

the kathmandupost

CAPITAL EDITION • PRINTED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN KATHMANDU, BIRATNAGAR, BHARATPUR AND NEPALGUNJ

Vol XXIV No 336 | 12+4 Pages

STAND PRICE RS 5.00

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2017 (12-10-2073)


**PAGE 8
LIFE & STYLE**

Simens: Focus on storytelling, not competition

**PAGE 5
WORLD**

'Mechanism' to monitor fragile Syria truce

**PAGE 12
SPORTS**

Federer, Venus enter semi-finals

money

Investors reluctant to adopt ASBA

**'LA LA LAND'
LEADS OSCAR
NOMINATIONS
WITH 14**

LOS ANGELES: Romantic musical "La La Land" topped the list of Oscar nominations on Tuesday with 14 nods, including for best picture, actor, actress and director. In second place were sci-fi movie "Arrival" and drama "Moonlight," tied at eight nominations. The 89th Academy Awards will be handed out on February 26 in Hollywood.

NOMINEES IN KEY CATEGORIES**Best picture**

Arrival
Fences
Hacksaw Ridge
Hell or High Water
Hidden Figures
La La Land
Lion
Manchester by the Sea
Moonlight

Best director

Denis Villeneuve, 'Arrival'
Mel Gibson, 'Hacksaw Ridge'
Damien Chazelle, 'La La Land'
Kenneth Lonergan,
'Manchester by the Sea'
Barry Jenkins, 'Moonlight'

Best actor

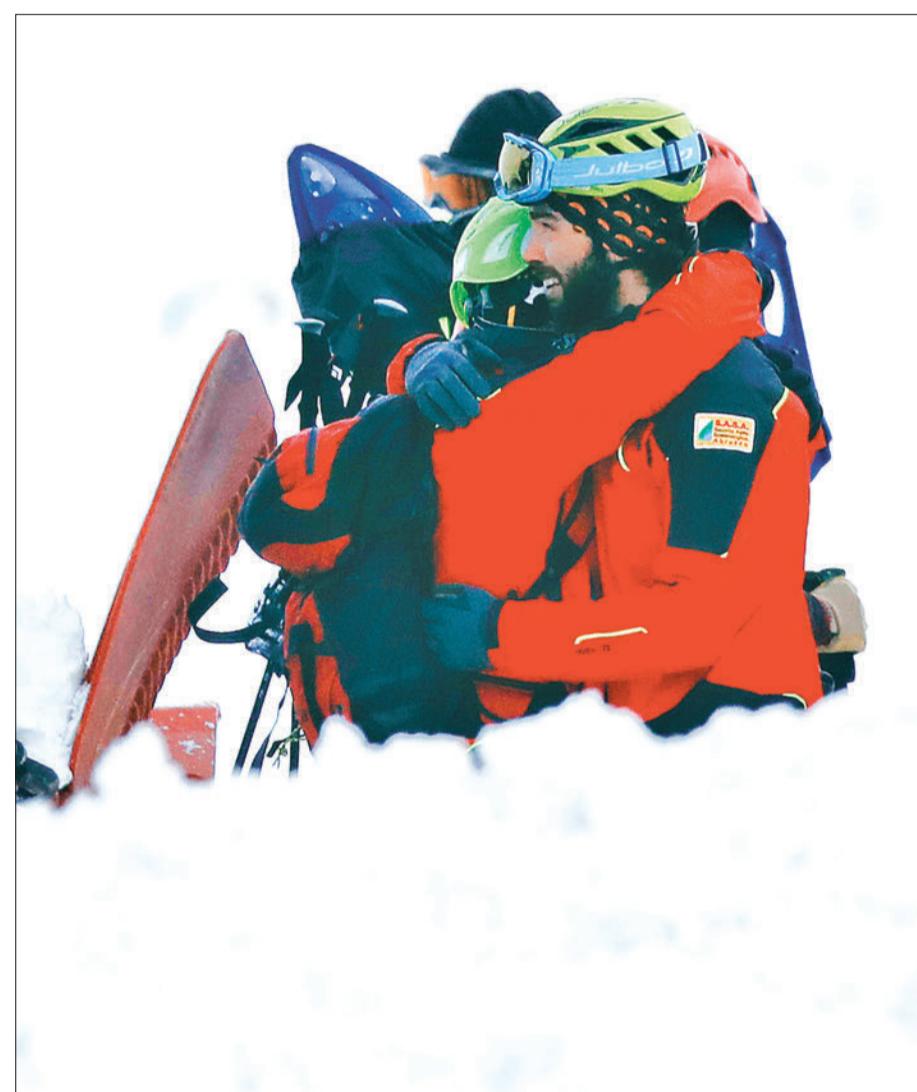
Casey Affleck, 'Manchester by the Sea'

Andrew Garfield, 'Hacksaw Ridge'

Ryan Gosling, 'La La Land'
Viggo Mortensen, 'Captain Fantastic'Denzel Washington,
Fences**Best actress**

Isabelle Huppert, 'Elle'
Ruth Negga, 'Loving'
Natalie Portman, 'Jackie'

Emma Stone, 'La La Land'
Meryl Streep, 'Florence Foster Jenkins'
(AFP)



■ Rescuers hug each other on the site where a helicopter crashed, in the Campo Felice ski area, central Italy, on Tuesday. A helicopter ferrying an injured skier off the slopes crashed on Tuesday in central Italy with at least six people aboard, another tragedy to hit a region slammed by recent earthquakes, heavy snowfall and an avalanche.

AP

capital gains tax issue

PAC fiat not to issue 4G licence to Ncell

SANJEEV GIRI
KATHMANDU, JAN 24
THE LOWDOWN

- Axiatia, a Malaysian telecom company, acquired 80 percent stakes in Ncell for Rs 140 billion (\$1.4 billion) last year
- Axiatia acquired 60.4 percent of Ncell's shares from TeliaSonera and another 19.6 percent from SEA Telecom Investments BV, a company owned by Kazakhstan-based Visor
- PAC is of the view that the government should collect Rs 23 billion from TeliaSonera in capital gains tax
- Some PAC members say the government should be asked to shut down Ncell if the company fails to abide by the country's laws
- There is counter-argument from others, who say an order to shut down a company will not be a wise decision at a time when tax authorities have not been able to determine the applicable tax amount

authorities are undecided over the actual amount to be paid by TeliaSonera that exited Nepal after selling its stake to Axiatia.

"If we see the data of recent years, Ncell has been generating revenues of around Rs 64 billion and earns around Rs 29 billion in profits annually," said Nepali Congress lawmaker Ram Hari Khatiwada.

"Why is it dilly-dallying to pay just Rs 23 billion in tax?" the lawmaker wondered.

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

ANIMAL TALES

The epic river race behind Chinese zodiac

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

HONG KONG, JAN 24

One of the most popular tales behind how the 12 zodiac animals of the Chinese calendar secured their spot depicts an epic river race in which each creature revealed its true colours.

In Chinese culture, every year is represented by one of the 12 animals in a set consecutive order, starting with the rat and ending with the pig, with each bringing its own characteristics to the year it denotes.

In 2017, it is the turn of the rooster, who comes third last in the 12-yearly cycle.

According to a frequently told ancient folk tale to explain the rota of animals, it all began when mythical deity the Jade Emperor organised a race across a river.

Frontrunners were the cat and the rat—at that time close friends—who had persuaded the ox to let them ride across the river on its back.



But the cunning rat had plans of its own, pushing the cat into the water and jumping ahead of the ox as it neared the other side to claim the first spot in the Chinese zodiac.

The ox came in second followed by the tiger, which also swam across.

Close behind was the agile rabbit,

slipping into the water and clinging to a floating log.

It was blown to the safety of the riverbank by the heroic dragon, who surprised the Jade Emperor by only managing fifth position despite its ability to fly.

The dragon said it had not only helped the rabbit but also some villagers in distress along the way.

After the snake and the horse made it over, the unlikely trio of sheep, monkey and rooster reached the bank by sharing a raft.

Bringing up the rear was the dog—delayed because it had become distracted and could not help playing in the water.

And finally the pig, who ate too much and took a nap along the way.

The cat failed to make it across in time to secure its place in the zodiac line-up.

A victim of the rat's duplicity, from then on the two animals became mortal enemies.

Parties continue to bicker over threshold

PRITHVI MAN SHRESTHA
KATHMANDU, JAN 24

Threshold continues to be the major bone of contention as a subcommittee under the State Affairs Committee (SAC) of Parliament plans to pass the Bill to Integrate and Amend Laws Related to Political Parties on Wednesday.

Lawmakers from major parties such as the Nepali Congress (NC) and the CPN-UML have stood in favour of keeping 3.5 percent threshold under proportional electoral system, while smaller parties are against it, as they fear the provision could deprive them of representation in provincial assemblies and federal parliaments.

A subcommittee under the State Affairs Committee of the Legislature-Parliament on Tuesday concluded clause-wise discussion on the bill.

Lawmakers who have called for putting threshold in place have said it should be somewhere between 0.5 percent and 10 percent.

The Election Commission has proposed 1.5 percent threshold.

UML lawmaker Rameshwor Phuyal, a member of the SAC sub-committee, said threshold is one of the key issues that has prevented lawmakers from reaching consensus.

Phuyal, who has registered an amendment proposal demanding threshold of 5 percent, said not having threshold would mean even the political parties with insignificant people's support can become ministers.

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on Thursday

Parties that are against threshold say big political parties want to maintain monopoly by keeping the provision

inducted Prem Bahadur Singh, whose Samajbadi Janata Party was scrapped by the EC last year for not submitting audit report for three consecutive years, and Kumar Khadka from Akhanda Nepal Party as ministers. Singh's party had secured 25,215 and Khadka's party had secured 36,883 votes.

Sanghiya Loktantri Rastriya Manch (Tharuhat) is another example.

The party which secured a seat in the Constituent Assembly in 2013 had received 36,883 votes.

The EC had sought certain threshold arguing that issues like preparing ballot papers and other preparations are

21,128 votes—0.22 percent of total cast votes—under proportional electoral system.

Small parties that are against threshold have their own arguments.

Chitra Bahadur KC of Rastriya Janamorcha Nepal asked whether small parties were responsible for all the wrongs in the country.

"Big parties' demand that there should be threshold is aimed at maintaining their monopoly in politics. This is unacceptable to

us," said KC.

Small parties claim that even without threshold, not all the political parties contesting in the elections are represented under proportional representation system.

For example, of the 127 parties which were registered with the election body for contesting elections in 2013, only 30 parties made it to the CA.

The EC had sought certain threshold arguing that issues like preparing ballot papers and other preparations are

hampered when parties in large numbers contest the elections.

The EC gave up the idea of using electronic voting machines in 2013 elections largely due to a large number of political parties.

