



THE KATHMANDU POST

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

Nepal's largest selling English daily

Printed simultaneously in Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Bharatpur and Nepalgunj

Vol XXXII No. 61 | 8 pages | Rs.5
Friday, April 19, 2024 | 07-01-2081

38.8° C 6.5° C
Dhangadi Jomsom

TODAY

NATIONAL

Over 3,000 girls aged 14 to 15 years who were given the first dose of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine did not take the second dose. The health ministry will be searching for them. **Pg 3**

Provincial governments particularly in Koshi, Gandaki and Sudurpaschim have been shaken. Also the governments in Bagmati, Madhesh, Lumbini and Karnali have failed to function smoothly. **Pg 3**

OPINION

One could argue that the security market in Nepal is driven neither by economic indicators nor individual performances of the listed firms, writes *Jagadish Prasad Bist*. **Pg 4**



MONEY

A panel formed by Nepal's central bank has suggested capping payments made via quick response code for Nepali nationals in India at IRs 100,000 per month, either in one go or cumulatively. **Pg 5**

WORLD

UN chief Antonio Guterres has painted a dark picture of the situation in the Middle East, warning that tensions over the Gaza war and Iran's attack on Israel could devolve into a "fullscale regional conflict." **Pg 6**

SPORTS

Antonio Rudiger stared down the goalkeeper, took a deep breath, and drilled home the decisive penalty, proving once again there is no tougher task in club football than beating Real Madrid in the Champions League. **Pg 7**



A relative of a Nepali national serving in the Russian army wrestles with police during a demonstration in Kathmandu on Thursday. The kin been pressing the governments of Nepal and Russia to send back the illegal Nepali recruits and provide compensation for the dead.

POST PHOTO: HEMANTA SHRESTHA

Provincial heads proxies of Kathmandu to meddle in regional politics: Congress

The main opposition is unhappy with their roles in Sudurpaschim and Gandaki provinces.

BINOD GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, APRIL 18

The Nepali Congress on Thursday claimed that the provincial heads were treading on unconstitutional grounds in favour of the current ruling alliance.

A meeting of the party's top leaders also asked its provincial committees to oppose the unconstitutional moves. The main opposition is particularly unhappy with the roles of the heads of the provinces in Sudurpaschim and

Gandaki. It has even lodged a writ petition against the move of Dilliraj Bhatta, head of Gandaki Province, to appoint Khagraj Adhikari the chief minister based on the support of a majority of provincial assembly members including the Speaker.

"The provincial heads are violating the constitution and working against the spirit of the constitution. Our party objects to the moves," said Congress spokesperson Prakash Sharan Mahat adding that the heads of the provinces were favouring the five-party alliance

of the CPN-UML and CPN (Maoist Centre) among others.

This is not the first time the roles of the provincial heads have been questioned. And in some cases, even the top court has ruled against their unconstitutional moves.

The Congress, which has been pointing fingers at the roles of the provincial heads, had last year used Province Head Parshuram Khapung to form an unconstitutional government in Koshi.

>> Continued on page 2

Lamichhane seeks to discuss GB Rai with Malaysia minister

Foreign ministry sitting on home minister's request fearing he may influence the fugitive's deportation, says source.

ANIL GIRI

KATHMANDU, APRIL 18

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Rabi Lamichhane has written to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressing his intent to speak with his Malaysian counterpart, Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, regarding Gitendra Babu Rai, a main suspect in the large-scale embezzlement of cooperative funds who is said to be hiding in the East Asian country.

A senior home ministry official confirmed to the Post that Lamichhane wants to discuss deportation, drug, trafficking, and other issues, with his counterparts in Malaysia, Qatar, and the UAE.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister has sent a letter to Foreign Secretary Sewa Lamsal expressing Lamichhane's intent to hold telephone conversation with his Malaysian counterpart, Ismail, and two others, and requested arrangements for talks.

However, a member of Lamichhane's private secretariat talking to the Post denied any knowledge of any such communication and said they would need to verify with the minister and senior officials. Similarly, the information officer at the home ministry, Ekdev Adhikari, said he is unaware of such development.

Malaysia, the UAE and Qatar are the major destinations for Nepali workers, who often encounter various problems there. Before joining politics, Lamichhane, as a television journalist, championed the cause of migrant workers, and has a huge support base among them. He entered

politics in 2022 by launching the Rastriya Swatantra Party a few months ahead of the general elections.

The development coincides with mounting pressure on Home Minister Lamichhane from various quarters to pave the way for an investigation into allegations of his involvement in the embezzlement of funds of savings cooperatives based in Pokhara and Butwal, and his connection with Rai during the establishment of a television company called Gorkha Media Network, which is now defunct.

Lamichhane and Rai are accused of cooperative cash misappropriation while at Gorkha Media.

Lamichhane had also invited Foreign Secretary Lamsal to his office and asked her to arrange telephone calls with his counterparts in Malaysia, UAE, and Qatar.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has, reportedly, withheld the request over concerns that the home minister may influence Rai's deportation from Malaysia.

The government has already sent a diplomatic note to the Malaysian government seeking Rai's deportation based on his case in domestic courts and his status as a fugitive accused of embezzling billions of rupees in cooperative members.

>> Continued on page 2

Once fringe ideology, Hindu nationalism is now mainstream, thanks to Modi

ASSOCIATED PRESS
AHMEDABAD, APRIL 18

Hindu nationalism, once a fringe ideology in India, is now mainstream. Nobody has done more to advance this cause than Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one of India's most beloved and polarising political leaders.

And no entity has had more influence on his political philosophy and ambitions than a paramilitary, right-wing group founded nearly a century ago and known as the RSS.

"We never imagined that we would get power in such a way," said Ambalal Koshti, 76, who says he first brought Modi into the political wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in the late 1960s in their home state, Gujarat.

Modi was a teenager. Like other young men—and even boys—who joined, he would learn to march in formation, fight, meditate and protect their Hindu homeland.

A few decades earlier, while Mahatma Gandhi preached Hindu-Muslim unity, the RSS advocated for transforming India—by force, if necessary—into a Hindu nation. (A former RSS worker would fire three bullets into Gandhi's chest in 1948, killing him months after India gained independence.)

Modi's spiritual and political upbringing from the RSS is the driving force, experts say, in everything he's done as prime minister over the past 10 years, a period that has seen India become the world's fifth-largest economy. At the same time, his rule



AP/RSS

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

has seen brazen attacks against minorities—particularly Muslims—from hate speech to lynchings. India's

democracy, critics say, is faltering as the press, political opponents and courts face growing threats. And Modi has increasingly blurred the line between religion and state.

