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WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

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Dipayal Jumla

Prince Harry jets in as King Charles's cancer 'caught early'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON, FEB 6

King Charles III's estranged son Prince Harry reportedly arrived in London on Tuesday after his father's diagnosis of cancer, which doctors "caught early".

Harry, who now lives in California with his actress wife Meghan and their children, has been at war with his family since quitting royal life and launching a barrage of score-settling criticism in his best-selling autobiography "Spare". The Telegraph and The Sun reported that Harry arrived at Heathrow airport following an overnight flight from Los Angeles.

His car was reportedly seen being driven from the airport accompanied by two police cars, less than 24 hours since Buckingham Palace made Charles's cancer diagnosis public.

The palace has not specified the cancer type afflicting monarch.

Royal watchers say that while Charles's ill health may be a catalyst for a rapprochement between father and son, healing the rift with his brother Prince William, heir to the throne, would be more difficult.

Buckingham Palace has not specified the type of cancer afflicting the 75-year-old monarch who will now step back from public-facing royal duties to complete his treatment. British PM Rishi Sunak said the cancer had been "caught early". Charles is just 17 months into his reign having waited decades to begin the job he was born to do following the death of his 96-year-old mother, Queen Elizabeth II, on September 8, 2022.

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Relatives of Nepalis who have joined Russian fighting forces demonstrate outside the Russian Embassy in Kathmandu on Tuesday demanding an end to the unauthorised recruitment, compensation for the war's victims, repatriation of the deceased and safe return of the recruits.

POST PHOTO: PRANSHU CHANDRA TIMILSENA

Light Feb calendar belies government pledge of more effective Parliament

Two ruling parties' events clash with the House of Representatives' schedule.

BINOD GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, FEB 6

For those believing in the government's repeated claims that the new session of the federal parliament would be productive, the calendar for the winter session could disappoint.

The House of Representatives calendar for February shows it will sit only seven times in the month, including the inaugural meeting on Monday. Six other meetings—on

February 7, 18, 22, 23, 25 and 26—will be held over the next three weeks.

Except for the anti-money laundering bill, no other bills will be endorsed by the lower house this month. The winter session, also called the bill session, will last a maximum of three months.

If the meetings are held at the present pace, only 20-21 meetings will be held in the entire session which wouldn't be enough to endorse around three dozen bills the government is

planning to push through.

Officials at the Parliament Secretariat say lack of adequate business, the political campaign of the Nepali Congress and the statute convention of the CPN (Maoist Centre) are the reasons only seven meetings are scheduled this month.

The country's largest party is busy with the "Samudaya ma Congress" (Congress in Communities) campaign from January 30 to February 9.

>> Continued on page 2

Maoists first became top upper house force. Now they claim chair

Prime Minister Dahal denies having given word to Congress on making Krishna Prasad Sitaula Assembly chairman.

ANIL GIRI
KATHMANDU, FEB 6

On Tuesday, the CPN (Maoist Centre) declared its intent to claim the National Assembly chair, giving a new twist to the dynamics within the ruling alliance. The development comes as the Nepali Congress, the largest party in the coalition, has already expressed its interest in the post.

The ruling coalition is certain to elect the chair of the National Assembly given its clear majority in the chamber.

However, the claim from the Maoist Centre, the prime minister's party, has put the ruling coalition on the path of a confrontation.

Nepali Congress has publicly announced that its former secretary general Krishna Prasad Sitaula will be the candidate for the assembly chair. Sitaula was elected to the assembly from the Koshi Province in the January 25 election.

Earlier, some Congress leaders including General Secretary Bishwa Prakash Sharma and senior leader Dr Shekhar Koirala had claimed that there was an agreement between Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba to field Sitaula as the ruling alliance's common candidate for assembly chair.

They had said Sitaula's role as upper house chair would

be instrumental in completing the remaining tasks of the peace process.

But on Tuesday, a meeting of the Maoist parliamentary party decided that the party will claim the post.

"We, being the largest party in the National Assembly, will stake our claim to the post," said Dahal.

Sitaula was projected as the National Assembly head right at the time of candidacy filing.

Although the Maoist Centre stands distant third in the lower house, after the recent election, it has emerged as the largest party in the National Assembly. The election to pick the chair is scheduled for March 12.

>> Continued on page 2



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चीनीयाँ नयाँ वर्ष साँस्कृतिक महोत्सव, काठमाडौं 中国新年系列庆祝活动

中国年升级为世界年，联合国将中国的春节列入联合国假日。春节是中华文化中最古老、最重要的传统节日，是万家团圆、辞旧迎新的喜庆日子。春节是中国的，也是世界的。

The Chinese Year is upgraded to the World Year, China's Spring Festival has been officially listed as a UN floating holiday. The Spring Festival is the oldest and most important traditional festival in Chinese culture. It is an auspicious day of family reunions, farewell to the old year and welcome to the new year. Spring festival not only belongs to China, but also to the whole world.

今年春节将来到尼泊尔，中国驻尼泊尔使馆同尼泊尔旅游委员会等部门将举办中国新年系列活动，让大家感受浓浓的年味！欢迎中国和尼泊尔朋友们在加德满都过大年！

This year the spring festival has arrived in the doors of Nepal as well. The Chinese Embassy in Nepal Nepal Tourism Board and other departments have organized various programs in the glorification of Chinese New Year and make everyone feel the golden warmth of the New Year. Friends from China and Nepal are warmly welcomed to Kathmandu to celebrate the Spring Festival.

2月8日-21日 中国新年灯展- Ratna Park Chinese New Year Lantern Show From February 8 to 21 - Ratna Park

2月9日 15:00 舞麒麟舞龙舞狮巡游(深圳盐田,云南大学,尼泊尔武术联合会)- Thamel Dragon/Lion/Kirin Dance Parade on February 9 at 3pm - Thamel

2月10日 10:00 舞麒麟舞龙舞狮巡游(深圳盐田,云南大学,尼泊尔武术联合会)- Durbar Marg Dragon/Lion/Kirin Dance Parade on February 10 at 10am - Durbar Marg

2月10日 14:00 "贺岁杯"中尼友谊足球赛(青海玉树、尼泊尔足球协会) - Dasharath Stadium
"Chinese New Year Cup" Nepal-China Friendship Football Match on February 10 at 2pm - Dasharath Stadium

2月12日-14日 春节庙会 - Tundikhel Ground Chinese New Year Fair from February 12 to 14 - Tundikhel Ground

2月14日 10:00 舞麒麟舞龙舞狮巡游(深圳盐田,云南大学,尼泊尔武术联合会)- Gahana Pokhari, Handigaun Dragon/Lion/Kirin Dance Parade on February 14 at 10am - Gahana Pokhari, Handigaun

2月14日 13:30 舞麒麟舞龙舞狮巡游(深圳盐田,云南大学,尼泊尔武术联合会)- Bhaktapur Durbar Square Dragon/Lion/Kirin Dance Parade on February 14 at 1:30pm - Bhaktapur Durbar Square

2月14日 16:30 舞麒麟舞龙舞狮巡游(深圳盐田,云南大学,尼泊尔武术联合会)- Patan Durbar Square Dragon/Lion/Kirin Dance Parade on February 14 at 4:30pm - Patan Durbar Square

主办单位: Organizer:
中国驻尼泊尔大使馆
Chinese Embassy in Nepal
加德满都市政府
Kathmandu Municipality

尼泊尔旅游委员会
Nepal Tourism Board
尼泊尔体育委员会
National Sports Council

承办单位: Co-Organizer:
尼泊尔华侨华人协会
Nepal Overseas Chinese Association
尼泊尔中资企业协会
Nepal Chinese Enterprises Association

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वक्ता

प्रस्तोता

<p>9 पहिलो सत्र आन्तरिक रोजगारी दशक, सफल पार्न सकस</p>	<p>डीपी अर्याल पूर्वमन्त्री, श्रम, रोजगार तथा सामाजिक सुरक्षा मन्त्रालय</p>	<p>सुर्यराज बस्नेत रोजगार विज्ञ, प्रधानमन्त्री रोजगार कार्यक्रम</p>	<p>कान्तिका सेजुवाल सांसद तथा केन्द्रीय सदस्य, नेपाली कांग्रेस</p>	<p>चन्द्र ढकाल अध्यक्ष, नेपाल उद्योग वाणिज्य महासंघ</p>	<p>रामेश्वर नेपाल श्रम तथा आप्रवासन मामिलाका अनुसन्धानदाता</p>
<p>2 दोस्रो सत्र विप्रेषण : सचिचति बढाउन, उत्पादनमा लगाउन</p>	<p>महाप्रसाद अधिकारी गभर्नर, नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंक</p>	<p>उदयशमशेर राणा सांसद, नेपाली कांग्रेस</p>	<p>कौशल्या कुशवाहा पूर्वअध्यक्ष, आप्रवासी श्रमिक सञ्जाल</p>	<p>उपेन्द्र पौड्याल अध्यक्ष, बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्था परिषद</p>	<p>राज बजाडे कान्तिपुर दैनिक</p>
<p>3 तेस्रो सत्र फ्रि टिकट, फ्रि भिसा : अवसर कि अवरोध ?</p>	<p>केवल भण्डारी सचिव, श्रम, रोजगार तथा सामाजिक सुरक्षा मन्त्रालय</p>	<p>डा. नारदनाथ मारदजा पूर्वराजदूत, कतार</p>	<p>सीता लावती श्रमिक</p>	<p>राजेन्द्र भण्डारी अध्यक्ष, नेपाल वैदेशिक रोजगार व्यवसायी संघ</p>	<p>होम कार्की कान्तिपुर दैनिक</p>
<p>8 चौथो सत्र श्रममन्त्रीको श्रम कति ?</p>				<p>शरतसिंह भण्डारी मन्त्री, श्रम, रोजगार तथा सामाजिक सुरक्षा मन्त्रालय</p>	<p>विजय पौडेल कान्तिपुर टेलिभिजन</p>

● प्रत्यक्ष प्रसारण
बिहान १०:४५ बजे



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OPINION



OUR VIEW

The electric future

There is a need for more clarity on policy and intent on switching to electric vehicles.

Electric vehicles (EVs) have taken the world by storm, and Nepal is no exception to this trend. According to the Department of Customs, in the first half of 2023-24, the country's shift to EVs reached a record high, accounting for a third of auto import value. Thanks to their cost effectiveness and environment friendliness, even those who rely on petrol or diesel vehicles are now turning to EVs. Financial institutions are also supporting the EV trend, providing loans of up to 90 percent of the total cost of the vehicle.