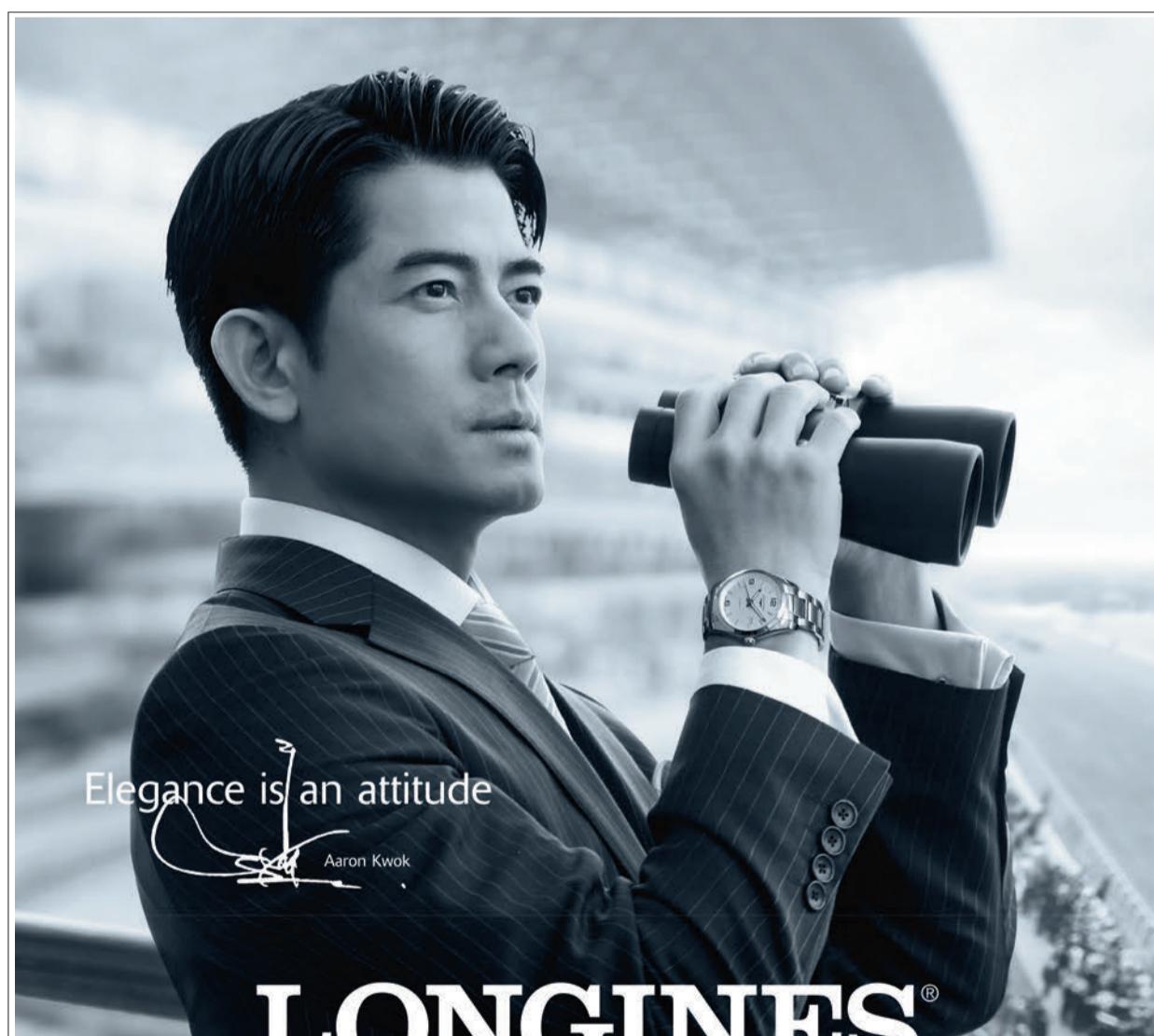
"The proposal of keeping threshold of 1.5 percent is just symbolic. Political parties have to take a call on threshold issue," said Election Commissioner Ila Sharma.

The EC had proposed 3 percent threshold before the 2013 elections were held.

The 1990 Constitution of Nepal also had a provision that said a political party must secure three percent of total votes cast for it to be recognised as a national political party.

"If a candidate of a certain party which has secured less than three percent of total votes cast is elected to the House of Representatives, such person shall be deemed to be an independent—not belonging to an organisation or party," the 1990 Constitution of Nepal said.

Besides threshold, differences persist also on whether the state should finance political parties.



LONGINES®

Elegance is an attitude

Aaron Kwok

Regency Watch

CITY CENTRE KAMAL POKHARI

MGA INTERNATIONAL PVT. LTD.

Conquest Classic

www.longines.com

Shortage of masons threatens to hamper reconstruction efforts

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN 24

The shortage of technical staff, ranging from engineers, sub-overseers to trained masons is likely to further delay the rebuilding efforts of the damaged houses after the Gorkha earthquake, according to the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA).

The Ministry of Finance on Sunday released Rs 7.8 billion out of the total Rs 28 billion asked by the NRA for the distribution of the second tranche of housing aid to the affected families. The government has announced the second instalment of Rs 300,000 will be distributed to those who have received the first tranche and completed the construction of the plinth level of the house.

The distribution of the second instalment of the private housing aid is underway in three districts and the NRA plans to extend it to the remaining 11 most earthquake-affected districts soon. But the shortage of engineers to inspect the construction works and trained



masons to adhere to the compliance standard is likely to leave a majority of the households without access to the second instalment. As of

Monday, a little over 100 households have received the second instalment after successful verification by the engineers. A total of 20,879

houses are undergoing construction, while 41,311 houses have been completed.

"Poor mobilisation of the technical staff on the ground

to assist the affected households to rebuild their damaged house is one of the critical challenges facing us now," said the newly-appointed NRA Chief Executive Govind Raj Pokharel.

The Post Disaster Need Assessment report, prepared by the National Planning Commission under Pokharel immediately after the Gorkha Earthquake in April 2015, had identified that 60,000-trained masons and technical staff will be required to rebuild around 600,000 houses destroyed in the disaster. However, hardly 5,000 have been mobilised in the districts to assist and oversee rebuilding of the private houses, according to the NRA.

Likewise, around 2,400

engineers, overseers and sub-overseers have been mobilised in 11 of the 14-most affected districts.

The shortage of technical resources, particularly masons and carpenters, have again halted the reconstruction of houses in many districts even after receiving the first instalment, said Deputy Spokesperson for the NRA Bhimsa Kumar Bhusal.

The majority of households that have already received the first tranche of the aid have not even started rebuilding, Bhusal noted. "To become eligible for the government's housing grant, the households have to follow the compliance standard including building earthquake-resistant structures. But there is no one to guide them," he said. Of the total 626,036 households registered for the housing grant in 14 districts, 482,856 have received the first instalment. A total of 549,443 households have signed tripartite agreements for the grant.

Pokharel has already asked the government to call on the universities and engineering colleges to mobilise the final-year students of the Bachelor-level programme in the districts as volunteers. Last week, the Nepal Army and the NRA have agreed on mobilising around 200 army personnel to assist in the rebuilding efforts in selected districts. Besides, the NRA is holding a meeting with the Armed Police Force this week to seek their technical staff to mobilise in the districts facing the shortage.

"People enrolled for health insurance programme so far have done so voluntarily," said Dr Gunaji Lohani, executive director of Social Health Security Development Committee of the government.

Under the current health insurance programme, a household of five has to pay an annual premium of Rs 2,500. For each additional member, Rs 425 the family needs to pay Rs 425. Under this insurance scheme, each household can avail itself of health services worth up to Rs 50,000.

As of January 22 this year, 47,734 have enrolled themselves for the health insurance programme.

Ranju Jha, chairperson of the parliamentary committee, said the House panel will soon hold meetings with Minister for Cooperative and Poverty Alleviation Hridayaram Thani to discuss the issue.

"This is an essential programme of the government which protects the poor from falling further into poverty due to costs incurred in healthcare," said Jha.

In the meeting, parliamentarians also urged the government to focus the national health insurance programme in rural parts of the country and upgrade health services at health facilities where the programme is being implemented.

health insurance

Failure to identify poor affects plan

MANISH GAUTAM

KATHMANDU, JAN 24

The Ministry of Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation (MoCPA)'s failure to distribute poverty ID cards to the poor has affected the ongoing health insurance programme.

Speaking at a meeting called by Women, Children, Elderly citizen and Social Welfare Committee of the Parliament, officials and parliamentarians said the for the effective implementation of the health insurance programme, the poor should be first identified and given poverty ID cards.

"People enrolled for health insurance programme so far have done so voluntarily," said Dr Gunaji Lohani, executive director of Social Health Security Development Committee of the government.

The government, however, has not been able to spend the money allocated for insurance programme as the concerned ministry is yet to distribute the ID cards which categorise the impoverished people as "too poor", "poor" and "marginalised".

According to Rule 11 of the Social Health Security Programme (Operating) Regulations, 2015, the government will waive the premium fees for persons with the identification cards issued by the Ministry of Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation.

The regulation states that it will waive Rs 2,500 in premium for people identified as "too poor". While 75 percent of the premium will be waived for those identified as "poor", "marginalised" will get 50 percent waiver in the premium. But for this to happen, the ministry has to issue identity cards first.

TWO ROBBERS ARRESTED

LALIPUR: Police on Tuesday arrested two of a gang of robbers in Lalitpur.

The arrestees have been identified as Ashok Giri, 22, of Belabaju, Motihari district in India and Tanka Bahadur Tamang, 23, of Ramechhap.

They were involved in breaking into houses and stealing money, jewellery, mobile phones and laptops.

Police have also recovered jewellery from them.

"We are looking for other members of the gang," said police.

The robbers used to hide their faces behind masks and break into houses and would destroy CCTV cameras, if there were any, before perpetrating the crime. (PR)

Doubt over Everest's true height spurs fresh expedition

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

NEW DELHI, JAN 24

Scientists will take the tape measure to Mount Everest to determine whether a massive earthquake in Nepal really did knock an inch off the world's tallest peak.

India's top surveyor said on Tuesday a team of scientists would be sent to neighbouring Nepal to measure Everest



in the hope of putting to rest a debate about the true height of the towering mountain.

A deadly 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck Nepal in 2015, killing thousands and altering the landscape across the Himalayan nation.

Satellite data at the time suggested the impact of the quake reduced Everest's peak—which officially stands at 8,848 metres (29,029 feet) above sea level—by anywhere between a few millimetres and an inch.

But lingering doubt among the scientific community has prompted a fresh expedition to size up the peak, said India's surveyor general Swarna Subba Rao.

A team of scientists are set to measure Everest in the hope of putting to rest a debate about the true height of the mountain.

"We will remeasure it," Rao was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency, adding the team would set off in two months.

"Two years have passed since the major Nepal earthquake and there's doubt in the scientific community that it did in fact shrink."

The exercise will require a month for observation and roughly another fortnight for the data to be officially declared.

Another official told AFP that a five-member team would depart for the expedition at winter's end, and would take measurements using instruments on the ground to gauge the peak's real height.

