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Bhairahawa Jomsom

Slow and costly: 'Fast track' passport service lets down applicants

Department accused of breaching trust by failing to deliver passports in 3 days.

○ AARATI RAY
KATHMANDU, MAY 17

At around Friday noon, hundreds of people had gathered outside Room 18, the grievance and complaints section of the Department of Passports in Tripureshwar, Kathmandu.

In the midday heat, they were visibly exhausted. Some sat on the floor, while others milled about, clutching documents and receipts in their hands.

They had each paid Rs12,000 for a passport that was supposed to arrive in three days. But the deadline had already passed.

"I was told I'd get it by Wednesday," said Nim Dorje Sherpa from Bhojpur, who applied for the passport on Monday. "It's already Friday. But I still haven't received it."

Sherpa had arrived in Kathmandu from Bhojpur, hoping to get his passport quickly and to be able to process for his UK visit on time. Instead, like hundreds of others, he now found himself stranded.

Despite promises of "fast-track" processing of passport delivery within three days for a raised fee of Rs12,000, applicants report delays of up to a week. While officials often blame "technical glitch," applicants see it as a reflection of long-standing institutional rot and neglect in government offices.

Sherpa lamented he had already spent around Rs40,000 on the passport, including on transport and accommodation.

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Plotting of forest, farm and public land for housing ongoing at Kakrebari in Suryabinayak-9, Bhaktapur, in this picture taken on Monday. The illegal excavation hasn't stopped despite objections from local residents, local people's representatives and the district administration.

Host of climate-related issues discussed on 2nd day of Sagarmatha Sambaad

Some experts see climate change more as a governance issue than a scientific problem.

○ POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, MAY 17

The Sagarmatha Sambaad continues to take up various facets of the climate crisis that the world is confronting and discusses how indigenous and local knowledge and science can work together to mitigate the crisis.

Experts, academicians, officials, local leaders and stakeholders spoke on Saturday during eight parallel sessions. The first edition of the Sambaad that kicked off on Friday took up

issues related to the climate crisis on the theme "Climate change, mountains and the future of humanity".

Achim Stenier, administrator at the United Nations Development Programme, sent a video message where he hailed the Sambaad, and reiterated the urgent global call for mitigation and adaptation.

He highlighted how UNDP is supporting 45 mountain countries including Nepal in mitigation and adaptation measures.

"Glaciers face the threat of burst-

ing. We are supporting Nepal with the early warning system," he said, praising the country for pushing the agenda of mountain countries.

Yubraj Khatiwada, former finance minister and economic adviser to Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, highlighted the magnitude of the climate crisis and stressed on climate justice. Chairing a roundtable conference, he raised the issue of climate financing to help countries affected by the climate crisis.

>> Continued on page 2

Proposed casino law to tighten rules, curb foreign investment

Bill, part of Integrated Tourism Act, envisages ownership caps, tighter licensing, and stricter compliance measures.

○ SANGAM PRASAIN
KATHMANDU, MAY 17

The government has proposed lowering the threshold for foreign direct investment (FDI) in the casino sector and introducing regulatory reforms to better manage Nepal's expanding gaming industry.

While these measures are intended to clarify the law and attract more global players, some operators warn that certain provisions in the proposed legislation could prove counter-productive.

In June 2018, the government drafted a stand-alone Casino Act for the first time to provide a clear legal framework for the sector and to facilitate the entry of international operators. This came in anticipation of a surge in demand, fuelled by a rapid increase in the construction of luxury hotels across the country.

However, this original plan has now been revised. Instead of a separate legislation, the proposed Casino Act is embedded in the newly tabled Integrated Tourism Bill in Parliament.

At present, the operation of casinos in Nepal is governed primarily by the Casino Regulation of 2013.

The past decade has seen a sharp increase in hotel infrastructure, with the number of five-star hotels rising from 10 to 26, including three five-star deluxe establishments. Four-star

hotels have also grown significantly, with 41 in operation by the end of the last fiscal year. Until 2015, Nepal had only two four-star hotels—Hotel Himalaya and Hotel Shanker.

The proposed bill allows foreign investors to hold up to 49 percent equity in joint ventures, with the remainder reserved for domestic partners. This contrasts with the current regulation, which allows foreign investors to own up to 90 percent of a casino business.

While the existing regulation explicitly bars Nepali citizens from entering the casinos, the bill is silent on whether this restriction will continue, be modified, or removed altogether under the new legal framework.

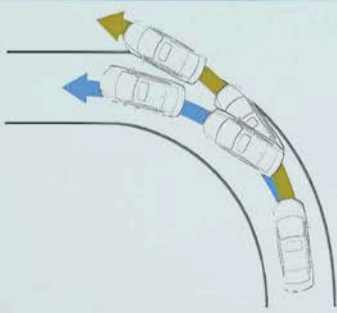
This omission leaves a significant gap, raising questions over the government's future stance on local people's access to gambling establishments.

>> Continued on page 5



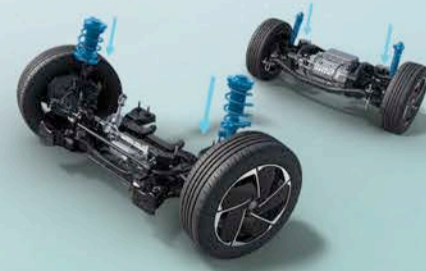
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NATIONAL

BRIEFING

Windstorm kills four, injures 28 across Nepal

KATHMANDU: A powerful windstorm that swept across Nepal on Friday has claimed the lives of four people and injured at least 28 others, according to Nepal Police. The storm has also caused significant damages to property and infrastructure in various parts of the country. The deceased include 14-year-old Shukna Kewat from Kapilvastu; 54-year-old Rambha Devi Dhanuk from Bara; and 30-year-old Mira Bayambu; and 40-year-old Durga Bahadur Pun from Nawalparasi West. Senior Superintendent of Police Ramesh Thapa, spokesperson for Nepal Police, confirmed that six houses and two animal sheds were damaged in the storm. In Nawalparasi East, the windstorm also brought down the transmission tower of Nawalpur FM 104.4 MHz in Kawasoti, halting its radio broadcasts. Preliminary estimates by police indicate that the storm caused damages worth approximately Rs1.08 billion. On the same day, there were 18 incidents of fire and 59 reported cases of lightning strikes across the country, prompting emergency response and data collection efforts by authorities.

Man electrocuted while working on electricity pole in Kavre

KAVRE: A worker died from electrocution while working on an electric pole in Dhulikhel of Kavre district. According to Deputy Superintendent of Police Min Bahadur Ghale, spokesperson for the District Police Office, the deceased has been identified as 28-year-old Ujjwal Nepali (Pariyar) from Lalbandi Municipality in Sarlahi district. The incident occurred at around 11:30 am on Saturday at Sanjeebani Chowk in Ward No 7 of Dhulikhel Municipality. Nepali was working on an 11,000-volt high-tension power line when he was electrocuted.

Private schools another stumbling block for House subpanel on Education Bill

Lawmakers are on the same page that private schools cannot remain profit-oriented, but they have not found consensus on how to regulate them either.

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, MAY 17

Despite months-long discussions and deliberations over the School Education Bill, a subpanel under the Education, Health and Information Technology Committee of the House of Representatives has failed to agree on a modality for regulating private schools.

While cross-party lawmakers are at the same point that private schools cannot be left profit-oriented, as the constitution mandates free and compulsory school education, they have not found a consensus on how to regulate them. Though most members of the CPN-UML's Chhabal Bishwakarma-led panel had floated the idea of converting private schools into trusts, no agreement was reached.

"Our panel will submit the report to the full committee tomorrow [Sunday], leaving it to decide the contentious issue," Dik Bahadur Limbu, a Nepali Congress lawmaker in the panel, told the Post. "It is clear that private schools cannot run in the present form under this constitution. However, we could not find the right modality for regulation."

The 10-member committee was given 35 days to discuss the amendments to the bill and finalise it. On May 6, I got 10 more days to prepare the report. With no agreement on some of the provisions, it will submit the report, leaving it up to the full committee to find consensus.

"It was an uphill task to find agreement on the bill with hundreds of amendments. We have successfully found agreement on most of the issues," said Limbu. "We will share everything once we finalise the bill."

He told the Post that the committee has agreed on 42 of the 163 sections of the bill. As many as 161 lawmakers from the ruling and opposition parties registered 1,758 amendments to the bill, which has 163 sections.

If the bill gets endorsed, teachers can be transferred within local units and among local units once each.

Other than regulating the private schools, the bill includes the management of community school teachers and their professional benefits; provisions for making relief teachers permanent through internal competition; the duration of early childhood development (ECD) classes and the facilities for teachers working there.

Other debated topics include whether or not to continue the Secondary Education Examination (SEE), the process of selecting and appointing headteachers at community schools, and whether to retain the Education Development and

Coordination Units at the district level and the Education and Human Resource Development Centre at the federal level.

The panel has agreed that the teachers would be under the local governments. However, the headteachers would be given more authority in managing the schools independently as a measure to lessen the interference of the local governments. The school teachers have been arguing that they would not work under the local governments as they act on political ideologies.

"As the constitution clearly says, school education is under the local government, we can not go against it," said Limbu. "We have added some provisions to address the teachers' concerns regarding the local government's interference."

If the bill gets endorsed, teachers can be transferred within the local units and among the local units once each. They can also take transfers to other provinces once.

Endorsement of the bill that has been pending in Parliament since September 2023 was one of the major demands of the teachers; they resorted to a month-long protest in the Capital. The two major ruling parties have agreed in writing that the lower house will endorse the bill by June 29.