Nepal, in its zero-emission strategy of the second Nationally Determined Goals, aims to ramp up EV sales to 90 percent of all four- and two-wheeler private vehicles and 60 percent of all four-wheeler public vehicle sales by 2030, which is a positive step. However, the country still intends to build two new petroleum pipelines beginning this fiscal year. This goes against Nepal's commitment to achieving net zero emissions and belies the country's plan for an environmentally friendly transport system.

According to Statista's 2022 report on transport emissions worldwide, the sector's share of yearly carbon dioxide emissions is more than 7 billion metric tonnes. EVs indeed help cut emissions as they produce fewer greenhouse gases than fossil fuel vehicles, promising a green future. Given this and rising climate change tensions, EVs have become more crucial than ever. But are our policymakers, investors and stakeholders also aware of the downsides of EVs?

Research and studies show that EV batteries contain raw materials like lithium, cobalt and nickel, which have short life spans. Research by Greenpeace East Asia, an organisation working on the green movement, suggests that globally, over 12 metric tonnes of lithium-ion batteries are expected to stop working between 2021 and 2030. Additionally, when these batteries expire, they remain in the environment as electric waste. There are also environmental concerns over recharging EVs using non-renewable energy sources like coal power stations rather than with renewable sources.

While experts and researchers in developed countries are prioritising repurposing and recycling EV batteries, that is still a distant concern for Nepal. We are still struggling to build sufficient charging stations for EVs and are only taking baby steps by formulating policies on net zero emissions. On the one hand, the government encourages people to use EVs by levying high taxes on fossil fuel vehicles; on the other, it keeps investing in fuel pipelines to make petroleum products cheaper and more accessible. Given this muddled thinking, there is thus a risk that Nepal could re-embrace fossil fuel vehicles. In this case, policymakers must first be clear about what is in the best interest of the public and the environment. This calls for a profound revision of their plans without compromising the importance of EVs.

Developed countries are trying to recycle and repurpose batteries to tackle the challenges posed by batteries. For instance, China has been using retired lithium-ion batteries for 5G infrastructure, data centres and energy storage. The Greenpeace research estimates that by 2025, repurposed batteries could power all of China's 5G telecom stations. Nepal could try to emulate this. More immediately, there is a need for clarity on policy and intent on the embrace of the EVs. For instance, fretting over losing tax revenues from petrol vehicles, as some of our policymakers are doing, is worrying about the wrong thing at the wrong time.

THEIR VIEW

Wheat woes

A strategy encompassing climate-resilient agricultural practices and farmer support is imperative.

As the country faces the spectre of above-normal temperatures in its key wheat-producing regions, the nation's agricultural landscape is poised at a critical juncture. The heat forecast for February sparks concerns about the impending impact on crop yields, a worry that echoes the challenging weather conditions experienced in previous years, leading to a sharp decline in state reserves. The vulnerability of India's wheat production to adverse weather conditions is not a novel predicament.

The nation, the world's second-largest wheat producer after China, grapples with a delicate balance between ensuring food security for its 1.4 billion people and the political ramifications of potential imports. The looming question revolves around whether the Centre should yield to the pressing need for wheat imports, a move that might be necessary to avert a severe shortage and skyrocketing prices.

However, the timing couldn't be more sensitive, with a general election on the horizon. The reluctance to import wheat stems from the fear of unsettling farmers, a crucial constituency that plays a pivotal role in shaping electoral outcomes. The repercussions of a third consecutive poor wheat harvest are tangible. The past two years have witnessed hot and unseasonably warm weather, which took a toll on wheat output, leading to inventories dwindling to their lowest levels in seven years. Prices soared far above the government-set minimum support price, exacerbating concerns about affordability and access to this staple for millions. India's northern states, including Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and the central state of Madhya Pradesh, are the epicentre of wheat cultivation. These regions are bracing for above-normal temperatures during a crucial stage of wheat growth, raising fears of potential crop damage. Wheat, being a winter crop, is particularly susceptible to dry conditions, and a rise in temperatures during the grain formation stage could spell trouble for yields. In 2023, India experienced a significant dip in wheat harvest, at least 10 percent lower than the Centre's estimate. A prolonged cold spell initially favoured wheat during its vegetative growth, only to be offset by rising temperatures later in the season. The result was a stark reminder of the fragility of agricultural production in the face of climatic unpredictability.

The narrative underscores the need for a nuanced and comprehensive approach to tackle India's wheat challenges. While the immediate concern is securing a robust wheat supply to meet domestic demand, a broader strategy encompassing climate-resilient agricultural practices, research and development, and farmer support systems is imperative. As the Centre contemplates the delicate decision of whether to import wheat, a forward-looking perspective is essential.

Embracing sustainable agricultural practices, investing in technology to mitigate climate risks, and providing farmers with the necessary tools and knowledge can pave the way for a more resilient agricultural sector. At the same time, a concerted effort must be made to promote the use of other staples. The delicate balance between addressing the immediate crisis and implementing proactive measures will shape the future trajectory of India's agricultural landscape.

— The Statesman (India)/ANN

Nepal's peace dilemma

GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY

Failure to conclude the TJ process undercuts achievements in the structural transformation of Nepal.

KHIM LAL DEVKOTA



On November 21, 2006, the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) was signed between the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), officially bringing an end to the decade-long armed conflict. This document facilitated Nepal's transition from war to peace, ending the Maoist insurgency that had started a decade earlier. As per the Nepal Conflict Report published by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2012, over 13,000 persons were killed in the insurgency, 1,300 went missing, and numerous others were displaced, mutilated, tortured and sexually exploited.

Path to peace

The CPA included various provisions aimed at promoting stability and reconciliation in the post-conflict period. Both sides were required to make public the status of the people in their custody and release them within 15 days. Additionally, they were obligated to disclose, within 60 days, information about the real name, caste and address of individuals who were 'disappeared' or killed during the war and inform their families. The agreement also mandated the formation of a 'National Peace and Rehabilitation Commission' to establish peace in society by normalising adverse situations generated by armed conflict, providing relief and rehabilitation for people victimised and displaced by war, and carrying forward related tasks through the commission. Furthermore, it was agreed to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate the truth about individuals seriously violating human rights and involved in crimes against humanity, creating an environment of reconciliation in society.

Article 33 of the Interim Constitution, 2007 addressed the CPA and contained mandates for relief, recognition, and rehabilitation for families of the deceased and individuals disabled during the armed conflict. It required providing relief to victims' families based on the report of the Investigation Commission, which will investigate cases of enforced disappearance during the conflict. The constitution emphasised the need for special programs to rehabilitate displaced persons, offer compensation for damaged property, and rebuild infrastructure. Additionally,



POST FILE PHOTO

it called for the establishment of a high-level 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission' to investigate individuals involved in serious violations of human rights and crimes against humanity during the conflict to foster an atmosphere of reconciliation in society.

Accordingly, the Government of Nepal submitted the Bill on Disappearances Act, 2066, and the Bill on Forming the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act, 2066, to the legislature-parliament of the then Constituent Assembly. However, after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, those bills automatically became inactive.

Seeking truth

It is crucial to acknowledge the intricacies involved in drafting the constitution by the then Constituent Assembly. The political parties faced challenges in reaching a consensus, particularly on the restructuring of the state. The peace agreement also underscored the importance of addressing state restructuring. During that period, the integration of Maoist fighters into the Nepal Army was also a significant issue. With considerable effort, 1,460 out of the 19,600 Maoist fighters were successfully integrated into the Nepal Army. This accomplishment marked a significant milestone in the peace process deal.

The Enforced Disappearances Inquiry, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act, 2071 ('TRC Act 2014') was promulgated in May 2014. Subsequently, two separate commissions, namely the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons (CIEDP), were established in February 2015. The commissions did some work: A total of 3,288 complaints have been registered, with 2,543 currently awaiting investigation. Moreover, 3,993 family members of 1,321 disappeared persons have received victim identification cards. The CIEDP has recommended that the government provide relief

to the families of 551 missing persons who have not yet received assistance.

As for the TRC, 63,718 complaints have been registered, covering issues such as physical and mental torture, property damage, murder, displacement, injury, kidnapping, rape and sexual violence. Only about 4,000 complaints have undergone preliminary investigation. Due to the Supreme Court's verdicts, disputes among political parties, and repeated time extensions, the commissions have struggled to function effectively and have remained vacant since July 2022.

In numerous cases, the Supreme Court has ruled on issues such as the assertion that pardons cannot be granted in serious crimes without the consent of the victim, highlighting various serious human rights violations. It has also emphasised that the existing law is not victim-friendly. The court has said cases from the conflict era should not be prolonged any further. As the peace process unfolds, the international community is closely monitoring Nepal's transitional justice. Further, many human rights activists have also suggested that the four pillars of transitional justice—truth, justice, reparation, and the guarantee of non-recurrence of conflict, as identified by the United Nations, should be considered a foundation.

Based on the court's verdicts, among others, the government registered a bill to amend the TRC Act 2014 in the Parliament Secretariat in March 2023. The bill is under discussion in the Law, Justice, and Human Rights Committee committee of the House of Representatives. Despite a sub-panel's attempt to streamline amendments and find common ground, it submitted an incomplete report in October 2023 due to a lack of consensus. Lawmakers couldn't agree on categorising killings, leading to ongoing debate. Conflict victims advocate for labelling various types of killings as serious human rights violations, including extrajudi-

cial and unlawful acts. The committee remains undecided on the course of action if victims reject reconciliation.

Justice delayed

Among the four pillars of the peace process, the integration of Maoist combatants into the Nepal Army, state restructuring, and the promulgation of a new constitution have been accomplished. However, transitional justice has remained unresolved for the past 17 years. All parties involved in the conflict must acknowledge the truth regarding the violations committed. Undoubtedly, the victims and their families have the right to voice their concerns and receive appropriate answers to their questions. Seventeen years since the CPA, the task of investigating human rights violations since 1996, revealing the truth, disseminating the reality, delivering justice and assistance to victims, and fostering social reconciliation and enduring peace remains unfulfilled.

The peace process has yet to reach a logical conclusion, presenting a significant challenge. Nevertheless, notable changes have occurred: The previously centralised governance system has been constitutionally decentralised, integrating backward and marginalised communities such as women, Dalits, Madhesi, and Muslims into the mainstream; political stability has been achieved, demonstrated by two consecutive elections and the restructuring of the governance system; the empowerment of people and the assertion of their sovereign rights are evident, accompanied by the effective distribution of fiscal and human resources to their doorsteps.