The earthquake, Nepal's deadliest disaster in more than 80 years, is also believed to have shifted the earth beneath the capital Kathmandu several metres to the south.

outer ring road construction

Works on Chobhar-Satungal stretch to start in Feb

ANUP OJHA

KATHMANDU, JAN 24

"We sent the DPR to the ministry last week. Works will start from next month after it is approved," said Dhruba Sapkota, acting project manager at the ORRD.

Works on the 72-km Outer Ring Road, which is expected to ease traffic congestion in the Kathmandu valley, had been in a limbo for over 12 years due to various reasons.

The government had proposed the plan in 2005. But it had failed to take off mainly due to issues related to land compensation.

Before sending the DPR to the ministry, the KVDA had issued a 35-day notice asking the locals to lodge complaints

regarding the authority's plan to start land pooling.

"We forwarded the DPR to the ministry after we did not get any complaints from the locals," he added.

According to the ORRD, the locals of Chobhar and Satungal have agreed to hand over 9,000 ropanis of land worth Rs 20 billion, where the project will carry the task of land pooling, develop integrated settlement and hand it back to the owners.

"The Chobhar-Satungal

segment is going to be the first section of the outer ring road being developed under the public private partnership (PPP) model," said Sapkota.

Bhai Kaji Tiwari, chief commissioner at KVDA said, works on other sections of the Outer Ring Road will start from next year.

The project has divided 72-km-long Outer Ring Road into 11 equal sections. "The DPRs of other segments are yet to be prepared," said Tiwari.

Of the total 72km, 35.08km stretch fall in Kathmandu, 15.80km stretch in Lalitpur and 21.05km stretch in Bhaktapur.

The eight-lane Outer Ring

Road will have a separate bicycle lane and is all set to make a systematic settlement in 62,000 ropanis of land on either side of the road.

According to project officials, the Outer Ring Road will pass through Chobhar, Gamcha, Satungal, Naikap-Purano Bhanjhlang, Sitapaila, Nagarjun, Nepaltaar, Gongabu, Tukhagaun, Chapali, Kapan, Jagdol, Sandol and Thalidachi in Kathmandu district. Similarly, it will pass Lubhu, Thaiba, Dhapakhel, Thecho, Bungmati and Chobhar in Lalitpur and through Gampchedi, Pakaunepati, Bansbari, Yangdol, Masandol, Bhatedhikuro, Naya Thimi and Dadhikot in Bhaktapur.

Police have also recovered jewellery from them.

"We are looking for other members of the gang," said police.

The robbers used to hide their faces behind masks and break into houses and would destroy CCTV cameras, if there were any, before perpetrating the crime. (PR)



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

WWF Nepal, the global conservation organization leading international efforts for a living planet, seeks applications from qualified Nepali candidates for the following full-time position.

If you think you are an achiever and willing to work within a diverse team in a multicultural environment with commitment and passion for what you believe in, you are highly encouraged to apply.

SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (Based in Kathmandu)

Major Responsibilities: The Senior Communications Officer will be responsible for the implementation of the communications strategy aimed at building the profile of WWF Nepal both nationally and internationally. As a key contributor to the Communications Unit, the Senior Communications Officer will be primarily responsible for targeted communications with the WWF network, donors and key stakeholders through engaging content that highlights the results and achievements of WWF Nepal while contributing to the organization's broader story-mining efforts. S/he will assist in public relations initiatives with relevant constituencies while helping cement relationships with WWF's supporters both in-country and externally.

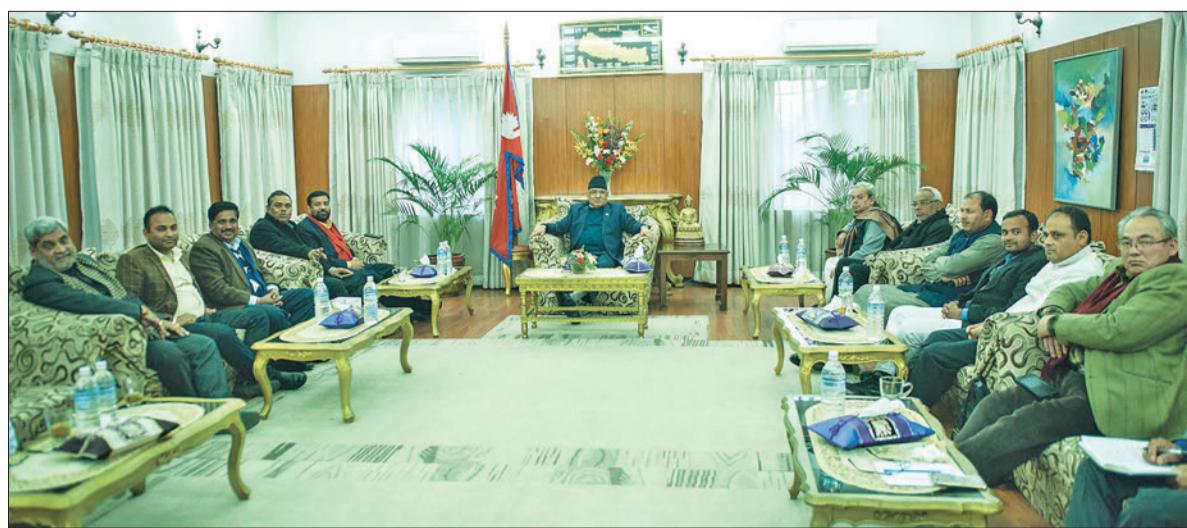
Qualifications: A Masters degree, preferably in communications or a related field with at least three years of experience in handling marketing communications-related work portfolios primarily with development sector agencies is required. The ideal candidate for this position should possess demonstrable skills in creative writing and visual storytelling, strong interpersonal, public relations and organizational skills. IT skills especially the use of designing tools, and knowledge on publishing, photography and film-making is required.

Interested applicants are requested to download the [application form](#) on the below mentioned website and send the same with an application letter to the [email address](#) below by **17:00 hours** on **7th February 2017**. Please mention the position you are applying for as the subject. Emails without an application letter and completed application form will not be entertained. Only shortlisted candidates will be informed. Detailed TOR for the above mentioned position can be downloaded from our website.

Website: <http://www.wwfnepal.org>

Email: hr@wwfnepal.org

WWF is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Please join us in our mission to save life on Earth.



■ Leaders of the CPN (Maoist Centre), Nepali Congress and the Madhesi Morcha in a meeting at the PM's residence in Baluwatar, Kathmandu, on Tuesday.

THAPA, RANA TO FIGHT FOR RPP CHAIR

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN 24

Chairman Kamal Thapa and National Chairman Pashupati Shumsher Rana are most likely to contest for leadership during the first unity convention of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party scheduled to be held in the Capital next month.

The convention that begins on February 17 is the first after two rightist forces Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal and the RPP merged on November 22 to become the RPP.

With 37 seats in the 595-strong Parliament, the RPP is the fourth largest party. The four-day jamboree will be held at the Bhrikutimandap-based exhibition hall.

A new leadership and a Central Working Committee will be elected for the next four years.

According to party sources, Thapa and Rana have expedited their consultations with the cadres. Rana, who chaired the RPP before the merger, is the national chairman, the second-in-command after Thapa.

Dilnath Giri, the chief whip of the party, said around 4,500 delegates will elect a 150-member CWC including the office bearers. As the party had to adjust leaders from both the factions, the CWC currently has 300 members preparing for the convention.

The party has also formed around a dozen committees assigning them to handle guests, manage shelter for the representatives and respond to the media. The Election Committee is led by Vice-chairman Nirajan Thapa.

Village and municipal conventions of the united party began across the country on Sunday. The district conventions will select the convention representatives by February 4. The list of delegates will be submitted to the organising committee by February 12.

'Ready to hold local level polls within May-June'

KAMAL DEV BHATTARAI

NEXT DELHI, JAN 24

Chief Election Commissioner Ayodhee Prasad Yadav has said the Election Commission is ready to conduct the local elections within May-June if all the legal provisions are made within a week.

Yadav, who is currently in New Delhi to renew a memorandum of understanding between the election commissions of Nepal and India, said the local, provincial and national elections would be conducted by January 21 next year.

The government plans to hold the local elections within May-June, provincial elections in September and national elections by January.

The understanding covers exchange of knowledge and experience in the fields of electoral process, exchange of materials and expertise,



■ Ayodhee Prasad Yadav

turnover in the upcoming polls. "Last election, there was 80 percent turnover. We will increase it in the upcoming vote," he said.

An MoU signed between the election bodies of the two countries in 2011 on mutual cooperation in election management has been renewed.

The understanding covers exchange of knowledge and experience in the fields of electoral process, exchange of materials and expertise,

Govt committed to timely polls: NC chief Deuba

BANKE: Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba has said the government was committed to holding the local level elections at the earliest. "The prime minister is committed to conducting the polls by May. As a coalition partner, our party has full support to him," Deuba said while unveiling the statue of late NC leader Ganesh Singh in Sirkhetroad, Nepalganj, on Tuesday. (PR)

training of personnel, productions and dissemination of materials, voting technology and voter education and awareness.

Insurance to double for migrant workers: PM

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN 24

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on Tuesday unveiled a "highly ambitious" plan to provide insurance cover for Nepali migrants going to work in India and double that for those leaving for other 110 work destinations abroad.

Beginning on Sunday, each foreign-bound (except India) migrant will now have to buy life insurance cover and general insurance coverage worth Rs2 million. Migrants going to India, who will have to take permission of the concerned district administration office from February 12, can buy insurance schemes worth up to Rs1.25 million.

The announcement was made at the prime minister's residence in Baluwatar. The PM said the move is aimed at providing better social security schemes for migrant workers, most importantly the families of those killed and injured in the work destination. Tuesday's decision, if



POST FILE PHOTO

enforced, could benefit more than 5 million Nepalis working in the countries permitted by the government. But not all are convinced that it will happen owing to a lack of concrete plan to put it into effect.

Though Dahal spent more than an hour justifying the rationale behind the decision, he failed to explain how his government plans to provide the insurance cover for those going to work in India when it lacks even proper documentation of Nepalis crossing the porous border.

"The plan is to make it binding for workers to obtain work approvals from the concerned district administra-

tion office. But it's going to be very difficult to implement it as anyone can freely cross the open border," said an official at the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Officials said it may be extremely hard to persuade workers to buy an insurance package due to bureaucratic hassles and the cost.

"A majority of people go to India because they cannot afford to go to the Gulf or Malaysia. Each worker need will at least Rs20,000 to follow the due process," said the official.

The PM failed to explain how the government would help the migrants currently

working abroad to pay the additional premium that would be required to benefit from the new package.

The workers may be required to submit almost 50 percent more in premium though the exact amount remains unknown. Insurance companies currently charge Rs2,066 to Rs15,660 in premium from workers depending on the length of stay, age and gender of the workers.

"The government will pay the premium on behalf of the needy workers and those currently doing time in detention camps and jails abroad. It will be done within the next three months," the PM's secretariat stated.