The Education Committee will again discuss the bill to reach a consensus on all the issues before forwarding it for the lower house's endorsement.

Congress lawmakers decry 'selective bias' in prosecuting party leaders

Accuse agencies of being harsh on Congress leaders linked to various scams and going easy on those from the UML.



Congress parliamentary party members pictured during a meeting on Saturday.

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, MAY 17

Nepali Congress lawmakers have raised questions over the actions taken by law enforcement and anti-corruption bodies against the party's leaders on various charges.

Speaking at the Congress' parliamentary party meeting on Saturday, several lawmakers also accused the state agencies of being selectively biased against Congress leaders while sparing leaders from another ruling partner, the CPN-UML, linked in similar charges.

Though the meeting was convened to discuss the issues related to the government's budget to be unveiled on May 29 for the upcoming fiscal year, many speakers were reportedly focused on criticising the government.

Moreover, according to lawmakers present at the meeting, some lamented that the Congress, the largest party in the House of Representatives, was treated as a junior partner in the government. Party's general secretaries Gagan Thapa and Bishwa Prakash Sharma, among some other key leaders, however, were not present at the meeting.

They asked why mostly Congress leaders were being arrested or facing court cases one after another.

The Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) on May 15 filed a corruption case at the Special Court against 16 individuals including Congress lawmaker and former minister Mohan Bahadur Basnet and top government officials on Teramoc procurement scam.

With the corruption case filed against him, Basnet has been automatically suspended as a lawmaker.

The UML leader and lawmaker Gokul Prasad Baskota was also linked to the Teramoc scam. However, no case has been filed against Baskota and another Congress lawmaker and former minister Gyanendra Bahadur Karki.

Meanwhile, Congress lawmaker Maya Rai on April 25 was arrested for her alleged involvement in cooperative fraud and organised crime. She is accused of misusing substantial depositor funds during her tenure as assistant secretary at the Swarnalaxmi Cooperative based in Kalimati, Kathmandu. The Kathmandu District Court ordered Rai's release on a bail of Rs1 million on May 14. She also spoke at the meeting and complained that she didn't get any support from the party and leaders when she was in custody.

Congress lawmakers mentioned a cooperatives scandal in which Anjala Koirala, wife of UML leader and chair of the Public Accounts Committee, Rishikesh Pokharel, has been accused and argued that the authorities had gone easy on her.

Koirala was released on bail without being kept in custody. "The question raised by many is why have legal proceedings been initiated only against Nepali Congress leaders?" a Congress lawmaker told the Post.

While leaders speaking in the party's parliamentary meeting called for a review of the government, party president Sher Bahadur Deuba, however, addressing a programme organised by the Democratic Thought Society in Kathmandu earlier on Saturday, said that although the Congress is the largest party, it does not have a majority, making it necessary to form a coalition government.

He further noted that under the present system, parties need to work together with other parties to run the government and even to contest elections.

President Deuba did not say anything in the parliamentary party meeting regarding the government, a Congress lawmaker said.

Congress lawmakers have raised questions about the government's functioning at a time when recent interactions between leaders from Congress and the Maoist Centre have sparked some speculations as to whether there are any attempts to change the coalition.

On Thursday, CPN (Maoist Centre) chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal had called Deuba from the Congress leader's home district Dadeldhura and Maoist Centre's Deputy General Secretary Janardan Sharma had subsequently visited Deuba at the latter's residence. These activities sparked some speculations.

"The party president's conversations with Maoist leaders and other meetings have nothing to do with government changes as speculated," said lawmaker Prakash Sharan Mahat, also the Congress spokesperson.

According to the party's Chief Whip Shyam Kumar Ghimire, although there was a general discussion about the government in Saturday's parliamentary party meeting, no leader expressed views suggesting that the party should consider an alternative to the current government. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the upcoming budget, and the discussions largely focused on that agenda.

When asked whether the long-delayed issue of the appointment of the governor of Nepal Rastra Bank was discussed, Ghimire stated that the matter had indeed been briefly discussed.

The governor will be appointed within a few days, Ghimire said. "The governor issue has been discussed with the government and the candidate recommended by the party, Bishwo Paudel, will be appointed as governor within a few days," Ghimire told the Post.

According to him, lawmakers stressed the judicious and balanced allocation of the development budget. Party lawmaker Shankar Bhandari said they have suggested that the budget should reflect the sentiments of the youth.

"The government must create an environment where it takes full responsibility for the agricultural production of the farmers," Bhandari said. "Only then will farmers be motivated to work."

'Technical glitch' at passport office troubles service seekers

>> Continued from page 1

"Yesterday, they said servers would start working from today, and I would get the passport," Sherpa said. "Now they're saying Sunday or Monday. How can I trust them?"

Through a regular process, one can prepare a passport at one's home district for a fee of Rs5,000. That process, however, takes up to a month.

But those who need the document urgently opt to pay Rs12,000 at the Tripureshwor office, hoping to get their passports within three days. They made for long queues outside the department office on Friday.

Some had only days left for their flights. Others were racing against tight visa deadlines or needed to submit documents urgently to embassies or manpower agencies. For them, even a day's delay could mean a missed flight or a lost job opportunity. And every extra day of delay in Kathmandu was adding to their financial burden.

Sherpa questions why a vital department like the passport office, seen as the last resort, operates with faulty servers. "They didn't mention a word about this server thing while taking money," Sherpa told the Post. "They gave us false hope and duped us."

Just beside him, Malti, a young mother from a struggling family, held her crying two-year-old daughter close. "I've come here three days in a row with my sick baby. I'm applying to go to Kuwait for work as soon as possible," Malti, who the Post is identifying with a pseudonym for privacy, said. "But nothing works here. That Rs12,000 means the world to us lower-middle-class people."

Malti had applied for the passport on Sunday (May 11).

"Instead of helping, they say 'Why

did you apply at the last minute?' If they had been honest about the delays, many of us wouldn't have applied," she said.

This is not the first time the department has had such problems. Last November, a computer virus infiltration disrupted its services for an entire week. Even in January 2023, the department paused passport distribution for some time, citing technical issues.

For others like Sonu Kahar, who applied six days before (May 11), the experience has been financially exhausting. "The Rs20,000 I borrowed to come to Kathmandu is gone," Kahar, who hails from Nawalparasi, said. "How am I supposed to survive here now?"

The issue highlights a deep-seated pattern of digital dysfunction within public offices.

On its website, the passport department says passport delivery takes 2 to 3 working days after enrollment. It, however, adds a condition that if the details of citizenship, National Identity Card, and old passport, etcetera, are not verified or the photograph does not meet ICAO criteria, further investigation would be required. In case of such a mistake, applicants get a message on their phone instructing them to contact the office for correction.

However, the aforementioned service seekers were not given any such reason.

Shatrudhwan Pokharel, director and spokesperson of the department, acknowledged the delays but insisted the issue was a rare technical glitch.

"The server went down on May 15, functioned briefly this morning [May 16], but has been running very slowly since 11 am," said Pokharel. "Servers slow down sometimes, but this is the most severe disruption we've experienced during my four months in office."

He emphasised that the department would try to do some internal work on Saturday (May 17) to clear the backlog.

Responding to accusations of false promises, he said, "Our track record shows that passports are usually delivered within three days. Unless there's a technical issue, we honour that timeline."

Pokharel mentioned that before this week, cases of applicants not receiving their passports within three days were close to none.

However, vendors outside the passport office tell a different story. A woman selling passport covers said delays are common. According to her, when things go well, some get their passports in three days, and those with connections may get them in two. But when the server slows down, the process can be delayed for up to a week. "The public's frustration isn't just about the delay, it's about being misled," she added.

A stationery and printing shop owner nearby, who's spent years helping applicants fill forms, agreed, saying officials don't give a clear picture. Many people end up confused, coming to the stationery and printing shops nearby for information. Delays aren't always because of the server; sometimes it's minor mistakes in the form

or biometric rejections.

"But no one inside explains this clearly. People are simply told, 'You will get your passport within three days'," added the stationary owner. "It's no surprise that they become upset and angry when things don't go as promised."

The current passport crisis, coupled with the malware attack in November, highlights a deep-seated pattern of digital dysfunction within Nepal's public offices.

These problems are far from new.

Key agency websites, including those of the department of transport management, the election commission, Tribhuvan International Airport, and Tribhuvan University, often go offline due to server issues or cyberattacks, leaving users troubled.

For example, Malti had an appointment for her national ID on May 8 in Narayanhi, expecting it to take an hour (as stated in the online appointment). Instead, it took two days, with seven hours of standing in queues, due to recurrent server issues.

Shayana Manandhar, a cybersecurity expert and information security consultant at One Cover Private Limited, a cybersecurity company, explained that the core issue with Nepal's public offices is outdated infrastructure. The integrated data centre that hosts government websites lacks sufficient security, server capacity, and modern software. "Overloaded systems, administrative negligence, lack of skilled personnel and poor planning worsen the situation," Manandhar said.

Manandhar added Nepal needs regular system audits, cybersecurity awareness, and more investment in infrastructure. "Otherwise," she said, "this will keep happening."

Day II of Sagarmatha Sambaad sees a sense of urgency and hope

>> Continued from page 1

Norwegian politician and diplomat Erik Solheim highlighted how India and China are moving towards installing solar energy and asked nations to follow their path.

Sheikha Asma Al Thani of Qatar, who recently climbed Mt Everest, shared her experience and highlighted the impact of a changing climate on the Everest region.

Chanrda Prasad Dhakal, chairman of the FNCCI, the umbrella organisation of the Nepali business community, called on the private sector to seek climate financing from investors.