It is crucial to interpret these positive developments in connection with the CPA. However, political parties must be sincere in bringing the peace process to a logical conclusion. It should not be perceived as a means of seizing power but rather as a pathway toward genuine resolution.

Democracy wearing an army uniform

Concerns about the fairness and transparency of the electoral process are mounting in Pakistan.

AJAY DARSHAN BEHERA



As Pakistan gears up for its general elections on February 8, the fate of the country's democracy hangs in the balance. Concerns about the fairness and transparency of the electoral process are mounting.

The rejection of the nomination papers of most candidates of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party (PTI) and some other parties has sparked debates about the legitimacy of the polls. There are worries about the overall fairness and legality of the electoral process, heightening Pakistan's challenges to political stability.

Achieving political stability is paramount to addressing numerous challenges, including a weak economy, soaring inflation and escalating foreign debt. Pakistan does not have a good track record of free and fair elections. For almost 34 years, the country has been under direct military rule. When not in power, the military has resorted to political engineering to manipulate poll outcomes or dismissed governments that were not to its liking.

The military propelled the PTI to power in 2018, creating a leader in Imran Khan, who lacked prior governance experience. Imran's political rise and downfall have been remarkable. The PTI, barely visible on the political scene in 2008, made substantial gains by securing 17 percent of the popular vote in 2013, increasing it to 32 percent in 2018. However, this may not necessarily be the strength of the PTI's support base, as the elections in 2018 were rigged in its favour. The 2018 elections

were Pakistan's second successful democratic transition—one political party handing over power to another without being dismissed. It possibly portends the future of electoral democracy in Pakistan—a political system in which the military will not derail democracy but will simply "guide" it.

Imran claimed he and the military were on the same page early in his tenure. However, differences with the Army arose over choosing the successor to the then Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed. The Army Chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, also distanced himself from Imran's anti-US stance. The economic mismanagement under Imran's government was also an issue. Pakistan's GDP fell from \$315 billion in 2018 to \$292 billion in 2022. Imran's politics did not gel with the military.

His government was ousted from power in a no-confidence motion in April 2022. His removal, Imran believed, was due to a foreign conspiracy (read, US).



AP/ISS

Urging his supporters to engage in peaceful protests, he garnered significant traction with his anti-establishment and anti-American narrative. The PTI has been a disruptive force in Pakistani politics for some years now. The zenith of the party's disruptive politics unfolded on May 9, 2023, marked by attacks on military installations and public property, shortly after Imran's arrest by the

security forces. Since then, the military has made a systematic effort to break and weaken Imran's party.

Imran is currently incarcerated, and attempts to marginalise the PTI have given rise to splinter parties like Jahangir Tareen's Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party and Pervez Khattak's PTI (Parliamentarians).

The party has been deprived of its "cricket bat" election symbol on the grounds that its intra-party polls were unconstitutional, bringing into question the impartiality of Pakistan's Election Commission. Party members have been intimidated and faced obstacles in filing nomination papers, and the police have targeted their families. The way the military has gone after Imran and dismantled the PTI, it is clear that it will never allow him to return to power.

In 2018, Imran was the flavour of the electoral season. Ironically, in 2024, it is his bete noir, Nawaz Sharif of PML(N). In the 2018 elections, the military did not want Nawaz Sharif back in power

and did its best to weaken the PML(N). Ironically, in 2024, it does not wish Imran Khan to return to power but wants Sharif instead. The Pakistan military does not want a genuinely popular civilian political leader in power backed by an electoral mandate.

While external borrowings offer temporary relief, lasting stability necessitates structural reforms, including fiscal responsibility and a reduced dependence on external aid. Whether a "selected government" will have the freedom and autonomy to tackle these challenges, bring about political stability, and improve democratic governance in Pakistan remains to be seen.

Therefore, the prospect of these elections bringing about political stability and tackling the fragile economic situation remains uncertain. Pakistan faces formidable economic challenges, having narrowly averted default in 2023. Managing debt servicing poses a significant challenge, with projected figures reaching \$25 billion for the financial year 2024-25 and \$23 billion for 2025-26.

While external borrowings offer temporary relief, lasting stability necessitates structural reforms, including fiscal responsibility and a reduced dependence on external aid. Whether a "selected government" will have the freedom and autonomy to tackle these challenges, bring about political stability, and improve democratic governance in Pakistan remains to be seen.

Behera is a professor at MMAJ Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India.

— 360Info

NC leader and ex-minister Budhathoki dies aged 80

Nepali Congress leader Keshav Budhathoki was minister for general administration in 2016.

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, FEB 6

Nepali Congress central committee member and former minister for general administration Keshav Kumar Budhathoki died on Monday. He was 80.

Budhathoki, who had prostate cancer, died at Birat Nursing Home in Biratnagar late on Monday, the Congress said in a statement on Tuesday.

An emergency meeting of the party's central working committee expressed "deep sorrow" over Budhathoki's death, the statement read. The party "will always remember" his good deeds.

The meeting has announced various programmes at the central, provincial and district levels for 13 days to pay tributes to the leader.

Budhathoki's political journey, spanning over four decades, began in 1967 as a student leader in the Panchayat era.

Budhathoki, who also became an assistant minister during the Panchayat, got elected a parliamentarian from Jhapa-7 in 1994 after the reinstatement of multi-party democracy in 1990. The Congress leader served as the minister for general



administration in 2016 under the Pushpa Kamal Dahal government.

He was quite active in social and development activities, mainly in Koshi Province.

Budhathoki is survived by his wife, two sons, two daughters and grandchildren.

Pairavi Book House published his autobiography titled "Aafno Aafno Sagarmatha" edited by litterateur Krishna Dharabashi in 2022.

Sharp rise in sexually transmitted diseases among female sex workers in Pokhara

Study among 364 workers shows over 44 percent of female sex workers are employed in Dohori restaurants, followed by 17.5 percent from cabin restaurants and 15 percent in massage centres.

ARJUN POUDEL
KATHMANDU, FEB 6

There has been a sharp rise in sexually transmitted diseases, especially syphilis, among female sex workers in Pokhara, according to an integrated biological and behavioural surveillance carried out by the Nepal Health Research Council in 2023.

Syphilis, a sexually transmitted infectious disease caused by the bacterium *treponema pallidum*, has increased to 14.8 percent in 2023 from 0.6 percent in 2011, according to the new report unveiled recently.

"Syphilis displayed more significant variability, peaking at 4 percent in 2004, declining to 0.6 percent in 2011, and then sharply increasing to 14.8 percent in 2023," reads the report.

"The prevalence of HIV remained relatively steady, varying between 2 percent and 1.1 percent, a slight uptick observed in 2023."

The study, which was carried out on 364 female sex workers, also shows substance use—alcohol consumption and drug use, with some engaging in risky behaviours related to substance exchange.

"Alcohol and drug use were reported in only 10.4 percent indicating drug

use, and 2.7 percent exchanging sex for drugs," the report stated.

"Around 55 percent never had an HIV test, and 76.4 percent never heard of Hepatitis C infection."

Up to 3.9 percent of workers were not aware of STIs (sexually transmitted infections), their symptoms, and treatment while 15.3 percent were getting treatment for STI. Of them, 55.9 percent chose private clinics for treatment.

Dohori restaurants serve as the primary workplace for 44.3 percent of these sex workers, followed by cabin restaurants at 17.5 percent, and massage centres at 15 percent.

Dohari restaurants are eateries where patrons can enjoy dining while being entertained by live Nepali duet performances. Cabin restaurants are eateries with private booths where patrons can enjoy meals with a degree of privacy.

Most of the respondents explained their financial hardships as a major reason for initiating this line of work.

"My husband treats me badly and does not look after our son, so to take care of my son and his education I got engaged in this profession" the report quoted a 28-year-old female sex worker was quoted as saying.

Some female sex workers, who were interviewed for the study, expressed feeling guilty in the initial stage about having to use sex as a means to earn money. However, they reported feeling accustomed to it after a year.

Some sex workers said that due to their limited education and fewer job prospects, they were okay with their current line of work.

"I am not well educated, and there are not many job options available to me, so I am uncertain about my future. For now, I am fine with the work I am doing," the report quoted a 30-year-old female sex worker as saying.

Around 45 percent female sex workers had one client daily, while 70.3 percent had one to five clients weekly. Condom usage was practised by almost 65 percent of female sex workers with their male clients. Only 10.4 percent reported drug use, including 3 percent who exchanged sex for drugs.

Knowledge gaps were evident, with 54.9 percent never having tested for HIV. Awareness of STIs, particularly Hepatitis C, was lacking.

The report emphasised regular HIV testing as crucial, given that more than half of the participants were found to have never undergone an HIV test. Implementing a communi-

ty-based screening programme for HIV, syphilis, Hepatitis B and C is essential to lessen the disease burden, according to the report.

Data was collected through face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire. Blood samples were collected from the participants for serological analysis for HIV, HBV, HCV, and STI screening.

The median age of female sex workers was 30 years and they came from diverse ethnic groups including Janajatis in higher numbers, and Dalits. Regarding their educational status, 35.7 percent had secondary-level education. The majority, 77.7 percent, were married at least once.

Under the heading childbirth and family planning, 88.3 percent reported childbirth. Miscarriage affected 21.7 percent, with condom usage being the preferred family planning method (53.5 percent).

In terms of sexual behaviour, over a quarter initiated sexual activity before the age of 20, with an average age of first sexual encounter at 16.89 years.

Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance (IBBS) surveys are being conducted at regular intervals in Nepal.

Padma Prasad Pandey appointed Parliament general secretary

The federal parliament and the President's Office had been at odds over the appointment for two months.

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, FEB 6

President Ramchandra Paudel on Tuesday appointed Padma Prasad Pandey as general secretary of the federal parliament, two months after his recommendation for the position.

The Office of President stated that Pandey was appointed as per Article 106 of the constitution on the joint

recommendation of Speaker of the House of Representatives and the National Assembly chair.

Earlier on Tuesday, Pandey resigned as secretary of the House of Representatives. Pandey's resignation was approved before he was appointed general secretary.

The Parliament and President's Office had been at odds over the appointment for two months.

Pandey led the administration of the federal parliament as the acting chief following the resignation of Bharat Raj Gautam. Gautam submitted his resignation from the post to President Paudel on December 10.