At 73, Modi is campaigning for a third term in a general election, which starts on Friday. He and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party are expected to win. He's challenged by a broad but divided alliance of regional parties.

Supporters and critics agree on one thing: Modi has achieved staying power by making Hindu nationalism acceptable to a nation of 1.4 billion that for decades prided itself on pluralism and secularism. With that comes an immense vote bank: 80 per-

cent of Indians are Hindu. "He is 100 percent an ideological product of the RSS," in said Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, who wrote a Modi biography. "He has delivered their goals."

>> Continued on page 2



उच्च सोचका साथ
अडिग अठोट लिई, अघि बढ्ने
सगरमाथा
एउटै छ

सगरमाथा सिमेन्ट

OPC 43 GRADE • OPC 53 GRADE • PPC CEMENT

Health workers to visit schools to jab over 3,000 girls, who missed second HPV vaccine dose

The girls between 14 and 15 years received the first dose but did not show up for the second shot.

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, APRIL 18

Over 3,000 girls between 14 and 15 years who were given the first dose of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine did not show up to take the second dose.

Due to the low uptake of the second dose, the Ministry of Health and Population has suspended the vaccination programme for now.

“We are preparing to send health workers to schools to administer the second dose of the vaccine to girls who got the first dose but did not show up to receive the second dose,” said Dr Abhiyan Gautam, chief of the Immunisation Section at the Family Welfare Division of the Department of Health Services. “We know that those who have not yet sought the second dose will not come to hospitals for vaccination.”

According to the health ministry’s data, 9,980 girls between 14 and 15 years of age from all seven provinces were jabbed with the first dose of HPV vaccine under a pilot programme, launched in September last year.

WHO says HPV is responsible for over 70 percent of cervical cancer cases.

Human papillomavirus is a viral infection that spreads through skin contact. The virus causes cervical cancer, which is the second-most common cancer in the developing world and a major cause of death among Nepali women. Hundreds of women get diagnosed with cervical cancer every year in Nepal.

According to the BP Koirala Memorial Cancer Hospital in Bharatpur, more than 700 women suffering from cervical cancer seek treatment at the hospital every year.

HPV vaccination was also included in the government’s policies and programmes for the fiscal year 2023-24.

Doctors say most cervical cancer cases are associated with the HPV, a sexually transmitted infection and that widespread immunisation could reduce the impact of cervical and other cancers caused by the HPV worldwide. Countries like Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Maldives have introduced the HPV vaccine nationally while India and Indonesia have introduced it in some districts.

In 2016, Nepal piloted HPV vaccination in Chitwan and Kaski districts. All girls aged 11 to 13 years were then given two doses of the vaccine.

Experts say early treatment prevents up to 80 percent of cervical cancer.

Meanwhile, health ministry officials said that a nationwide HPV vaccination drive is likely in

the third quarter of 2024. The ministry plans to inoculate around 1.7 million girls between 10 and 14 years with HPV vaccine through nationwide drives, and also make it a part of regular immunisation.

According to officials, the Global Alliance for Vaccine and Immunisation (GAVI) has agreed to provide HPV vaccine doses. They said that once the campaign is completed, the HPV vaccine will be included in the government’s routine immunisation programme.

Nepal had submitted a proposal to GAVI in July last year requesting for HPV doses for free so that the vaccine could be included on the regular immunisation list. Ministry officials say they have proposed a budget for HPV vaccination campaigns in 2024.

Officials say that GAVI has already agreed to provide required doses of vaccine, but the problem is their availability.

The World Health Organisation says HPV vaccination is recommended as part of a coordinated strategy to prevent cervical cancer and other diseases caused by the virus.

The UN health body says HPV is responsible for more than 70 percent of the cervical cancer cases in women. Countries that have included the HPV vaccine in their regular immunisation list have successfully reduced cervical cancer cases in women, according to doctors.

Meanwhile, the health ministry has started the ‘big-catch-up’ campaign throughout the country, aiming to inoculate children under five years who have either missed scheduled doses or have not completed a vaccine series.

Under the programme, health workers including female community health volunteers will track children who have not completed all doses of routine vaccines.

Every year, the ministry launches a month-long campaign to boost the coverage of routine vaccines.

Childhood immunisation is the number one priority of the government, under which 13 types of vaccines are given against a range of diseases such as measles-rubella, pneumonia, tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B, rotavirus, Japanese encephalitis and typhoid under the regular immunisation programme, free of cost.

Regular immunisation is one of the most successful programmes in Nepal, with a high coverage rate. The country has demonstrated remarkable progress in reducing the under-five mortality rate and the regular immunisation programme is credited with that.

However, a report of the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey-2022 carried out by the Ministry of Health and Population showed that at least four percent of the children aged between 12 and 23 months have received no vaccine at all. This figure was one percent in 2016.



POST PHOTO: PRAKASH CHANDRA TIMILSINA

Kathmandu district administration officials and plainclothes policemen lock and wax-seal Lainchaur Banquet, a party venue, on the Nepal Scouts property at Lainchaur on Thursday evening. Nepali Congress lawmaker Deepak Khadka is accused of illegally occupying the property.

Government formation in provinces getting knottier

Experts blame central leaders’ interference and the electoral system for instability in all provinces.

PURUSHOTTAM POUDEL
KATHMANDU, APRIL 18

As parties intensely engage in forming coalitions in the provinces, formation of the sub-national governments has become knottier by the day.

Amid a dramatic turn of events, Sudurpashchim Head Najir Miya appointed Dirgha Sodari of the CPN (Unified Socialist) as chief minister of the province on Thursday. Sodari presented his claim to the position with the backing of the CPN-UML, the CPN (Maoist Centre) and the Nagarik Unmukti Party and an independent lawmaker. The extended deadline to lay claim to the position ended at 5pm Thursday.

When the UML-Maoist Centre coalition decided to support Nagarik Unmukti leader Kailash Chaudhary for the position earlier, the Unified Socialist, which is a partner in the ruling coalition at the centre, had joined the main opposition Nepali Congress to support another Nagarik Unmukti lawmaker as the chief minister.

The Sudurpashchim move of the Unified Socialist created ripples in Kathmandu earlier this week, prompting top leaders including UML chair KP Sharma Oli and Unified Socialist leaders to trade blame. Oli accused the Unified Socialist of showing a ‘non-political’ culture while the Unified Socialist leaders accused the UML and Maoist leaders of breaching an understanding reached with them.

