



# THE KATHMANDU POST

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

Nepal's largest selling English daily

Printed simultaneously in Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Bharatpur and Nepalgunj

Vol XXX No. 324 | 8 pages | Rs.5  
Sunday, January 15, 2023 | 01-10-2079

24.1°C -5.5°C  
Dhangadi Jomsom

## TODAY

### NATIONAL

**Nepal Electricity Authority is facing hurdles in building transmission lines in different parts of the country, the latest seen at a proposed substation site in Lapsephedi area on the outskirts of Kathmandu. Pg 3**

### OPINION



**The iconicity of Prithvi Narayan Shah raising his index finger is interpreted variously, but the one given by textbooks and teachers is the most authentic, writes Abhi Subedi. Pg 4**

### MONEY

**Nepali traders had cheered when China allowed two-way trade to resume at the Rasuwagadhi-Kerung border last month, but they are finding out that the joy may have been premature. Pg 5**

### WORLD

**Russian missile attacks hit critical infrastructure in Kyiv and the eastern city of Kharkiv on Saturday morning, and a utility company imposed emergency power cuts in the capital and two other regions. Pg 6**

**Iran said on Saturday it had executed a dual Iranian-British national who once held a high-ranking position in the country's defence ministry despite international warnings to halt his death sentence. Pg 6**

### SPORTS



**Marcus Rashford scored a late winner as Manchester United came from behind to beat rivals Manchester City 2-1, dragging Erik ten Hag's side back into the Premier League title race sooner than anyone expected. Pg 7**



A Tharu woman gives a ritual donation to a cultural troupe at Bokatiya in Bardiya's Badhaiyatal on the eve of Maghi, on Saturday.

## Prime minister's overture to Congress on key posts makes UML jittery

Cabinet expansion by Monday and all-party meeting on Tuesday, Dahal tells journalists.

TIKA R PRADHAN  
KATHMANDU, JAN 14

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's statement on Saturday that he would consult the Nepali Congress on the elections of the President and the Speaker has created confusion among the coalition partners.

Dahal's statement, which he made while meeting a group of editors at Baluwatar, comes at a time that leaders of CPN-UML, his major coalition partner, are increasingly suspicious of the Congress' decision to give the trust vote to the prime minister.

After a series of meetings with UML Chairman KP Sharma Oli, Dahal was said to have removed many such suspicions that the CPN (Maoist Centre) and the Nepali Congress, which fought the three-tier elections held last year in an alliance, were cosy up again.

When the Congress, fresh after emerging the largest party from the November elections, refused to make Dahal the prime minister, he sided with the UML to win the chief executive post.

But then the Congress threw up a surprise by deciding to back Dahal as prime minister in the confidence vote. Many saw the move as Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba trying to drive a wedge between

Dahal and Oli.

Some Congress leaders have said they gave their trust vote to Dahal, expecting votes for their own candidates in the Presidential and Speaker elections. Congress leaders may have hoped to turn the tide in their favour as the head of state is elected through a secret vote by members of the National Assembly, the House of Representatives and members of the seven provincial assemblies.

Dahal's Saturday statement leaves the possibility of political realignances for the looming elections open. "We have called an all-party meeting on Tuesday where the elections to the President, Speaker and deputy Speaker will be discussed," Dahal said. "As the Nepali Congress also gave me the vote of trust, it is my duty to consult the party too."

The largest party in the House with 89 seats, Nepali Congress gave Dahal the vote of confidence on January 10.

"When Oli and I reached an agreement on power sharing, it was imagined that the Congress would sit on the opposition bench. Now that the Congress has extended me support, it is my responsibility to consult the party as well," Dahal told the editors.

"I need to thank the Nepali Congress and discuss how to go about electing the President, the Speaker and others."

Dahal clarified to the editors that there has been no written agreement with other partners on electing the President, Vice President and Speaker.

>> Continued on page 2

## Dahal to visit India in first foreign trip

Several bilateral meetings will precede the sojourn that will take place in late February or early March.

ANIL GIRI

KATHMANDU, JAN 14

Government officials have started preparations for Pushpa Kamal Dahal's visit to India in the near future with the prime minister saying on Saturday that he would make New Delhi his first port of call after taking up the executive job in December-end.

Speaking with some editors and journalists at Baluwatar, Dahal said the Nepali Embassy in New Delhi was coordinating with relevant offices and officials in New Delhi on the visit.

In 2008, after being elected prime minister for the first time, Dahal went off the beaten track to visit Beijing for the Olympics inaugural ceremony without first travelling to India, as Nepali prime ministers have traditionally done. Dahal later tried to control the damage and upon his return from Beijing, said his first 'official' visit would still be to New Delhi.

Having thus caused deep suspicions in the officialdom in New Delhi, Dahal, in his second stint as prime minister, first went to India on a state visit in September, 2016. In July last year, Dahal visited India at the invitation of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president JP Nadda. Dahal had at the time met External Affairs Minister of India S Jaishankar, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and the BJP president.

Multiple sources in Kathmandu and New Delhi told the Post that Dahal could visit India at the end of February or in March. Dahal's visit will happen only after the election of the President, two CPN (Maoist Centre) leaders who are familiar with the developments

said. "However, if the Indian side insists on the visit before the new President is elected, the trip may even take place earlier," one of them said.

The presidential vote is due in February as the term of President Bidya Devi Bhandari expires in March-end. As per the constitution, the election is held a month prior to the expiry of the incumbent's term.

**India's foreign secretary is due to visit Nepal to speed up preparations.**

Foreign Secretary of India Vinay Mohan Kwatra will visit Kathmandu to extend an invitation to the prime minister, probably after January 26, India's Republic Day, sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Nepali Embassy in Delhi said. The two sides would then discuss the visit and fix the exact date. A series of bilateral mechanisms that are due to meet soon will set the visit's tone, officials said.

Foreign ministry sources said that ahead of the visit, meetings of various bilateral mechanisms are planned.

"Soon, we will hold the energy secretary-level meeting, followed by those of water resources, agriculture, integrated check post, railway and the bilateral project oversight mechanism led by Nepal's foreign secretary and the Indian ambassador to Nepal," foreign ministry sources told the Post.

>> Continued on page 2

## SUNDAY EXPLAINER

## Behind the frequent measles outbreaks

Low uptake of vaccines is the main reason. The World Health Organisation on Friday called on countries to take urgent measures against measles.

ARJUN POUDREL  
KATHMANDU, JAN 14

Nepalgunj Sub-metropolitan City has been witnessing a massive measles outbreak over the last two weeks. The contagious viral disease, which killed a 30-month-old toddler and has infected over 130 people, has already spread in 12 of the 23 wards of the sub-metropolis.

Health authorities in Banke have been launching mass vaccination drives in the disease-hit wards of the city in which children aged between six months and 15 years are being jabbed with the measles vaccine.

Infection has been seen in the adult population as well, but they are only getting post-symptomatic treatment.

The outbreak has occurred in an area that was declared 'fully



Measles can be prevented through immunisation.

immunised' in March 2021.

Child health experts in Nepal questioned the authenticity of government agencies' claims of fully-immunised local units and districts and seriousness of the three tiers of government towards achieving the country's health goals.

Here's all about Nepal's current childhood vaccination status and the reason for the frequent measles outbreaks.

**What is measles?**

Measles is a contagious disease caused by a virus of the paramyxovirus family, transmitted through fluids from the nose, mouth or throat of infected persons and through air. The virus infects the respiratory tract, then spreads throughout the body. It remains a big cause of death among young children globally despite the availability of a safe and effective vaccine, according to the World Health Organisation.

>> Continued on page 2



Seasoning chamber









स्वदेशी

हाम्रो सामान, हाम्रै स्वाभिमान



ECO PARQUET & DECORATOR PVT.LTD.

GAIRIDHARA, KATHMANDU

TEL : 01-4445589, 9851036513

Website: [www.ecoparquet.com.np](http://www.ecoparquet.com.np)

Email : [ecoparquet73@gmail.com](mailto:ecoparquet73@gmail.com)

Facebook : [www.facebook.com/ecoparquet73](http://www.facebook.com/ecoparquet73)



An ideal investment that gives you

12.13%\* p.a. on fixed deposit

Scan to apply





NATIONAL

DISTRICT DIGEST

Properties worth Rs4.9 million destroyed in Sidhuwa fire

**DHANKUTA:** Properties worth about Rs4.9 million were destroyed by fire in Sidhuwa Bazaar in Chhathar Jorpati Rural Municipality-6, Dhankuta, on Friday night. The raging fire that broke out from a meat shop completely destroyed four houses while two others incurred partial damage, according to police. The district disaster management committee, the municipality and Dhankuta chapter of Nepal Red Cross Society provided relief materials to the victims on Saturday.

Dhital elected Gandaki Assembly Speaker

**KASKI:** CPN (Maoist Centre) leader Krishna Dhital has been elected as the Speaker of Gandaki provincial assembly. Dhital, who was elected from Gorkha-1 (a), secured 32 votes while Nepali Congress's Saraswati Aryal Tiwari obtained 26 votes. A total of 58 members were present during the provincial assembly meeting held to elect the speaker.