The next day, Speaker Dev Raj Ghimire, in consultation with Ganesh Prasad Timilsina, the Assembly chair, recommended Pandey as his replacement.

Paudel accepted Gautam's resignation on December 13, two days after Pandey was recommended for the position. His refusal to appoint the general secretary put the two state bodies in a state of dispute.

In January, Ghimire and Timilsina sent a reminder to the President saying that the delay in appointment had affected the functioning of the legislature.

New 132kV transmission line in eastern Nepal to stabilise power supply

Amarpur-Dhungesanghu transmission project to help divert power from Kabeli corridor to Koshi corridor.

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, FEB 6

Nepal Electricity Authority has started constructing a 132kV double circuit transmission line in eastern Nepal to connect Koshi and Kabeli corridors of transmission line.

The transmission line, whose power carrying capacity will be at 200MW, will connect the Amarpur substation, Panchthar with the Dhungesanghu substation, Taplejung.

The NEA said in a statement that construction of this transmission line would be crucial to diverting power from one corridor to another if any problem arises in the transmission corridor.

"As this transmission line will connect the two transmission corridors, power can be transmitted to Koshi corridor if electricity transmission is obstructed in the Kabeli corridor for various reasons," said Anup Gautam, the project chief.

The 132kV Kabeli corridor starts at the Damak substation, Jhapa and is extended to the Amarpur substation, Panchthar.

The 220kV Koshi corridor connects the Inaruwa substation, Sunsari and Dhungesanghu substation, Taplejung.

According to the NEA, the Kabeli corridor has already come into operation. The Inaruwa-Basantapur (Sankhuwasbha) is now operational while construction of the Basantapur-Dhungesanghu section is in the final stage of completion, the NEA said.

Several hydropower projects have either been built, are under construction or are planned along these two transmission corridors. But hydro-power projects have been victims of flooding and landslides.

For example, flooding in eastern Nepal in July last year damaged the infrastructure of 30 hydropower projects—13 operating and 17 under construction, according to the Independent Power Producers' Association of Nepal (IPPAN), a representative body of the private sector power developers.

According to IPPAN, the hydropower projects based in Hema Khola, Phuwa Khola, Sabha Khola, Ingwa Khola, Kabeli River, Ishuwa Khola and Irkhuwa Khola caused estimated losses of Rs8.5 billion, according to the association.

Gautam said that construction of Amarpur-Dhungesanghu transmission line would ensure the reliability of power supply from the projects developed or to be developed along the watershed of the Kabeli river. This will enhance the credibility of the national transmission grid in eastern Nepal, the NEA said.

Besides the projects to be developed on the Kabeli river and in its watershed, those coming up in the watershed of Tamor River will also benefit from the new transmission line because electricity generated there can be evacuated through the Dhungesanghu substation, according to the NEA.

The contract for the 19 km long Amarpur-Dhungesanghu transmission line was awarded last year. It will have 67 towers and cost an estimated Rs1.2 billion.

There will also be an 11kV infrastructure at the Dhungesanghu substation to deliver power to the local people. For this, a separate contract will be awarded in the current fiscal year. The state-owned power monopoly plans to complete the project by the next fiscal year (2024-25), Gautam said.



A child plays swing at Ratna Park in Kathmandu on Tuesday.

POST PHOTO: DEEPAK KC

Investors care more about reputational risk than climate risk: Survey

The findings show a worrying disconnect between executives' understanding that climate change is a threat and investment decisions that fail to match that concern.

DAVID FOGARTY
SINGAPORE, FEB 6

Executives at many of the world's largest investment firms are more concerned about reputational risk to their company than the climate impacts of the companies they invest in, according to a survey released on February 5.

The findings show a worrying disconnect between executives' understanding that climate change is a threat and investment decisions that fail to match that concern.

"Most CEOs and executives are very concerned about climate change, but they are not doing enough to ensure that the soaring climate risks they face are incorporated into their investment decision-making," said Rose Tehan, report author and analyst at Australian activist group Market Forces.

"Corporate leaders and investors must make better choices for their companies to prosper," she told The Straits Times. Climate risks include direct impacts of worsening weather

extremes on companies' assets and supply chains, such as floods, storms and wildfires. They also include risks from tougher regulations such as taxes on carbon pollution or tighter emissions controls on transport.

in assets under management. Just over half of the respondents were in the United States, 28 per cent in Britain and 19 per cent in the Asia-Pacific region.

The survey showed that executives regard climate change as a threat, with 84 per cent of respondents saying they were moderately to extremely concerned about global warming.

Yet nearly 80 percent of respondents said reputational risk had a high or very high level of influence on decision-making when evaluating investments. A total of 57 percent said climate change risk had a high or very high influence on their decisions.

However, this refers only to climate risks that might affect the investor's own company and not to the activities of firms they might invest in.

The climate change impacts of the investee's activities (such as the planet-warming emissions of a coal miner or oil and gas producer) ranked lower as a concern, with just half of respondents viewing it as highly influential in their investment decisions. "Unlike previous studies,

our survey found that the reputational risk to investors and their companies is more important to them than maximising returns for clients," said Tehan.

That is concerning because big investors have trillions of dollars at their disposal and are a critical force in the global fight against climate change and environmental destruction.

Decisions on whether to invest in companies can help determine how quickly the world switches away from fossil fuel emissions, as well as the adoption of cleaner and greener practices. Similarly, when big investors are shareholders in companies, they can influence these firms to change.

But to be effective, there needs to be consistency in investment decisions and good data to assess climate risk.

Corporate greenwashing—false or exaggerated claims of climate action—and inadequate information from companies on their climate management plans are barriers to investors incorporating climate risk more effectively, the survey found.

The researchers also found that a large proportion of respondents indicated they largely disregard Scope 3 emissions when evaluating investments, and respondents were overall far more concerned about government regulatory risk. Yet, Scope 3 emissions are increasingly in the sights of regulators looking to hasten the decarbonisation of economies.

Scope 3 emissions are those that a company is indirectly responsible for up and down its value chain, and include emissions from customers using their products and services.

For some companies, such emissions—for instance, those from fuels produced by oil and gas companies—can be the largest portion of their emissions. Scope 1 and 2 emissions are already part of wider mandatory corporate reporting on climate impacts and risks and therefore a key focus for investors. Scope 1 covers emissions from sources that an organisation directly owns or controls. Scope 2 emissions are those a company causes indirectly, such as the emissions from the energy it purchases and uses.

A quarter of respondents reported they had never or rarely considered Scope 3 emissions when evaluating an investment, while 37 per cent said they only sometimes did this. Just under 40 per cent of investors said they consider Scope 3 emissions "often" or "always".

"Scope 3 emissions are a key indicator of regulatory, market, reputational and financial risk for fossil fuel companies, so this is a major concern for the clients who entrust their money with investors, as well as for the climate," said Tehan.

So what can be done to improve investment decisions? One key area is better data when assessing companies' climate risk. Respondents said they wanted an authoritative, objective and standardised body of data they could draw on to quantify risks and impacts, and inform their decisions.

"Climate risk is still not a widely adopted and standardised risk topic," said a senior executive with a bank in Britain, in a response to the survey.

—The Straits Times

MONEY

FOREX

US Dollar	133.2
Euro	142.98
Pound Sterling	167.14
Swiss Franc	152.75
Australian Dollar	86.49
Canadian Dollar	98.43
Singapore Dollar	98.96
Japanese Yen (10)	8.96
Chinese Yuan	18.53
Saudi Arab Riyal	35.52
Qatari Riyal	36.54
Thai Bhat	3.73
UAE Dhiram	36.27
Malaysian Ringgit	27.95
Korean Won (100)	10.02

Exchange rates fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank

SHARES

Nepse (in percent) **2.085,71pts** **0.45%**

HIGHEST GAINERS					
SAMAJ	GLSL	LAAL	DORDI	LUK	NCCD86
9.99	9.42	7.4	6.96	6.32	6.11
MODERATE GAINERS					
MDB	ADBLD83	JBLB	HBL	SBD83	ACLBSL
0.12	0.1	0.08	0.05	0.05	0.03
MODERATE LOSERS					
KBSH	CU	USLB	NMBD2085	LEC	GBD85
-0.11	-0.11	-0.08	-0.06	-0.05	-0.03
HIGHEST LOSERS					
SPC	NTC	SIGS2	SAGF	MSHL	WBD2082
-10	-5.1	-3.71	-3.26	-2.13	-2.1

BULLION PRICE PER TOLA

Fine Gold	Rs 118,000
Silver	Rs 1,375

SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA

BIZLINE

Ncell launches roaming package

KATHMANDU: Ncell launched a roaming package, especially for customers who frequently travel to India.



Customers can activate the roaming pack at Rs100 including taxes and can take roaming service for 3 days. Subscribers will also get 500 MB of data, voice and SMS services at discounted rates under the package. The roaming pack came into effect on Friday. Customers can activate a roaming pack by dialling *17129*5# or using the Ncell App and the Ncell website.

EU chief bows to protesting farmers on pesticide use

STRASBOURG: EU chief Ursula von der Leyen on Tuesday recommended the bloc bury a plan to cut pesticide use in agriculture as a concession to protesting European farmers. The original proposal, put forward by her European Commission as part of the European Union's green transition, "has become a symbol of polarisation," she told the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France. Noting that the plan—to halve chemical pesticide use in the EU by the end of the decade—had also stalled in discussions in the European Parliament and in the European Council representing EU member countries, von der Leyen said she would ask her commission "to withdraw this proposal". (AFP)

BP rebounds into \$15.2 billion net annual profit

LONDON: British energy giant BP rebounded into vast profit in 2023, it said Tuesday, after slumping into a loss the prior year on its exit from Russia following Moscow's Ukraine invasion. Profit after taxation rocketed to \$15.2 billion last year from a net loss of \$2.5 billion in 2022, when it had taken a gigantic charge of \$24 billion on its exit from Russian energy group Rosneft. However, underlying profit excluding exceptional items halved to \$13.8 billion on lower refining margins and oil prices, BP added in a results statement. That compared with a record \$27.7 billion the prior year when prices of fossil fuels had surged on key energy producer Russia's assault on neighbouring Ukraine, boosting the global sector. (AFP)

Nintendo lifts net profit forecast on weak yen

TOKYO: Game giant Nintendo raised its annual net profit forecast on Tuesday, saying the weak yen and steady sales of the Switch console, now in its seventh year, would boost earnings. Sales grew in the first three quarters for major releases including the new Zelda game, the company said, while the Super Mario movie helped sell games from the Mario franchise. Nintendo now expects net profit of 440 billion yen (\$2.96 billion) in the current financial year, up from its previously announced forecast of 420 billion yen. (AFP)

Money foreign workers send home jumps by 25 percent

Remittances rose to Rs733.22 billion in the first half of the current fiscal and the foreign exchange reserves ballooned to a record high of Rs1.81 trillion.