On Thursday, Unified Socialist chair Madhav Nepal held a meeting with Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba, who reportedly expressed his readiness to support him to form the provincial government if needed.

Then, the UML became ready to support Sodari for the post. However, a faction of Nagarik Unmukti led by Reshamlal Chaudhary, who commands the support of five of the seven members of the assembly, stood against party chair Ranjita Shrestha’s decision to support Sodari. Immediately after the appointment, five members of the Unmukti Party wrote to the province head, asking him not to validate the support of the party’s other two lawmakers.

Unified Socialist leaders said their party gave the vote of confidence to Bagmati Chief Minister Shalikram

Jamkattel on April 1 only after the assurance from the UML and the Maoist Centre to help the party in leading the Sudurpashchim government. However, on April 14, the day before the deadline to appoint chief minister of Sudurpashchim Province, the UML-Maoist leadership allegedly backtracked on its promise to assist the Unified Socialist in Sudurpashchim and decided to back the Nagarik Unmukti’s Kailash Chaudhary as the chief minister of the province.

Laxman Kishor Chaudhary, a provincial assembly member of the Nagarik Unmukti from the Rashamlal Chaudhary faction, told the Post over the phone that they will go to the Supreme Court against Sodari’s appointment.

“I already had submitted my claim for the position of chief minister, but Provincial Head Miya delayed the appointment by unnecessarily extending the deadline,” Chaudhary told the Post. “We do not support Sodari as the chief minister and will rather file a petition in the Supreme Court.”

Unified Socialist leader Prakash Jwala, however, claimed that Sodari still commands a majority even if some of the Nagarik Unmukti members move the Supreme Court against his appointment.

“Ranjita Shrestha is the legitimate leader of Nagarik Unmukti Party and two members of her party have supported our chief minister in Sudurpashchim Province,” Jwala told the Post. “Sodari’s appointment as chief minister is legal.”

Sodari is supported by 10 members of the Maoist Centre, 10 from the UML, four from the Unified Socialist, 2 of the Nagarik Unmukti and one independent member which totals 27 members needed for the appointment, Jwala said.

The Sudurpashchim provincial assembly is 53-strong where the Congress is the largest party with 18 members. The Rastriya Prajatantra Party has one member that is in the opposition camp with the Congress.

Khagaraj Adhikari of the UML was appointed the chief minister of Gandaki on April 7. But the Congress immediately challenged his appointment as Speaker Krishna Prasad Dhital was also listed among the assembly members who supported his bid. Surendra Pandey, the Nepali Congress leader in Gandaki Province, filed a petition in the Supreme

Court on April 9 saying that Adhikari’s appointment was unconstitutional as the Speaker was counted among the supporters to garner a majority in Adhikari’s favour.

A similar case happened a year ago in Koshi Province where the Speaker cast his vote to former chief minister Uddav Thapa but it was later nullified as the Supreme Court ruled that the move was unconstitutional.

The UML that had challenged Gautam’s move in the Supreme Court last year involved the Speaker to garner a majority in favour of Adhikari in Gandaki this time around.

The top court has already asked the Adhikari government not to make any decision having lasting implications. The hearing on the petition is scheduled for April 22.

The Koshi government is again in trouble. After the UML and the Maoist Centre withdrew their support, Chief Minister Kedar Karki lost the majority in the assembly. The two opposition parties in Koshi asked him either to prove his majority in the provincial assembly or resign. But he has been defying.

As the UML-Maoist coalition staked their claim to form the government in Koshi, Karki has been trying to stick to power. The opposition parties have demanded a special session of the assembly but Karki has written to the Speaker against that.

Experts said that such problems arose due to political leaders’ tendency to control provincial affairs from the centre.

“Our political leaders are using provincial governments as a power-sharing platform, frequently inviting this kind of problems,” former National Assembly member Khim Lal Devkota, who is also an expert on federalism, said. “If a new alliance forms again at the centre, the provincial governments will face the same problem immediately.”

One and a half years since the November 2022 elections, the provincial governments have seen many ups and downs. The instability in central politics has made provincial governments unstable every time.

The changes in provincial governments was triggered by the March 4 move of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal when he ditched his coalition partner Nepali Congress to form a new

alliance with the main opposition the CPN-UML and three other parties including the CPN (Unified Socialist).

Provincial governments particularly in Koshi, Gandaki and Sudurpashchim have been shaken. Also other provincial governments in Bagmati, Madhesh, Lumbini and Karnali have failed to function smoothly due to the wrangling between ruling parties over the sharing of ministerial portfolios.

Devkota believes that the present structure of governance should be reframed to make provincial governments stable. “Nepal need not have adopted federalism, but since we have already embraced federal governance, we now must make it sustainable,” he added. “The current structure of provincial governments will not work in the long run,” Devkota told the Post. “We had not envisioned provinces that would face problems with the change of alliance at the centre.”

Krishna Pokharel, a professor of political science, says a direct implication of central politics is seen in the provincial governments due to the provincial leaders’ inability to work on their own. He pointed out numerous instances of provincial leaders inviting central leaders to interfere when it suits their interest.

“Our problem is that politicians are still practising the centralised system against the spirit of the federal constitution,” Professor Pokharel told the Post. “The problem is seen because the provincial leaders are not given the autonomy needed to run a province effectively.”

Pokharel also blamed the fractured electoral mandate for the problems in the provincial governments. The present electoral system has slim chances of giving a single party majority seats in both federal and provincial legislatures, he said.

Devkota echoed Pokharel. For him, a directly elected chief minister answerable to the provincial assembly provides stability to the provincial government. He also claims to have advised senior leaders of major parties to change the electoral system to ensure stable governments.

“There is no harm in abandoning the proportional electoral system and making the direct election inclusive to solve the instability problem,” Devkota added.

Carbon financing could retire dozens of coal plants in South-east Asia by 2030

DAVID FOGARTY
SINGAPORE, APRIL 18

Dozens of coal-fired power plants, many of them in South-east Asia, could be retired early by 2030 by using a carbon financing initiative, a sustainability conference heard on April 17.

The Rockefeller Foundation-led Coal to Clean Credit Initiative (CCCI) guides power plant owners and their investors to use carbon offsets to fund early plant retirement. These transition credits are nascent but have strong support from Singapore’s central bank and other financial institutions.



Transition credits aim to monetise the emissions savings from the early closure of coal plants. Revenue would come from the sale of high-integrity carbon credits to companies or governments, with each credit representing a tonne of emissions avoided by shutting a power plant early.