40 infected with tuberculosis in Darchula

**DARCHULA:** Forty people in Darchula, a remote district in Sudurpaschim Province, have been found to be infected with tuberculosis. According to the district health office, the tuberculosis patients are between 15 and 80 years in age and they are receiving medicines on a regular basis. The district health office estimates that there could be more than 300 tuberculosis patients in the district. "People hide their diseases due to ignorance and also fearing social stigma," said Jayaraj Bhatta, chief at the district health office. "We are worried about the possible spread of tuberculosis in the community."

Ground being laid for Dahal's visit

Singha Durbar officials said preparations are independent of any official instruction from the prime minister. When Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal visited India in September, he invited Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra for a return visit, a senior foreign ministry official said. "Kwatra will probably make the return trip to Kathmandu for the foreign secretary-level meeting after the prime minister gets a formal invite to visit India." But Paudyal has yet to send an invitation to Kwatra to come to Kathmandu, the official said. "Our prime minister also has to make a return trip to India after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Lumbini in May last year."

Soon after Dahal took the oath of office, Kwatra called on him on December 27 and invited him to visit India. In his interview to an Indian news channel on December 28, Dahal confirmed that he had received a phone call from Kwatra and was invited to visit India at a convenient date. "I think my first foreign visit will be from India," Dahal said in the interview with ABP News.

On December 30, Indian Ambassador Naveen Srivastava, while handing over a written congratulatory message by Indian Prime Minister Modi to Dahal, extended the invitation, sources said. Responding to Modi's message, Dahal said that he wants to work closely with New Delhi, speed up implementation of India-funded projects and improve Nepal-India ties.

Shanker Sharma, Nepal's ambassador to India, said he hopes the prime minister's visit takes place soon. "Once the date is finalised, we will proceed with the preparations," Sharma told the Post over phone from Delhi. "We are waiting for instructions from Kathmandu."

Traffic police say they have made no-horn rule in Valley more stringent

Data show 11,477 drivers have been booked for causing noise pollution in the current fiscal year so far.

ANUP OJHA  
KATHMANDU, JAN 14

In an effort to control noise pollution, the Kathmandu Valley Traffic Police Office has intensified its 'no-horn' drive.

Traffic police on Monday booked 107 drivers for unnecessary honking in public spaces, and since then, an average of 100 drivers are being given tickets every day, according to the Valley's traffic department.

"We have found an increasing number of vehicles honking on the streets, and so, we have made the drive more stringent," said Rajendra Prasad Bhatta, spokesperson at the Valley Traffic Police.

While the traffic police used to fine Rs500 for those violating the rule, it has increased the fine to Rs1,500 from December 17. Senior officials at the Valley Traffic Police said they increased the fine to reduce the number of offenders.

"However, we do not take classes for no-horn rule breachers," Bhatta said. It's mandatory for traffic rules violators to take a one-hour class for drink-driving and other offences.

According to the Motor Vehicle and Transport Management Act 1993, drivers caught blowing horns in the restricted zones will have to pay fines up to Rs1,500.

"We want to reduce noise pollution



Drivers caught blowing horns in the restricted zones will have to pay fines up to Rs1,500.

Dahal's Congress outreach gives rise to suspicion

>> Continued from page 1

"I will hold a meeting of the parties that supported me on January 17. I'm trying to forge an agreement among all the parties," Dahal said. "Many things will be determined by that all-party meeting."

Some UML leaders tried to downplay the matter saying that they had no confusion over the confidence vote of Congress as Oli and Dahal had already settled the issue and were now focused on Cabinet expansion.

"How can Dahal talk about power sharing with the Congress after becoming the prime minister with the UML's support?" asked Prithvi Subba Gurung, deputy general secretary of the UML, who is among the Speaker candidates. "Dahal must have given such a statement just to appease Congress leaders who gave him their vote of confidence."

The much-awaited Cabinet expansion deal among the ruling parties has also been delayed with no concrete agreement on picking the Speaker and deputy Speaker. The Parliament Secretariat is scheduled to hold the

Nepali Congress gave Dahal the vote of confidence on January 10.

votes to elect them on January 19 and 21, respectively. As per an initial agreement in the ruling alliance, the UML will get the post of Speaker and one among the Rastriya Swatantra Party, Rastriya Prajatantra Party and Janata Samajbadi Party will land the deputy Speaker position.

UML leaders said they would decide the Speaker and deputy Speaker candidates after the second Cabinet expansion, most likely by Monday evening. Prime Minister Dahal also said the distribution of ministries among the ruling partners would be complete by Sunday evening.

According to the Parliament Secretariat, the schedule for Speaker election will be published on January

17, final nominations will be published on November 18, and polling will be held on January 19.

UML deputy general secretary Bishnu Rimal said the Speaker candidates would be decided after Cabinet expansion as discussions on it had yet to begin. "The Speaker is allocated to the UML but we have yet to finalise the candidate," he added. UML leaders said that Chhabilal Bishwakarma and Prithvi Subba Gurung are the front-runners for the Speaker's post from their party. They believe Bishwakarma has better chances of the two.

A section of the UML is also floating the name of Devraj Ghimire, who won the recent parliamentary elections from Jhapa, but his claim is weaker compared to the prospects of Bishwokarma and Gurung.

"As Bishwokarma represents the Dalit community and Gurung comes from the indigenous background, both their claims are valid. As this puts the party leadership under pressure, the candidate selection has been delayed," a UML leader said. "When Oli and Prime Minister Dahal sealed a pow-

er-sharing deal on December 25, it was also agreed to divide the term of the Speaker equally between the two parties."

As per the understanding, the Maoist Center heads the government in the first half of the five-year term, before handing over the reins to the UML in the second half. By extension, a UML leader will lead the legislature during Dahal's tenure and a Maoist leader will command the House when the government leadership is handed over to the UML.

The ruling alliance has yet to agree on the deputy Speaker candidate as well. The latest Congress decision on the crucial elections came on Wednesday, when a meeting of the party's incumbent and former office bearers decided to contest the four top state positions.

"We will decide [further] only after hearing the views of political parties represented in the House," said senior Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Poudel. "But it's all up to the prime minister whom we supported with our trust vote."

Traffic police data shows that a total of 11,477 drivers who flouted the no-horn rule have been booked so far in the current fiscal year, up from 9,477 in the whole of last year. Between 2017, when the rule was first introduced, and 2019, the traffic police booked 12,271 drivers for violating it.

According to traffic police records, Kathmandu Valley had as many as 1.75 million in August, 2022, up from 1.4 million in 2021 and 1.18 million in 2017.

-BY THE NUMBERS-

\$9.82 billion

Nepal's Foreign Exchange Reserves as of mid-December 2022, which is adequate for sustaining merchandise and services imports of 8.7 months.

SOURCE: NEPAL RASTRA BANK

Rs480.50 billion

Total remittances received during the first five months of the current fiscal year 2022-23 with a rise of 23 percent year-on-year.

SOURCE: NEPAL RASTRA BANK

6 million

Targeted beneficiaries of social security allowance in the next five years as per the 'Common Minimum Programme' of the ruling parties, which is nearly double of the current number.

Rs25,000

Minimum wage per month vowed by the ruling parties in their 'Common Minimum Programme' in the next five years, from the current Rs15,000 per month.

122 tonnes

Coffee output in Lumbini Province in the fiscal year 2021-22, as production drops by 27.84 percent as per the Siddharthanagar-Annual Economic Activity Port.

SOURCE: NEPAL RASTRA BANK

1.6%

Growth rate of credit to the private sector during the first five months of current fiscal year 2022-23, down from 10.4 percent year-on-year.

SOURCE: NEPAL RASTRA BANK

28

Active Covid-19 cases as of January 13, 2023.

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND POPULATION

Experts suggest micro-planning to ensure no child misses vaccine

>> Continued from page 1

Measles history in Nepal

Measles was endemic in Nepal. In the past, hundreds of children died every year in the country from the potentially fatal contagion.

Routine measles vaccination in Nepal began in 1979, starting with three districts. The campaign was extended nationwide after 10 years. Despite measles vaccines being included in the regular immunisation list, an average of 90,000 cases were recorded every year from 1994 to 2004.

"I was deputed to Doti after deaths of over 300 children from measles infection there some 35 years ago," said Dr Baburam Marasini, former director at the Epidemiology and Disease Control Division. "I remember we had admitted and treated more than 80 children in a 15-bed hospital."

With the increase in vaccine coverage, both infection and death rates from the virus declined significantly. Still, measles continues to stalk many children across the country.

The vaccine

Measles can be prevented through immunisation. The best way to protect against the deadly disease is to get the measles-rubella (MR) shots. The government has included the MR shots in its regular immunisation programme and offers the vaccine free of cost. Children get two doses of vaccine—in nine months and in 15 months—under the programme. Apart from this, health authorities also launch a nationwide mass vaccination drive every four years targeting children who missed the vaccine doses in regular immunisation programmes. All children under five are administered the MMR vaccine during the campaign.

Why frequent outbreaks?