POST REPORT KATHMANDU, FEB 6

The remittance inflows to Nepal jumped by a staggering 25.3 percent to Rs733.22 billion year-on-year in the first half of the current fiscal year that ended mid-January, Nepal's central bank said on Tuesday.

The robust growth in remittance has been attributed to the growth in migrant workers' departure from the country and the appreciation of the US dollar against the Nepali rupee.

According to the Nepal Rastra Bank, 343,405 individuals were issued foreign work permits in the first half of the current fiscal year. Among them, 207,970 were first timers.

With the remittance boom, the country's gross foreign exchange reserves increased 18 percent to a record Rs1.81 trillion in mid-January 2024, from Rs1.53 trillion in mid-July 2023.

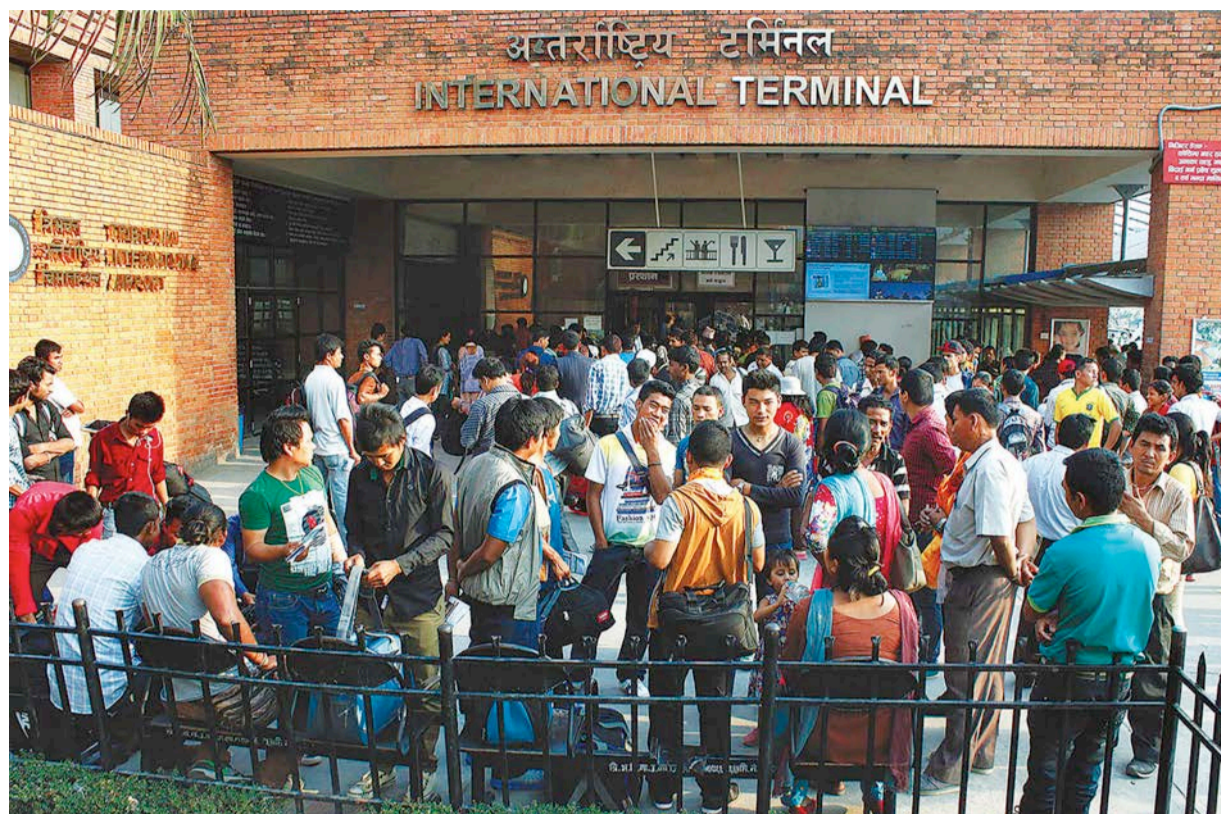
Of the total foreign exchange reserves, reserves held by the central bank increased by 18.9 percent to Rs1.60 trillion in mid-January. Similarly, reserves held by banks and financial institutions increased by 11.8 percent to Rs216.35 billion in mid-January 2024, from Rs193.59 billion in mid-July 2023.

The share of Indian currency in total reserves stood at 22.5 percent in mid-January.

The central bank said that the current account remained at a surplus of Rs161.62 billion in the review period against a deficit of Rs35.57 billion in the same period of the previous year.

The current account is the sum of net income from abroad, net current transfers, and the balance of trade.

The balance of payments remained at a surplus of Rs273.52 billion in the review period against a surplus of Rs92.15 billion in the same period of the previous year. The balance of payment is the statement of the inflow and outflow of goods, services, and assets.



According to the Nepal Rastra Bank data, 343,405 individuals were issued foreign work permits in the first half of the current fiscal year.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the total expenditure of the government stood at Rs566.62 billion during the six months of 2023-24. Compared to the growth of 13.7 percent

in the last fiscal year, government expenditure decreased by 1.7 percent in the review period.

The recurrent expenditure, capital expenditure and financial expenditure amounted to Rs437.38 billion, Rs49.24 billion and Rs80 billion, respectively, in the review period.

Deposits at banks and financial institutions reached Rs377.07 billion

(a rise by 6.6 percent) in the review period compared to an increase of Rs215.14 billion (4.2 percent) in the corresponding period of the previous year. On a year-on-year basis, deposits at banks and financial institutions expanded by 14.9 percent in mid-January.

The share of demand, savings and fixed deposits in total deposits stood at 6.8 percent, 26.8 percent and 59.9 percent, respectively, in mid-January.

Private sector credit from banks and financial institutions increased by 4 percent to Rs192.64 billion in the review period compared to an incre-

ment of Rs137.33 billion (3.0 percent) in the corresponding period of the previous year. On a year-on-year basis, credit to the private sector from banks and financial institutions increased by 4.9 percent in mid-January.

In the review period, private sector credit from commercial banks, development banks and finance companies increased by 4 percent, 4.4 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively.

In the review period, out of the total outstanding credit of the banks and financial institutions, 11.4 percent was against the collateral of current assets (such as agricultural and

Nepal, Switzerland sign bilateral air service accord

POST REPORT KATHMANDU, FEB 6

Nepal and Switzerland on Tuesday signed an air service agreement (ASA) in Kathmandu opening the way for the operation of commercial air services between the two countries.

The agreement allows Swiss carriers to operate 28 weekly flights on a reciprocal basis.

The pact permits unrestricted cargo movement between the two countries besides third country code share arrangement, said Mukesh Dangol, an official at the Tourism Ministry.

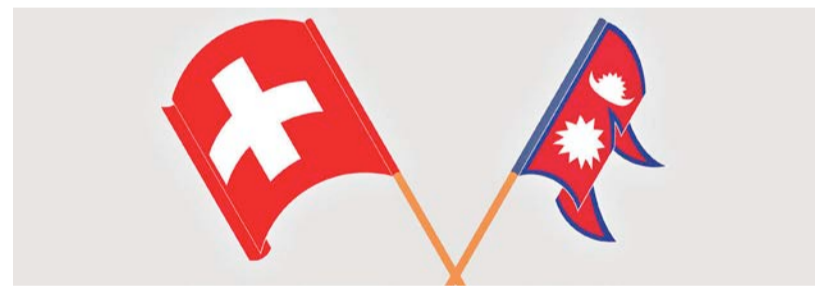
A code-share agreement is an arrangement under which two or more airlines share the same flight. A seat can be purchased from one airline on a flight that is operated by another airline under a different flight number or code.

It provides travellers with coordinated customer service—a single ticket and through check-in of bags to their final destinations. The agreement is a low-risk way for airlines to expand their network without added cost.

According to Dangol, Nepal has designated Swiss International Air Lines, Switzerland's national airline and Edelweiss Air, while Switzerland has designated Nepal Airlines and Himalaya Airlines from Nepal, to fly into the respective countries, subject to the approval of the respective governments.

With this, Nepal has concluded air accords with 43 countries—42 bilateral air service agreements, and one multilateral agreement with the European Union—since 1963.

The last bilateral air service agreement was signed with Rwanda in December 2023.



SHUTTERSTOCK

Meta wants industry-wide labels for AI-made images

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE SAN FRANCISCO, FEB 6

Meta on Tuesday said it is working with other tech firms on standards that will let it better detect and label artificial intelligence-generated images shared with its billions of users.

The Silicon Valley social media titan expects to have a system in place in a matter of months to identify and tag AI created images posted on its Facebook, Instagram and Threads platforms. "It's not perfect, it's not going to cover everything; the technology is not fully matured," Meta head of global affairs Nick Clegg told AFP.

While Meta has implemented visible and invisible tags on images created using its own AI tools since December, it also wants to work with other companies "to maximize the transparency the users have," Clegg added. "That's why we've been working with industry partners to align on common technical standards that signal when a piece of content has been created using AI," the company said in a blog post.

This will be done with companies Meta already works with on AI standards, including OpenAI, Google, Microsoft, Midjourney and other firms involved in the fierce race to lead the nascent sector, Clegg said.

Ride-sharing service gains legal status in Nepal

POST REPORT KATHMANDU, FEB 6

Ride-sharing has been listed as a service-oriented industry under the Industrial Enterprises Act 2020.

The government amended the Act to include ride-sharing as a service industry and published it in the Nepal Gazette on February 1. This gives ride-sharing a legal status seven years after the service started in Nepal.

With the legal amendment, the Bagmati provincial government has said it is in the final stages of introducing a legal framework for app-based ride-sharing services.

The draft of the Ride-Sharing Guidelines has been finalised, Balram Niraula, secretary at the Bagmati provincial Ministry of Labour, Employment and Transport, told the Post on Monday.

"We will send the draft to the Economic Affairs and Planning, and Law ministries for their approval," Niraula said. "Once the ministries approve the draft, it will be tabled at the provincial cabinet."

According to Niraula, it would take a month to complete the process.

The plan comes ahead of the Nepal Investment Summit, which is set to start on April 21 to promote Nepal as an investment-friendly country.