In many cases, the early closure of each power plant is likely to avoid millions of tonnes of emissions.

The goal of CCCI is to retire 60 coal plants globally by 2030 and transition credit financing is a key lever for achieving that, said Ms Elizabeth Yee, the Rockefeller Foundation’s executive vice-president of programmes.

She was speaking during Ecosperity Week 2024, a sustainability conference convened by Singapore’s investment company Temasek, held from April 15 to 17 at Sands Expo and Convention Centre.

Many of the 60 coal plants she mentioned would be in South-east Asia, Dr Joseph Curtin, managing director of the power and climate team at the Rockefeller Foundation, told The Straits Times.

“When you take the whole subset of eligible coal plants, there could be a couple of thousand globally. So we think trying to get 50 or 60 across the line by 2030 is a realistic objective,” he said.

Ms Yee said: “Coal is the single largest contributor to global emissions and it accounts for 20 per cent of global emissions and 70 per cent of power emissions. And it is the leading cause of premature death in the world—worldwide, 800,000 people perish early.”

In South-east Asia, coal power plants are the main source of electricity and a major source of air pollution and carbon emissions driving climate change. Many of the plants are young, with an average age of less than 15 years.

Coal plants have a lifespan of 40 to 50 years, and investors recoup their money via long-term power-purchase contracts with utilities. This means that closing them early is costly. Carbon finance can help bridge the gap by funding the forgone revenues and the costs of swopping coal power for renewable energy.

Also key to the transition is funding to retrain coal plant workers affected by early plant closures.

In December, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) launched the Transition Credits Coalition, or Traction, which is backed by nearly 30 members and will study the challenges and propose solutions to scale the early retirement of coal-fired power plants in Asia.

On the sidelines of the COP28 cli-

mate talks, MAS announced it was collaborating with the Philippines’ ACEN Corporation, the listed energy platform of the Ayala Group, and the Rockefeller Foundation for a first pilot of the CCCI.

The partnership focuses on a 246MW coal plant owned by ACEN with the aim to retire the plant by as soon as 2030, which is 25 years ahead of the end of its technical life. It plans to use a mix of carbon credit revenues and low-cost climate finance to achieve this.

The plant is currently due to close by 2040. According to a study, closing it 10 years earlier could avoid up to 19 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, said the Rockefeller Foundation on April 17.

The Rocky Mountain Institute in

the United States led the CO2 reduction assessment. The goal is to replace the coal plant with clean power and battery storage, and provide financial support for workers affected by the early closure.

How does CCCI work?

CCCI is mainly a de-risking tool to provide an additional revenue stream and make a phase-out deal more appealing to other investors, the foundation said.

Not all power plants would be eligible. The CCCI methodology is very conservative in terms of calculating emissions reduction credits that could be issued. A key element is ensuring that power plant owners are committed to not building any new coal power plants anywhere else in the world.

The CCCI methodology has been developed over several years and is currently being reviewed by Verra, the world’s leading organisation that verifies carbon credit methodologies, and projects and issues carbon offsets, Ms Yee said. The foundation has helped fund the development of the methodology and provide other technical support.

Dr Curtin said more projects are being considered under CCCI.

“We’re exploring a portfolio of potential pilot projects, including in Indonesia. We’re undertaking due diligence on one project in Indonesia at the moment,” he added.

The Asian Development Bank



PHOTO: THE STRAITS TIMES

The eight-unit Suralaya coal-fired power plant in Cilegon, Banten.

FOREX	
US Dollar	133.97
Euro	142.96
Pound Sterling	167.1
Swiss Franc	147.38
Australian Dollar	86.28
Canadian Dollar	97.35
Singapore Dollar	98.5
Japanese Yen (10)	8.67
Chinese Yuan	18.51
Saudi Arab Riyal	35.71
Qatari Riyal	36.73
Thai Bhat	3.65
UAE Dhiram	36.48
Malaysian Ringgit	28.01
Korean Won (100)	9.75

Exchange rates fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank

SHARES	
Nepse (in percent)	1,972.14pts -0.98%
HIGHEST LOSERS	
RURU	-9.99
GULF	-9.39
CBLD88	-8.89
CYCL	-6.12
SBLD89	-5.84
WNLB	-5.6
MODERATE LOSERS	
SIGS3	-0.12
BNT	-0.11
ADBL	-0.09
3BBD85	-0.05
SPHL	-0.02
CBBL	-0.01
MODERATE GAINERS	
KKHC	7.94
PFL	6.21
NICGF2	5.71
MBJC	5.7
PPL	5.59
JOSHI	4.51
HIGHEST GAINERS	
PBLD8E	0.19
KBL	0.15
NBLGF	0.13
PBD88	0.1
PRIN	0.06
NIBD84	0.01

BULLION		PRICE PER TOLA
 Fine Gold		Rs 138,600
 Silver		Rs 1,725
SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA		

■ BIZLINE

British airline EasyJet cuts losses despite Gaza fallout

LONDON: EasyJet said on Thursday it expected first-half losses to be cut by more than £50 million (\$62 million) as strong holiday demand offset higher fuel prices and disruption from the Gaza war. The no-frills carrier forecast pre-tax losses of between £340 and £360 million in its six months to the end of March, which would be an improvement on the equivalent period a year earlier. EasyJet, which flies mainly in Europe, paused flights to and from Israel after the Gaza war started in October. It resumed flights to and from Tel Aviv at the end of March but following Iran’s weekend attack on Israel, EasyJet on Tuesday said it would again pause services until October 27. **(AFP)**

Taiwan chip giant TSMC’s profits surge on AI demand

TAIPEI: Taiwanese semiconductor giant TSMC announced Thursday a nearly 9 percent increase in net profits in the first quarter of 2024, buoyed by global demand for its microchips used to power everything from mobile phones to AI technology. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company—whose clients include Apple and Nvidia—controls more than half the world’s output of silicon chips, which have been called the “lifeblood” of the modern world. The company said Thursday its net profit increased 8.9 percent on-year in January-March to NT\$225.4 billion (\$6.97 billion) compared to NT\$206.9 billion in the same period last year.