Likewise, speaking during the session "Bridging science and technology for mountain resilience", Mahdav Karki, who served several institutions in various capacities and worked as an adviser to the prime minister, said climate change is an issue of governance, not science.

He called for promotion of indigenous and local knowledge through institutional efforts to help people adapt to the crisis. "We can adopt citizen science and institutionalise local knowledge," he said.

Abdalah Mokssit, secretary general of the intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC), stressed on the use of artificial intelligence and neo-science in order to tackle the climate crisis.

At another session titled "Powering the

future; harnessing clean energy", speakers stressed the production of clean energy.

Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority, Hitrendra Dev Shakya, gave examples on how climate change is affecting water resources. As the water level drops in rivers in the dry season, Nepal is forced to import electricity from India.

Francesco La Camera, director general of the International Renewable Energy Agency, proposed setting up a public fund for the promotion of renewable and clean energy to aid disadvantaged or vulnerable communities.

Vice-chancellor of Kathmandu University Achyut Wagle called for investments for the promotion of green energy.

Wagle said that scientific community has produced a lot of data related to climate change. He said that global climate governance needs to be strengthened.

Aditi Mukherji, Director, Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Impact Action Platform of the CGIAR, said that agriculture and food systems emit one third of the total GHG emissions. She also said that irrigation is one of the systems that use a lot of energy in this region. She highlighted the importance of finance, capacity development and technology transfer.

In the session "Risk and assessment of mountain regions," experts discussed the magnitude of the climate crisis triggered by

rising temperatures.

The "Exploring Nature, Culture, and Adventure in the Mountains" session focused on the critical role mountains play as the confluence of natural systems, cultural identity, and adventure tourism, particularly in the context of the Himalayas.

The session highlighted how mountains are not only geographical features but sacred spaces, cultural repositories, and life-support-

Another key theme was the loss of indigenous culture and seeds due to migration and modernisation.

ing systems, especially as sources of water and biodiversity. These regions are rich in flora and fauna, including iconic species like snow leopards and tigers, and support millions of people across diverse ethnic and cultural groups.

The discussion drew attention to the mounting threats of climate change. Rising temperatures, glacial melt, water insecurity, and biodiversity loss are transforming the mountain ecosystems at an alarming pace. Panellists

raised the concern that climate change is not a distant risk but a present reality, affecting food systems, displacing communities, and eroding indigenous knowledge, cultural identity, and local traditions.

Rapid warming has already exceeded critical thresholds, with grave consequences for Himalayan populations, especially as mountain tourism and traditional livelihoods come under increasing pressure.

On adventure tourism up on the mountains, experts stressed the need for sustainability while exploring its potential for national development. They pointed to a pressing need for eco-conscious tourism models that respect cultural heritage and local ecosystems while providing economic benefits. Diversifying tourism and promoting high-value, low-impact experiences were presented as key strategies to ensure resilience and sustainability in the face of environmental and socio-cultural changes.

Another central theme of the second day was the loss of indigenous culture and seeds due to migration and modernisation. Sacred traditions, local knowledge, and practices deeply intertwined with nature are disappearing as youths migrate to urban areas and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge declines. There was a call to document and preserve these elements as vital parts of the region's identity.

Examples were given of how communi-

ty-based approaches, such as those practised in Uganda and along the Mahakali river in Nepal and India, can successfully balance development and conservation. Local communities were shown to have strong connections with natural resources and to be effective stewards when empowered. The role of integrating local voices, especially of the youth and women, in mountain tourism and conservation was also emphasised.

In the same vein, there was discussion of global inequality in climate impacts and financial mechanisms designed to address them. Despite receiving billions in climate finance, much of this comes in the form of loans, and access for small-scale local actors remains limited.

It was noted that wealthy nations contribute disproportionately to climate change while developing countries suffer its consequences. Calls were made for more efficient and equitable financial structures that are accessible to small and medium enterprises and rooted in grant-based rather than debt-based support.

There was a sense of urgency but also hope. Mountains, though under threat, are sites of resistance and renewal. A call was made to take the momentum from this dialogue to international platforms like COP30, asserting that mountain voices and the realities they face must be made central to the global climate agenda.



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OPINION

A deafening silence

Women's resistance history is overwritten by narratives portraying them as passive or invisible.

AMEENA ZIA



The activists, the change-makers, the feminists who once filled the streets with demands for equality and reform—where are they now, when the country stands at the brink of further destabilisation? Why are they not demanding peace? Pakistan's women have long shaped the nation's story. From the grassroots mobilisations during Partition—where women cared for refugees, protected their communities, and facilitated survival amid chaos—to the democratic struggles under military regimes, women have played a crucial, though often unrecognised, role in national pro-

Pakistan, labels don't just damage reputations, they also destroy livelihoods and futures. But this silence is costly. It extends far beyond personal consequence and spills into national collapse.

The devastating effects of war are not hypothetical—they are unfolding. Economic collapse, inflation and disrupted supply chains hit the most vulnerable first. Infrastructure is decimated: Schools become rubble, hospitals overcrowded and under-equipped, homes are reduced to dust. And above all, there is a loss of humanity—lives shattered, communities displaced, dreams abandoned in the name of nationalism. This is why peace cannot be optional. It must be a rallying cry.

And it must come from women. From activists, organisers, writers, politicians. No one is stopping them—not patriarchy, not the establishment, not culture or tradition. This moment is not waiting for permission. Women in Pakistan must own it.

Peace in South Asia demands more than diplomacy—it demands courage rooted in context. In a region where identity, tradition and sovereignty are tightly woven into



SHUTTERSTOCK

gress. Voices like Fatima Jinnah, Hina Jilani and Asma Jahangir carved out space in political and civil society with courage and persistence.

But that space has shrunk. Civic and media platforms have increasingly drowned out women's leadership. Activism is often treated as dissent. Feminist voices are co-opted or silenced. The powerful, plural history of women's resistance is overwritten by narratives that see women either as passive recipients of policy or invisible altogether.

More troubling is the disconnect between women's advocacy and formal politics. Women may occupy power, but they are constrained by party lines, patriarchy, and pressure to conform. This gap between grassroots activism and institutional leadership fractures collective power—and the potential to demand peace remains unrealised.

Where are the women?

They are not missing. They are nurses in overcrowded clinics. Teachers trying to keep classrooms open. Social workers navigating shrinking civic space. Mothers fearing for sons at the border. Daughters mourning opportunities lost to geopolitical tension. Their voices—the ones that have sustained this nation—are now sidelined.

Because in times of curated nationalism, peace becomes a dangerous word. To question war is to be seen as a traitor. To advocate for dialogue is to be cast as disloyal. Patriotism becomes a performance of silence. Women must either assimilate into the dominant narrative or face being labelled—and in

every drop of water and every border crossed, women's leadership offers a chance to rewrite not only national narratives but regional futures. From Kashmir to Khyber, from the Ravi to the Brahmaputra, peace must reflect the lived realities of those who carry its cost. Women—long erased from these conversations—must now be at their centre.

They are watching. Waiting. Surviving. Many are exhausted. Some have internalised war as inevitable. But it is not. Women know this better than most. Global research continues to affirm: When women are included in peace processes, those agreements are more likely to succeed. Women in peace-keeping bring trust, sustainability, and grounded, community-based solutions. Yet they remain sidelined in decision-making.

One day, the soul of the nation—the women—will speak, not in whispers but in full voice. They will lead—not behind veils of silence, but at the forefront of peace, justice and memory. They will not be asked to trade truth for loyalty or to quiet their courage in the name of manufactured patriotism. But today, they remain the pulse beneath the noise. The keepers of stories. The architects of healing. The women of Pakistan have always been here.

The question is not who is giving them the space to speak—but whether they are willing to take ownership of their own agency.

Zia is a political science professor at Brevard College, a UN civil society representative and a former Missouri political appointee.

— Dawn (Pakistan)/ANN

Post-Pahalgam divergence in foreign policy

Nepal must diplomatically address India's expectations if their ties are to grow stronger.

AJAYA BHADRA KHANAL



India and Pakistan's cross-border military operations have ceased for the moment, but the conflict continues to crystallise the nature of Nepal-India relations.

Over the last two weeks, India's official position and voices inside Nepal have diverged, creating inherent differences. Three features are remarkable. First, despite denouncing terrorism, Nepal has appeared willing to preach to India about peace, de-escalation and dialogue. Second, as the chair of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Nepal has adopted an unrealistic and idealistic view about regional cooperation that jars with the current reality. The third is that Nepal, as a whole, has failed to empathise with India's positions.

In the immediate aftermath of the April 22 terrorist attack in Pahalgam, which killed 26 people including a Nepali from Butwal, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli held a telephonic conversation with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Posting to X after his conversation, PM Oli wrote that he spoke with PM Modi and conveyed his "deepest condolences on the loss of lives in the Pahalgam terrorist attack" and "reiterated Nepal's firm solidarity with India against such heinous acts."

In the aftermath of the incident, Nepal reiterated its commitment to India that it wouldn't allow its territory to be used against neighbours and has also stepped up security measures along the southern border. But so far, no one has visited the family of the victim in Butwal killed by the terrorists, indicating a lack of understanding about India's feelings.

It appears as if Nepal has failed to understand the gravity with which India approached the terrorist attack or to empathise more deeply.

On May 8, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a second statement expressing concerns about the "esca-



REUTERS

lating tensions between India and Pakistan." Then, during an event organised to mark Buddha Purnima, PM Oli recalled how Nepal wished for de-escalation and also talked with India and Pakistan. "As if on cue, they expressed commitment not to go to war," Oli said.

If Nepal and India ties are to grow stronger, Nepal must try to diplomatically address India's expectations.