The draft guidelines propose vehi-

cle registration. Ride-sharing drivers

have to register their cars and motorbikes similarly to traditional taxis and operate under the regulation of the Ministry of Transport, he said. The companies have to renew their operations annually at the transport management offices. The guidelines will also regulate the fares, making insurance mandatory for passengers. In January 2019, the government cracked down on ride-hailing platforms like Tootle and Pathao, but public pressure forced it to back down as the ride-hailing apps had changed the way Nepalis travelled.

Subsequently, in February 2020, the Patan High Court ordered the government to regulate ride-hailing services. Bagmati Province declared ride-hailing services legal in June 2022, but it did not issue any guidelines or policy. Ride-hailing companies were permitted to operate mobile apps by registering with the transport department.

The Motor Vehicles and Transport Management Act 1993 states that vehicles registered for private use should not be deployed for public transport.

The law also bars vehicle owners from using their vehicles for purposes other than declared. The first Nepali ride-sharing app was launched in 2017.

EU unveils 2040 climate goal under pressure from farmer protests

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BRUSSELS, FEB 6

The European Union on Tuesday unveils its climate targets for 2040 and a roadmap for the next stage of its energy transition, with the bloc reeling from a farmer revolt against green reforms just months before European elections.

In a sign of how politically fraught the issue has become, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen gave key ground to the farmer movement on Tuesday by deciding to bury a plan to halve chemical pesticide use by the end of this decade.

The commission's original proposal "has become a symbol of polarisation", she acknowledged to the European Parliament, noting that the legislation had stalled due to divisions between EU lawmakers and member countries. The concession, made hours before the 2040 climate announcement, came as farmers converged outside the parliament building in another protest over shrinking incomes and rising production costs.

The 27-nation European Union has already committed to a 55-percent cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, as it seeks to become carbon neutral by 2050.

For the next milestone, 2040, working documents suggest the European Commission will aim for a drop of 90 percent, compared to 1990 levels.



A tractor with a sign reading 'Without fields, there is no life' enters the A-2 highway during a farmers protest asking for better conditions, in Mollerussa, near Lerida, on Tuesday.

But this time Brussels has to factor in growing discontent—illustrated by the snowballing farmer protests of recent weeks—over the social and economic impact of its much-vaunted Green Deal.

Far-right and anti-establishment parties have latched onto the farmers' movement and are predicted to make big gains in June elections to choose the members of the next EU assembly.

That vote will also lead to a new commission late this year. Von der Leyen has not yet said whether she intends to seek a new mandate at its helm.

There is a vocal backlash from some industries to the bloc's climate policies and several national leaders are now calling for a "pause" in new environmental rules.

The EU's climate commissioner,

Wopke Hoekstra, last month warned the bloc needed to stand by its climate ambition while "making sure our businesses stay competitive".

Striking that balance is at the heart of a joint letter to Brussels, sent by 11 states including France, Germany and Spain, and seen by AFP.

Together they urge the commission to set an "ambitious EU climate target" for 2040.

But the states also call for a "fair and just transition" that should "leave no-one behind, especially the most vulnerable citizens".

The targets laid out on Tuesday will be a simple recommendation.

They will be accompanied by new post-2030 climate projections the commission was required to produce within six months of December's UN climate negotiations (COP28).

The next European Commission will be tasked with turning the outline into proposed legislation ahead of next year's international climate summit (COP30).

The bloc's 2040 targets are expected to rely in part on the capture and storage of ambitious volumes of carbon dioxide—incensing climate campaigners who criticise the technologies as untested and want to see gross emissions-cut pledges instead.

Even so, the plan would require a sizeable effort from every sector of the economy—from power generation to farming, which accounts for 11 per-

cent of EU greenhouse gas emissions.

Some of the strongest resistance to tougher environmental action comes from the centre-right European People's Party (EPP), from which von der Leyen hails.

The EPP's Peter Liese says a more cautious stance is justified.

"It's easy to fix a figure," he said, but as the bloc has been implementing its existing 2030 target, "we see more and more how ambitious it is".

Liese considers a 90-percent emissions cut to be a "very ambitious" target for 2040 and stresses the need for "the right conditions, the right policy framework".

Elisa Giannelli, of the E3G climate advocacy group, urged the EU to keep the social impact of its climate policies front of mind.

"Getting this wrong," she said, "would allow conservative and populist voices to set the direction of the next steps."

The United Nations climate change organisation said in November the world was not acting with sufficient urgency to curb greenhouse gas emissions and thus limit global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial emissions.

With temperatures soaring and 2023 expected to be recorded as the warmest year so far in human history, scientists say the pressure on world leaders to curb planet-heating greenhouse gas pollution has never been more urgent.

Hat-trick hero Foden revelling in central role

The English midfielder scores three times to help Manchester City earn a 3-1 comeback win at Brentford.

REUTERS LONDON, FEB 6

At the age of 23 Phil Foden already has a personal trophy cabinet that would be the envy of most clubs throughout their existence and he underlined his growing influence on Manchester City with a superb hat-trick in Monday's 3-1 win at Brentford.

In the six years since making his debut as a waif-like 17-year-old, Foden has a Champions League, five Premier Leagues, two FA Cups, four League Cups, the Club World Cup and 31 appearances for England to his name.

Throughout that time he has had spells on the sidelines as City's production line of superstar midfielders took precedence, often leaving him something of a peripheral figure on the flanks. However, this season, in the lengthy absence of Kevin de Bruyne, he has really stepped up to a new level.

Often playing more centrally, as he did on Monday, he is having more influence, for longer, on games and looking an ever-more accomplished finisher.

His three goals, coming after Neal Maupay had put Brentford ahead, were a masterclass in movement, touch and poise when it mattered most, rewarding manager Pep

Guardiola for keeping him in the middle where he dovetailed smoothly with De Bruyne.

"This is the most influential he has been in the team," Guardiola said after the victory that took the champions within two points of Premier League leaders Liverpool with a game in hand.

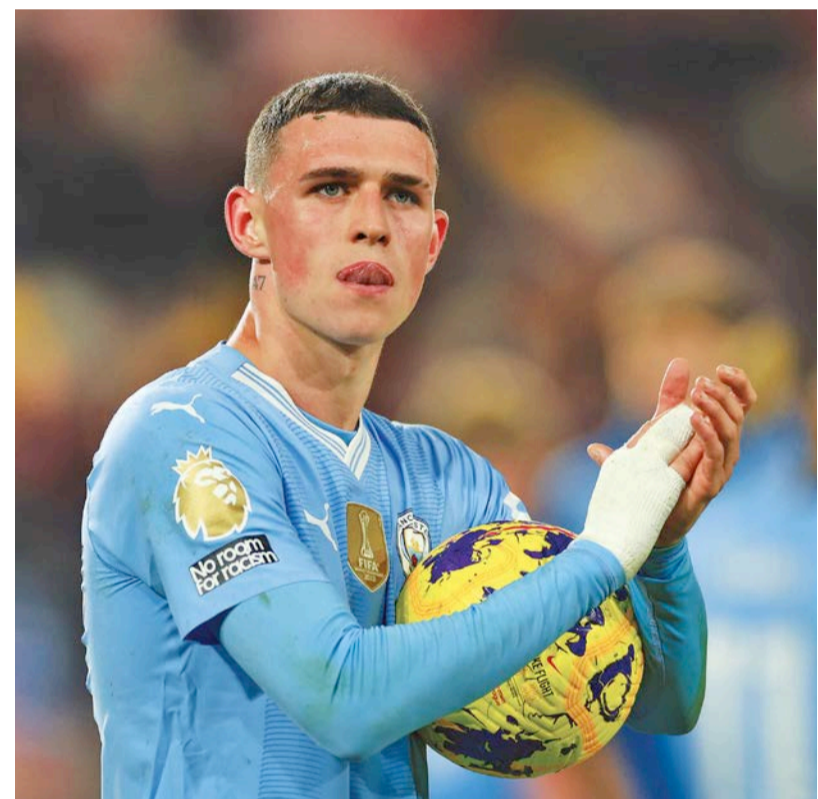
"He has always had that threat in the box, he had that sense of an amateur player, like kids playing in the street. It's how he moves in the small spaces and when he's there now he can score or make an assist and that's difficult to find."

Foden said: "I've been getting goals and assists recently. I've been playing more centrally so I think that's why. It's the most consistent I've been for a long time."

"I'm a person that adapts and plays a lot of positions when needed. I'm enjoying playing in the middle and that's where I see myself. Hopefully I can get more game time playing there."

"I don't score a lot of headers so I'm delighted with that one."

"All I set myself is to try to better last year's stats and just try to improve every year - more goals and more assists. I need to keep going and showing this level of performance more often."



Manchester City's Phil Foden celebrates at the end of the English Premier League football match against Brentford at the Gtech Community Stadium in London on Monday.

Youth and coach nominees for NSJF Pulsar Sports Award unveiled

Two footballers and coaches each are named in the shortlist for annual award ceremony set to take place on February 11.

SPORTS BUREAU KATHMANDU, FEB 6

Nepal Sports Journalists Forum (NSJF) on Tuesday revealed the eight nominees each in the youth player and coach of the year for the annual Pulsar Sports Award set to take place on February 11 at Hotel Yak and Yeti in Kathmandu.

The nominations include two players each from football, cricket and boxing in the youth category along with one each from golf and athletics, according to a press release issued by NSJF who are set to organise the 20th edition.

Youth footballers Unesh Budathoki and Sujata Tamang, cricketers Dev Khanal and Dipesh Kandel, boxer Sushma Tamang and Bijay Bata are the nominees in the youth category. Golfer Sadbhav Acharya and athlete Ram Maya Budha complete the list.

Similarly, cricket coaches Monty Desai and Jagat Tamata, football coaches Bhagwati Rana Magar and Ananta Raj Thapa, boxing's Deepak Maharjan, athletics' Chandra Gurung, volleyball's Bharat Shah and swimming's Ongden Lama are the nominees for coach of the year award.

According to NSJF, the nominations were made on the basis of performance and outcome of players and coaches at the domestic and international level in the past Nepali calendar year (2079 BS). The top three players and coaches each will be revealed in a few days and the winner will be declared during the award ceremony, stated NSJF.

The organisers have already made eight nominations each for male and female player of the year apart from five nominees in peoples' choice award. The winner of the peoples' choice category which will be decided through eSewa voting, points allocated by sports journalists and chief coaches of 27 sports associations affiliated with Nepal Olympic Committee and Facebook likes. The winners of the other four categories will be decided by a selection committee of NSJF. The winners of male, female, youth, coach and peoples' choice award will be rewarded with a Pulsar motorbike each.