Cost-cutting boosts Nokia earnings in first quarter

HELSINKI: Cost-cutting helped Finnish telecoms equipment maker Nokia on Thursday report a 52-percent rise in first-quarter net profit to 438 million euros even though sales plunged nearly 20 percent. Nokia posted sales of 4.67 billion euros, down by a fifth from a year ago in a “challenging environment”. It mobile networks activity was hit by operators’ declining investments in North America and India. The firm announced in October it would cut up to 14,000 jobs out of 86,000 employees due to weakening demand for 5G equipment in the two key markets. “As expected, the ongoing market weakness drove a 19 percent year-on-year constant currency decline in net sales in the first quarter”, Nokia chief executive Pekka Lundmark said in a statement. **(AFP)**

Markets rise as traders consider US rate outlook

HONG KONG: Stock markets in Asia and Europe rose Thursday with traders mulling the outlook for US interest rates as Federal Reserve officials questioned the need for a cut anytime soon. Oil extended the previous day’s losses, fuelled by data indicating softer demand in the United States and fading fears of a regional war in the Middle East. Investors brushed off a sell-off on Wall Street where tech firms were hit by worries that borrowing costs will be kept elevated longer than expected. **(AFP)**

Central bank panel proposes monthly QR code payment limit at IRs100,000 for Nepalis in India

But the limit does not apply for payments to be made for services in hotels, hospitals and chemist shops in India.

■ KRISHANA PRASAIN
KATHMANDU, APRIL 18

A panel formed by Nepal’s central bank has suggested capping payments made via quick response (QR) code for Nepali nationals in India at IRs 100,000 (Rs160,000) per month, either in one go or cumulatively.

However, there will be no limits for making payments through quick QR codes at hotels, hospitals (hospital and research centres) and medicine shops, according to a draft report prepared by the panel which has been published on the Nepal Rastra Bank’s website to collect suggestions from the public.

Likewise, to allow Nepalis to make online purchases of goods and services from third countries (whose currencies are convertible in Nepal) via QR code, the limit has been proposed at \$2,000 a year. For making such purchases, the buyer must have a US dollar account in a Nepali bank, and the purchased goods or services should be used in Nepal. The panel has also suggested a separate provision for those without a US dollar account—such individuals can make online purchases of up to \$500 only, per year. However, such account holders have to request their banks to convert the currency.

The panel has proposed that the charges for the QR code services should be determined by the market. However, the central bank can inspect the charges and limitations as needed, according to the draft report titled ‘Provisions related to international retail payments to be made through mobile and internet banking and inter-bank transactions through QR code.’

The panel made the draft public on Tuesday asking for suggestions and feedback.

These provisions are in line with the existing rules related to foreign exchange services.

On March 1, India launched the payment system through QR codes in Nepal.

Payments for purchases made through mobile phones have been seen as a milestone in cross-border digital payment between Nepal and India, addressing numerous hassles faced by citizens of both countries who rely on banknotes.

Although India implemented the system swiftly from March 1, the Nepali side has been dilly-dallying as the central bank said it would take time to set transaction limits for digital wallets.



SHUTTERSTOCK

The central bank draft report says that after the ‘personal payment transfer’ system is implemented, the ‘merchant payment transfers’ will be implemented in the second phase.

The bank then constituted a task force to set the transaction limits. The task force produced the draft report on Tuesday, subject to an approval by the Nepal Rastra Bank.

“We have kept the draft in the public domain seeking suggestions and have provided a month to give feedback. Once we receive suggestions and feedback, we will review the draft and implement the provisions, which will enable Nepalis to make payments using QR codes in India and other countries,” said Gunakar Bhatta, executive director at the Payment Systems Department of Nepal Rastra Bank.

He said that the proposed transaction limits for QR codes-based cross-border payment transactions are the same as payment in card systems.

Another central bank official said that if things go as planned, the cross-border payment

service in India will begin by June.

On June 1 last year, Nepal and India signed a memorandum of understanding for cross-border digital payment to ease digital transactions for business people, students, and tourists from both countries.

On February 15 this year, Nepal Rastra Bank and Reserve Bank of India signed and exchanged Terms of Reference for interlinking the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) of India and the National Payment Interface of Nepal.

The integration is aimed at facilitating cross-border remittances between India and Nepal by enabling users of the two systems to make instant fund transfers at low costs.

According to the proposed draft report, all types of retail payments to be made through QR codes should be done through the National

At IMF, Brazil and France renew push for ‘fairer’ international taxation

■ AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON, APRIL 18

The international community must do more to make the world’s richest companies and individuals pay their “fair” share of taxes, Brazil and France’s finance ministers said on Wednesday.

Brazil, which is chairing the G20 this year, has been pushing for the group of nations which together account for 80 percent of the world’s economy to adopt a shared stance on preventing tax-dodging by billionaires by the summer.

“Fair international taxation is not just a topic of choice for progressive economists, but a key concern at the very heart of macroeconomic management today,” Brazilian finance minister Fernando Haddad said during an IMF event in Washington.

“Without international cooperation, there is a limit to what states can do, both rich and developing ones,” he added. Haddad called on countries to “enhance revenue mobilization through fair, transparent, efficient and more progressive tax systems” to

make the system “fairer.”

Sitting alongside Haddad at the IMF event, French finance minister Bruno Le Maire renewed his calls for a global minimum tax—and backed calls for a crackdown on tax avoidance.

France is among the world’s advanced economies that have thrown their support behind a 15 percent global minimum tax rate, and has already implemented a minimum tax on the world’s tech giants.

“The future of the world cannot be a race to the bottom,” Le Maire said. “This is true also of taxation.”

In January this year, the European Union introduced a 15 percent minimum tax for multinational companies active in the 27-member trading bloc.

According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), a global minimum tax could bring in an additional \$200 billion in revenues per year.

Le Maire also called on the world’s richest individuals to pay more in tax, outlining a series of steps to boost transparency and information-sharing between countries.

US to reimpose oil sanctions on Venezuela

■ AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON, APRIL 18

The United States said Wednesday it will snap back sanctions on Venezuela’s crucial oil industry after President Nicolas Maduro’s government continued its repression of opponents.

President Joe Biden’s administration suspended some sanctions after Maduro’s government and the opposition agreed in Barbados last October to hold a free and fair vote in 2024 under the watchful eye of international observers.

But the thaw ended when Maduro’s opponents were not allowed to run against him in elections, and the United States said Caracas had now failed to make progress ahead of an April 18 deadline.

“We are concerned that Maduro and his representatives prevented the democratic opposition from registering the candidate of their choice, harassed and intimidated political opponents, and unjustly detained numerous political actors and members of civil society,” State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said in a statement.

“We again call on Maduro to allow all candidates and parties to participate in the electoral process and release all political prisoners without

restrictions or delay.”