Currently, Nepalgunj Sub-metropolis has been grappling with a massive measles outbreak. Such incidents were previously reported from Kapilvastu, Dang, Dhading, Kathmandu and Morang, among other districts.

Low vaccination coverage, internal migration, lack of public awareness on the importance of vaccines and

government apathy are attributed to regular outbreaks of measles in the districts, according to health experts.

Public health experts say most measles outbreaks have been reported among the marginalised and religious communities—Muslims and Catholics—as well as other backward groups where the level of awareness of regular immunisation is low. Rumours about measles vaccines causing impotence and high fever are also still rife in these communities.

The vaccine coverage rate is low in some Muslim communities, as they believe that gelatine derived from pigs is included in the vaccines. Some from the Catholic Christian community believe they don't need vaccines as God takes care of them. Also, some elites in major cities apparently reckon they can do without vaccination. Moreover, working class people who go from place to place are also being deprived of vaccination.

"When all children are not immunised, risks of disease outbreaks increase," said Dr Jhalak Gautam, former chief of the Immunisation Section at the Family Welfare Division under the Department of Health Services. "We must make every effort to increase the vaccine coverage."

**Nepal's goal of measles elimination** Nepal had committed to eliminating measles by 2023. But the outbreak of the deadly disease at the start of 2023 shows that the country is nowhere near meeting the measles elimination target. The previous deadline of 2019 had to be extended due to the failure to meet the target.

To declare measles as eliminated, the number of cases should be less than five in every million people throughout the year.

"To achieve measles elimination status, over 95 percent of the total children need to be immunised with both doses of vaccine and no children should miss the vaccine," said Dr Jhalak Sharma, former chief of the Immunisation section at the Family Welfare Division of the Department of Health Services.

Nepal's vaccination status

A recent report of the Nepal



To eliminate measles, over 95 percent of the children need to be vaccinated with two doses.

Demographic and Health Survey-2022 carried out by the Ministry of Health and Population shows that four percent of children in the 12-23 month age group have received no vaccine.

This figure was just one percent in 2016, and the rapid surge in the number of unvaccinated children poses a serious threat to the country's achievements in immunisations made over the years through huge investments, child health experts warn.

The study shows that overall, 80 percent of children aged 12-23 months are fully vaccinated with basic antigens. The measles-rubella vaccine uptake rate is 89 percent. The percentage of children aged 12-23 months who are fully vaccinated (received all the basic antigens) has fluctuated over the time, rising from 43 percent in 1996 to a peak of 87 percent in 2011, then decreasing to 78 percent in 2016, and again increasing slightly to 80 percent in 2022.

Experts' take

Child health experts say the increase in the number of children who did not take any vaccine from one percent to four percent in a five-year period is alarming.

"We are at a risk of outbreaks of multiple vaccine-preventable diseases. All our achievements in child health are at risk," said Gautam, the former chief of the Immunisation Section at the Family Welfare Division of the Department of Health Services. "After the declaration of a fully immunised district, the vaccination programme perhaps got less priority. Without developing a system that ensures that no child misses the vaccines, these types of outbreaks won't stop."

The experts suggest micro-planning to ensure no child misses the vaccine, improvement of preparedness to respond to the outbreaks and better coordination among the concerned agencies under all three tiers of gov-

ernments, as well as with international partners, including UN bodies like WHO and UNICEF.

Status in South-East Asia region

According to UNICEF, five out of the region's 11 countries (Bhutan, DPR Korea, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste) have eliminated Measles and two countries (the Maldives and Sri Lanka) have eliminated Rubella as well.

But the potentially deadly disease is still being spotted in Nepal, Indonesia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, India and Thailand.

WHO on measles risks in the region

The World Health Organisation South-East Asia Region on Friday called on countries to take urgent and accelerated measures against Measles which is on the rise with nearly nine million children in the region having missed vaccination against the killer disease in the last two years.

Issuing a statement on the 12th anniversary of the last case of wild poliovirus detected in the region, Regional Director Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh said a strong political commitment, determination, focussed and concerted efforts and community support that marked efforts for polio elimination are now urgently needed to stop and prevent measles outbreaks and called for accelerated efforts to eliminate the disease.

Measles and rubella elimination is the flagship priority programme of WHO South-East Asia Region. The region recorded 73 percent reduction in measles deaths and 64 percent reduction in measles cases between 2014 and 2021.

"The decline in vaccine coverage, and interruptions and delays in immunisation and surveillance activities due to Covid-19, leaves the region susceptible to large outbreaks, and off track for the 2023 target of measles and rubella elimination," said the regional director. "We need to urgently close immunity gaps with tailored approaches for highest impact, such as through catch-up campaigns, and strengthening of the routine immunisation with better micro-planning."







WORDS & ECHOES

The uncertainty that the political interpretations have created about the king carries a burden of ambivalence.

ABHI SUBEDI

The present coalition government led by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, president of the CPN (Maoist Centre), decided to give a public holiday on the occasion of Prithvi Jayanti, which is observed on January 11. The pro-monarchist Rastriya Prajatantra Party that carries the value, if not the political structuration of the erstwhile Panchayat political ideology, led by a young politician named Rajendra Lingden from my region Limbuwan, had set this as a condition for giving a vote of confidence in favour of the Prachanda-led government. As the algorithm of the hung Parliament would have it, even the largest party in the House, the Nepali Congress, has voted in favour of the present coalition of parties despite the opposite views held by its general secretaries Gagan Thapa and Bishwa Prakash Sharma and young intellectuals like Shankar Tiwari.

Now the largest party in Parliament, the Nepali Congress, the second largest party, the CPN (Unified Marxist-Leninist), and the other parties that hold a significant number of seats all have come together to give the present coalition a vote of confidence. This convergence leaves no room for the opposition in Parliament. This strange covenant of heterogeneous groups looks like a unique collage, which is a technique in modernist painting. But this is a restive montage executed not on a longer lasting canvas but arranged as an installation art. It is for learned political scientists and historians to tell us about the significance and transient nature of political alliances. In the following lines, I would like to dwell on the enigmatic image of the king of Gorkha, Prithvi Narayanan Shah (1723-75), who is regarded as the builder of modern Nepal. New historicist interpretations of Prithvi Narayan Shah, his times and works could also be evoked.

**Iconic feature**

Prithvi Narayan Shah's portraits and statues have some familiarised features. The iconicity of the king raising his index finger is the most eloquent feature in this regard.

# Enigma of Prithvi Narayan Shah



POST ILLUSTRATION

People have interpreted it variously, but the interpretation given by the textbooks and teachers is the most authentic. The iconic feature was created and familiarised by artist Amar Chitrakar (1920-99), who projected his vision by making Shah's statues and paintings. I would be thrilled every time Chitrakar quietly narrated how he consulted artists and historians several times before embarking on the project, especially while sculpting the statue installed in front of the huge secretariat named Singh Durbar and executing oil portraits of Prithvi Narayan Shah and other Shah kings.

He prominently mentioned his interactions with Bala Krishna Sama (1903-81), the doyen of Nepali drama and an artist, and historian Baburam Acharya (1888-1971) to form ideas about the features of Prithvi Narayan Shah's persona. The challenge was great for Amar Chitrakar. He said Sama's ideas about projecting Prithvi Narayan

Shah's persona were helpful. But Amar Chitrakar quietly confessed he had some differences with Sama, though he did not elaborate what those differences were. When he got a commission to make a statue of Prithvi Narayan Shah to install at Prithvi Chowk, Pokhara, Chitrakar said he worked according to his plans and imagination. Chitrakar would have been heartbroken if he was alive to see the same statue vandalised by Young Communist League (YCL) cadres on May Day 2007.

We can imagine that Sama, as a poet, had formed some imaginary perceptions about Nepali nationalism, and the significance of the unification of Nepal must have differed from the quiet and realistic interpretation of Amar Chitrakar. However, their common consensus emerged on the iconicity of the index finger in both the sculpture and the painting. The symbolism of the index finger is unity or unified concept of a nation. The

iconicity of the index finger represents a single nation formed through a merger of many units, a gestalt almost, which shows a singularity of purpose.

We can raise a series of questions like the following in this regard. What is the enigma of Prithvi Narayan Shah? Why do politicians bandy his image and name after every political change in the country? Why has it become a concern of royalists to uphold his image and not others? How did a consensus emerge to recognise this day for celebration? Is it a permanent perception or something that changes with the nature of the coalitions to form governments? All this shows a very uncertain misinterpretation of history. The uncertainty that the political interpretations have created about this king carries a burden of ambivalence. A number of questions remain unresolved about the Nepali nation and nationalism. Prithvi Narayan Shah remains at the centre of it; he

has been called a great usurper of small principalities and nationalities, and is also remembered for some of his ruthless deeds. He is called a Nepali Otto von Bismarck, who achieved German unification in the 19th century. He is commonly called rash-tranirmata or the maker of the Nepali state.