First, India expects Nepal to recognise the normalisation of politics and the security situation in Kashmir. India's abrogation of the Article 370 of the Constitution in 2019 indicated that the region had made a complete transition under the Indian Constitution.

The timing of the Pahalgam terrorist incident indicated that the terrorists wanted to bring global attention to the issue of Kashmir. The attack came during the private visit of US Vice President JD Vance, at a time when the US as well as the world are giving up on Pakistan.

And the attack did manage to draw global attention to Kashmir, much to the chagrin of India. The international media, while highlighting the terrorist incident, focused on two related themes: The long-standing conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and the prospect of nuclear war in the region.

While the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir is a significant contextual factor, the act of terrorism in Pahalgam should be approached distinctly and separately from the long-standing issue. Otherwise, acts of ter-

rorism will continue to achieve their objectives, legitimising the acts.

The focus on Kashmir directly fulfilled the wishes of the perpetrators. For example, in the last several years, India has managed to normalise the situation in Kashmir, politically and strategically, and attract a large number of tourists to the area.

India also expects Nepal to recognise the fundamental Indian positions outlined by Modi during his May 12 speech—the need to forge a unified stance against terrorism.

He also indicated that India's well-wishers need to recognise India's right and ability to defend itself and strike against terrorists or those aiding them. He touted India's attacks deep into Pakistani territories, like Muridke and Bawalpur, as major achievements.

India believes that its ability to conduct "precise and forceful strikes" in Pakistan, combined with its "aggressive countermeasures" led Pakistan to look for a ceasefire. According to senior Indian officials, the cessation of hostilities was the result of India's conventional military superiority and not of any outside mediation.

India has committed to punish "every terrorist and their backers," and is likely to pursue this anti-terrorist agenda until it has achieved its objectives. In the past, India sought to expose and isolate Pakistan, but this strategy, clearly, has not worked.

The actual impact of the military operations is still emerging, with some reports claiming that despite the

Lessons from California

The Senate Bill 1047 treats AI as a powerful, fallible infrastructure that needs serious oversight.

BIMAL PRATAP SHAH



California, the birthplace of Google, Facebook and OpenAI, has finally realised the reality of regulating artificial intelligence (AI). The US, which has always been at the forefront of innovation, is now stepping up with a legislative approach as sharp as the minds that built Silicon Valley.

Senate Bill 1047, formally known as the "Safe and Secure Innovation for Frontier Artificial Intelligence Models Act," is a moral statement disguised as law. It acknowledges a fundamental shift: AI is no longer a futuristic dream but a powerful social force that can be unruly, seductive and potentially catastrophic.

This law mainly targets "frontier models," the general-purpose AI systems that operate on massive scales of data and computation. These models, like GPT-4.5 or Claude 3, can code, reason, translate and persuade with a fluency that seems almost human. But they're also the models that, with the right prompt or malicious intent, can generate blueprints for bioweapons, spread viral disinformation, or even hijack critical infrastructure. California was quick to grasp that the stakes are real and immediate.

Under SB 1047, companies training AI systems above a certain computational threshold must implement "reasonable safety precautions." This includes extensive pre-deployment testing, operational safeguards and the ability to shut down the system if it misbehaves. If a model crosses critical lines, such as enabling the design of biological weapons or conducting autonomous cyberattacks, developers must report it to the California Attorney General.

But the law goes beyond just setting boundaries. It also protects whistleblowers, mandates third-party audits and gives both regulators and citizens the right to question what these systems are doing. This isn't just regulatory theatre. It is a serious attempt to

bring accountability to a domain that has, until now, operated with a sense of libertarian impunity.

For decades, California has fostered a culture where disruption was seen as a virtue and regulation as a hindrance. Innovation was sacred, and markets were believed to self-correct. But now, with AI's potential to erode truth, amplify inequality and operate beyond human comprehension, California is reimagining its role.

California's pivot is not isolated. In January 2025, a consortium of 96 international experts led by AI pioneer Yoshua Bengio published the International Scientific Report on the Safety of Advanced AI. Commissioned by 30 governments and global institutions, the report is a stark warning.

Nepal are struggling to find ways to enter the AI age.

Earlier this year, Nepal's Ministry of Communication and Information Technology released a draft National AI Policy. It's earnest, idealistic and deeply aspirational. The document envisions using AI to modernise agriculture, digitise education, improve public health and promote innovation-led entrepreneurship. It hints at a future where Nepali society could leapfrog development hurdles through the transformative promise of artificial intelligence.

And yet, the policy reads more like a dream than a plan. There's no roadmap for implementation, no inter-agency coordination and no mention of budget allocation. Notably, there are



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It outlines the risks posed by increasingly autonomous AI systems: manipulation of public discourse, cyberwarfare, bioterrorism, economic destabilisation, and the real possibility of losing control entirely. The report doesn't indulge in hysteria; instead, it firmly states that humanity is unprepared.

SB 1047 is California's response to that call. It's the first legislative attempt in the US to put into practice what Bengio's report demands: Not a halt to innovation, but a pause for reflection; not fear of the future, but the tools to meet it. However, while California confronts the dilemmas of abundance, countries like

no pointers on an AI task force, no national centre for AI safety and no strategy for data governance. The policy is silent on risks like deepfakes, cybercrime, algorithmic discrimination, or the existential threats outlined in the global report. Simply, it uses the language of innovation but sidesteps the accountability architecture.

This isn't a criticism of intent. Nepal is doing what many countries in the Global South are doing. It is trying to harness AI as a tool for progress, but it lacks the infrastructure, institutional capacity and global leverage to shape its trajectory. But intent alone won't save Nepal from the conse-

bluster, the damage was limited. Despite the limited damage, India showed a capability to penetrate deep inside Pakistan.

Indian PM Modi outlined a new security doctrine: decisive retaliation, no tolerance for nuclear blackmail, and no distinction between terror sponsors and terrorists. India is looking for the global community, including Nepal, to support this new doctrine.

The focus on the threat of nuclear war covered up the role of Pakistan in nurturing and harbouring terrorist organisations like Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba, which had previously perpetrated terrorist attacks in India.

Despite the initial empathetic response from Nepal against terrorism, Nepal's foreign policy positions have shifted, gradually diverging from India's expectations from Nepal and moving closer to the position of China.

For example, China's second statement, issued on May 10, called on both India and Pakistan "to act in the larger interest of peace and stability, exercise calm and restraint, return to the track of political settlement through peaceful means, and refrain from any action that could further escalate tension." China has sought to position itself as a responsible power, but it has a clear bias towards and strategic interests tied to Pakistan.

As the chair of SAARC, Nepal has a responsibility to work for the revival of the regional grouping, even if it is only to ensure regional peace and stability. But India expects Nepal to be realistic and not preachy.

But, Indian PM Modi highlighted that any dialogue with Pakistan, if any, will focus solely on terrorism and Pakistan-held Kashmir from now on. This has strong implications for SAARC.

Promoting SAARC at this point in time would lead to greater space for China and its desire to play a balancing role in South Asia. It would also generate the possibility of SAARC trying to revive the question of Kashmir and its autonomy.

The nature of Nepal-India relations could also have significant implications for cross-border dynamics. If terrorism continues to remain problematic and Nepal-India relations sour, then India could seek greater securitisation of the border, requiring electronic identification and security checks for people crossing the border. This would have the most impact on the poor and the vulnerable people of Nepal.

Got a column idea? Write for us

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— Editors

FOREX

US Dollar	137.12
Euro	153.59
Pound Sterling	182.30
Swiss Franc	163.82
Australian Dollar	87.99
Canadian Dollar	98.20
Singapore Dollar	105.59
Japanese Yen (10)	9.42
Chinese Yuan	19.03
Saudi Arab Riyal	36.56
Qatari Riyal	37.62
Thai Bhat	4.12
UAE Dhiram	37.33
Malaysian Ringgit	31.92
Korean Won (100)	9.82

Exchange rates fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank

BULLION

PRICE PER TOLA

Fine Gold	Rs 184,800
Silver	Rs 1,945

SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA

Vietnam steps up talks with US to reduce hefty tariff

HANOI: Vietnam and the United States held their first direct ministerial-level negotiations on Friday against the backdrop of an impending US tariff of 46 percent on imports from the Southeast Asian nation, which could significantly impact its growth.

The Vietnamese trade ministry said in a statement released on Saturday that the meeting, which occurred in Jeju, South Korea, following the 31st APEC Ministerial Meeting on Trade, symbolised both nations' commitment to fostering a stable economic, trade, and investment relationship.

The talks follow a phone call last month between Vietnamese trade minister Nguyen Hong Dien and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer that officially started negotiations. (REUTERS)

Casino bill silent on barring Nepalis from entering casinos

>> Continued from page 1

Meanwhile, the policy on the location of casinos has been inconsistent.

A Cabinet decision on June 27, 2019, amended the original Casino Regulations to allow casinos and electronic gaming houses to operate within 3 kilometres of Nepal's international borders. This was a departure from the previous rule, which mandated a minimum distance of 5 kilometres from border points.

The new bill proposes reverting to the 5-kilometre restriction. However, it includes a grandfather clause allowing casinos already operating within a 3-kilometre radius to continue doing so if they were established before the new law comes into effect.

This inconsistency has frustrated hotel and casino operators.

Chandra Prakash Shrestha, president of the Siddhartha Hotel Association and owner of Nansc Hotel in Bhairahawa, described the shifting distance limits as senseless.

"The gaming industry is a major taxpayer and it should not be saddled with arbitrary location-based rules. Hotels near border areas were developed to cater to Indian and Bangladeshi tourists and there should not be restrictions in doing so," Shrestha said. Other operators allege that the frequent changes are driven by political agendas disguised as security concerns.