Oil companies would have a winding-down period until May 31 to comply with the sanctions, Miller said.

However Washington would “continue to assess sanctions policy” based on the Maduro government’s actions leading up to the election, the State Department said.

Venezuela has the largest proven oil reserves in the world, but production has plummeted after years of mismanagement and crushing sanctions.

Caracas vowed its oil sector would keep going regardless of US policy.

“We will not stop, with or without a license,” Petroleum Minister Pedro Tellechea told reporters ahead of Washington’s announcement.

The sanctions move is not without risk for Biden as he makes his own bid for reelection this year.

Venezuelan authorities have previously threatened to hit Biden in the sensitive area of migration. More than seven million Venezuelans have fled over the past decade, with many coming to the United States.

Caracas has previously warned it will cancel migrant repatriation flights which started under the October deal if Washington continues with its “economic aggression.”

Sanctions could also hit oil prices just as Americans face growing costs at the pump and rising inflation, and

polls show that US voters are not buying Biden’s sunny messages about the economy.

The Barbados agreement collapsed after state institutions loyal to the regime disqualified Maduro’s main challenger Maria Corina Machado, and a proxy candidate, from running in the elections due on July 28.

In comments to AFP, Machado said the reimposition of sanctions was the result of “a brutal wave of repression” under Maduro.

“This is the consequence of having failed to fulfill their part of the agreement,” Machado said.

Maduro, the anointed heir of the late firebrand anti-US leader Hugo Chavez, will be seeking a third six-year term after 11 years in office marked by sanctions, economic collapse and accusations of widespread repression.

Dozens of countries including the United States rejected the results of 2018 elections that were won by Maduro and boycotted by the opposition.

Most Western and Latin American countries switched recognition to then opposition leader Juan Guaido.

But years of sanctions and other pressure failed to dislodge Maduro who enjoys support from a political patronage system, the military and from Cuba, Russia and China.

Going ‘backwards’? Whistleblowers slam Boeing safety culture

■ AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK, APRIL 18

Witnesses at a US Senate hearing on Boeing drew a disturbing picture on Wednesday of an aviation giant that blows off safety questions and sidelines critics as it chases faster production and bigger profits.

“The attitude from Boeing from the highest level is just to push the defective parts, regardless of what it is,” Boeing engineer Sam Salehpour told lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

Salehpour, who has worked at Boeing for 17 of his 40 years in aerospace, said he became a whistleblower after he was punished for raising safety questions about the top-selling 787 Dreamliner and 777.

He testified that he was blackballed by company higher-ups and feared for his personal well-being after raising concerns about safety.

He maintains that the Dreamliner could show premature signs of fatigue, resulting in a catastrophic accident because of excessively large gaps in the plane’s assembly. He likened it to a paper clip that is bent repeatedly.

“You do it once or twice, it doesn’t break, but it breaks at some time,” said Salehpour, who has said the entire 787 fleet should be grounded for investigation.

Boeing acknowledged imperfections, but said it was making progress.

“We know we have more work to do



AFP/RS

(Left to right) Boeing engineer, Sam Salehpour; Foundation for Aviation Safety Executive Director, Ed Pierson; Foundation for Aviation Safety engineer, Joe Jacobsen; and Ohio State University Professional Practice Assistant Professor Shawn, Pruchnicki are sworn in before the US Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Investigations during a hearing on ‘Examining Boeing’s Broken Safety Culture: Firsthand Accounts,’ at Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, on April 17.

and we are taking action across our company,” the company said after the hearing, pointing to an uptick in its “Speak Up” portal to field employee input. Boeing has pushed back against Salehpour’s allegations about the 787, pointing to extensive testing that shows no signs of fatigue.

It also said that it had addressed the gap issue during a period when it slowed production and suspended deliveries—a process tightly overseen by the Federal Aviation Administration.

The FAA said in response to Salehpour’s claims that the 787s currently flying are in compliance.

The aircraft also received an endorsement Wednesday from United Airlines Chief Executive Scott Kirby, who told CNBC he was “totally confident the 787 is a safe airplane.”

Lawmakers expressed alarm at testimony about alleged widespread manufacturing and quality control problems throughout Boeing’s fleet, as well as the overly deferential approach of the FAA, which one witness

described as “captive” to Boeing.

“This requires a full-blown investigation,” said Republican Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, calling for future hearings to hear from pilots, the airlines and other witnesses.

Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, who chaired the hearing, said representatives of Boeing and the FAA were already scheduled to appear.

The hearing comes as regulators escalate scrutiny of Boeing in the wake of a near-disastrous January 5 Alaska Airlines flight, in which a 737

Arteta urges Arsenal to use Bayern ‘pain’ to fuel title bid

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MUNICH, APRIL 18

Mikel Arteta has urged Arsenal to use the “pain” of the Champions League quarter-final exit against Bayern Munich to fuel their Premier League title bid.

Arteta’s side failed to clinch a first semi-final appearance since 2009 as Joshua Kimmich’s second half header gave Bayern a 1-0 second leg win and a 3-2 aggregate success.

It was a bitter evening in Munich for Arteta and his players, who had dreamed of leading Arsenal to their maiden Champions League crown.

After a blistering run carried them to the top of the Premier League and into the Champions League last eight, Arsenal have endured a nightmare week. They were below their best in the 2-2 first leg draw with Bayern, then surrendered pole position in the Premier League after conceding two late goals in a 2-0 home defeat against Aston Villa on Saturday.

After producing another underwhelming display in Germany, Arteta has to find a way to lift his team’s shattered morale in time for a last push for the English title.

“We were very close, that is the reality. It’s painful, but we have to learn from this,” Arteta said.