**Guerrilla skills**

Prithvi Narayan Shah's other image is that of a teacher whose edicts, presented in aphoristic style, have gone down well in history. Not only that, Shah's strategic acumen has found admirers in recent times. Maoist leader Prachanda's admiration for Shah's guerrilla skills has added a new dimension to this line of thinking. Equally enigmatic are Prithvi Narayan Shah's geopolitical interpretations of Nepal. Modern-day political leaders suggest an alternative interpretation of the famous dictum of Prithvi Narayan Shah. I especially remember Baburam Bhattarai's alternate interpretation of Prithvi Narayan Shah's renowned observation about Nepal being sandwiched between two giant boulders. Bhattarai says this is a position of advantage in terms of extending Nepal's access to the big neighbours by utilising the geopolitical position for the expansion of trade and economic activities.

The enigma of Prithvi Narayan Shah remains there. As said earlier, this enigma is directly related to the geopolitical position of Nepal. But more importantly, Prithvi Narayan Shah's "unification of Nepal" has assumed greater meaning in the context of defining Nepal as an independent nation-state. This subject would also trigger new interpretations if the geopolitical metaphor of Prithvi Narayan Shah were viewed in the postcolonial context. This subject demands interpretation in terms of the geo-cultural and geo-political history of South Asia. Prithvi Narayan Shah occupies a position from where one can interpret the political conditionality of Nepal that covers the present political developments that saw the end of the rule of the House of Gorkha in 2008. The enigma becomes more prominent when we fail to clearly say whether Prithvi Narayan Shah evokes a spectre of feudal history or a rational interpretation of the features of the Nepali nation-state beginning with this obtrusive monarch of Gorkha.



Abhi Subedi is a poet and playwright.

## Our metamorphosis to kakistocracy

To make matters worse, we now have a newly formed Parliament with no opposition.

SUCHETA PYAKURYAL

Ask any student of government and politics and they will tell you how the discipline makes them understand various systems of government and types of governance and political ideologies that the political systems use to operate. A typical modern, legal-rational political system operates under a democratic modus operandi. To practise democracy, a state needs a system in place, and procedural democracy does not have many structural-functional templates it can choose from.

tem and psyche and an implicit bias for and awe of the British system of government, we opted for the parliamentary form of democratic governance with constitutional monarchy after the British model in 1990. Reflecting back, one cannot help but wonder whether our constitutional framers even considered other systems of governance, such as direct democracy, which probably is more practical and sustainable given the size of our nation-state.

The Westminster style of parliamentary democracy, which operates under the premise of majoritarian rule, comes with certain clauses and conditions. The template we chose and adopted came with those conditionalities that the West had pointed out since the early days of its inception and adoption. They had explicitly pointed out how "tyranny of the majority" is a condition that can develop, and to counter this malaise, a system of "checks and balances" needs to be weaved into the structure. In his

In simple terms, a state cannot hope to sustain procedural democracy without the separation of powers and checks and balances. In the United States, checks and balances are weaved in through the system of separation of powers, whereby they have three branches of government as well as a bicameral legislature. In the United Kingdom, checks and balances are conducted through the opposition along with the two-chamber legislature. With these templates in place, various nouveau democracies have opted for either the presidential or parliamentary democracies and have encountered various challenges of both the systems such as the idiosyncrasies of hung Parliaments or presidential autocracy, but as of now, there has been no recorded instance of a Parliament with no opposition.

What Nepal has at the moment is a badly morphed political machine that erodes democracy bit by bit, an apparatus that can

reduced to a bumbling "kakistocracy" last week, and that too with kleptocratic tendencies. For the uninitiated, kakistocracy is a rule by the worst kind of people who are immoral, unscrupulous or bad. Just as the Greek word "eudaimonia" encompasses more than the "good life" in the study of politics, "kakistos" holds more meaning than just the "worst kind".

We have a group of people who, in the guise of delegates or agents of the people, operate as relentless rent-seekers. Be it systemic corruption such as the Baluwater land scam, the Covid-19 healthcare procurement scandal, the pre-election inter-party alliance that refuted every ethos of democratic politics, the post-election wheel and deal behind the newly formed hung Parliament that exposed the level of accountability of the erstwhile and the present prime ministers, or the latest overwhelming vote of confidence garnered by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, all these point to the direction of kakistocracy. We have formally arrived at the state of kakistocracy and what lies ahead looks bleak and grim.

We have an economic crisis staring at us. The public sector that is festered with systemic corruption is inept in both policy formulation and administration, unbridled market, and sovereignty that is at risk of getting compromised by a massive influx of policy imports, political pressures from within and outside of the region, and political parties that resemble the American political machines of the 19th century: rife with patronage and nepotism. Last year, around this time, Transparency International published its 2021 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which ranked Nepal as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. This year the expectation is that we will get an even lower score due to the behind-the-scenes political horse-trading and election tickets distribution. Making matters worse than it already is, we now have a newly formed Parliament with no opposition.

The "absence of an organised opposition can easily invite political dictatorship" is a well-grounded political theory. We may be able to escape that political fate with the multiparty system that we have in place, but the dictatorship of this wanton political class could result in anarchy and the collapse of our entire system, something worse.

One often gets to hear a particular sentence uttered by Woodrow Wilson through those who teach politics and administration on "how easy it is to make a constitution, but extremely hard to run one". Never before did this sentence seem truer than now.



SHUTTERSTOCK

In Nepal's case, adopting the system of representative democracy made sense to the prevailing socio-political mindset. Since the start of our democratic practices in 1951, representative democracy has been the de facto choice, and the prevalent best practices point to two popular systems: Parliamentary form and presidential form of government. Maybe because we too had a colonial residue in our socio-political sys-

tem and psyche and an implicit bias for and awe of the British system of government, we opted for the parliamentary form of democratic governance with constitutional monarchy after the British model in 1990. Reflecting back, one cannot help but wonder whether our constitutional framers even considered other systems of governance, such as direct democracy, which probably is more practical and sustainable given the size of our nation-state.

The Westminster style of parliamentary democracy, which operates under the premise of majoritarian rule, comes with certain clauses and conditions. The template we chose and adopted came with those conditionalities that the West had pointed out since the early days of its inception and adoption. They had explicitly pointed out how "tyranny of the majority" is a condition that can develop, and to counter this malaise, a system of "checks and balances" needs to be weaved into the structure. In his

book *On Liberty*, a British political philosopher, JS Mill, first discussed the concept of the tyranny of the majority. The precise term, however, is attributed to the French political philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville which he used in his book *Democracy in America*, alongside the discourses on two other necessary political conditions for democracy "separation of power" and democratic "checks and balances."

systematically steal from the state coffers without any organised check in place. Suddenly, we find ourselves devoid of the opposition in the Parliament—a substantial institution that is part and parcel of parliamentary democracy as well as a part of the original formula to save Parliament from becoming the handmaid of the ruling party(s). After a series of hung parliaments that have marred our democracy, it was



Pyakuryal is director of the Centre for Governance at the Institute for Integrated Developed Studies.







WORLD

BRIEFING

Russian ex-President Medvedev says Japanese PM should disembowel himself

**MOSCOW:** Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev accused Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Saturday of shameful subservience to the United States and suggested he should ritually disembowel himself. It was the latest in a long line of shocking and provocative statements from Medvedev, who was once seen as a Western-leaning reformer but has reinvented himself as an arch-hawk since Russia invaded Ukraine last year. Medvedev is a prominent ally of President Vladimir Putin who serves as deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council and of a body overseeing the defence industry.

British PM says will send tanks to Ukraine

**LONDON:** British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Saturday said the UK will provide tanks to Ukraine to help Kyiv's forces "push Russian troops back". Sunak made the pledge to supply Challenger 2 tanks and additional artillery systems as a sign of the UK's "ambition to intensify our support to Ukraine", according to a read-out of a phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. The move makes the UK the first Western power to supply the Ukrainians with main battle tanks, the PA news agency said. France on January 4 said it would supply Kyiv with the French-made AMX-10 RC—a light tank model.

Top US lawmaker objects to potential F-16 sale to Turkey

**WASHINGTON:** The Biden administration has told Congress it is preparing the potential \$20 billion sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkey, sources familiar with the matter said on Friday, sparking an immediate objection from a senior US lawmaker who has long opposed the deal. The State Department sent the informal notice to Congress on Thursday, three sources said, informing committees overseeing arms sales in the Senate and House of Representatives of its intention to proceed with the proposed deal. NATO member Turkey requested in October 2021 to buy 40 Lockheed Martin Corp F-16 fighters and nearly 80 modernisation kits for its existing warplanes. **(AGENCIES)**

Iran hangs former defence ministry official over spy claim, UK condemns act

Execution of Ali Reza Akbari, a dual Iranian-British national, suggests an ongoing power struggle within Iran's theocracy.

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
DUBAI, JAN 14

Iran said on Saturday it had executed a dual Iranian-British national who once held a high-ranking position in the country's defence ministry despite international warnings to halt his death sentence, further escalating tensions with the West amid the nationwide protests now shaking the Islamic Republic.

The hanging of Ali Reza Akbari, a close ally of top security official Ali Shamkhani, suggests an ongoing power struggle within Iran's theocracy as it struggles to contain the demonstrations over the September death of Mahsa Amini. It also harkened back to the mass purges of the military that immediately followed Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Akbari's hanging drew immediate anger from London, which along with the US and others has sanctioned Iran over the protests and its supplying Russia with the bomb-carrying drones now targeting Ukraine.