During the Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign, the government had shown flexibility in allowing casinos to operate closer to the border to promote tourism. As multiple five-star hotels are under development at Nepal-India border points, investors have voiced concerns about the impact of shifting policies on their long-term plans.

The new bill has also eliminated two categories of gaming operations: electronic gaming houses in four-star hotels and light casinos in five-star properties.

Casinos are not licensed directly to hotels.

Potential casino operators must form a separate company and then come to an agreement with a hotel or resort. This company will then sign a



SHUTTERSTOCK

Under current regulations, to operate a casino business, an application with a fee of Rs1 million should be submitted to the Department of Tourism.

lease with a four-star or five-star property to operate the casino. The Department of Tourism will grant a casino license only after reviewing the necessary documentation and hotel details.

In response to past financial defaults by casino operators, the bill introduces a provision requiring hotels and resorts to hold at least a 10 percent ownership stake in the casino.

According to Shrestha, this clause aims to ensure accountability from the host properties if the casino operators default on royalty payments or flee the country, a recurring problem in Nepal.

Data from the Office of the Auditor General reveals that the government

collected Rs1.69 billion in royalties and Rs132.46 million from licence renewals in the last fiscal year. However, five casinos—three declared illegal—still owe the government Rs1.78 billion.

The bill prohibits the operation of casinos in areas with religious or cultural significance.

It also introduces a cap on the number of licences a single company can hold. Previously one license allowed a company to run electronic gaming operations in up to 10 locations, but this was later reduced to four. Under the new rules, companies operating more than a casino under a single licence must scale down to one casino of their choice by mid-July 2025.

The legislation further stipulates that a casino licensed company may not transfer or lease the licence to another party. Licensed operators must maintain comprehensive records of all players. Any individual or entity seeking to acquire more than 15 percent of shares in a licensed casino company, whether directly or indirectly, must get prior approval from the tourism authority.

If a licensed casino fails to meet specified infrastructure and security standards, it must comply within two years of the bill's enactment. Failure to deposit customer taxes into the government revenue account will result in mandatory repayment. Unauthorised casino operation or law

violations will lead to immediate closure and legal action.

All financial records, including player logs, share transactions, and operational data, must be maintained per regulatory standards to ensure transparency. Licences are valid until mid-July each fiscal year and must be renewed annually. Under current regulations, to operate a casino business, an application with a fee of Rs1 million should be submitted to the Department of Tourism.

The company must pay Rs25 million for a casino licence and Rs10 million for a licence for electronic gaming (commonly known as mini casinos). The Financial Act for 2024-25 sets the annual royalty fee at Rs50 million for casinos and Rs15 million for electronic gaming.

The company must apply for renewal if a licence is not renewed within 60 days of its expiration. Failure to do so will result in automatic cancellation.

Moreover, if a hotel or resort intended for casino operations loses its four-star or higher classification, due to suspension, downgrade, or non-operation for over three consecutive months, its affiliated casino licence will not be renewed.

If a casino wishes to relocate to another eligible hotel, it must obtain approval from the tourism department. Likewise, a licensed company may partner with a foreign investor for joint casino operations only with the department's recommendation and Cabinet approval.

The proposed bill allows foreign investors to hold up to 49 percent equity in joint ventures. Companies already running casinos at the time of the law's enactment must adjust their shareholding ratios within a year to comply with the new ownership limits.

Additionally, licensed casino operators must allocate at least 2 percent of their annual profits to social development initiatives, including tourism, education, health, sports, environmental protection, and worker welfare. An equivalent amount must be deposited into the government treasury if this obligation is not met.

Phantom cows and missing millions spark scandal in Uruguay

REUTERS

ARTIGAS, URUGUAY, MAY 17

Sandra Palleiro is on the hunt for her lost cows. The 60-year-old accountant is standing in a muddy field at the end of a farm track in Uruguay's remote border region with Brazil.

She has traveled 600 kilometers from the capital, Montevideo, to find 61 cattle she owns, at least on paper. The missing bovines were part of a "cow bond" scheme that has collapsed, causing one of Uruguay's biggest ever financial scandals.

The co-owner of one Uruguayan firm that took money from savers to invest in cows has died by suicide. Three companies have gone bust and are under investigation for fraud.

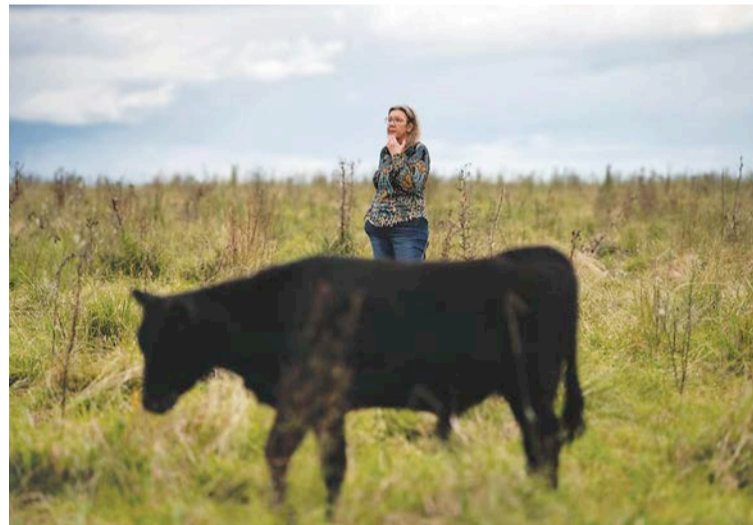
"Hello moo-moo! Could one of you be mine?" Palleiro called out hopefully into a paddock in the border region of Artigas, her jeans caked in mud as she approached a wire fence to get a closer look at the cows. Palleiro—like hundreds of other investors—is unable to find the animals she owns or prove they even exist, making them part of a herd of "phantom cows" that could number over 700,000 head of cattle.

So far, the losses have mounted to some \$350 million, roiling the stable farming nation, home to just 3.4 million people—but 12 million cows. It has also sent shockwaves through bigger ranching neighbors Argentina and Brazil, which looked to Uruguay's cattle-tracking system as a model and where similar livestock investment schemes operate.

In March 2024, Palleiro put her life savings of over \$50,000 into the livestock investment scheme offered by a local firm named Conexión Ganadera, lured by promises of fixed 7-10 percent dollar returns and investment materials with bucolic pictures of brown-and-white Hereford cattle. Savers could own cows directly that would be reared and sold for profit by livestock firms, or take an investment stake in the overall scheme. Palleiro, an urban professional, liked the idea of owning a tangible asset.

It seemed a safe bet. She could track the cows via a state-backed online portal—for years an example globally for cattle tracking—which set out breed, age and location. Each cow was supposed to be branded with a symbol assigned by the government and documents listing her assets carried the crest of the agriculture ministry, which oversees the cattle registry. Uruguay's national cattle registry declined to comment on the cases.

When she went in search of her cows, Palleiro carried print copies from the cattle registry to see if she could match the 53 tracking numbers linked to this ranch with the tags of the cows staring at her on



REUTERS

Sandra Palleiro stands near a cow in a field at a farm, in Artigas, Uruguay on April 9.

the opposite side of the fence.

Using her smartphone camera, she zoomed in on the tracking numbers pinned to their ears. It soon became clear few of the numbers matched. Then the cows started backing away. She couldn't get close enough. The exercise felt hopeless. "It feels like falling into a nightmare," said Palleiro.

Tesla crash

Three of the biggest firms under investigation for fraud are Conexión Ganadera, República Ganadera and Grupo Larrarte, which between them persuaded nearly 6,000 people or investor pools to buy into the program, investing millions of dollars.

Similar investment schemes exist throughout South America, in Argentina, Brazil and Colombia. Many are legitimate. Martín Fabelat, a local radio presenter in Montevideo, said he invested several times in Conexión Ganadera and other livestock schemes in Uruguay over the past 12 years: "This system of receiving fixed dollar returns worked fantastically well for at least 11 years. They paid me on time."

The first hint of the scandal at Conexión Ganadera came on November 28 last year, when a Tesla Model 3 car crashed at 211 kilometres per hour in the small central Uruguayan city of Florida. Behind the wheel was Gustavo Basso, one of the co-owners of Conexión Ganadera, which had boomed since opening in 1999. Weeks after he drove his car into a parked construction vehicle, investors started reporting their payments from the cattle scheme were late, and by January the company confirmed it was short of nearly \$250 million. A coroner concluded in April that Basso had died by suicide.

Conexión Ganadera was one of the three funds that started to warn

late last year that they were unable to fulfill obligations to investors. They were short of cash, which they blamed on adverse weather (there had been a drought in 2022-23) and tough market conditions.

By late January, investors were scrambling to withdraw savings amid reports of fraud. Some filed suits for fraud, leading to bankruptcy proceedings and an official investigation by Uruguay's Prosecutor's Office for Money Laundering Crimes, which remains ongoing. The prosecutor declined to comment to Reuters.

Pablo Carrasco of Conexión Ganadera denies fraud allegations. Lawyers representing Conexión Ganadera said they were unable to comment on legal proceedings until testimony was given in court. Grupo Larrarte's lawyer said the firm was fully cooperating with the authorities. República Ganadera did not respond to a Reuters request for comment.

Maybe the cows were fakes

Politicians, radio hosts, pensioners and even priests are among the thousands now attempting to recover their savings—and their missing 'phantom' cattle, the number of which is proving hard to pin down. An inventory of the biggest firm, Conexión Ganadera, carried out by a bankruptcy trustee estimated that as few as 70,000-80,000 of the 804,604 cattle the company claimed to manage actually existed.