Labour Ministry officials said they were working to increase the compensation to Rs700,000 from the current Rs300,000 to be claimed by the kin of migrant workers who die abroad. Injured migrants would also be entitled up to Rs700,000 depending on the severity of injury after the new rule comes into effect in the next 45 days.

According to party sources, Thapa and Rana have expedited their consultations with the cadres. Rana, who chaired the RPP before the merger, is the national chairman, the second-in-command after Thapa.

Dilnath Giri, the chief whip of the party, said around 4,500 delegates will elect a 150-member CWC including the office bearers. As the party had to adjust leaders from both the factions, the CWC currently has 300 members preparing for the convention.

The party has also formed around a dozen committees assigning them to handle guests, manage shelter for the representatives and respond to the media. The Election Committee is led by Vice-chairman Nirajan Thapa.

Village and municipal conventions of the united party began across the country on Sunday. The district conventions will select the convention representatives by February 4. The list of delegates will be submitted to the organising committee by February 12.

Panel on disappearances to seek 1-year term extension

DEWAN RAI

LALITPUR, JAN 24

The Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons has decided to seek one year extension of its tenure to investigate into the complaints received from conflict victims.

Its sibling, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is set to take a decision on its term renewal on Wednesday. The two-year mandate of the commissions expires on February 10. As per the law, the commissions' terms can be extended by one year.

"A formal request for extra term will be forwarded to the government on Wednesday," said CIEDP Chair Lokendra Mallick.

The commission has

received over 2,800 complaints from conflict victims. However, it has completed only the preliminary investigation, which includes screening the complaints and creating a database.

The government took 13 months to approve the regulations of the commission. The understaffed commission still lacks the law to recommend action against perpetrators as the government has not criminalised the act of disappearance. Besides, the government is yet to amend the Enforced Disappearances Enquiry, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act as per the Supreme Court verdict of 2015.

"We are prepared to start a detailed investigation once we get the terms extended," said Mallick. "We hope the government will enact the new law, amend the existing Act and provide us with logistics."

The commission, which is criticised for its poor performance, is set to start collecting anti-mortem details of missing persons despite the lack of clear legal definition of the disappeared.

The commission has received complaints from the kin of those who went missing for reasons unrelated to the conflict. Conflict victims who were detained incommunicado have also registered their complaints with the commission.

"We can no longer wait for legal clarity," said Mallick. "We are already behind schedule. We hope the government streamlines legal provisions during the course of investigation."



KANTIPUR Half-Marathon

In Association With **NIC ASIA**

Powered by **SHIKHAR SHOE**

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

We are calling all the interested people to participate in Half marathon, Corporate & Media Run and Wheelchair Race. The interested candidates are requested to download the respective forms from www.kantipur-marathon.kmg.com.np or visit Kantipur Publications head office at Central Business Park (Thapathali) from 11:00 AM till 4 PM. To register, interested candidates must submit a filled up form, a passport size photo and a copy of citizenship.

EVENT DATE : FALGUN 7, 2073 (FEBRUARY 18, 2017)

TOLL FREE : 1660 01 22222 NTC, 9801 57 2222 NCELL

EMAIL : kantipurmarathon@kmg.com.np

* Terms & Conditions Applied.

- Half Marathon 21.1 KM
- Corporate & Media Run*
- Wheelchair Race

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



TITLE SPONSOR



iSmart
It's Smart Thinking

POWERED BY



CO-SPONSOR



NEPAL LIFE
INSURANCE CO. LTD.



NEWS DIGEST

Man dead of apparent suicide

BIRATNAGAR: A 55-year-old man was found hanging in suspicious circumstances at Biratnagar Sub-metropolis-4, Morang, on Tuesday. Radha Ghimire, a real estate trader, was found hanging from a ceiling fan in his residence at Himaltol, said police. There were deep cut injuries, apparently incised with blade, around his body. The victim's relatives claimed that he was murdered. Ghimire was alone in his house since January 14. His wife had gone to Siliguri, India, for treatment. A retired civil servant, Ghimire was involved in real estate business for the past few years. Police said they have recovered a suicide note from the incident site. (PR)

Two minors raped

RAJBIRAJ: Two girls, aged 10 and 12, were raped at Terahauta VDC in Saptari district last week. Two local youths from Terahauta allegedly raped the victims, residents of Kanchanrup Municipality-2, separately on January 18, according to police. Police made public the incident after they detained a suspect on Monday. The suspects, according to police, lured the girls into going to Birendra Bazaar with them and committed the crime. (PR)



■ Children walk past a heap of utility cables thrown on a sidewalk in Naya Bazaar, Kathmandu. What little efforts the authorities are employing to keep the capital city clean are being negated by people who have no qualms about throwing waste on streets and into rivers.

POST PHOTO: NIMESH JANG RAI

MYAGDI FOLK FACE SHORTAGE OF LIFE-SAVING MEDICINES

GHANASHYAM KHADKA
MYAGDI, JAN 24

People in Myagdi are compelled to buy essential medicines that should be available for free of cost at government health facilities.

The situation rose after the District Hospital ran out of medicine supply, the hospital's storekeeper, Lila Paudel, said.

The government has issued a list of life-saving drugs that patients can receive without any charge from the state-run health facilities. Seventy types of essential medicines should be made available by district hospitals, 42 by primary health centres and 35 by health posts.

In Myagdi, however, people are buying these otherwise freely available medicines at pharmacies.

Paudel said the District Hospital did not have enough medicines to fulfil the demand since the Central Regional Medical Store and the Western Regional Medical Store have not supplied the medicines for a long time.

Most of the government health facilities in the Far West are also reeling under a shortage of essential medicines. The government health facilities in the districts, including Bajura, Bajhang and Kanchanpur, were out of medicines. Owing to the shortage, most people visit private hospitals and clinics for treatment these days, health officials said.

TENDER NOTICE FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF CHEMICAL FERTILIZER

(First Published Date: 24th January, 2017)

- Agriculture Inputs Company Limited (AICL), Central Office, Kuleswor, Kathmandu, Nepal invites sealed Tender for the supply and delivery of under mentioned chemical fertilizers. The fertilizer must be delivered at CIP Nepal basis (Biratnagar, Birgunj and Bhairahawa AICL warehouses) with insurance up to Nepal as mentioned in the tender document.
- Each tender document including tender conditions, tender form, commodity specification and a draft copy of supply contract can be obtained on any working day during office hours on payment of Rs. 10,000/- (Rs. Ten thousand, non-refundable) or equivalent convertible currency from the Central Office.
- Fully completed sealed tender must be submitted at the Procurement Division, Central Office and obtain receipt for the same not later than 13:00 hrs. Nepalese time on 3rd March, 2017. Tender or any part thereof received after the stipulated time will not be accepted. Submitted sealed envelope should have following superscripting "TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OFFERTILIZERS, TENDER NOTICE NO. KPN.....".
- Alternatively, bidders may purchase tender document and submit their bid electronically (as specified in the website) through Tender section of AICL's website: <http://www.aicl.org.np>. In the case bidder choose to download and submit bid electronically, the bidder shall pay the above non-refundable fee as specified below.
- a. Current Account of Nepal Rastra Bank Thapathali with account No. 1206135/001-000-524 or
b. Current Account of Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. Kalimati with account No. 01701030001922
- Tenders will be opened at the Central Office in the presence of representatives of concerned Government office and tenderers at 14:00 hrs on 3rd March, 2017. The bid price will be read and recorded in the presence of the tenderers or their representatives. However, tenders may be opened even if tenderers or their representatives remain absent at the scheduled time.
- Bids must be valid for a period of minimum 21 days after the deadline of bid submission and bid bond for UREA US \$ 290,000.00 and for DAP US \$ 2,50,000.00 respectively must be enclosed with the tender which must be counter guaranteed by first class commercial bank of Nepal and valid for minimum 120 days from the date of opening of tender. Successful tenderer shall be required to furnish a performance bond at 5 percent of total quoted amount before signing the contract. Format is given in the tender document.
- Tenders shall be considered only if the tenderers fulfill the under-mentioned conditions. Tenders will be rejected if conditions are not fulfilled.
- a) The Fertilizers should be bagged either at manufacturer's plants or load port only.
b) Among the total quantity, about 50 percent of the consignment (first ship-load) should be delivered within 90 days and rest of the quantity should be delivered within 110 days at CIP Nepal basis (Biratnagar, Birgunj and Bhairahawa AICL warehouses) from the 7th day of the establishment of L/C.
- c) In the event of force majeure declaration in the country of the origin mentioned during the execution of the contract the supplier shall supply the goods from any other origin acceptable to AICL so as to meet delivery schedule.
- d) Tender document must be accompanied by and complied with the tender conditions. Tender will be rejected if conditions mentioned in the tender documents are not fulfilled.
- Bid price shall be evaluated upon the basis of calculation of three different destinations quoted price by the bidder and the average price will be used for price comparison.
- Local agent must mention the name of principal supplier in order to purchase tender document. Purchased tender document will be valid only for specified principal supplier.
- Documents issued by foreign institutions must be expressed in English language.
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding document at the Agriculture Inputs Company Limited (AICL), Central Office, Kuleswor, Kathmandu, Nepal during office hours or may visit Tender section of AICL's website <http://www.aicl.org.np>.
- The award for an agreement will be made to the tenderer, whose tender has been accepted meeting the requirements in the specification and other terms and conditions set forth in the tender document latest by 21st day from the date of tender opening.
- Agriculture Inputs Company Limited reserves all rights to accept whole or part of any tender or reject any or all tender without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Tel: (+977 1) 4279715, 4274819

Fax: 4278790,

E-mail: aicl@ntc.net.np

URL: www.aicl.org.np



कृषि सामग्री कम्पनी लिमिटेड
AGRICULTURE INPUTS COMPANY LTD.
Procurement Department, Central Office
Kathmandu, Nepal

Prolonged banda in Nuwakot affects farmers, quake victims

KRISHNA THAPA
NUWAKOT, JAN 24

The indefinite banda in Nuwakot, enforced by the people of Likhu region to protest the report of the Local Level Restructuring Commission (LLRC), continued for the 10th consecutive day on Tuesday.

The shutdown has mainly affected the farmers and the earthquake-affected families, as transportation service in the district is at a halt. Vegetable and dairy farmers have been unable to take their produce to the market while the earthquake victims have no way of transporting construction materials to rebuild their homes.

The villages, including Khanigaun, Chaughada, Suryamati, Thansingh, Kabilas, Ganeshshank, Narjamandap, Karanitar, Ralukadevi, Samudratar,

Shikharbesi and Betini, have been hit hard.

The banda enforcers have allowed schools in the district to operate their classes from Monday.

The people in Likhu region began protesting after the LLRC report did not incorporate their recommendation of granting Likhu a village council status. The protest took a violent turn on Friday, when the people from Likhu descended on the streets of Bidur, the district headquarters, on Friday. At least a dozen people were injured when police intervened in a demonstration outside the office of the District Development Committee. The demonstrators also vandalised the DDC building and misbehaved with some of its staff, causing the latter to stage a protest of their own demanding security. The

local level restructuring dispute



■ Protesters assemble at Chhahare-Kathmandu road to obstruct traffic on Tuesday morning.