"This was a callous and cowardly act, carried out by a barbaric regime with no respect for the human rights of their own people," British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said.

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly summoned Iran's chargé d'affaires in the United Kingdom and separately warned: "This will not stand unchallenged."

Iran's Mizan news agency, associated with the country's judiciary, announced Akbari's hanging without saying when it happened. However, there were rumors he had been executed days earlier.

Iran has alleged, without providing evidence, that Akbari served as a source for Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, known popularly as MI6. A lengthy statement issued by Iran's judiciary claimed Akbari received large sums of money, his British citizenship and other help in London for providing information to the intelligence service.

However, Iran long has accused those who travel abroad or have Western ties of spying, often using them as bargaining chips in negotiations.



A file photo of Ali Reza Akbari.

Akbari, who ran a private think tank, is believed to have been arrested in 2019, but details of his case only emerged in recent weeks. Those accused of espionage and other crimes related to national security are usually tried behind closed doors, where rights groups say they do not choose their own lawyers and are not allowed to see evidence against them.

Iranian state television aired a highly edited video of Akbari discussing the allegations, footage that resembled other claimed confessions that activists have described as coerced confessions.

The BBC Farsi-language service aired an audio message from Akbari on Wednesday, in which he described being tortured.

"By using physiological and psychological methods, they broke my will, drove me to madness and forced me to do whatever they wanted," Akbari said in the audio. "By the force of gun and death threats they made me confess to false and corrupt claims."

Iran has not commented on the torture claims. However, the United Nations human rights chief has warned Iran against the "weaponisa-

tion" of the death penalty as a means to put down the protests.

On Friday, State Department deputy spokesman Vedant Patel also criticised Akbari's pending execution.

"The charges against Ali Reza Akbari and his sentencing to execution were politically motivated. His execution would be unconscionable," he said. "We are greatly disturbed by the reports that Mr Akbari was drugged, tortured while in custody, interrogated for thousands of hours, and forced to make false confessions."

He added: "More broadly, Iran's practices of arbitrary and unjust detentions, forced confessions and politically motivated executions are completely unacceptable and must end."

Iran is one of the world's top executioners. However, it wasn't immediately clear when the last time of a former or current high-ranking defence official had been executed. In 1984, Iran executed its navy chief Admiral Baharam Afzali along nine other military people on the charge of spying for Soviet Union.

Iran's government for months has been trying to allege — without offering evidence — that foreign countries

have fomented the unrest gripping the Islamic Republic since the death of Amini in September after her detention by the morality police. Protesters say they are angry over the collapse of the economy, heavy-handed policing and the entrenched power of the country's Islamic clergy.

For several years, Iran has been locked in a shadow war with the United States and Israel, marked by covert attacks on its disputed nuclear programme. The killing of Iran's top nuclear scientist in 2020, which Iran blamed on Israel, indicated foreign intelligence services had made major inroads. Iran mentioned that scientist in discussing Akbari's case, though it's unclear what current information, if any, he would have had on him.

Akbari had previously led the implementation of a 1988 cease-fire between Iran and Iraq following their devastating eight-year war, working closely with UN observers. He served as a deputy defence minister under Shamkhani during reformist President Mohammad Khatami's administration, likely further making his credentials suspicious to hard-liners within Iran's theocracy.

Today, Shamkhani is the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran, the country's top security body which Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei oversees. Akbari's audio message aired by the BBC Persian included him saying he was accused of obtaining top-secret information from Shamkhani "in exchange for a bottle of perfume and a shirt." However, it appears Shamkhani remains in his role.

The anti-government protests now shaking Iran are one of the biggest challenges to the Islamic Republic since the 1979 revolution.

At least 520 protesters have been killed and 19,400 people have been arrested, according to Human Rights Activists in Iran, a group that has been monitoring the unrest. Iranian authorities have not provided official figures on deaths or arrests.

Iran has executed four people after convicting them of charges linked to the protests in similarly criticised trials, including attacks on security forces.

Maine gets 1st Mega Millions jackpot with \$1.35 billion grand prize

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
DES MOINES, JAN 14

Maine scored its first Mega Millions jackpot—and someone beat the ill fortune of Friday the 13th—when a ticket purchased in the state matched the winning numbers for the lottery's estimated \$1.35 billion grand prize.

The lucky combination of numbers drawn late Friday night were: 30, 43, 45, 46, 61 and gold Mega Ball 14.

The winner, whose name is not yet known, overcame steep odds of 1 in 302.6 million, which led to three months of drawings without a claim on the jackpot.

"Congratulations to the Maine State Lottery, which has just won its first-ever Mega Millions jackpot," Pat McDonald, Ohio lottery director and lead director of the Mega Millions Consortium, said in a statement early Saturday.

The jackpot was the second largest in Mega Millions history and the fourth time the game has had a billion-dollar win. The largest Mega Millions jackpot in October 2018 was \$1.53 billion claimed by a single ticket holder in South Carolina.

Friday's prosperous drawing also marked the seventh time there was a grand prize winner on Friday the 13th, a date superstitiously considered unlucky.

To claim the full \$1.35 billion, the winner would need to take the money in an annuity with annual payments over 29 years. Most jackpot recipients prefer the reduced but quicker cash option, which for Friday night's drawing was an estimated \$724.6 million.

The next grand prize drawing on Tuesday will drop to an estimated \$20 million and a cash option of \$10.7 million.

Until Friday night, there had been 25 straight drawings without a jackpot winner.

There were more than 7 million winning tickets across nine prize tiers on Friday. Beyond Maine's jackpot, 14 tickets matched five white balls to claim the second-tier prize of \$1 million. Four were sold in New York, two in California and one each in Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Texas, Mega Millions said.

Russian missiles strike vital infrastructure in Kyiv and Kharkiv

The strikes on Saturday came as Ukrainian and Russian forces battled for control of Soledar.

REUTERS  
KYIV, JAN 14

Russian missile attacks hit critical infrastructure in Kyiv and the eastern city of Kharkiv on Saturday morning, and a utility company imposed emergency power cuts in the capital and two other regions.

Reuters journalists heard a series of blasts in Kyiv before the air raid siren even sounded, which is highly unusual. No one was reported hurt, but missile debris caused a fire in one place and houses were damaged outside the capital, officials said.

"Explosions in the [eastern] Dniprovskiy district. All agencies heading to the site. Stay in your shelters!" Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

Russia, which invaded last February, has been pounding Ukraine's energy infrastructure with missiles and drones since October, causing sweeping blackouts and disruptions to central heating and running water as winter bites.

"An infrastructure facility was hit. No critical damage or fire. All emergency services are working at the site. No one is wounded," Kyiv's military administration said in a statement.

Ukrenergo, which runs the power

grid, said its workers were racing to fix the damage and that the network was grappling with a power deficit caused by earlier attacks even though it was -2 Celsius in Kyiv, only mildly cold. DTEK, the biggest private electricity company, introduced emergency blackouts in Kyiv, the Kyiv region and Odesa region.

Kyiv's mayor said the debris of a missile came down on a non-residential area in the Holosiivskiy district in the west of Kyiv, causing a fire but hurting no one. Residential infrastructure was also hit in the village of Kopyliv in the region just outside the capital. The windows and roofs of 18 privately owned houses were shattered or damaged by the blast, Oleksiy Kuleba, the regional governor, said.

Air Force spokesperson Yuriy Ihnat said Russia's missiles had likely been fired along a high, looping ballistic trajectory from the north, which would explain why the air raid siren did not sound. Ukraine is not able to identify and shoot down ballistic missiles, he told the Ukrainska Pravda online outlet.

In Ukraine's northeast, Oleg Synehubov, Kharkiv's regional governor, said two S-300 missiles struck the city near the Russian border early on Saturday.



Children climb on top of a tank at a Royal Thai Army base during celebrations for National Children's Day in Bangkok on Saturday.

End to storms is near but California braces for more

The ninth and final atmospheric river of the series is due to make landfall on Monday and last a couple of days.

REUTERS  
CALIFORNIA, JAN 14

California's parade of atmospheric rivers may be nearing an end but not before at least two more of the rainstorms are due to drench the waterlogged state starting on Saturday, forecasters said.

A series of atmospheric rivers rarely seen in such frequent succession has pounded the state since December 26, killing at least 19 people and bringing floods, power outages, mudslides, evacuations and road closures.

The storms have dropped half the average annual rainfall on the agricultural Central Valley and as much as 4.5 m of snow in the mountains.

The six-day forecast called for 10 to 15 cm more rain in California's north and 2.5 to 7.5 cm in its south, the state's water resources depart-

ment said on Friday.

At least seven waterways were officially flooded, it added.

The latest storm, the season's eighth, is expected to begin dumping heavy rain on California from early on Saturday, the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Centre said.

The ninth and final atmospheric river of the series is due to make landfall on Monday and last a couple of days.

Among the waterways of concern, the Salinas River in northern California flooded roads and farmland on Friday, when 24,000 people were urged to evacuate.

In southern California, officials will release water on Saturday from Lake Cachuma, which provides drinking water near Santa Barbara, as the chronically low lake has filled to capacity.