In another court case into fraud allegations, Uruguay's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MGAP) said in March that one of Conexión Ganadera's main cattle holding firms, Pasfer, had only 49 of the 3,740 cows that it put up as collateral to secure a loan. "We don't know if the cows were ever bought, whether they're alive or dead," Palleiro said during a drive along country lanes to the Artigas ranch. "Maybe the cows were fakes, or

sold, moved somewhere or their tags were changed."

Victims want to know how authorities failed to spot the problems despite the cattle registry. Three lawyers for victims said it was possible that the government-issued tags were never attached to the animals because the animals were never purchased, and the investments were used for other purposes. Two other lawyers representing investors in bankruptcy and fraud cases alleged that cows owned by investors were sold off illegally, without their consent.

Each company was responsible for applying the tags and in-putting data to the national registry. "The registry reflects what the company provided. The problem is that there was no control over what the company provided," said one of the lawyers, Nicolás Hornes, who represents 98 victims.

Hornes said he went to several farms and found that the number of cattle did not match the registry. Two other investors Reuters spoke to told similar stories of trying to find their cows. Uruguay's livestock ministry did not respond to Reuters questions about whether the registry system failed.

Companies under investigation

An executive from Grupo Larrarte, the first firm to receive formal complaints from investors, is already in prison as part of an ongoing criminal investigation, which is separate from bankruptcy proceedings. Jáiro Larrarte was placed in preventive detention by a judge in April for alleged crimes of misappropriation, fraud and issuing bad checks.

In a response to Reuters, his lawyer Enrique Möller said that his client had fully cooperated with the authorities and that cattle had already been returned to some investors.

República Ganadera filed for voluntary bankruptcy in November, which the courts rejected in March because authorities opened an investigation into the company's accounts. Negotiations with creditors continue and the firm said in a March 25 statement that it was "prioritizing the best possible solution" for those affected. The company did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

There are several open investigations into Conexión Ganadera, the biggest of the three. The company's co-owner, Pablo Carrasco, his wife Ana lewduikow and Basso's widow, Daniela Cabral, are being investigated for fraud and embezzlement. In February all three were temporarily barred from leaving Uruguay without court authorization and their passports confiscated. Carrasco's lawyer Jorge Barrera said there would be no comment to the media.

Colombia seeks to join China-based bank as Latin America drifts away from US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIAMI, MAY 17

Colombia's government has applied to join a China-based development bank, another sign of Latin America's drift away from the US as the Trump administration's foreign aid cuts, trade barriers and crackdown on immigration spurs many leaders in the region to seek closer ties with Washington's geopolitical rival.

Colombian President Gustavo Petro wrapped up a visit to China this week with a stop in Shanghai, where he met with former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, the head of the New Development Bank.

The multilateral lender was set up a decade ago as a project of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—the so-called BRICS nations of major developing markets—as a counter to US-dominated institutions like the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.

To date, the New Development Bank has approved loans for 122 infrastructure projects totaling more than \$40 billion in areas such as transport, sanitation and clean energy, according to Rousseff.

Petro, speaking to reporters in China on Saturday, said that Colombia is committed to purchasing \$512 million worth of shares in the bank. He said that he was especially excited by the possibility of securing the New Development Bank's support for a 120-kilometer canal, or railway, connecting Colombia's Atlantic and Pacific Ocean coastlines that he said would position the country at the "heart" of trade between South America and Asia.

Colombia is the second Latin American country to try and join the bank after tiny Uruguay sought membership in 2021.

But Colombia's traditional role as a



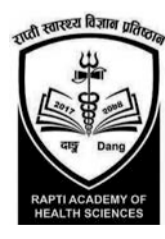
AP/PRSS

Chinese President Xi Jinping (left) shakes hands with Colombia's President Gustavo Petro.

staunch US ally and caretaker in the war on drugs is likely to raise eyebrows in Washington. The US State Department this week said that it would "vigorously oppose" financing of projects linked to China's Belt and Road Initiative in Latin America. Petro signed up to the initiative during a summit with fellow leftist leaders from Brazil and China.

Petro, a former leftist guerrilla, said he wouldn't be dissuaded by US pressure and reaffirmed that Colombia seeks to remain neutral in a new era of geopolitical wrangling.

"We made this decision freely," Petro told reporters from Shanghai. "With the United States we can speak face to face, with China too."



Invitation for Bid

Government of Nepal

Rapti Academy of Health Sciences

Ghorahi, Dang

Date of Publication: 18th May 2025

Pursuant to clause 31 Ja (4) and (5) of Public Procurement Regulation 2064, this is to notify all the bidders that the following substantially responsive technical bidder has been selected for further evaluation as per the Invitation for Bids published on 18-03-2025, Rapti Academy of Health Sciences decides to open the price bid on 25 May 2025 on 14:00 Hr.

S.N.	IFB No	Successful Bidders Name and Address
1.	The Procurement of Supply, Delivery and Commissioning of Medical Equipment (RAHS/ICB/GOODS/ME/02/2081/82)	M/S United Scientific and Surgical House Pvt Ltd., Ghorahi

SPORTS | MEDLEY

Battle for survival heats up in B Division

Nayabasti are the only club to be relegated so far. Madhyapur, Tushal and Brigade Boys seek to avert the same fate.

POST REPORT KATHMANDU, MAY 17

Nayabasti Youth Club currently sit at the bottom of the Martyr's Memorial B Division League points table with five points. In the 12 games they have played so far, they have managed to win only one and draw two.

Meanwhile, Madhyapur are themselves struggling to avoid relegation. They will face Bansbari Club on Sunday in the 12th round before the fixture against Nayabasti.

If they fail to do so, Tushal Youth Club, who are in the second-to-last position, could bring themselves away from the last two relegation spots with a win over Jhapa FC on Sunday.

B Division returns to Dasharath Stadium on Sunday with Jhapa vs Tushal while Madhyapur will play

Bansbari at the Lalitpur-based ANFA Complex Ground. The Saraswati Youth Club vs Shree Kumari Club fixture on Monday is the only other game of the 12th round to be played at the home of Nepali football.

Saraswati, who were once at the bottom, are currently seventh in the table. They have found their rhythm after their main striker Dharendra Bahadur Shah returned from the suspension by the All Nepal Football Association (ANFA).

ANFA had suspended Shah after a complaint regarding his agreement with another club while one of the club's wins was transferred to the losing side, costing them three crucial points.

However, the suspension was later revoked and the three points restored after Saraswati applied for a review and submitted evidence regarding Shah's innocence. Shah missed seven games during the suspension, a decision that proved costly for Saraswati.

Saraswati can climb up to the fourth position if they defeat Kumari on Monday; Kumari are in the 10th position with 13 points from four wins and a draw in 11 games. The same can be achieved by Bansbari Club if they defeat Madhyapur on Sunday. Bansbari have 15 points and are eighth

in the table. Ninth-placed Annapurna RCT and fourth-placed Birgunj United, with no hopes for promotion, will also be looking for a win to better their ranking when they meet on Wednesday.

RCT (14 points), Kumari, Brigade Boys Club (12 points) and Madhyapur will have to be extra careful in the remaining two games to mitigate the chances of being relegated. Tushal could climb over them with a win in their final game if the four teams fail to win or draw in their respective fixtures.

Nonetheless, the end of the 12th round marked by Shree Bhagawati Club vs Boys' Union Club on Wednesday will be the most important one. The duo are second and third in the table with 23 and 19 points, respectively.

Bhagawati will ensure their promotion to the A Division with a win or a draw against Boys' Union. However, Boys' Union, led by Nepal's first top-tier woman coach Chandra Bhandari, can prevent Bhagawati from sealing the only remaining spot to A Division if they defeat them; a tie would not take the mathematics in favour of Boys' Union.

Even if Boys' Union defeat Bhagawati in the 12th round, the lat-

ter can still realise their A Division dream by winning their last league game, against Saraswati, in the 13th round. Thus, for Boys' Union to reach the top tier, they will have to win both of their upcoming fixtures while Bhagawati should lose theirs. Bhagawati are yet to lose a single game this season.

'B' DIVISION LEAGUE table with columns: Teams, GP, W, D, L, GD, Pts. Rows include Planning Boyz United, Shree Bhagawati Club, Boys' Union Club, Birgunj United, Jhapa Football Club, Chyasaal Youth Club, Saraswati Youth Club, Bansbari Club, Annapurna Club (RCT), Shree Kumari Club, Brigade Boys Club, Madhyapur Y. Association, Shree Tushal Youth Club, Nayabasti Youth Club.

Late Dambar Dhami Memorial T10 Cricket Tournament starts today

POST REPORT KATHMANDU, MAY 17

Late Dambar Dhami Memorial T10 Cricket Tournament is set to begin on Sunday.

The tournament will be held at the Tribhuvan University International Cricket Ground in Kirtipur with participation from 12 college teams representing three universities in Nepal. The teams have been divided into four groups of three each. The teams will play in a single round-robin league structure in the group stage.

HIST Engineering College, Kantipur International College and Acme Engineering College make up Group A, while Himalayan White House International College, Geomatic Institute of Technology and Cosmos College of Management and Technology are in Group B. Similarly, Group C comprises Kantipur City College, College of IT and Engineering and Hillside College of Engineering, Kantipur Engineering College, Pashupati Multiple Campus and Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus are in Group D.