POST PHOTO

employees at the DDC, the VDC offices and the municipality in Nuwakot halted their works on Tuesday to protest Friday's incident.

Meanwhile, the agitating people in Likhu region have

said that they will continue their protest and the banda in the district until the government assures them that the LLRC report would be revised to accommodate their demand.

Against the recommendation of the Likhu inhabitants, the LLRC report has proposed incorporating Chaughada VDC, Thansingh VDC, Suryamati VDC, and Khanigaun VDC under separate village councils and a municipality.

People in Belkotgadhi region have also begun a protest demanding a municipality status. The LLRC report has suggested incorporating Belkotgadhi under two village councils, namely Belkot and Kolpkhola. A delegation representing the Belkotgadhi people submitted a memorandum of their demand to the District Administration Office on Monday.

The Belkotgadhi residents have accused the LLRC of disregarding the suggestion of its technical committee to grant the region a municipality status.

966 families without land titles denied housing aid

NAGENDRA ADHIKARI
KAVRE, JAN 24

At least 966 earthquake-affected families from Bhumlutar and Phalante VDCs in Kavre could not get the housing reconstruction aid as they were unable to furnish land titles to become eligible for the aid distributed by the National Reconstruction Authority.

These families have been living without land deeds for the past 40 years, and the NRA measures the eligibility of the aid recipients based on land ownership papers, said Local Development Officer Tekraj Niraula. "They were included on the aid list but were disqualified during the aid distribution process," he said.

Land survey officer Ram Hari Timalsina said the people in Bhumlutar and

Phalante did not have land ownership papers because of a dispute that emerged when the government land surveyors visited the VDCs to survey the land for the first time. The dispute was never resolved.

"For the people of Bhumlutar and Phalante to be able to receive the housing reconstruction aid, the land guidelines have to be revised," said Timalsina.

Dhurba Guada, of the NRA District Coordination Committee, however, said that the people in Bhumlutar and Phalante could apply for aid if the Land Revenue Office was to issue them recommendation letters.

"All we need is a proof that one holds legal ownership of the property where he intends to rebuild. The NRA guidelines could be revised accordingly," he said.

Land survey officer Ram Hari Timalsina said the people in Bhumlutar and

NRA to provide aid to 1,008 households

RAMECHHAP: The NRA has decided to provide housing reconstruction aid to 1,008 quake-affected families in Ramechhap. The decision was made after going through the complaints filed by the earthquake survivors in 42 VDCs of the district. One NRA official said out of 10,060 complaints screened by the Complaint Hearing Committee, 1,008 had sufficient ground to claim for the aid and they have been approved. (PR)

making a decision.

Ncell had sought permission to launch 4G service in July from its existing frequency of 1800 MHz.

Although the NTA has not awarded the licence, it has asked for a rollout plan from Ncell. Before asking for the rollout plan, the NTA generally awards a technology neutrality licence, which paves the way for telecom companies to use 4G service from their existing frequency.

Some of them said that the government should be directed to even "shut down" Ncell if it fails to abide by the country's laws.

A few PAC members, however, had reservations over this statement.

Former information and communications minister Minendra Rijal said that it wouldn't be a wise decision for the committee to issue such a strict directive at a time when tax authorities had not been able to determine the applicable tax amount.

"How can we ask a company to pay tax that hasn't been set by tax authorities?" Rijal said, hinting that the country's financial authorities were to be blamed for TeliaSonera's exit from the country without fulfilling its responsibilities.

CPN (Maoist Centre) lawmaker Yogendra Tamang said that the House panel should summon Ncell officials and conduct further studies before

Aims, Anghos sign MoU

KATHMANDU: The Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (Aims) of Kerala, India, and Nepal's Association of Non-Government Hospitals (Anghos) have signed an MoU agreeing to improve healthcare delivery system at Anghos member institutes. Under the agreement, the Aims will set up state-of-the-art telemedicine service for speciality and sub-speciality

consultation in all Anghos affiliated health institutions. Another important aspect of the wide-ranging collaboration is skill enhancement of healthcare professionals through medical education and training programmes. The MoU was signed by Aims Medical Director Dr Prem Nair, and Anghos Chairman Dr Bharat Pradhan.

'Unshakeable commitment' to Nato

US Secretary of Defense James Mattis reassured Nato allies on Monday that Washington had an "unshakeable commitment" to the military alliance, despite President Donald Trump previously deriding the organisation as "obsolete." Mattis "emphasized the US' unshakeable commitment to Nato" in his call with British Defence Secy Michael Fallon.



Flights cancelled at Heathrow

About 100 flights have been cancelled at London's Heathrow Airport for a second day because of fog. There has been one cancellation at Gatwick, while Southampton, Stansted and Edinburgh airports have told passengers to check for delays. On Monday, Heathrow, Gatwick and Southampton airport had cancellations.

Elder Bush out of intensive care

Former US president George HW Bush was being transferred out of intensive care on Monday as he recovered from pneumonia, while his wife Barbara was discharged from the hospital after a bout of bronchitis, doctors said. The 41st president and former first lady were admitted to Houston Methodist Hospital on Wednesday.



CHINA SAYS IT WILL NOT BACK DOWN ON SOUTH CHINA SEA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BEIJING, JAN 24

China warned Washington on Tuesday that it would not back down over its claims in the disputed South China Sea, following vows by the Trump administration to defend US and international interests there.

China's artificial islands in the sea, some with the potential for military use, are considered a potential flashpoint and tough comments from White House spokesman Sean Spicer and Trump's nominee for secretary of state have raised the temperature.

"China has indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and their adjacent waters," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular press briefing, adding that the country is "firm in safeguarding our rights and interests".

"The United States is not a party to the South China Sea issue," Spicer said Monday that the US "is going to make sure we protect our interests" in the sea. "If those islands are, in fact, in international waters and not part of China proper, yeah, we'll make sure we defend international interests from being taken over by one country," he said.

Trump's nominees for secretary of state, Rex Tillerson, said last week China's access to the islands might be blocked—raising the prospect of a military confrontation.

China lays claim to a vast swathe of the South China Sea within a so-called "nine dash line," including waters claimed by several of its neighbours.

Under President Barack Obama's administration, Washington insisted it was neutral on the question of sovereignty over the islets, reefs and shoals.

But, while calling for the dispute to be resolved under international law, the US supported freedom of navigation by sending naval patrols through Chinese-claimed waters.

Hua said China "firmly upholds freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea in accordance with international law" and urged the US to "fully respect the efforts of regional countries to safeguard peace and stability".

Despite the recent escalation in rhetoric, China is "not worried" about rising tensions with Washington, Hua said. Beijing asserts sovereignty over almost all of the resource-rich region despite rival claims from Southeast Asian neighbours and has rapidly built reefs into artificial islands capable of hosting military planes.

snow-covered



A couple walks through a snow-covered park in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on Tuesday.

'Mechanism' to monitor fragile Syria truce

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ASTANA (KAZAKHSTAN), JAN 24

Russia, Iran and Turkey, the sponsors of peace talks between Syrian rebels and Damascus, agreed on Tuesday to establish a joint "mechanism" to monitor the fragile truce in the war-torn country.

The sides will "establish a trilateral mechanism to observe and ensure full compliance with the ceasefire, prevent any provocations and determine all modalities of the ceasefire," according to a final statement read by Kazakh Foreign Minister Kairat Abdralkhmanov following the talks in Astana.

Rebel backer Turkey and regime allies Russia and Iran also support the presence of the armed opposition at political negotiations under UN auspices set to take place next month in Geneva, the statement said.

The rebel delegation said earlier that they would agree to have Russia serve as a guarantor of the current ceasefire but not Iran, another backer of President Bashar al-Assad.

A ceasefire brokered by Russia and Turkey has been in place since late December but both rebels and Damascus have complained of repeated violations.

The rebels backed out Monday of what could have been their first face-to-face talks with the Syrian regime since the conflict erupted in 2011.

They said they would not engage in direct negotiations with the regime because of its continued bombardment and attacks on a flashpoint outside the Syrian capital Damascus.



■ UN Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura (centre) shakes hands with Kazakh Foreign Minister Kairat Abdralkhmanov during the announcement of a final statement following Syria peace talks in Astana on Tuesday.

AFP/RSS

tronic tags under a planned package of new "anti-terror" measures.

"There are several possibilities on the table... Electronic ankle tags for people posing a potential threat are definitely something to be considered," Hans Peter Doskozil told Austrian radio.

"I definitely think that it would be appropriate that... they are monitored, that the authorities know what they are doing, whom they are meeting. It's very important," he said.

Austria's centrist government has been preparing a raft of measures to beef up security and reduce illegal immigration, including tighter border controls and more video surveillance.

House approval must before Brexit: UK Court

REUTERS

LONDON, JAN 24



British Prime Minister Theresa May must give parliament a vote before she can formally start Britain's exit from the European Union, the UK Supreme Court ruled on Tuesday, giving lawmakers who oppose her Brexit plans a chance to amend or hinder them.

Theresa May has said she intends to invoke Article 50 before the end of March but the ruling means she must bring legislation before parliament

However, the main opposition Labour Party said it would not block Brexit although it would try to amend the legislation.

"Labour will seek to build in the principles of full, tariff-free access to the single market and maintenance of workers' rights and social and environmental protections," said party leader Jeremy Corbyn.

May has said she intends to invoke Article 50 before the end of March but the ruling means she must bring legislation before parliament before she can go ahead.

That opens up the Brexit process to scrutiny from lawmakers, the majority of whom had wanted to stay in the EU.

"Of course the government

is disappointed with the outcome," Wright said outside the Supreme Court. "The government will comply with the judgment of the court and do all that is necessary to implement it."

May said the decision did nothing to change the path of Brexit.

"The British people voted to leave the EU, and the government will deliver on their verdict - triggering Article 50, as planned, by the end of March," her spokesman said.

Last week May set out her stall for negotiations, promising a clean break with the world's largest trading bloc as part of a 12-point plan to focus on global free trade deals, setting a course for a so-called "hard Brexit".

Some investors and those who backed the "remain" campaign hope that lawmakers, most of whom wanted to stay in the EU, will force May to seek a deal which prioritises access to the European single market of 500 million people, or potentially even block Brexit altogether.

Sterling initially rose on the news that the government had lost its appeal, but it then fell over half a cent to hit day's lows against the dollar and euro after the ruling that the devolved assemblies did not need to give their assent. By 1022 GMT it had trimmed some of those losses and stood at \$1.2485, down 0.4 percent on the day.

The going has been tough for federal forces as IS has defended its last remaining major stronghold in Iraq fiercely.

All central neighbourhoods on the east bank of the Tigris River that divides the city have now been retaken and commanders are devising a strategy to tackle the western side of the city.