The storms have mitigated but not solved the region's drought.

The storms have mitigated but not solved the region's drought.

"You can have flooding and drought at the same time, because drought is long-term dryness," said David Roth, meteorologist with the Weather Prediction Centre.

"You need a long period of precipitation to cancel out a drought, even if some areas have had the equivalent of 30 inches of liquid."

The US Drought Monitor revised on Thursday its assessment to lift virtually all of the state out of extreme

drought or exceptional drought, the two worst categories, though much of it is still considered to be suffering moderate or severe drought.

"There's also the danger that if we get excessive temperatures later, we could get evaporation, the snowpack evaporates, the water evaporates, and we're right back to where we've been," said Roger Bales, an environmental engineering professor with the University of California.

Excess snow has been both good and bad for the ski industry, likely leading to a long season but also forcing disruptions from power outages, road closures and delays at some resorts, said Michael Reitzell, president of Ski California.

"It has been a bit challenging, but we will take all of it," added Reitzell, whose industry association represents 35 resorts.



BRIEFING

Army, Tip Top to compete for men's volleyball title

**KATHMANDU:** Defending champions Tribhuvan Army Club saw off arch-rivals Nepal Armed Police Force (APF) Club in straight sets to set up the title clash with Tip Top Help Nepal in the men's category of the seventh NVA Club Volleyball Championships on Saturday. Army registered 25-23, 25-17, 25-17 win over the departmental rivals to avenge the defeat suffered in the final of the Ninth National Games in October last year. In the second semi-final, Tip Top registered a hard fought 25-21, 24-26, 25-17, 20-25, 15-8 win over Nepal Police Club. The women's section will see New Diamond compete against Nepal Police Club in the title clash after they emerged victorious in their semi-finals clashes. New Diamond saw off Tribhuvan Army 3-1, in the sets. After losing the first set 17-25, New Diamond won the next three sets 25-19, 25-16, 25-18. Police beat APF 3-2 in the sets with scores of 25-15, 17-25, 21-25, 25-21, 15-7. The finals will be played on Sunday. **(SB)**

New Zealand clinch Pakistan ODI series in Karachi

**KARACHI:** Glenn Phillips smashed a quickfire half century to guide New Zealand to a two-wicket victory over Pakistan in the third one-day international in Karachi on Friday and clinch the series 2-1. Phillips scored an unbeaten 63 off 42 balls as New Zealand chased down a target of 281 within 11 balls remaining. Opener Devon Conway (52) and captain Kane Williamson (53) also made telling contributions. Pakistan opted to bat and scored 280-9, opener Fakhar Zaman top-scoring with 101 and wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan making 77. Tim Southee took 3-56 and Lockie Ferguson bagged 2-63 while Michael Bracewell and Ish Sodhi took one wicket each. **(REUTERS)**

Napoli crush Juventus

**NAPLES:** Leaders Napoli snapped Juventus's eight-match Serie A winning streak in spectacular style on Friday, handing Massimiliano Allegri's men a humiliating 5-1 thrashing on Friday. Napoli went ahead in the 14th minute, after Juventus goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny saved a bicycle kick by Khvicha Kvaratskhelia but failed to deny Victor Osimhen's follow-up. Osimhen set up Kvaratskhelia for Napoli's second, sending in a precise cross into an empty space for the Georgian to put a finishing touch and double their lead in the 39th minute. Di Maria put Juventus back in the match three minutes later with a low shot. Defender Amir Rrahmani restored a two-goal lead for Napoli with a powerful first-touch finish following a corner. Osimhen furthered the lead in the 65th with his second header of the evening. Substitute Eljif Elmas sealed the win for Napoli in the 72nd minute. **(REUTERS)**

Man United defeat City in dramatic derby at Old Trafford

Fernandes and Rashford score in the final 12 minutes as Ten Hag's men snatch a 2-1 come-from-behind victory over Guardiola's side in the Premier League.

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
MANCHESTER, JAN 14

Marcus Rashford scored the winner as Manchester United came from behind to beat Manchester City 2-1 in a thrilling finale at Old Trafford in the Premier League on Saturday. Both United goals came in the final 12 minutes as Erik ten Hag's side moved to within one point of their local rivals in the table after inflicting a damaging blow to City's hopes of retaining the title. Pep Guardiola's men looked to be heading to victory when Jack Grealish came off the bench to head the visitors into the lead. But Bruno Fernandes' controversial equaliser turned the game and four minutes later Rashford netted for the ninth consecutive match at Old Trafford. The victory for United was sweet revenge after being destroyed 6-3 when the sides met in October. The scoreline even flattered United at the Etihad thanks to two late goals from Anthony Martial. However, Ten Hag's men have now lost just once in 19 games since in a stunning turnaround in the Dutch coach's first season in charge. The introduction of Casemiro has transformed United's midfield since the last Manchester derby and Ten Hag's decision to play Fred alongside his Brazilian international teammate cut City's supply line to Erling Haaland. United's turnaround is reflected in Rashford's revival. The England international has now scored 16 times this season.

Rashford threatens

Rashford's pace in behind was the biggest threat posed by either side in the first half and he should have done better after rounding Ederson than allowing Kyle Walker to comfortably clear off the line. Another Rashford burst then took him beyond Rodri, but again the finish was lacking as Ederson hurried off his line to smother. United's new loan signing Wout Weghorst was watching on from the stands and Martial's lacklustre performance before being replaced at half-time by Antony underlined Ten Hag's need for more forward options. By contrast, City are blessed with an abundance of talent in the final third and Guardiola's ability to make game-changing substitutions looked to have swung the game in their favour. Grealish had only been on the field three minutes before netting the big-



Manchester United's Marcus Rashford (right) reacts after scoring his side's second goal during the English Premier League match against Manchester City at Old Trafford on Saturday.

gest goal of his City career to date as he nodded in Kevin De Bruyne's cross on the hour mark. But City have struggled this season to match the consistency that has won them four Premier League titles in the past five years and were undone by a hugely controversial equaliser. Rashford was clearly offside as he raced towards Casemiro's pass, but crucially did not touch the ball and left it for Fernandes to sweep home. The assistant referee initially flagged for offside and City were livid at the decision to allow the goal to stand. City were still rocking when they conceded again as Alejandro

Garnacho sprinted down the left and crossed for Rashford to prod home from close range. There was still time for City to feel further aggrieved at referee Stuart Attwell as Haaland saw a penalty appeal waved away. But the champions now have a huge job on their hands if they are to maintain their dominance of English football in the Guardiola era.

| RESULT            |            |                 |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| <b>Man United</b> | <b>2-1</b> | <b>Man City</b> |
| Fernandes 78'     |            | Grealish 60'    |
| Rashford 82'      |            |                 |

APF, Lumbini off to winning starts

Sita Rana Magar's side thrash Gandaki by seven wickets. Saraswati Ganga Magar's team defeat Karnali by 98 runs.

**SPORTS BUREAU**  
KATHMANDU, JAN 14

Nepal Armed Police Force (APF) Club and Lumbini Province made winning starts to their Prime Minister Cup National Women's Twenty20 cricket tournament campaign in Itahari, Sunsari, on Saturday. APF registered a thumping seven-wicket victory over Gandaki Province and Lumbini saw off Karnali Province by 98 runs at the Janata Cricket Park in Itahari. In the earlier fixture, Gandaki were sent in to bat and were restricted to 51/7, before AFC raced to victory in 8.4 overs, ending the game at 52/3. Gandaki captain Shristhi Jaisi was the only player to touch double digit figures, scoring a 24-ball 14 that also included a hit to the fence. APF bowler Suman Bist was the pick of the bowlers, picking up three wickets. The player-of-the-match conceded only six runs in her four-over spell. Nary Thapa, Sushma Shrestha, Sita Rana Magar and Rajmati Airee shared a wicket each. In the APF run chase, captain Sita Rana Magar and Roma Thapa remained unbeaten on 19 runs and 14 runs respectively, and shared an unbeaten partnership of 33 runs. Rana Magar hit two boundaries in her 22-ball knock and Thapa smashed two boundaries in her run-a-ball innings. Gandaki captain Jaishi claimed all three wickets of APF. She gave away 19 runs in her four-overs of bowling. In the late fixture, opting to bat first, Lumbini Province scored 147/5 and bowled out Karnali for a meagre total of 49 runs in 18.1 overs. Opener Laxmi Chaudhary contributed 33 off 33, the highest of the innings, studded with five hits to the fence. Saraswati Pun played an unbeaten knock of 25 off 30 balls. She hit three fours. Opener Ashma Pulami Magar (29-ball14) and Ranju Shrestha (14-ball 10) were other notable scorers. Yamunua Tharu and Bina Thapa of Karnali grabbed two wickets each. Tharu conceded 22 runs in her four overs of bowling, while Thapa gave away 20 runs in her four overs. In the run chase, opener Kiran Kunwar and middle-order bat Yamuna Tharu were the only Karnali batters to reach double-digit scores. Kunwar scored 10 off 12 and Tharu scored 13 off 44 balls. Lumbini bowler Kritika Marasini dismissed top three batters, including openers Kunwar and Trishna Biswakarma and one down Rama Budathoki. The latter two failed to open their accounts. Marasini, who