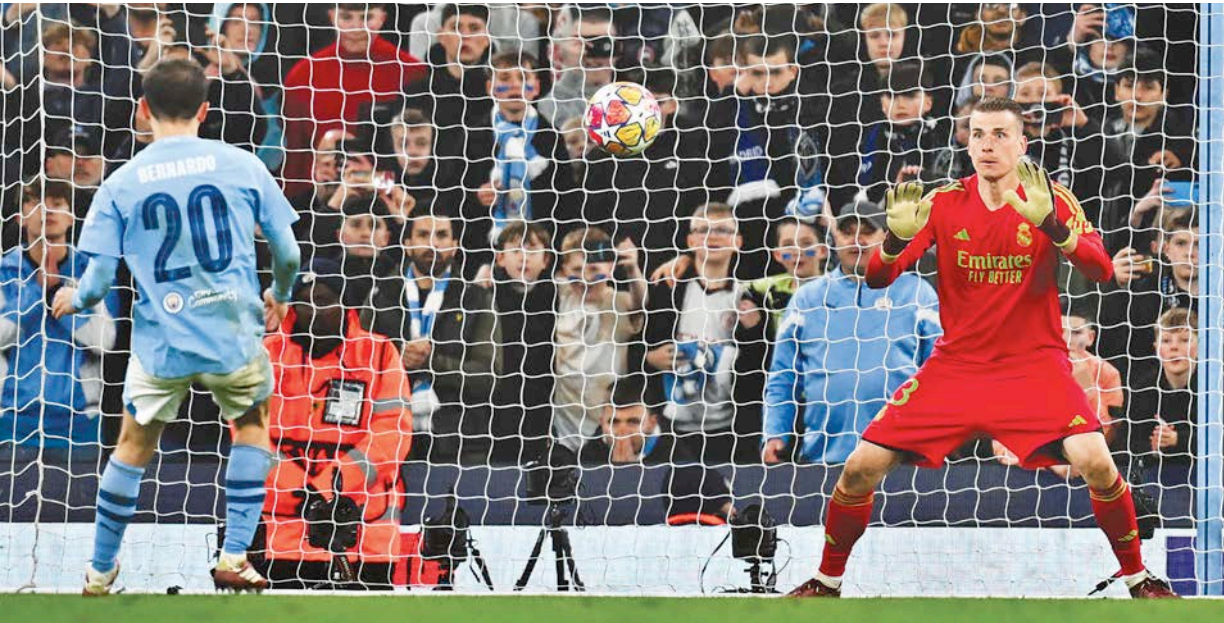
Arsenal have little time to lick their wounds, with the title race approaching a gripping conclusion.

Arteta’s side are in second place, two points behind leaders Man City. Third placed Liverpool trail Arsenal on goal difference, with all three clubs having six games left.

With City playing Chelsea in the FA Cup semi-finals this weekend, the Gunners have a chance to return to first place if they win at Wolves on Saturday.

Real Madrid adapt to Champions League needs: Shock and awe one week, armadillo defence the next

Carlo Ancelotti’s team reached a record 17th semi-final and are on the course to add to their unequaled haul of 14 European Cups.



Andriy Lunin was Real Madrid’s saviour on Wednesday night after stopping penalties by Manchester City’s Bernardo Silva and Mateo Kovacic.

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BARCELONA, APRIL 18

Antonio Rudiger stared down the goal-keeper, took a deep breath, and drilled home the decisive penalty, proving once again there is no tougher task in club football than beating Real Madrid in the Champions League.

Madrid’s victory over Manchester City after a penalty shootout on Wednesday sent them to a record 17th semi-final appearance and kept them on course to add to their unequaled haul of 14 European Cups.

It was fitting that Rudiger finished

off City after he anchored a spirited defensive effort by Madrid that weathered wave after wave of attacks by Pep Guardiola’s side.

For Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti, it was a question of survival.

“There was only one way to get out of here alive. We had to dig in and fight hard,” Ancelotti said. “We showed the attitude and commitment demanded by this jersey. This is a very special competition for us and we always deliver something that people are not expecting us to produce. Everyone was writing us off but we’re still here.”

Those football purists who delight in Guardiola’s passing-and-pressure game (think Barcelona fans) like to say Madrid lack a distinctive style. But as Ancelotti has said, he doesn’t want his team to have a “set philosophy” that would make it predictable; his team must be chameleonic so it can adapt to each rivals, each game, each moment.

Madrid’s top scorer Jude Bellingham credited Ancelotti with letting his players expose their individual talents in order to make the team versatile.

“I think our biggest strength is that

he finds a way to let our boys play with freedom,” Bellingham said.

City completely dominated the ball in the away leg of their quarter-final in Manchester—even though they never led and needed Kevin De Bruyne to cancel out Rodrygo’s opener—and hemmed mighty Madrid into their box for most of the match and extra time.

But Madrid showed that their strength lies in their ability to do whatever is needed to get a win. Ancelotti’s bunch matched City’s scoring prowess last week in the 3-3 draw in Spain’s capital, and then at Etihad Stadium they had no qualms packing their area and hanging on for dear life.

Rudiger solidified his status as Madrid’s sheriff at the back. The Germany player has also helped Madrid lead the Spanish league after fellow central defenders David Alaba and Eder Militao went down with injury earlier in the season.

Last season, when City beat Madrid in the semi-final on their way to winning the title, Rudiger was left on the bench at the start of a 4-0 loss in Manchester. This time, he played both legs that ended 4-4 on aggregate.

De Bruyne’s equaliser came after Rudiger’s only blemish of an otherwise superb outing when the City midfielder fired in a ball the defender failed to clear. Otherwise, Rudiger bossed the area and again kept Erling Haaland scoreless.

And when City’s talented passers did manage to create a rare opening in Madrid’s box, there was Andriy Lunin to stop them.

The Ukrainian goalkeeper entered the preseason as the backup to the injured Courtois Thibaut and had to

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE		
QUARTER-FINALS, SECOND LEGS		
In Munich, Germany		
Bayern Munich	1-0	Arsenal
Bayern Munich win 3-2 on aggregate.		
In Manchester, England		
Man City	1-1	Real Madrid
After extra time, 4-4 on aggregate; Real Madrid win 4-3 on penalties.		

earn the starting job after Kepa Arrizabalaga’s arrival. Lunin was the team’s saviour on Wednesday night after stopping penalties by Bernardo Silva and Mateo Kovacic. His saves tilted the shootout in Madrid’s favour after Luka Modric missed their first kick.

Rudiger may have even played a part in Lunin’s save of Kovacic’s try. Rudiger gestured to Lunin that Kovacic, who Rudiger played with at Chelsea, would shoot to Lunin’s right—and he was right.

Lunin said he was “exhausted” after helping to defend 18 corners—to one for Madrid—and absorb 34 goal attempts by City.

“You can’t always play with the ball or be the best team on the pitch,” Lunin said. “It was an amazing experience for me and the team put in an incredible effort for the 120 minutes.”

Guardiola praised his team’s effort and recognised that to best Madrid, who also knocked his team out two years ago when Rodrygo sparked a late comeback, required more than just a good game.

“To beat Real Madrid, we had to perform our best,” the Catalan coach said. “We were our best but it was not enough.”

Kantipur Half Marathon on May 18

SPORTS BUREAU
KATHMANDU, APRIL 18

The 12th edition of the Kantipur Half Marathon is set to ignite the streets on May 18.