UN WARNS WEST MOSUL CIVILIANS AT 'EXTREME RISK'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BAGHDAD, JAN 24

The estimated 750,000 people living in jihadist-controlled west Mosul are in grave danger, the United Nations warned on Tuesday, 100 days into a massive Iraqi operation to retake the city.

"We are relieved that so many people in the eastern sections of Mosul have been able to stay in their homes," the UN's humanitarian coordinator for Iraq Lise Grande said in a statement.

"We hope that everything is done to protect the hundreds of thousands of people who are across the river in the west. We know that they are at extreme risk and we fear for their lives," she said.

On October 17, tens of thousands of Iraqi forces launched an offensive—Iraq's largest military operation in years—to retake the country's second city from the Islamic State group.

The going has been tough for federal forces as IS has defended its last remaining major stronghold in Iraq fiercely.

All central neighbourhoods on the east bank of the Tigris River that divides the city have now been retaken and commanders are devising a strategy to tackle the western side of the city.

Wolf-size otters once roamed China

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SHANGHAI, JAN 24

Archeologists discovered the animal's remains in a coalpit in 2010, according to China's Xinhua news service.

The animal lived more than six million years ago and weighed about 50 kilos (110 lbs), far more than modern otters and similar to a modern wolf, the agency said.

It added that the find could help piece together the puzzling evolutionary record of mustelids, the family of carnivorous mammals that includes otters, badgers and weasels.

"The new discovery permits recognition of a rare

clade (group) of otters and affords an opportunity to explore relationships among several enigmatic fossil mustelids that have been referred either to as badgers or to otters," said the paper.

US and Chinese researchers involved in the study told US media the large teeth and powerful jaws indicated the animal probably used them for crushing hard objects such as large shellfish and freshwater molluscs.

Siamogale melilutra fossils were first uncovered in 2010, with more finds in subsequent years completing the picture, the researchers said.

UNDETERRED

Tajik women train to shoulder work men left behind

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

DUSHANBE (TAJIKISTAN), JAN 24

Wearing blue overalls, trainee mechanic Marjona Abdulloeva carefully examines a car chassis at a government-run training centre in Tajikistan, an ex-Soviet republic hit hard by the recession in Russia.

The 20-year-old hopes to be the first woman to earn a car mechanic's diploma at the Dushanbe centre, as a growing number of women seek work to help end men's meet in the socially conservative and impoverished country.

Undeterred by the social stigma of shedding their traditional home-based role, the women are stepping into jobs left vacant by menfolk, many of whom moved to Russia to find work.

"Repairing cars is considered

man's work, but I do not care what my friends think about my choice," Abdulloeva told AFP. "The work you do should interest you. I want to make a life for myself."

Historically heavily reliant on Russia, the Muslim-majority nation of some eight million has been hit by the two-year recession suffered by its ex-Soviet masters.

At least 860,000 Tajik citizens—the vast majority men—are working in Russia, according to Russian migration authorities, sending back good wages to provide for their families at home.

But many have been thrown out of work as Russia's economy was hit by plunging oil prices and Western sanctions over Moscow's actions in Ukraine.

The collapse in the Russian ruble's value has also left a sharp dent in the money they send



home.

In 2015, the amount of money transferred back to Tajikistan fell to \$1.3 billion from \$3.8 billion a year earlier when remittances represented nearly half of the country's GDP, according to the

Russian Central Bank.

To make ends meet, women have had to find new sources of income. Women make up about 60 percent of the new enrollees at the Dushanbe training centre, said its

director Shukhrullo Salomov. "Many of them choose typically male professions, successfully complete their courses and don't look back," he told AFP.

Even with a qualification, the job market is tough: although Tajikistan has significantly reduced poverty in the last decade, unemployment remains stubbornly high. "Of the 130,000 young people that finish school every year, more than 60,000 enter the ranks of the unemployed," Saimuddin Dustov, a Moscow-based Tajik analyst, told AFP.

In theory this could prompt women like Abdulloeva to head abroad too. But they could face a double stigma if they leave the country to find work: both xenophobia, which Tajik men say they suffer abroad, but also suspicions about exactly what kind of work they

are doing. "Young women migrants often find themselves targets of (Tajik) society's suspicion if they find work abroad, because some female migrants fall into prostitution," said researcher Alla Kuvatova, who studies gender issues in the country.

Even at home, Tajik society "doesn't welcome" women taking up work that is usually done by men, she added.

A 2010 census, whose data was published in 2013, showed that about 1.1 million women in Tajikistan work, most of them in agriculture. In his December address to the nation, veteran President Emomali Rakhmon summed up the sentiment, deploring that women were "more often than not doing heavy, physically taxing work".

Rakhmon, who came to power during a ruinous five-year civil

war in the country during the 1990s, called on the service industry to employ more women instead.

Taxi driving has drawn some of Tajikistan's unemployed but few women have been able to get into the business.

"Behind the Wheel", a 2013 award-winning short documentary film, tells the story of a Tajik woman, who quit taxi driving after repeated arguments with male clients, preferring to fix tyres instead. "Of thousands of taxi drivers in the major cities—Dushanbe, Khujand and Kulyob—probably fewer than 10 are women," said analyst Dustov.

Despite grim employment prospects across the board, however, many women graduates from the Dushanbe training centre don't regret their choices to attend courses.

EDITORIAL

Growth and prosperity

Nepal should enforce economic reforms and spend the capital budget

One of the basic principles of economics is that a country's standard of living—quality of healthcare, nutrition, life expectancy, material comforts, etc—depends on its ability to produce goods and services. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a measure of the value of the goods and services produced within a country in a given year. While GDP has its limitations and there are people who dispute its validity as a measure of well-being—it does not calculate the value of leisure and spiritual happiness, for example—what is indisputable is that GDP measures a country's ability to obtain many things that contribute to people's well-being.

It is therefore good news for us that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has revised upwards its forecast of Nepal's GDP growth from 4 percent to 5.5 percent for this fiscal year. The revision comes on the back of expectations of a rise in farm output because of a good monsoon. Paddy production, which contributes to around 6 percent of the GDP, is projected to increase by around 22 percent in this fiscal year. The IMF's growth estimate is however lower than the government's forecast of 6.5 percent.

Nepal recorded low growth for the last two years, mainly due to the earthquakes, agitations in the Madhes and the unofficial trade embargo imposed by India. Growth dropped to 2.3 percent in 2014-15 and further down to 0.8 percent in 2015-16.

But GDP growth was not spectacular even before the country was struck by these challenges. In the last decade, Nepal's average growth rate was only around 4 percent. Low capital spending—spending meant for infrastructure construction—has been a chronic problem in the country, which is likely to continue this year as well. Nepal's capital spending stood at a mere 11 percent in the first half of this fiscal year; only Rs35 billion has been spent out of the allocated budget of Rs312 billion for capital expenditure in the current fiscal year. This is woeful for a country like ours with a huge infrastructure gap, which is a major constraint for growth.

So the IMF has rightly warned that in order to sustain the growth rate that will likely be achieved this fiscal year, Nepal must put appropriate policies in place and enhance its capacity to spend the capital budget. Nepal has of late initiated some policy reforms. It has, for example, introduced new Industrial Enterprise Act, Special Economic Zone Act and Bank and Financial Institution Act. The country should focus on implementing the reforms and on addressing the problem of low capital expenditure. This will help achieve shared prosperity and raise our living standards.

WORLDVIEW

Lesson for Trump

He should study Obama's respectful approach

It was not a coincidence. In the waning hours of the Obama presidency, officials in Mexico bundled the drug kingpin Joaquin Guzmán Loera, known as El Chapo, into an airplane and handed him to the American government so he could stand trial in New York. His extradition came after years of painstaking diplomacy. This was no easy task: Washington's relationship with Mexico has been strained by an imbalance of power and by American slights. By completing the transfer on President Barack Obama's watch, Mexico appeared to be rewarding an administration that was respectful. It also ensured that the extradition was not seen as a concession to President Trump, who made maligning Mexicans a centerpiece of his campaign.

Obama officials succeeded because they tried to persuade, not hector, their Mexican counterparts. This fit with the administration's broader strategy for Latin America, one that was rooted in pragmatism and cooperation. It offers a lesson Mr. Trump would be foolish to disregard. Mexican officials have wisely refused to escalate tensions with Mr. Trump. But if they conclude that a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship with the United States is impossible, they have cards to play that could stymie Mr. Trump's agenda. Mexico could cease rigorously controlling its border with Guatemala, which would lead more people to try to enter the United States. It could do more to encourage investment from China and Russia, which are eager to strengthen ties with Latin America. If the new administration builds on the successes of Mr. Obama, Mexico may never feel the need to do so.

BUDDHA RATNA TANDUKAR

We have passed many years in the dark with a lot of suffering because of load-shedding. We had power cuts lasting up to 18 hours a day. It was a terrible experience which we can never forget. We were compelled to follow the load-shedding schedule when planning anything. It used to change almost every month, and so did our daily schedule.

The rolling blackouts had a profound impact on our daily life. We could not use any kind of electronic device or

electrical household appliance during load-shedding.

Students could not do their homework or read books at night. During exams, they suffered a lot. We could not watch television or listen to the radio, which are the most popular forms of entertainment and sources of information. We could not surf the internet either. We had to prepare our dinner by candle light. There used to be greater problems at hospitals, offices, banks, hotels and schools during load-shedding. We had to miss many things in our daily life because of it. Every day, lots of work used to remain incomplete

despite ample time to complete them. During the no-power hours, our valuable time used to go to waste.

Electricity is one of the most important blessings that science has given to mankind. It is quite versatile. Modern life cannot be imagined without it. It has many uses in our daily life. Electricity is our primary need, it is not a luxury. We can have no comfort and conveniences, and we will not be connected with the world without electricity. We will be isolated and uninformed. Therefore, we need electricity at every step to make meaningful progress and live a happy and prosperous life.

Now, load-shedding has been eliminated because of good management of the power supply. It became possible only because of the current managing director of the Nepal Electricity Authority Kulman Ghising and his great efficiency in handling the crisis. And it must be eliminated for ever. It is not our desire but a basic need of the modern world. In the modern world, most things are possible only because of electricity.

If load-shedding resumes, we will not

sides of the border.

Accordingly, the most modern trade facilitating measures, including customs, banking, warehousing, and insurance must be put in place along with the physical infrastructure. Besides, reorganising trading season from the present June to September to maximise the annual period and removing values of trading limit per trader per day have to be done with a strong regulatory mechanism that pertains to smuggling, environment, social interactions and other security parameters. A comprehensive policy intervention is required for promoting trade-investment-tourism-service sector linkages in the BBIN framework. In fact, the power hungry South West region of China could access electricity from the Bhutan-Nepal-North Eastern corridor of India.