The winner of the five-day tournament will receive a cash prize of Rs35,000, while the runner-up will receive Rs20,000. According to the organisers, the entry fee for each team is Rs15,000. The tournament is being organised by the ANNFSU (All Nepal National Free Students Union) National Committee of Purbanchal University in memory of the late Dambar Dhami, Dhami, who hailed from Dadeldhura, passed away last year while undergoing treatment after being injured in a jeep accident. He had recently completed his engineering studies from HIST Engineering College. "We have initiated the tournament to keep the memory of Dhami alive," said Manoj Chand, chairman of the ANNFSU Purbanchal University National Committee. "The tournament's profit will also be utilised to support Dhami's family." On the first day of the tournament, Kantipur International College will face HIST from Group A. It will be followed by Kantipur City College vs Hillside College from Group C and Kantipur Engineering College vs Pashupati Campus from Group D.

Lyon win fourth French crown in a row

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE DECINES-CHARPIEU, MAY 17

Lyon sealed their fourth consecutive women's French league title on Friday with a comfortable 3-0 win in the play-off final against Paris Saint-Germain.

Goals from Melchie Dumornay, Kadidiatou Diani and Wendie Renard wrapped up the 18th title in the history of the club's women's team.

Lyon were head and shoulders above the rest of the division, achieving an unbeaten regular season with 20 wins and two draws. Because of that superb record, their players had expressed anger at having the title decided through the playoff system, but they made short work of PSG.

Coached by Joe Montemurro, who is set to leave to take over the reins of the Australian national women's team, Lyon took the lead in first-half stoppage time when Haiti international Dumornay opened the scoring.

Her low shot past PSG's England goalkeeper Mary Earps followed an assist from American Lindsay Heaps.

Diani then made it 2-0 after 80 minutes and veteran defender Renard completed the job with an injury-time penalty that was awarded after a VAR check for a handball by Oceane Hurtre.

Another domestic title was a boost after Lyon were eliminated in the



Sabitra Bhandari aka Samba

semi-finals of the Champions League by Arsenal.

Lyon now face a rebuilding phase as

several experienced players, including 35-year-old Eugenie Le Sommer, are leaving in the summer.

Samba's club relegated Meanwhile, Nepal's leading goal-scorer Sabitra Bhandari aka Samba's En Avant Guingamp (EAG) got relegated to Ligue 2.

Bhandari joined EAG in February last year for the 2023/24 season and became the first Nepali to play in one of Europe's biggest leagues. Her club managed to barely stay in the top flight last season.

However, after 19 continuous seasons in the top division of France, EAG will now have to bounce back from the second division.

EAG finished at the bottom this season with only three wins in 22 games. They lost all of the 19 other fixtures. Reims were the other club to get relegated to Ligue 2; they accumulated 15 points from 22 games with four wins and three draws.

Samba scored six goals for EAG in the 2024/25 season. Her first of the season came against Strasbourg on October 19, 2024. She then scored two goals against Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) on March 22 this year. Samba concluded the league with a hat-trick in EAG's last game against RC Saint Etienne on May 7.



Williams' Spanish driver Carlos Sainz races during a qualifying session for the 2025 Emilia Romagna Formula One Grand Prix at the Imola autodrome in Imola, on Saturday.

HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Reimagine your contribution to society this morning, dear Aries. Consider how your dreams and actions can be used to create community and positive change.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) Your resilience grows helping you turn over a new leaf. This energy increases your desire for meaningful change, inspiring you to take charge of destiny.

LIBRA (September 23-October 22) Love yourself fiercely this morning, darling Libra. Investing in your interests and identity will allow you to cultivate stronger friendships and romantic connections.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19) Soak up slow and luxurious moments this morning, darling Capricorn. Now is the time to release heavy emotions by feeling grateful and connected with the present.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Take note of any dreams or sunrise epiphanies that find you, considering how they fit into your bigger picture. Work on soothing internal wounds by finding beauty in the present moment.

LEO (July 23-August 22) Give yourself permission to sleep in, move slowly, and prioritise softness, dear Leo. Cultivating balance is your number one goal, but be mindful to invest in healthy relationships as well.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) A spiritually charged energy finds you this morning, dear Gemini. Search for deeper meaning, and consider connecting with groups who hold similar philosophical or religious views.

VIRGO (August 23-September 22) Devote your Sunday to self-care and wellness so that true empowerment may follow. Give yourself space to alter long-term aspirations, shedding past dreams to make room for improved ones.

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21) Tensions dissolve and lure you into a place of proper restoration, dear Scorpio. Harness these vibes upon awakening, taking a few extra moments to embrace your favorite wellness routines.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18) Look for opportunities to boost confidence. Allow negative thoughts to melt away, making space only for internal dialogues that bring transformation and empowerment.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21) Allow your ideas to evolve, trusting in your brand of genius. You'll find yourself in romantic spirits, but you should be mindful only to invest in dynamics that feed your confidence and offer a sense of belonging.

PISCES (February 19-March 20) Let hardship and grief melt away by indulging in simple pleasures and seeking beauty. Notice who or what throws you off balance, finding healing by prioritising the ground you walk upon.

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS 1 Stretches the truth 5 Low grower 10 Part of MIT 14 Drive the getaway car 15 Rodeo noose 16 Indulge, plus 17 Salami seller 18 Mediates 20 Bit player 22 Musical notes 23 Luggage fasteners 24 Sitcom afterlife 26 Mesh 27 Hunts rodents 29 Judo official 33 Supermarket saver 34 Curry 35 Mete out 36 Footed vase 37 Eras 40 Pump abbr. 41 Turn toward 43 NBA coach — Unselfed 44 Peps up 46 Speckled 48 Esteem 49 Holed up 50 Raw-fish delicacy 51 Simpleton 54 Scoundrel 55 Dieter's no-no

- PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED GERE DEBTS GALE OMEN DELHI OMAR RITA TROUBADOUR PRIMP INS BIRDS REAPED MAV STELLAR FACADES TIMELY BARK INK ABED SPUNK ASTI TIN AFAR SORBET EATCROW JUNKERS AIR REPEAL HALTS TAW SNIPS EXONERATED SERE ELSA ICILY AVEC DEEP GOOSE SEPT 1-15-20 © 2020 UFS, Dist. by Andrews McMeel for UFS 30 "Got it!" 31 Large antelope 32 Electric swimmers 33 Sleeve part 34 Informal greetings 38 Danger color 39 Weary exhales 42 Repeating 45 Least humble 47 Lightweight toy 48 In an insolent manner 50 Tuxedo trim 51 Currier and — 52 Statistics 53 Soldering tool 54 Hunter's wear 56 Keystone site 57 Breezy greeting 58 "The King and" actress 60 Fetch 61 Some, to Pierre

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-66 indicating starting points for words.

SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 1-9 and a difficulty rating of five stars.

Shaping clay, shaping lives

In Bhaktapur's Pottery Square, women quietly transform a male-dominated craft—preserving tradition, and finding independence.

○ REEVA KHANAL
KATHMANDU

A few months ago, I visited Bhaktapur Pottery Square to document its pottery culture for a social science project. As a media student, I wanted to explore it in depth, speaking to the artisans who have preserved this tradition for generations. Pottery here isn't just a craft—it's a livelihood, an identity, and a legacy passed down through families.

Something from those conversations stayed with me, lingering long after I left. So, when the chance came to write this story, I felt compelled to return—not just to report but to reconnect with the people and their enduring art.

Ranjana Prajapati, a pottery worker in Bhaktapur's Pottery Square, began working here after the Covid lockdown hampered her family's income. "During the lockdown, every business faced a fallout," she recalls. "That's when I started helping my husband with pottery."

She mentions that only a handful of women in the area teach others how to

make clay products. "In Kathmandu, you won't see many women in this profession," she says. "But their participation is more visible in Tarai or India."

Prajapati admits she has had no training. Her husband works an office job in the afternoons and makes pottery only on Saturdays. "I used to help him by preparing the clay and doing the colouring," she says. "Saturdays used to be so packed that I couldn't even assist those who wanted to learn. I had to wait for my husband to help me, which held me back."

Over time, she began learning independently and has started teaching a few others. "Before, I watched others work in silence, even though I was eager to do it myself," she says.

When asked if she had applied for any formal training, she mentioned the ceramic training offered at SOS Thimi. "I applied with my friends, but none of us were accepted," she shares. "I don't know why—we weren't even given a reason."

Prajapati reflects on the societal barriers she's faced as a woman. "Our society is still male-dominated. Growing up, we were never given the privilege to learn such skills," she says.

Speaking about the business, she notes a recent decline in sales. "Business has been slow recently. The number of tourists visiting has also gone down. But I'm hopeful it'll pick up again from next month."

Priya Laxmi Prajapati, 56, has been in this profession for over five years. Her journey into the craft began after a personal tragedy—her husband was diagnosed with cancer around the time of the 2015 earthquake, and following his passing, she had no option but to start working to support her family.

"I had to start working—it wasn't a choice," she says. "I learnt it by observing the men making clay products. No one taught me."

Priya now pro-



SHUTTERSTOCK

duces and sells clay items independently and gives training in schools. "I'm the only woman who works professionally in the pottery square," she says. "Some women are slowly learning, but I've come a long way doing this by myself."

Her workday often begins early in the morning, though sometimes she starts in the afternoon. A mother of two, she earns enough to support her children's education.

"I want more women to come into this field and work independently," she says. But the lack of systemic and community support worries her. "The government hasn't done anything to preserve or promote this craft. Pottery-making is still limited to certain communities, and authorities aren't paying attention," she adds.

She believes pottery has growing relevance today, especially in environmental sustainability. "People are using less plastic now—there's a need for clay products."

However, being a single woman in a male-dominated field hasn't been easy. "People—even other women—question why I do this kind of work. They look down on me for trying to stand on my own," she says.

On top of the emotional strain, financial difficulties persist. "After my husband passed away, things have been very hard. I'm trying to raise my children, earn a living, rebuild a life—but instead of support, I face judgement," she says.