Footballer Budathoki was an influential member of the Nepal U-17 team that finished runners-up last year in SAFF U-17 Championship in Sri Lanka. He finished joint highest scorer in the tournament with four goals under his belt. Footballer Tamang was the goalkeeper of women's U-15 and U-17 national teams. She played a key role in Nepal's SAFF U-15 title haul and also won the best goalkeeper award. She was also declared best goalkeeper in SAFF U-17 Championships.

COACH OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

YOUTH PLAYER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

Cricketer Khanal was the captain of Nepal U-19 team that claimed Asia Regional Qualifiers title and secured a place in the U-19 Cricket World Cup for the first time in eight years. He scored 125 runs against Kuwait and crucial 51 runs against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the final to score a total of 197 runs in three innings among five matches played.

Khanal's teammate Kandel claimed a hat-trick against the UAE in the title decider of Asia Regional Qualifiers. He grabbed five wickets in the final including a hat-trick in the 48th over when UAE required 11 runs for victory from the last three overs. He finished with 12 wickets in the tournament.

Boxer Tamang claimed silver medal in the Asian U-22 Women's and Men's Boxing Championships as Nepal earned first silver in the Asian age level boxing. She also won gold in the Ninth National Games women's 48kg division. Bata claimed the men's

bronze in the same tournament. Athlete Budha finished with junior women's bronze in both individual and team events. She was also the 1500m gold medalist at Golden Athletics Meet along with top place finisher at Junior National Athletics in 3000m.

Golfer Acharya claimed Nepal Tourism Cup golf pairing with Subash Tamang and was also the gold medalists at Bangladesh Amateur Golf championship. He also secured the winners' trophy at the Ninth National Games.

Football coach Ananta Thapa guided Nepali women's team to runners-up finish in the Women's SAFF Championship where Nepal defeated India for the first time in SAFF. Rana Magar was the women's U-15 and U-17 team coach. Under her, Nepal claimed the U-15 title, the second silverware by Nepal women's youth team.

Cricket coach Tamata led Nepali

team to the U-19 World Cup after eight years as the champions of the Asia Regional Qualifier. Nepali national cricket team coach Desai helped Nepali team retain One Day International (ODI) status. Under him Nepal won nine among the last 12 games of the World Cup League 2 as Nepal not only retained ODI status but also earned a direct berth for World Cup Qualifiers.

Boxing coach Maharjan led Nepal U-22 boxing team to a silver and three bronze medals at the ABC U-22 Asian Women's and Men's Boxing Championships. Athletics coach Chandra Gurung led Nepal to two gold and one silver in the senior category of Asian Cross Country Championships along with two silver and a bronze in junior. Volleyball coach Bharat Shah was the coach of the national men's and women's volleyball team that earned silver in both categories at CAVA Central Zone Beach Volleyball in both categories.

HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
Make decisions carefully especially when your livelihood or relationships are involved. Build up your dreams from behind the scenes. Keep important business or projects private, giving yourself time and space to reflect and plan for what comes next.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
Acknowledge how your daily habits and routines influence your ability to reach great heights. Break free from patterns that have held you back, looking toward the future from a new perspective. Surround yourself with those you can grow alongside.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)
Today, be mindful of who you invest your energy in and the boundaries you cultivate. Pursue dreams that are important and inspiring. Move away from patterns and situations no longer serving you, even if this departure feels sudden.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)
You may feel strained by your responsibilities between home and the office. Rather than closing off and allowing your relationships to suffer from stress, look for ways to find balance through mutual support. Practice self-care through spiritual practices.

LEO (July 23-August 22)
Loosen the grip of control to establish collaboration and learn. Commit to your deepest dreams acknowledging the power of routine and transformation. Good vibes flow as afternoon rolls in, encouraging teamwork as a way to break through barriers.

VIRGO (August 23-September 22)
Find ways to ground and seek change, but remember transformation cannot be forced and must occur over time. Follow your heart today. Good vibes flow this afternoon elevating your intuition and manifestation skills when you believe in yourself.

LIBRA (September 23-October 22)
Tensions at home or within romantic relationships could throw you off balance. Draw lines when dealing with difficult companions, protecting your emotional sanity by maintaining healthy boundaries. Break down your day into simple steps.

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)
Don't let your past haunt you. Focus on the present moment. You may encounter a new admirer or surprise within matters of the heart. Pay attention to what others are saying today, as words reveal their true feelings.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)
Don't stress to keep up with appearances. Consider how your social life and ego have impacted your savings account. Embrace luxury through acts of nurturing and self-care rather than extravagant expenditures.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)
Maintain composure when in the face of challenges related to professional or domestic situations. Your problems will dissolve if you allow them to, so invite in grace. Allow the weirdo within to come out and play this afternoon.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)
You may feel more shy and reserved than usual. Don't force yourself into social situations. Avoid agitating dynamics, when you chase your dreams. Say nice things to yourself if childhood fears, trauma, or disappointments start to creep up.

PISCES (February 19-March 20)
You may need a breather from social media accounts and surface-level interactions today. Connect with people who inspire you and follow your passions. Flirtatious vibes flow this afternoon. Meditate on what you can do to improve your community.

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Made with cream
 - Is worthwhile
 - Up to
 - Linen color
 - Fencing sword
 - "Peachy keen!"
 - Stratum
 - Treasured
 - Looks after the hens
 - Lurched
 - Muggy
 - Nightmares
 - Incentive
 - Weeping over
 - Structural metals
 - Rough shelters
 - DEA operative
 - Bert and —
 - Showery mo.
 - Stuck, as a ship
 - Salt Lake City player
 - Sales pitch
 - Grease job
 - Baby chick sound
 - Blossom bits
 - Rome's river
 - Area
 - Sang a ballad
 - Concluded
- DOWN**
- Type of rocket
 - More remote
 - Doctrine
 - Pitchers
 - Selling
 - Gorilla
 - "OK"
 - Antitoxin
 - Not suitable for
 - Poorer
 - kwon do
 - "— take forever"
 - Oaxaca article
 - Water, in Montreal
 - Yr. fractions
 - Tangle
 - Meeting's location
 - Upper crust
 - Crack filler
 - Filter in
 - Diary lock

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

O	A	R	S	A	S	P	I	C	G	I	L	L
P	L	O	W	S	T	A	R	E	A	L	A	I
E	L	B	A	C	O	N	A	N	L	E	W	D
N	I	B	B	L	E	R	S	T	E	A	S	I
S	E	E	I	N	K	Y	A	S	S	A	I	L
D	R	A	F	T	S	B	U	T	M	R	I	
R	E	S	F	M	R	A	D	I	O	S		
O	V	A	L	M	E	W	E	D	N	A		
R	E	C	O	U	R	S	E	C	U	B		
C	E	E	L	O	G	H	O	R	S	E	S	
A	R	D	E	N	T	B	A	U	D	N	O	M
B	A	A	A	A	U	G	U	S	T	L	Y	
Z	E	R	O	T	E	S	L	A	L	I	O	N
I	C	O	N	O	T	T	E	R	A	R	E	A
P	O	N	Y	R	E	E	D	S	M	E	D	S

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66				67				68					
69				70				71					

SUDOKU

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7	8	5	6	2	4	9	3	1
6	3	4	9	1	7	5	2	8
2	4	3	8	5	9	1	7	6
5	6	7	1	4	2	8	9	3
8	9	1	7	3	6	4	5	2
9	7	2	4	6	1	3	8	5
3	5	6	2	9	8	7	1	4
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YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

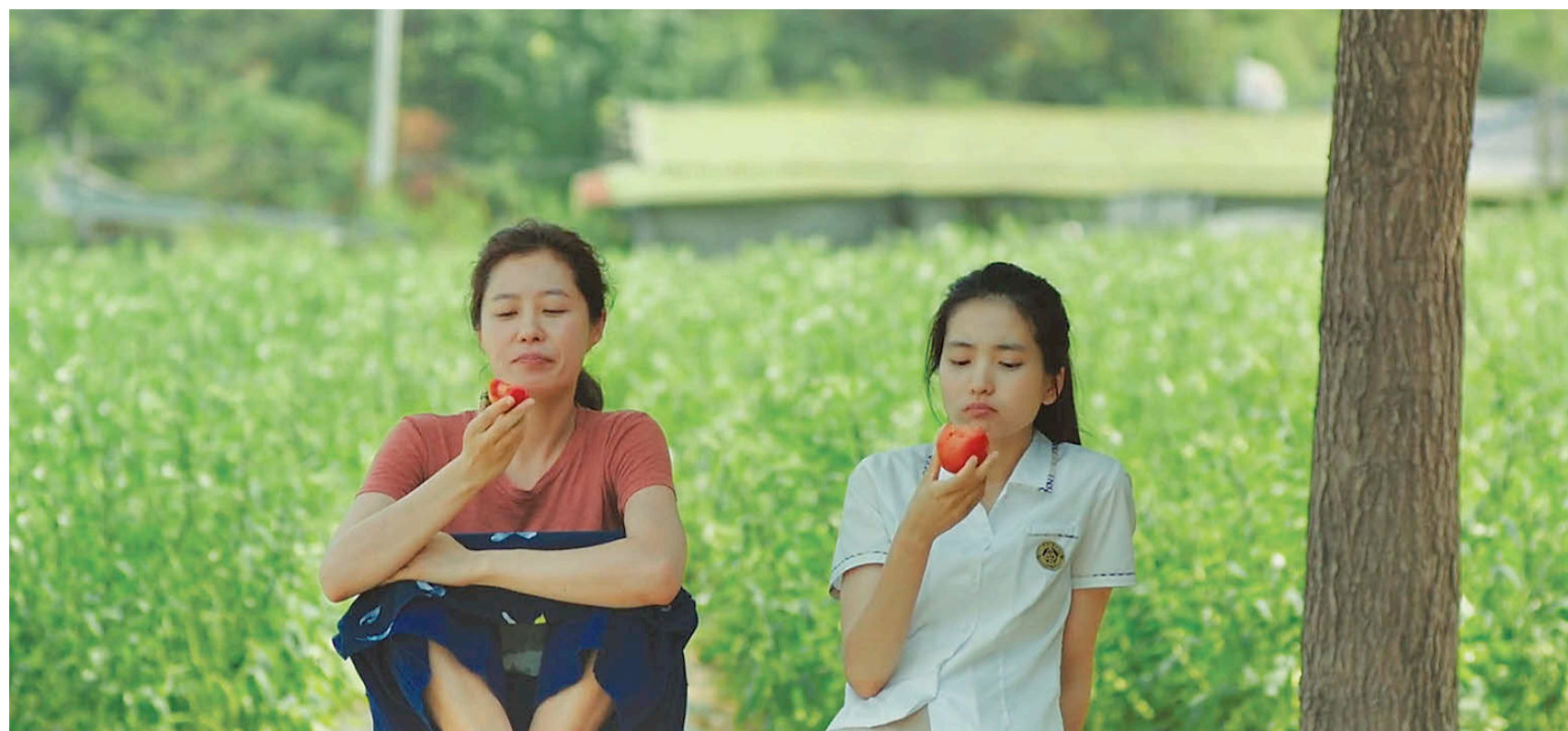
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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆



A breath of fresh air

Yim Soon-rye's 'Little Forest' gently explores the importance of embracing nature, connecting with one's roots and finding solace in the simple joys in life.