Kritika Marasini returned the bowling figures of 3-11 for Lumbini on Saturday.

| SCORECARD                                       |  |
|---|--|
| <b>PM CUP WOMEN'S T20 CRICKET</b>               |  |
| JANATA CRICKET PARK, ITAHARI                    |  |
| 3RD MATCH, GROUP A                              |  |
| <b>TOSS:</b> APF, elected to field first.       |  |
| <b>Gandaki:</b> 51-7                            |  |
| S Jaisi 14 (24)                                 |  |
| S Bist 6-3                                      |  |
| <b>APF:</b> 52-3 (8.4/20 overs, Target: 52)     |  |
| SR Magar 19* (22), R Thapa 14* (14)             |  |
| S Jaisi 3-19                                    |  |
| <i>APF win by seven wickets.</i>                |  |
| <b>Player of the match:</b> Suman Bist          |  |
| 4TH MATCH, GROUP B                              |  |
| <b>TOSS:</b> Lumbini, elected to bat first.     |  |
| <b>Lumbini:</b> 147-5                           |  |
| L Chaudhary 33 (32), S Pun 30* (25)             |  |
| B Thapa 2-20, Y Tharu 2-22                      |  |
| <b>Karnali:</b> 49 (18.1/20 overs, Target: 148) |  |
| Y Tharu 13 (44)                                 |  |
| M DC 3-5, K Marasini 3-11                       |  |
| <i>Lumbini win by 98 runs.</i>                  |  |
| <b>Player of the match:</b> Kritika Marasini    |  |
| TODAY'S MATCHES                                 |  |
| APF Club <b>vs</b> Bagmati                      |  |
| Madhesh <b>vs</b> Karnali                       |  |

returned with figures of 4-0-11-3 was named the player of the match. Madhu DC also claimed three scalps conceding five runs in her four overs, while Sushmita Bhusal took two wickets.

HOROSCOPE

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19) \*\*\*\*

The morning will find you in an intuitive and investigative headspace. Though your hunches will likely lead to some truly enlightening moments, you should avoid going overboard. Don't hesitate to seek clarity when you need it.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) \*\*\*

Embrace the day's harmonious vibes by approaching the day with leisure, allowing yourself to lean into the lighter side of life. Unfortunately, a cerebral energy could throw you off your game as the afternoon rolls around.

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

You'll be in the mood to push away people and behaviours that are no longer serving you. The day is all about getting organised both internally and externally, leaving you with little patience for anyone that's been holding you back.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22) \*\*\*

The universe will conspire to put you in good spirits today. The day is all about having fun and enjoying yourself, giving you an opportunity to let loose before the work week rolls in. A flirty energy will permeate the air this evening.

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

A cleansing energy will find you today. Use this energy as an excuse to lay low at home, nurturing yourself and the people you care for most. A spiritual element will come into play, making it a perfect occasion to perform a house blessing.

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

You'll have an opportunity to speak profoundly and transparently today. The day can also help you feel more comfortable with vulnerability and emotional exchange, providing you with a chance to deepen your most treasured bonds.

**LIBRA** (September 23-October 22) \*\*\*\*

You'll be in a unique position to see the world with new eyes, making it important that you choose optimism. Feel free to treat yourself under this luminary placement. The vibe will be cosy yet conversational in your home.

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

The day will motivate you to pursue your goals with gusto. However, you could become disorganised if you try to do too much at once. Don't be afraid to ask for help, though you should avoid demanding perfection.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22-December 21) \*\*\*

The vibe will be comfortably moody today. Lean into this luminary placement by embracing your mysterious side, working behind the scenes, and plotting your next bold move.

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

Your popularity will benefit from a cosmic boost today. These vibes are perfect for tapping into your personal power and paving a path for yourself, so don't be afraid to put yourself out there. Your voice will become amplified this evening.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20-February 18) \*\*\*

Focus on prioritising success, especially when it comes to your professional ambitions. This energy can also be harnessed to set boundaries with yourself and others, but make sure you do so with compassion and grace.

**PISCES** (February 19-March 20) \*\*\*

The world will sparkle if you choose to view it with optimism today. The day is perfect for embracing your mystical side, as the universe will be eager to guide and support you. A craving for knowledge will also come into play.

CROSSWORD

**ACROSS**

1 Italian wine city

5 Earth tone

10 Clothing

14 Carpenter's wedge

15 Unsophisticated

16 Assert positively

17 Hold on to

18 Summoned to court

19 "— Lisa"

20 Chinese parade features

22 Cried like a kitten

23 Trevi Fountain coins, once

24 College official

26 Reeked

28 Modifies

32 Paris street

33 "— Ha!"

34 Wizenod

35 "Mister Ed" actor

37 Wished fervently

38 Cad's rebuke

39 Hiking trail

40 Raw minerals

41 Hobby ender

42 Sailing vessel

44 Less than one

47 Luau strings

48 — Raton, Fla.

49 Steeple features

**DOWN**

1 Set a price

2 Lose, as skin

3 Stadium level

4 Reddish antelope

5 Remove the stopper

6 Mount Katahdin state

7 Drill attachments

8 Night before

9 Lipstick color

10 Pluck

11 Declare frankly

12 Laliqie or Descartes

13 Pitt of filmdom

21 Hoisting apparatus

22 NBA player

24 Parcels out

25 Phillips

**PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | A | G | S | I | G | L | O | O | T | O | A | D |
| O | V | E | N | N | E | E | D | S | I | D | L | E |
| S | I | N | E | H | E | I | D | I | B | I | E | N |
| E | S | T | A | T | E | F | E | R | V | E | N | C |
| B | L | A | S | T | E | R | I | O | T |   |   |   |
| B | L | A | S | T | E | R | I | O | T | S | L | A |
| A | I | M | U | N | I | F | I | C | A | T | I | O |
| L | I | L | E | T | A | L | E | S | O | D | E |   |
| L | A | B | E | L | T | O | S | E | R | S | O | L |
| S | C | A | L | E | S | E | T | A | G | E | R | E |
| J | U | M | P | S | E | A | T | L | L | A | M | A |
| E | R | A | S | T | R | E | V | I | N | A | P | A |
| E | D | I | E | H | E | R | O | N | T | U | E | S |
| P | U | N | S | E | K | I | N | G |   |   |   |   |

1-14-23 © 2023 UFS, Dist. by Andrews McMeel for UFS

|                  |                         |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| University town  | 48 Overindulge          |
| 26 Yma —         | 49 Salad dressing       |
| 27 Hen's lack    | cheese                  |
| 28 France        | 50 What the walls have? |
| 29 Old keepsake  | 51 Stripe               |
| 30 Garbage       | 52 Boundless            |
| 31 Equinox mo.   | 53 Ship of myth         |
| 32 Knocks firmly | 54 Get dewy-eyed        |
| 33 Drills holes  | 56 Toy gun ammo         |
| 36 Road edge     | 57 Groove               |
| 37 Sharpen       | 59 Ben & Jerry rival    |
| 43 Go-aheads     |                         |
| 44 Spaced out    |                         |
| 45 "Gross!"      |                         |
| 46 Endured       |                         |

SUDOKU

**YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION**

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

**DIFFICULTY RATING:** ★☆☆☆☆





A Tharu woman serving Maghi special food in their traditional green and white clothing.

POST PHOTO: ANISH REGMI

# Maghi the Tharu way

While most Tharus celebrate nowadays by rallying in cultural costumes, it is different from the traditional celebration of the festival.

AAKASH CHAUDHARY  
KATHMANDU

The preparation for Maghi festival in Tharu communities begins a day before the 1st of Magh when communities or families perform a ritual called ‘Chita marne’, which involves animal sacrifice. The festive spirit can be felt the following morning when families go for a holy bath in the river. The cold winter morning of Maghi is often filled with the warmth of festivities, worship, blessings, food, and dance.

While Maghi is celebrated in several communities with different names—like Gheu Chaku Sallhu in the Newari community and Makar Sakranti in the Brahmin and Chhetri communities—and rituals, the way Tharu communities across Nepal celebrate it is particularly fascinating.

Over 50 subcastes of Tharus live in Nepal, and each geography has a different name for the festival. In the central region, it is called Tila Sakranti, Maghi, or Khichara; in the east, it is called Khichadi; and in the Far West, it is called Magh or Maghi. “The names are different, but the theme and importance remain the same,” claims Krishna Raj Sarbahari, a researcher and expert on Tharu culture who has written numerous books (on the culture) including ‘Khutrukya’ and ‘Bhukhali’.

Tharus can be seen rallying in the streets, flaunting their traditional white and green dresses on Maghi. “The colour of our costumes have their own significance,” says 61-year-old Sumala Mahato from Magani village in Chitwan. He explains that Tharus are known to be nature lovers and worship it as a deity of its own. So, green in their costume represents nature, while white represents the peaceful nature of Tharus.

“The ornaments we wear on Maghi are made from silver which represents the moon in our,” says 61-year-old Sumala Mahato from Magani village in Chitwan.