Ram Chandra Prajapati has been working in pottery since childhood. As a member of the Prajapati community, he describes pottery as generational work—something that many like him have grown up learning.

"I started when I was young, so I picked up the basics early," he says. "In our community, children have traditionally learnt this craft from a young age."

However, he believes that today's youth need more formal support. "The younger generation still needs proper training," he says. He recalls how he used to collect mud from the Suryabinayak area a few years back. But due to urbanisation, "Now I

have to buy everything used in pottery making," he says. "The clay that was once accessible is getting harder to find."

He expresses concern over the profession's sustainability. "If it continues like this—if the raw materials keep becoming scarce—this profession could fade away in just a few years."

He adds that some women who have managed to learn the craft have begun working. "Neither the municipality nor the government has done anything to help us," he says.

Ceramic mud, he notes, is quite expensive, while the locally sourced kalo maato (local mud) is somewhat cheaper. Still, the rising cost of materials poses a challenge. "Right now, the business is in the middle," he says. "Not booming, not gone—but uncertain."



Scan for a related video.

Binod Kumar Prajapati describes pottery as his generational work—an inheritance of skill and passion. "This craft runs in our family," he says. "But really, anyone can get involved. It's all about interest."

He believes pottery can be a sustainable source of income if pursued seriously. "If someone is dedicated, they can earn Rs10,000 to Rs15,000 a month—by making creative products, teaching others, or helping them learn."

Binod proudly shares that even his young daughter is involved in the work. He explains that men traditionally handled most of the heavier tasks, while women assisted with cutting, shaping, and colouring. "One person can't manage

everything," he says. "We need both men and women working together. But women also have to manage the household, cook, and care for the family, so their time gets divided."

He acknowledges that gender roles are shifting. "These days, everyone contributes equally—men and women alike," he says.

He adds that the municipality has done what it can regarding promotion. "Pottery Square is marked on the map of Bhaktapur alongside Durbar Square, Taumadhi Square, and Dattatreya Square," he says. "It's included in photos, which helps—but that alone is not enough."

Binod stresses that government support is crucial, especially when accessing raw materials like clay and wood. "We need an environment where materials are available easily," he says. "That way, the profession can survive, and future generations will continue to learn about it."

Reflecting on the challenges post-Covid, he adds, "Every business has taken a hit. We have to support one another now. Not everyone has to become a doctor or engineer—professions like ours are important too."

He believes expanding access to pottery training could revive interest among young people. "If more training centres were opened, it could inspire a whole new generation," he says.

Bhaktapur pottery continues to mould more than clay—it shapes identity, community, and the quiet strength of tradition. Yet the future of pottery workers hangs in uncertainty. Without stronger institutional support, access to materials, and broader societal recognition, this generational craft may struggle to stay afloat.

Every profession has its importance, and learning a craft is about much more than just the skill—it's about respect for the work and each other within a community. From the outside, pottery might seem like something anyone can do easily, perhaps even a simple, beautiful act. But looking deeper, we understand the significance, dedication, and journey behind every piece shaped by skilled hands.



POST PHOTO: REEVA KHANAL

Ranjana Prajapati, a pottery worker in Bhaktapur's Pottery Square.

'Jaar': A sensuous adaptation

The movie takes viewers on a quiet, powerful journey through history, tradition, and personal rebellion—all without heavy dialogue or drama.

○ PRASHANNA MALI

'Jaar' begins with a wide, painting-like shot of a landscape. A boat slowly carries a group of people across the water. The scene plays out in one continuous take, emphasising how long the journey is and how important it is in the country's history.

The movie ends (no spoiler) with people sailing away from a similar place, something the film highlights powerfully. A lot seems to happen in between, but not much actually does. Time passes, a rebellious act takes place, and a historical moment is shown. But did it change anything in society or the nation? Or was it just a personal moment? You must watch—or rather, feel—the film to decide for yourself.

Based on a well-known story by writer and critic Indra Bahadur Rai, 'Jaar' took many years to be made into a film. Even after it was completed, it took a few more years to be released. Directed and adapted by Phurba Tshering Lama, it is one of the few Nepali films based on a short story.

The film tells its story like an experimental yet classic book, using chapters, text, and artwork on black screens. The title credits cleverly show the political history of that time.

It features rooted music, beautiful painting-like shots, camera movements that flow with the music, a realistically portrayed tiger, rich sound design, local dialects, and simple but effective costumes and sets. Together, these elements create a powerful visual experience that takes us back to 1890s Nepal—without needing much dialogue or explanation.

The 4:3 aspect ratio lends well to seeing things from a distant perspective and feeling the minimality. The image quality and colour correction have yesteryear vibes, like those captured from the earliest colour cameras, adding a nostalgic and rooted sensory atmosphere to the viewing.

We experience most of the film through Thuli's perspective, played gracefully by Indian National Award-winning actor Geetanjali Thapa. She comes across as a woman trapped in the wrong era, and her pauses and silences show the emotional weight she carries.

Instead of focusing on social issues, the



SCREENGRAB VIA YOUTUBE

film explores the psychological—and sometimes even leans into horror, though these elements stay in the background. The central external conflict arises from the traditional folk custom of 'Miteri Saino,' beautifully shown through a bond between two young girls from the Thapa and Gurung communities. Their families come together and form a sacred friendship pact, which sets the story in motion.

The two also carry a hint of rebellion (as seen in a forest hiding scene) but remain trapped within a larger system. The central conflict stems from the practice of Jaar Pratha, where if a married woman takes another lover, that man is labeled a Jaar. Upon discovery, the husband has the right to seek justice. However, the film doesn't portray these issues in a heavy-handed way. Instead, it focuses on the psychological toll these customs take. Everything shifts when Thuli catches a glimpse of Rudraman—portrayed with subtlety by Saugat Malla. He does very



Jaar
Director: Phurba Tshering Lama
Cast: Saugat Malla, Anoop Bikram Shahi, Geetanjali Thapa
Language: Nepali
Running time: 1h 55 minutes

little, yet commands attention with his expressive eyes and measured vocal tone, especially during a tense confrontation with Thuli.

As 'Aye Thuli' by Jhuma Limbu plays, we witness her growing infatuation with him. Time seems to pause—for her and for us—evoking the iconic mood of Wong Kar Wai's 'In the Mood for Love'. Harshajit, played by Anoop Bikram Shahi, is introduced through sound, and the contrast is striking—his presence carries more menace than warmth. Shahi's imposing physique and voice are used

sparingly but effectively. Here, sound and music are as powerful—if not more so—than visuals. The use of period horror sound effects keeps the film grounded while subtly introducing genre elements and expectations.

During a confrontation scene of major characters with a tiger, the wild animal's roar is so sharp and lively that it shook me from my seat. Thuli's own roar is just as powerful when she commits her act of violence. Whenever the film risks slipping into melodrama, it jolts us with something brutal, something unexpected. It might be the cutting of an animal part, or an attempt to slice a human. The horror is established early, making the appearance of the VFX tiger feel less like a gimmick and more like a natural, earned moment.

The film's pace may not be for everyone—it often settles into an almost meditative trance, deliberately lingering on each image to emphasise power dynamics within the frame. In one striking scene, an important discussion unfolds while Thuli remains in the background, visually present but voiceless. She is ignored despite repeated attempts to gain approval from a more 'powerful' figure. The framing and sound design in this moment effectively convey how the voices of vulnerable groups are often unheard or simply dismissed.

There are some underwhelming aspects, such as excessive fade-outs, abrupt narration, and unresolved relationships. Although the tiger sequence features authentic VFX, it lacks consistent horror and suspense. The film also misses internal tension between major characters, weakening its emotional impact. Still, to the film's credit, it shows how social realism and literary adaptation can create a unique cinematic experience when done with minimalism and strong genre craftsmanship. It also highlights where Nepali cinema's new challenges lie after 'Purna Bahadur Ko Sarangi'.

Mali is a movie critic and freelance filmmaker.





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Date	Day	Start	Home	Away	Venue
18-May-25	Sun	3:30 PM	Rajasthan Royals	Punjab Kings	Jaipur
18-May-25	Sun	7:30 PM	Delhi Capitals	Gujarat Titans	Delhi
19-May-25	Mon	7:30 PM	Lucknow Super Giants	Sunrisers Hyderabad	Lucknow
20-May-25	Tue	7:30 PM	Chennai Super Kings	Rajasthan Royals	Delhi
21-May-25	Wed	7:30 PM	Mumbai Indians	Delhi Capitals	Mumbai
22-May-25	Thu	7:30 PM	Gujarat Titans	Lucknow Super Giants	Ahmedabad
23-May-25	Fri	7:30 PM	Royal Challengers Bengaluru	Sunrisers Hyderabad	Bengaluru
24-May-25	Sat	7:30 PM	Punjab Kings	Delhi Capitals	Jaipur
25-May-25	Sun	3:30 PM	Gujarat Titans	Chennai Super Kings	Ahmedabad
25-May-25	Sun	7:30 PM	Sunrisers Hyderabad	Kolkata Knight Riders	Delhi
26-May-25	Mon	7:30 PM	Punjab Kings	Mumbai Indians	Jaipur
27-May-25	Tue	7:30 PM	Lucknow Super Giants	Royal Challengers Bengaluru	Lucknow
29-May-25	Thu	7:30 PM		Qualifier 1	TBC
30-May-25	Fri	7:30 PM		Eliminator	TBC
01-Jun-25	Sun	7:30 PM		Qualifier 2	TBC
03-Jun-25	Tue	7:30 PM		Final	TBC

Please note that this schedule may be subject to change for any reason as may be required in the sole discretion of BCCI



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