A win-win situation

Moreover, a fast-developing India has started to change many of its traditional policies and strategies. Unlike in the past, Delhi now thinks of borders and frontiers in more comprehensive terms. This is more so in the context of India's 'Act East' policy. The security-centric view about borders must change as a rising India grapples with issues and opportunities related to markets, resources, investments, services, and access to energy markets and tourism potentials. This is further speeded by the way the Chinese are building infrastructures alongside their borders, both with India and other neighbouring countries.

A fascinating venture could be the cross-border Buddhist circuit. The entire Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) and Myanmar sub-region could be the hub connecting all the major Buddhist destinations in India and neighbouring countries—Bodh Gaya in Bihar, Rumtek in Sikkim, Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, Lumbini in Nepal, Taktsang in Bhutan, Shwedagon Pagoda in Rangoon and Jokhang and Potala in Lhasa. Most of the Himalayan regions will benefit from this new intervention, enhanced by proposed air links between Bagdogra (Darjeeling), Sikkim and Guwahati with Rangoon, Kathmandu, Thimphu, Dhaka and other cities. Druk Airways of Bhutan is already flying between Bagdogra and Bangkok.

Also of interest to the people of Tibet and adjoining provinces like Sichuan will be the health and educational facilities available in the Sikkim-Darjeeling and the eastern belt of India, which boasts of fine educational institutions. However, to enhance the level of trading at Nathu La and other border points, the principles of trading must be based on the most favoured nation treatment (MFN) of World Trade Organisation, which will amount to drastically revising the list of exports and imports and announcing a negative list so as to match the market realities on both

Lama, who served as the chief economic adviser of the government of Sikkim (2000-2007), headed the team of experts to prepare the Nathu La Trade Report in 2005

Old connections and new opportunities

Security-centric view about borders must change as India grapples with market-related issues and opportunities



MAHENDRA P LAMA
mahendra_lama1961@yahoo.co.in

Borders-as-capillaries offer a broader and deeper meaning of borders and security. The re-opening of the once-versatile Nathu La trade route between Sikkim in India and the Tibet Autonomous Region of China after 44 years in 2006 has enabled a critical source of reconnection in the borderlands. After the agreement between Narendra Modi and Xi Jinping in September 2014, this route is now used for Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrimage. For decades, pilgrimage by Indians to Kailash-Mansarovar mainly took place either through the Nepal-China border town of Tatopani (Khasa) or by a difficult trek through the Sino-Indian pass from Taklakot on the Uttarakhand border.

The Nathu La route, which is one of the most magnificent eco-tourism routes, reduces physical hardship and the journey time. It makes deep inroads into biodiversity hotspots and offers a glimpse of glaciers and water towers. India has also decided to pave a two-lane highway up to Nathu La and a railway line to Rangpoo, while the Chinese government has decided to extend the railway line from Xigatse to Nathu La.

Trade ties

Many expected China's recognition of Indian sovereignty over Sikkim in 2003 to significantly alter India's economic exchanges through the borderlands. The 2005 Nathu La Trade Study Team Report projected that trade flow from Nathu La would reach IRS4.46 billion by 2015.

But the trade between the two countries has not really taken off. Total trade increased from IRS1.97 million in 2007 to IRS170.1 million in 2014. Interestingly, in the absence of any significant growth in imports from China, there has been a huge trade surplus (IRS150 million) in India's favour.

The dismal trade volume stems mostly from restrictions on tradable items, poor road conditions, inadequate and unattractive infrastructural facilities, limited tradable items, and policy-makers' lukewarm attitude. However, it would be particularly naïve to expect traditional items like yak tail and goat skins to dominate the trade exchange. Even Tibet is no more a market for religious and cultural items alone. The region's transforming market absorbs



cement and cars to *yarsagumba* (caterpillar fungus) and tulips.

This will not be pragmatic to confine this route to interaction among the border communities. This was the assumption in the border trade between Nepal and Tibet at Khasa and India and Myanmar at Moreh (Manipur). However, the actual volume, composition and direction of trade in these routes have far surpassed the local communities and their products.

Restrictions have only encouraged the illegal and surreptitious aspects of trade.

The Nathu La Trade Study Group recommended that during 2005-2010, construction of wider and deeper infrastructural facilities should take place to facilitate large-scale trading. By 2012, tourism should be integrated with trade and by 2015, Indian and Chinese tourists should be permitted to cross the border through Nathu La on a package tour basis. This route should also be used for the pilgrims going to Kailash Mansarovar from India. And during 2015-2018, neighbouring countries including Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal could begin to use this route. And 2018 onwards, SAARC tourism should be integrated through this route.

Regional integration

China has developed Renqinggang in Yatung county and India Sherathang as trade marts. Most of the scenic sites and tourist spots in Tibet are now open to domestic as well as international visitors. In fact, tourists are keen to observe how trade actually takes place between India

and China at Sherathang and Renqinggang. The Nathu La pass has become a major tourist spot with the majority of 6 lakh Indian tourists visiting the border and enjoying the pleasure of shaking hands with Chinese soldiers.

A fascinating venture could be the cross-border Buddhist circuit. The entire Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) and Myanmar sub-region could be the hub connecting all the major Buddhist destinations in India and neighbouring countries—Bodh Gaya in Bihar, Rumtek in Sikkim, Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, Lumbini in Nepal, Taktsang in Bhutan, Shwedagon Pagoda in Rangoon and Jokhang and Potala in Lhasa. Most of the Himalayan regions will benefit from this new intervention, enhanced by proposed air links between Bagdogra (Darjeeling), Sikkim and Guwahati with Rangoon, Kathmandu, Thimphu, Dhaka and other cities. Druk Airways of Bhutan is already flying between Bagdogra and Bangkok.

Also of interest to the people of Tibet and adjoining provinces like Sichuan will be the health and educational facilities available in the Sikkim-Darjeeling and the eastern belt of India, which boasts of fine educational institutions. However, to enhance the level of trading at Nathu La and other border points, the principles of trading must be based on the most favoured nation treatment (MFN) of World Trade Organisation, which will amount to drastically revising the list of exports and imports and announcing a negative list so as to match the market realities on both

The uncertainty of tomorrow

Children with disability need a secure future even when their parents are gone



SAMRIDHI RANA THAPA

I recently read an article published in the *Guardian* titled 'Facing my fear: to save my autistic son's future I had to let him go', written by Elaine Robertson Demby, a mother of a child with autism spectrum. In the article, Elaine confessed that sending her son, Evan, to a residential school in another state was the most difficult decision she had ever made. She did so to ensure his future—a future where he could learn to sustain his life even after she and her husband were dead. The fears and concerns of parents who have children with disability in Nepal are no different.

"Most importantly, we want our son to be happy, even after we are gone. There is not a single day when we don't wonder about his future without us," shares Dr Sunita Maleku Amatya, a mother of a son with autism and chairperson of the Autism Care Nepal Society (ACNS).

Common parental concerns

Parents are an integral support system for their children with disability, as they enable social participation as well as the access to disability allowance and specialised education for them. So the parents' concern for the future of their disabled child once they are gone remains. 'What happens to our child when we are no more? Will my child be able to sustain her life? Where and with whom will he live? Will they continue to participate in education,



employment and sports? What about property rights?' These are some common parental concerns.

In developed countries like the US, policies have been put in place to reassure parents. A father of Nepali origin, now settled in the US, says, "Social and regular mechanisms respect, guarantee and monitor the rights of the disabled." His son has multiple disabilities and lives in a specialised group home, similar to Demby's child. He adds, "the main reason for having our son live in a group home and away from home was an attempt to make him as independent as possible so that when the eventual unavoidable time arrives, he will be able to take care of himself. We know that he will have a major meltdown but we are hopeful that he will manage to deal with the situation in familiar surroundings. The state federal programmes and his brother will be responsible for him when we are gone. The fact that this kind of social network is available here in the US

is a blessing for people with disabilities."

A better welfare system

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) titled 'Living independently and being included in the community' expects Nepal as a state to ensure that people with disabilities can live independently and be included in the community. Article 19 stipulates, "Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community." None of the articles in UNCRPD is dedicated to residential interventions catering to all levels of socio-economic status of people with disabilities without parents. The uncertainty faced by most parents with children with disability, especially those with neuro-developmental disability, likely

lies in the fact that their child may experience discrimination. Discrimination under Article 2 of the CRPD is explained as the "exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others."

As a disability inclusive development worker, I strongly feel that Nepal direly needs a welfare system that ensures children with disability can continue to enjoy the highest affordable standards of living even after the loss of their parents or guardians. The welfare system should empower parents and guardians of children with disability to believe that their child will be safe and will have reason to be happy and engage socially. Expressing similar sentiments, Dr Amatya says, "I hope to have independent apartments with trained people where my son along with a few others can live a meaningful and dignified life. We want to see him live there when we are still around."

My aim in addressing this issue is to begin a discussion on the formation of trust bodies and sustainable specialised residential care homes for disabled people belonging to all age groups at a government, non-government or private level. For example, those with economic means could come together to establish a fund from the property the child with disability is entitled to inherit. The financial resources and property could be utilised in a way that generates regular income and ensures inclusion and various opportunities for these children and adults.

Thapa works with the Karuna Foundation Nepal as a Senior Officer-CBR Programme

Hello brightness

BUDDHA RATNA TANDUKAR

We have passed many years in the dark with a lot of suffering because of load-shedding. We had power cuts lasting up to 18 hours a day. It was a terrible experience which we can never forget. We were compelled to follow the load-shedding schedule when planning anything. It used to change almost every month, and so did our daily schedule.

The rolling blackouts had a profound impact on our daily life. We could not use any kind of electronic device or

electrical household appliance during load-shedding.

Students could not do their homework or read books at night. During exams, they suffered a lot. We could not watch television or listen to the radio, which are the most popular forms of entertainment and sources of information. We could not surf the internet either. We had to prepare our dinner by candle light. There used to be greater problems at hospitals, offices, banks, hotels and schools during load-shedding. We had to miss many things in our daily life because of it. Every day, lots of work used to remain incomplete

despite ample time to complete them.

During the no-power hours, our valuable time used to go to waste. Electricity is one of the most important blessings that science has given to mankind. It is quite versatile. Modern life cannot be imagined without it. It has many uses in our daily life. Electricity is our primary need, it is not a luxury. We can have no comfort and conveniences, and we will not be connected with the world without electricity. We will be isolated and uninformed. Therefore, we need electricity at every step to make meaningful progress and live a happy and prosperous life.

Now, load-shedding has been eliminated because of good management of the power supply. It became possible only because of the current managing director of the Nepal Electricity Authority Kulman Ghising and his great efficiency in handling the crisis. And it must be eliminated for ever. It is not our desire but a basic need of the modern world. In the modern world, most things are possible only because of electricity.

If load-shedding resumes, we will not

only be compelled to live in the dark with many sufferings, but also have to go back another decade. There will not be meaningful prosperity in any one's life. Schools, universities, hospitals, banks, hotels, factories and offices will not run smoothly. Everything will be pretty expensive. A black market will flourish in every field. Bribery and corruption will increase everywhere. Eventually, our entire country will become a great victim of these circumstances, and it will not be prosperous. Therefore, load-shedding must not be allowed to come back under any circumstances.