While rallying in traditional costumes is how most Tharus celebrate Maghi nowadays, it is different from the traditional Tharu celebration of the festival, according to the cultural experts and

social scientists, The Post spoke to.

“In the past, we Tharus celebrated this day as our new year,” says Sarbahari.

Anchala Chaudhary, professor at the Department of Sociology, Prithvi Narayan Campus, explains the traditional Tharu way of celebrating Maghi, stating, “Earlier younger family members touched the feet of their elders to start the year with blessings. Everyone would go home for the celebration and spend the whole day with their loved ones discussing their plans for the new year.”

Bala Ram Acharya, who holds a Master’s degree in sociology and has researched the Tharu community, mentions Tharus go to their nearest rivers for a bath the first thing in the morning on Maghi and worship unmarried girls and their parents in his book ‘Introduction to Sociology and Anthropology in Nepal’.

‘In the past, we Tharus celebrated this day as our new year,’ says Krishna Raj Sarbahari, a researcher and expert on Tharu culture.

According to Chaudhary, different Tharu communities across Nepal have their own kinds of food they make for Maghi—Bageya is made in the central region and Dhikri in the Far West. Other popular food items include Til ko Laddu (sesame balls), Bhuja ko Laddu (Puffed Rice) and Ghonghi (a snail dish).

“Some Tharu families also offer sacrifice animals—of pigs, boars, pigeons, ducks or goats—to their Ista Devata (preferred god) on the day of Maghi,” says Chaudhary adding that families make food the night before Maghi and eat it the next day. This is how the Tharu saying ‘Poush ma pakya, Magh ma khyaka’ (cooked in Poush, eaten in Magh) came about.

Rajmati Devi Shah, a 49-year-old resident of Madhuban village, Karaiyamai Rural Municipality-1, considers Kichadi the most important Maghi dish. “We prepare it using twelve ingredients—different types of lentils, ghee, cinnamon, turmeric, salt, black pepper, red chilly, garlic and asafoetida,” she explains, adding that all spices used to make Kichadi have medicinal properties. So, the dish is beneficial for boosting the body’s immunity too.

“In Chitwan, our foods are a little different, but the customs and practices are the same,” says Mahato adding that his community also worships unmarried girls and children of the family’s daughters.

While some individuals from the Tharu community feel that they portray their culture, identity and a strong social statement by wearing their cultural attire and making special food for the festival, some think that Maghi has become limited to clothes and food. Others also feel that a large number of young Tharus have no idea of the reason behind its celebration.

When asked why he celebrates Maghi, 25-year-old Sudhesh Chaudhary from Baluwa, Kolhabi Municipality-5, who is currently living in the US, says that it is to have fun. His idea of Maghi celebration includes having delicious food, dancing around, roaming the town with his friends and ending the day drinking alcohol.

Similarly, Anju Chaudhary 25-year-old from Madhuban village, Karaiyamai Rural Municipality-1, admits that she does not know much about the reason behind Maghi celebration, and it is just another day for her. “Maghi just means making delicious food for me. While I do enjoy the food, it just adds to the many household chores I do. So, it isn’t a celebratory event for me,” she states.

Professor Chaudhary blames the youth’s lack of knowledge of festivals like Maghi on modernisation adding that it is slowly erasing ancient practices of the Tharu community. She says, “I want people to realise that if we don’t continue these customs, the younger generation will not know about it, and one day, it will vanish.”



A brother-sister duo performing a Maghi ritual.

POST PHOTO: MANOJ PAUDEL

## FICTION PARK

# The first date

All my nervousness over the date dissipated the moment we held each other’s hands.

SUGAM GAUTAM

I ruffled my hair the moment I saw you. It’s one of those things I do when I’m nervous. You were sitting on the bench, your hands placed on your lap. I’d only seen you in photos before. You looked nothing different than in your photos. As I approached you, I saw a smile etched on your face. I smiled back in response. Your blond hair was gleaming in the wintry sun. Before I could sit on the bench, you jumped to your feet and pulled me for a tight hug. Till that moment, we hadn’t even said a word to each other.

Before coming on the date, I had rehearsed the first sentence I would say to you, but after you hugged me, I forgot my line. It was as if a single hug had wiped away everything from my mind. If I remember well, it was the first hug I received as a young adult.

I caught a whiff of your cologne when we were embraced in a hug. I had never used perfumes, and at that moment, I wondered what I smelled like. I prayed I hadn’t smelt foul, but would it even matter to you? To the best of my knowledge, you never judged people, especially their outfits and appearances. If you were the kind of lady who fancied stylish boys, I would have never made a place in your heart. As I pulled back from the hug, I suggested we sit on the bench, and you agreed. We were sitting side by side, and it was only then I noticed your outfits. You were dressed in a silver t-shirt and blue trousers. It looked well on your slender body. I couldn’t tell if you noticed my worn-out shoes.

to read while I search my books?” you said. I couldn’t say no, so I left you behind and walked ahead to explore books. I stopped by the shelf labelled ‘Nepali Literature’ and began going through book covers. A few moments later, I found myself skimming through books, and I enjoyed the process. Even as I flipped the pages, I kept checking on you, but at one point, my eyes couldn’t find you. I left the book I was going through on the shelf and walked to the counter. You were chatting with someone behind the counter desk, perhaps haggling over the price. As I got near the counter desk, I realised it was not about the price but about the release date of a book written by some popular author. When you saw me walking towards you, you smiled and asked if I’d picked any book. I shook my head.

A pile of books mounted on the desk was all yours, and I gasped as I learned it. The owner bundled the books in a large bag, and you told him you would return in a while. You led me out of the bookshop and asked if I was hungry. I said yes, and you guided me to a cosy restaurant across

It was the first date of my life, so I was clueless about everything. I had no idea what people talked about on dates.



UNSPASH

It was the first date of my life, so I was clueless about everything. I had no idea what people talked about on dates, particularly the first ones. You waited for me to initiate the conversation, but I kept quiet. We had spent an entire month chatting on Instagram before finally agreeing to the date. As we sat silently in the middle of the park, I realised it was easy to lie in bed and text each other. Minutes ticked by, but the words didn’t come out of me. I guess you felt awkward, so you began talking. Fifteen minutes later, we were holding each other’s hands, making fun of ourselves for how nervous we had been earlier. If I’m being honest, I must tell you that you were far more confident than I was.

I asked you if we could go for a walk rather than sit on a bench. You said you wanted to go to a nearby bookstore, so we set off towards our destination. As we walked along the streets of Lakeside, our hands were intertwined the whole time. Fellow pedestrians walked as if they had all the time in the world. The happy faces of tourists assured me that life was peaceful in this part of the world. This calming ambience of Lakeside was a contrast to other parts of the city, which were always noisy and polluted.

We stopped by the bookstore, and I said I would wait at the entrance. You creased your forehead in disagreement; it was enough for me to come along with you. Confused, I walked by your side as you kept browsing the shelves. I asked what book you were looking for, and you mumbled something I couldn’t comprehend. To avoid embarrassment, I didn’t ask again. The bookstore was so large I’d never known such a place even existed in Pokhara. You must have noticed uneasiness in my body language because you asked, “Are you bored?” I said no. Honestly, I felt out of place amidst the plethora of books, for I’d never read a literary work before. If I had uttered this truth to you, would you have kicked me out of the bookstore? I know you wouldn’t do such a thing. You were wise enough to understand that not everyone has the same choice.

“Hey, why don’t you find yourself a book

the street. You handed me the menu card and allowed me to order food for both of us. The cost was shockingly expensive. I said I was not good with ordering food and pushed the menu card to your side. It didn’t take much time for you to place an order. It seemed that you were familiar with the restaurant’s offerings. You ordered some Italian dishes that I’d never tasted in my life. I was unknown whether I should swallow or chew the food. You didn’t notice my awkwardness as I gobbled the food without knowing its name. It had to be the longest hour of my life. You paid for the lunch without turning around to see if I would pay. Once we were done with the lunch, we sauntered back to the bookstore. At the bookstore, you paid something close to Rs 10,000. After the payment, you tried to lift the bag full of books, but you failed to do so. The owner laughed at your fragility. “Maybe sir can lift the bag,” he suggested. I lifted the bag off the floor, and we exited the bookshop. You apologised for making me carry your books, and I said I could shoulder every burden for you. Once we reached the entrance gate of Basundhara Park, you asked me to set the bag on the ground. I did as I was told. You said your car was parked right around the corner, and I waited until you drove back to where I was standing.

Back in my room, after I opened the door, I found flies hovering around the unwashed dishes from the morning. The bed was not made; its crumpled sheet wafting the rancid smell. I was too tired to restore things back to order, but I had to. Before I could make my bed, I heard a knock on the door. I paced towards the door and opened it. It was my landlord. I hadn’t paid the rent for the last two months, and now he was saying he would evict me if I didn’t clear the rent in the next two weeks. I convinced him I would pay the rent by the end of the week, but I had no idea how I would do that. Exhausted, I threw myself on the crumpled bed and replayed the moments from my first date with my rich girlfriend.

Gautam is an IT student at GMMC, Pokhara.