SCREENGRAB VIA YOUTUBE

ANISH GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU

Little Forest' feels like a breath of fresh air. In it, you will see the passing of seasons and the foods that sprout with it. You will also see cold water running in the streams, the big red tomatoes, the rain that damages the crops and the sunshine that makes it all better.

Hye-won (Kim Tae-ri), like most city folks, is tired of her urban life. She returns to her home in the countryside to escape her dull life. There, she keeps herself busy by trying to make food from her mother's (Moon So-ri) recipes. Even though her mother is not there when she returns, she loved sharing her recipes with her daughter when she was little. Her experimental food recipes made her daughter curious about the life she had lived.

As Hye-won starts embracing country life, we see picturesque scenes of wine-making at home, inviting friends over for a glass and cooking with what sprouts on the field. This is a beautiful (albeit romanticised) portrayal of the simple, rural life. No phones, no computers, no WiFi, just good food and a few friends to share it with.

We all have problems, but at least Hye-won has a place where she could get away from it all. Her mother had taught her how to survive winter and prepare

food for the season beforehand. During her rebellious teenage years, she talked about leaving the city for good and her mother foresaw her eventual return to her roots. "I wanted to make your roots stronger," she had said and her teachings proved to be fruitful when her daughter did come back.

The movie does not tell you what you're lacking but what you need to incorporate into your daily life to make it a bit better.

For those of us seeking a break from the routine city life and dreaming of moving to the countryside, eating straight from the tree, planting enough food on our land, and roaming about in the wild, all of this seems like an idyllic dream. However, the movie doesn't necessarily advocate doing all of this for the entirety of our lives. Its message is about incorporating all these elements into our busy lives.

Hye-won does not leave the city for good as she had initially intended, nor does she settle permanently in the village. Instead, she opts for a balanced approach without complicating things much. She chooses to

have a little bit of everything—a stable source of income and a root that brings her back to nature.

This movie is not your "leave everything and go to the forest" guide, but rather a message to build your own little forest. As Hye-won says, "For my mother, her little forest was me, and the recipes." Similarly, her goal is to find her own little forest. A little forest isn't just a happy place; it is a reason to keep going and push a bit harder in life.

The movie does not tell you what you're lacking, but it tells you what you need to incorporate into your daily life. This might be a little bit of sunshine, a soup made of freshly plucked tomatoes, or a homemade wine that makes you a little crazy with your friends. It's about keeping it simple, not dwelling too much on the problems and keeping things real.

It doesn't take much to say a lot, and it doesn't take much to live a good life. 'Little Forest' does not have a strong sequence of scenes, or captivating dialogues, yet it feels like a hot soup in winter, which gradually makes you warm. In the simplicity through which the 1 hour 43 minutes film is built, you will find a sense of peace and a will to connect more with your roots and embrace nature.

Much like the seasons that pass when Hye-won is in her countryside retreat, her life also sees similar cycles. When she arrives in winter, she is weary and tired.



Little Forest

Director: Yim Soon-rye
Cast: Kim Tae-ri, Ryu Jun-yeol, Moon So-ri
Duration: 1 hour 43 minutes
Released: 2018
Language: Korean
Available on: Netflix

"I will stay till winter," she says, but when spring comes along, a gentle breeze invigorates her, and makes her stay longer. Only then do we see her shedding the weariness, preparing in advance for what to grow, and what to pluck out. This keeps her busy and helps her forget the exhausting city life.

When her friend reminds her that keeping busy won't solve her problems, she takes a hard look at reality and decides to confront her challenges by returning to the city. By weathering the winter, sweat-drenching summer, and ceiling-leaking monsoon in her countryside home, she gathers enough strength to go back to Seoul and face the trials of modern city life.

She had returned to the countryside, after failing an exam, and not finding joy in the estranged city. She ran from her unfulfilled life, dodging problems and making excuses not to face them. The film not only encourages us to go back to our roots and connect with our homeland more often but also tells us to bravely confront the issues of city life.

Through scenes of the preparation of homegrown meals, casual daily conversations with friends about life and relationships, a mother's selfless nurturing and the passage of seasons, 'Little Forest' imparts valuable lessons about life and how little it takes to improve it. Happiness in our own little forest requires very little.

Balancing skincare and cosmetics

Dermatologist Shradha Shrestha talks about the optimal use of makeup and skin care products to achieve healthy skin.



MANUSHREE MAHAT
KATHMANDU

Celebrities often share their skincare and makeup routines on YouTube. Vogue, for instance, features a 'celebrities guide to quick and easy makeup and skincare routine' on their YouTube channel, attracting millions of views.



SKIN CARE

Navigating through the myriad of beauty products talked about online can be confusing. The challenge, for most of us, is not only finding the best products but also striking the right balance between makeup and skincare.

Dr Shradha Shrestha, a dermatologist and aesthetic physician at Skin Arts Aesthetics, sheds light on maintaining this balance in an interview with the Post. She explains how we can effectively use beauty and skincare products without compromising our skin's health.

As a dermatologist, how do you approach the use of cosmetic and skincare products?

Skincare products play a big role in nourishing the skin and helping individuals work towards long-term goals for healthier skin. Cosmetic products, on the other hand, offer temporary solutions, covering blemishes or accentuating certain features without contributing to actual treatment.

Our focus as dermatologists is on skincare. We guide patients on using cleansers to deeply cleanse their skin for an acne-free complexion. Sun protection, hydration and proper cleansing are all

integral parts of skincare. We don't necessarily want to camouflage skin issues; our approach is to treat them through skincare practices.

Are there any combinations of skincare and beauty products that may not work well together?

The compatibility largely depends on an individual's skin type. Fundamental skincare steps like moisturising, cleansing, using face wash and applying sunscreen are essential before applying makeup. Moisturisers prepare the skin for makeup, while sunscreen is vital for preventing pigmentation and shielding against UV rays.

Other than that, some people may be allergic to certain products, or some products suit certain skin types better than others.

Are there products—skincare or cosmetic—that may be unnecessary but widely used?

Some popular products, like snail mucin hydration, may not be necessary for everyone's skincare routine. As for cosmetic products, I will say BB cream may not work



Dr Shradha Shrestha

for everyone as it can clog your pores. Again, we can't be too general about it as this depends on your skin type.

Are there products that are bad for the skin?

I wouldn't label products as inherently bad, but some individuals may have allergic reactions to certain ingredients present in skincare and beauty products. If you experience any discomfort while using a product, it's crucial to stop using it immediately to prevent any potentially serious issue.

What happens if someone uses skincare and cosmetic products not suitable for their skin type?

If someone with dry skin uses products designed for oily skin, their skin may become even drier. Similarly, using oil-based products on oily skin can worsen acne issues.

Understanding your skin type is important to achieve a balance between using skincare and cosmetic products. Ensuring you follow your skincare routine before applying makeup and removing it before bedtime is key.

What happens if one sleeps without removing makeup?

Leaving makeup on overnight can lead to clogged pores, resulting in skin sensitivity. Our skin undergoes repair during the night, and when pores are not cleared, it may lead to acne, irritation and even wrinkles, hindering the skin's ability to breathe.

Are more of the patients concerned with makeup or skincare these days?

In my experience, many patients are opting for long-term treatment, repair and protection processes of skincare, instead of relying on makeup these days. There's greater awareness about the benefits of skincare in maintaining healthy and happy skin.

What is the skincare and makeup routine you would recommend?

When it comes to skincare, you never miss out on face wash, cleanser, moisturiser and sunscreen. Depending on individual skin conditions, additional products like vitamin C and Retinol can be used, according to the

As for makeup, I believe lipsticks and eyeliner are suitable for everyday wear, but thick layers of foundation and heavy makeup on a daily basis are not advisable. The wearer's occupation should also be considered when determining the most appropriate routine.



MY PODCAST PICKS



Samjhana Rijal

Rijal is a board member of **Blind Rocks**, a non-profit organisation working to empower blind individuals, and is actively involved in **Chain For Change**. She works to make experiences more accessible for visually impaired individuals.



>> Disability Visibility

I highly suggest giving Disability Visibility a listen! It is a great gateway to learning about disability rights, social justice, and intersectionality. Even though it's not currently producing new episodes, there are 100 episodes hosted by Alice Wong that provide a unique perspective on life through the lens of disability.

>> On Air with Sanjay

From people at the grassroots level and up-and-coming professionals in different fields to well-known personalities, we get to hear perspectives from all these individuals through Sanjay Silwal Gupta's podcast. It's a great way to connect with people from different walks of life.



>> Harka's podcast

I came across Harka's podcast through Facebook reels. It is hosted by Harka Lopchan and Anup Tamang, based in Dubai. I like how this podcast brings stories from across the globe—especially about the journeys of individuals of Nepali origin who are making a name for themselves in foreign countries.

>> Samaya Bhitra ko Samaya

Babita Basnet's podcast Samaya Bhitra ko Samaya discusses historical figures and those connected to the royal family. It helped me understand the prevalent culture and lifestyle during the monarchy. Listening to this podcast feels like revisiting history. The episodes on Lalita Niwas in particular are very informative.



>> The Ranveer Show

Hosted by Ranveer Allahbadia, this The Ranveer Show delves into the journeys of successful individuals in India. What stands out about this podcast are Allahbadia's in-depth interviews, rather than just skimming the surface. I especially like the episode with mountaineer Kunal Joisher. Listening to his journey of mountaineering and adventure was inspiring.