Kantipur Media Group first organised the road-running event on February 19, 2011 to commemorate its 18th anniversary. The event has been continued annually since, establishing itself as one of the premier events in the country.

The one-day event features men’s and women’s half-marathons, a corporate run, and a wheelchair race, and sees participation of thousands of runners—including foreign nationals—every year.

The KMG has roped in Global IME

Bank as its chief sponsor for the event. Kantipur’s Marketing Manager Sagar KC and Global IME Bank’s Marketing Chief Dilip Pokharel signed a Memorandum of Understanding amid a function on Thursday.

“Kantipur Half Marathon has become a brand after more than a decade long journey. This event has been one of the top choices for numerous athletes,” said KC.

“Runners eager to participate in the event can fill out a registration form from Kantipur Office in Thapathali and Global IME Bank’s branch office in the capital,” KC shared.

The registration will open on Sunday. The form can also be filled

out through the Kantipur Half Marathon’s official website, according to the KMG.

Global IME Bank’s Marketing Chief Pokharel said he expects this year’s Kantipur Half Marathon to be as grand as previous editions.

Tournament’s director and Nepal Athletics Association Member RK Bista highlighted that the Kantipur Half Marathon has drawn interest from all quarters of the society due to its distinct identity.

The event is organised with the technical assistance of the association.

Last year, Tribhuvan Army Club’s Mukesh Pal and Nepal Police Club’s Rajpura Pachhai won the men’s and women’s titles of the 21.1 km race respectively.



Kantipur Media Group’s Marketing Manager Sagar KC (second right) and Global IME Bank’s Marketing Chief Dilip Pokharel (second left) exchange an MoU during a function in Kathmandu on Thursday.

HOROSCOPE



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Tune into your financial goals. This day nudges you to make serious moves from behind the scenes, especially when it comes to investing in your sense of emotional security. Expand your horizons, don’t be afraid to deviate from the norm.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Get ready to shine from the inside out. Networking opportunities could emerge in unexpected ways, though you should also take care to search for new avenues of connectivity. Be mindful to maintain composure this afternoon.



GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Go easy when mapping out social engagements for the next few weeks.Reconnect with yourself before another candle lands on your birthday cake.Think practically about your deepest desires, finding a healthy balance between logic and optimism.



CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Establish new footing within your social sphere throughout the coming month. Use this energy to refine your public image, considering how to use the material realm to give you an edge when standing out.



LEO (July 23-August 22)

Climb steadily toward new heights throughout the coming month.e mindful to maintain patience as milestones appear on the horizon. New commitments, partnerships, or renegotiates could alter your trajectory, so don’t be afraid to lean on your expertise.



VIRGO (August 23-September 22)

Get ready for the most horizon expanding, opportunity granting, and spiritually enlightening time of the year for you, Virgo. The wheel of fortune spins in your direction. You’ll find that it’s easier to maintain balance while taking risks.



LIBRA (September 23-October 22)

Life may begin to feel slightly more serious. Now is the time to stand firm in your quest for divine happiness, digging your roots deeper into people or situations that offer support while unapologetically cutting off that which does not.



SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)

You may notice extra attention from new admirers and potential mates. Fully embrace your effortlessly magnetic aura, using charisma to help you move forward when it comes to love. Finding personal balance will come more easily.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

Your wellness quests ramp up throughout the coming month. Don’t hesitate to invest in classes, tools, or counsels that offer more convivence and opportunities to live your best life, as long as they’re healthy.



CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

You’ll feel more extroverted, this day elevates your social skills, confidence, and creativity. Put action behind your boldest and most artistic ideas.New friendships could be made, especially when obscure topics or interests are shared.



AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)

You’ll be reminded of the importance of family and home today. Use this energy to connect with your intuitive and compassionate side, and consider returning to music, movies, or activities that unleash the child within.



PISCES (February 19-March 20)

Your mind should feel increasingly at ease. Use this energy to hold conversations you’ve been avoiding or finally pull the trigger on any passion projects your psyche has been nursing. Be wary of the tension that could brew midafternoon.

AUSTRALOGY.COM

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 — mater
 - 5 — of life rescue tool
 - 9 Six-pack muscles
 - 12 Bankrupt
 - 13 Pungent bulb
 - 15 Exchange
 - 16 Peru’s — Kola
 - 17 Army
 - 18 — Krishna
 - 19 Berliner’s homeland
 - 21 Sated
 - 23 Swindle
 - 24 Give a bias to
 - 25 Sizable snake
 - 28 Keep for later (2 wds.)
 - 32 Ethereal
 - 33 Bullwinkle foe
 - 34 Convent occupant
 - 35 Guitar cousin
 - 36 Wool cloth
 - 37 Picnic pest
 - 38 Spy novelist
 - 39 Deighton
 - 39 Blank
 - 40 Way back when
 - 41 Dumbfound
 - 43 Life’s work
 - 45 Pub order
 - 46 Circle part
 - 47 Mountain guide
 - 50 Leopard

- DOWN**
- 1 — Gold of “Entourage”
 - 2 Respiratory organ
 - 3 Rodents
 - 4 Lawlessness
 - 5 — Sebastian Bach
 - 6 Soon
 - 7 Thin and powerful
 - 8 Turf
 - 9 “And — we go!”
 - 10 Unadorned
 - 11 Drove recklessly
 - 14 Gift for dad
 - 15 Reveals
 - 20 Bovine cry
 - 22 Pastures
 - 24 Sudden increase
 - 25 Singer — Abdul

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

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

- 26 “Holy cow!”
- 27 River in England
- 28 Lanai
- 29 Silly
- 30 Clueless fellow
- 31 Stage direction
- 33 Brute
- 36 Fuel for Popeye
- 39 Clip
- 40 Field of fruit trees
- 42 Big name in book clubs
- 43 Horse’s gait
- 44 Gallery display
- 47 Missile housing
- 48 White with age
- 49 — Kett of old comics
- 50 Over
- 51 Opposer
- 52 Writer — Wiesel
- 53 Edgar — Burroughs
- 56 Owns
- 58 Craze

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8			9	10	11
12					13				14		15		
16					17					18			
	19			20					21	22			
			23					24					
25	26	27					28				29	30	31
32						33					34		
35					36						37		
38				39						40			
41			42						43	44			
			45						46				
47	48	49					50	51			52	53	
54					55	56					57		58
59					60						61		
62						63					64		

SUDOKU

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

YESTERDAY’S SOLUTION

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