GUY VERHOFSTADT

Brexit really does mean Brexit. Theresa May's long-awaited speech this week finally outlined some of her government's negotiating objectives. Now we know that Britain wants to leave the European single market it helped to create, the customs union, and the European Union as a whole.

With only a few weeks left to the likely invoking of article 50, triggering the start of talks on Britain's withdrawal, this clarity was much needed, and will help EU governments and the European parliament to prepare for the discussions to come. I have no doubt, however, that the process we are about to embark on will be a challenging one.

The EU will work in a frank and open manner to help deliver a Brexit that is least harmful for all concerned, but we must be honest with each other too: the days of UK cherry-picking and a Europe à la carte are over.

Contrary to the deeply unhelpful comments by the British foreign secretary Boris Johnson yesterday, who suggested that François Hollande was trying to "administer punishment beatings" in the manner of "some world war two movie", no one in Europe wants to "punish" either Britain or the British. I have

never heard any MEP or European leader call for this, in private or public.

But it is an illusion to suggest that the UK will be permitted to leave the EU but then be free to opt back into the best parts of the European project, for instance by asking for zero tariffs from the single market without accepting the obligations that come with it. I hope that British people will see from the perspective of an EU taxpayer how unreasonable this would be.

I am the first to recognise the importance of May's statement on the need for close cooperation on security matters, both internal and external. We will have to find a way to cooperate on anti-terrorism and defence in a structured and systemic way. As she made clear in her speech, Britain is leaving the EU, not Europe. We face a long list of shared security threats.

One of the most pressing priorities will be to find a solution to the intolerable situation of many European Union citizens

working and living in the UK and, likewise, the millions of British citizens currently resident in other EU countries. This will be priority for the European parliament, as soon as the article 50 notification is received and negotiations begin.

EU REFERENDUM

We're not out to punish Britain

Although the EU will negotiate a fair deal, the days of Europe à la carte are over



tive negotiating tactic.

May's declaration that the UK remains committed to a strong, stable and prosperous EU rather than an unravelling one was welcomed by many in the rest of Europe. But if her words are to be believed, they must now be backed up with concrete actions.

The views of US president-elect, Donald Trump, and the hybrid war involving cyber-attacks and disinformation and political subversion being waged against the west by Russia pose a profound threat to both the Brussels and London governments. It is increasingly clear that Trump and Russia now seek the disintegration of the European Union.

Donald Trump admitted as much when he suggested that more countries would leave the union following Britain's departure. What he really meant was: I hope they do. It is likely the new US president will nominate an ambassador to the EU who has only one quality—being a Brexit enthusiast.

This is a remarkable turning point in the American approach towards Europe. But I don't see why chaos on the continent would be in the interests of Britain. Post-Brexit, I hope that the UK and the EU can work together to defend what remains of the liberal democratic order.

One of the greatest challenges in the forthcoming negotiations will be the acute need to find a solution for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, so that a new hard border dividing them is avoided. I am committed to doing my utmost to ensure, from the European Union side, that the specific needs of Ireland and Northern Ireland are prioritised in the negotiations to come.

Here again, Britain and the European Union must work together. It would be a tragedy if Brexit reversed any of the progress towards peace and reconciliation made in recent years, but much work must be done to square this circle and deliver a viable solution on the ground.

Brexit will be a sad, surreal and exhausting process. The EU must use the UK's departure to reform and move forward. Britain can choose to be a partner in this process, or it can be an impediment to it. Let us hope for a future relationship based on trust and genuine partnership.

DONALD TRUMP

Nasty women of the world unite

It is not by chance that women have led the opposition to Donald Trump's ascendancy. An estimated 2 million demonstrated across the United States and around the world this weekend, in events across 60-plus countries, including Malawi, Peru, India and Lebanon. Attendance in Washington DC was estimated to be three times that of Friday's inauguration. In London, up to 100,000 marched. Even Antarctica saw a protest.

Marchers were driven by more than visceral disgust at a commander-in-chief who has boasted about sexually assaulting women and denigrated them in the crudest terms. Mr Trump has said that women should be punished for abortion and, though he later rowed back on that, has said he will appoint supreme court judges who oppose Roe v Wade, sending the issue back to states. His impact will not end at US borders. He is expected to reintroduce the "global gag" rule, which denies family planning funding to foreign groups using even their own money to advise women about abortion. Crude US protectionism could push low-paid female workers overseas into outright destitution. So while women welcomed male participants, they organised in the understanding that their lives and bodies will be affected disproportionately.

Mansplaining dismissals of the protests have missed the point. Democracy does not stop at the ballot box, any more than activism ends on the streets. Participants understand that these marches began a long struggle, which will need to take many forms and to be expressed at the highest levels of power (Theresa May, so cagey when asked whether she would raise concerns about his "unacceptable" comments on women in their meeting this week, should take note). And it is, in fact, Mr Trump who promoted and relied upon identity politics in this election.

Women's rights are simply human rights; human rights are women's rights, the marchers reminded us—a saying popularised by Hillary Clinton, then first lady, at 1995's UN world conference on women. The Beijing declaration reached at that meeting was the most progressive international agreement on advancing women's rights. Many fear that the global community is now going backwards. Human rights groups warn that in international policy-making, countries are increasingly



EQUALITY

It's time to rewrite the rules of economics

We reject the flawed orthodoxy of shareholder value and trickle-down economics

LIAM BYRNE

The debate taking place between the snow-topped peaks of Davos this week will be dominated by one issue and one issue alone, the surge in inequality. In a democracy, anger isn't abstract. As both the vote for Brexit and the election of Donald Trump show, it turns up on polling day.

In the US, new research shows that in the rust-belt states an incredible 40% of those born in 1980 are worse off than their parents. Here in the UK the gender pay gap still looms large—and as the Institute for Fiscal Studies revealed, there has been a four-fold increase in the number of men in low-paid, part-time work over the last 20 years. This represents a stark betrayal of the implicit intergenerational contract of the postwar years—that each successive generation would be better off than the preceding one. And that betrayal is by no means confined to the post-industrial interior

of the US; it is in danger of becoming the social and economic condition of our age.

For years, we've known that what you earn depends on what you learn, and the access to education and training that makes possible such learning. While wages for the highly skilled, such as graduates, have been flat since 2008, a degree remains the key determinant of a middle-class income. Thanks to Thomas Piketty and his colleagues, we also know that today's kings are asset owners, not wage earners. Our combination of hyper-loose monetary policy and tight fiscal policy means that the asset-rich get richer while the asset-and-income-poor get battered.

If you're lucky enough to own a house or shares or pension rights, you've done well since 2010: the stock market is up 40%; house prices are up by over a quarter; and the "triple lock" on pensions in the UK will have channelled more than £33bn extra to those with pension rights by 2020. Yet those on tax credits have seen their incomes

fall precipitously while, of course, benefiting not at all from asset-price inflation; needless to say, they have little if any pension rights to protect.

Other leading economists, such as Robert Reich, Joseph Stiglitz and Jason Furman, have shown categorically that the rules by which current economic policy is made are simply not delivering private job creation, rising wages or the taxes needed for a flourishing society. And that's why it's time to rewrite those rules. We don't need a new account of widening inequality; what we need are new solutions and the actions to put them in place.

That is why we are seeking to launch a new kind of debate in the hope of finding a new kind of consensus. The sooner we find it, the sooner we can reject once and for all the tired and increasingly flawed orthodoxy of shareholder value and trickle-down economics that took shape with such force nearly 50 years ago. That's why parliamentarians and Sheffield Political Economy Research

Institute have joined forces to broker new solutions—bringing together leading thinkers in politics, academia, business, finance, trade unions, churches and civil society—to pinpoint what needs to change and how.

In her Brexit speech at Lancaster House this week, the prime minister spoke of her determination "to build a stronger economy and a fairer society by embracing genuine economic and social reform". It was an echo of her message outside 10 Downing Street last July. Left and right now agree the status quo is not an option—and that's why we aim to unite reformers across the political spectrum through an all-party group on inclusive growth, to ensure together that the reality of change matches the rhetoric of change.

We're fast approaching the 10th anniversary of the greatest crash in economic history. That's long enough to have figured out how to do things better. After a year none of us are keen to remember, it's time to get down to work.

ISLAM

The UK media too often misrepresents Muslims

False stories and blatant inaccuracies about Islam only undermine trust in the press and fuel prejudice. I'm on a mission to have them corrected

MIQDAAD VERSI

Terror in Spain: Gunman screaming "Allahu Akbar" opens fire in supermarket" screamed a Daily Express news story recently. This headline is the latest in a long list of false and inaccurate stories I have identified as part of my work challenging the misreporting of Islam and Muslims in the media.

This story in the Express, also covered in the Sun (now corrected) and Mail Online, was complemented by a subsequent claim that the information came from the police—despite the police making it clear that the individual had spoken Basque and that it was not a terror attack.

Such blatant misrepresentation of the facts has real consequences that are the motivation for my efforts. On one hand, it tars the brilliant and careful work by many journalists across the country. Yet trust in journalism lags near the bottom of Ipsos Mori's Veracity Index—a serious concern given the importance of the media in challenging authority in our democracy.

On the other hand, it leads to



increasing hostility against Muslims, as shown by academics from the University of Cambridge and the University of Leicester. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance even called for the UK media to "avoid perpetuating prejudice", and that "fuelling prejudice against Muslims" was "reckless" given the dangerous consequences, in line with the United Nations human rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, who urged the UK to "tackle tabloid hate speech".

Unsurprisingly, and in a similar way to many of the other stories I have identified, this false terror story has been shared thousands of times, including by far-right groups and extremists. Initially, my work to correct inaccuracies was sporadic at best. But as my fears have worsened, I have adopted a more systematic, focused and analytical approach where I evaluate articles on Islam and Muslims that go against the editors' code of practice that the papers have themselves chosen to abide by.

To Fleet Street's discredit, rarely

does a week pass where an article has not been corrected: there have been a staggering 13 corrections following my complaints in the past seven weeks. Let's not forget this excludes discriminatory pieces and hate speech against Muslims in opinion pages of newspapers, which are not covered by the current regulator (in spite of Lord Leveson's recommendations).

Given that I cannot attribute motive without evidence, I am careful not to do so. But given their professional duty and undertaking to the press regulator as well as to society at large, newspaper editors need to seriously consider what are the drivers for this misreporting. I suppose this may be reflective of our current age, where click-baiting or web traffic are more valued in some newsrooms than the graft of old-fashioned journalism. While for some misreporting might be reflective of a lack of religious literacy, I do worry that in certain cases it may be due to anti-Muslim prejudice.

We desperately require greater care in the reporting of breaking news sto-

ries, better training, greater diversity in newsrooms, and a religious literacy clearly lacking at present, along with a consistent use of terminology that takes into account its consequences for our society. These are some of the issues that I have raised with national media outlets' managing editors, ombudsmen and legal teams who have engaged with me following complaints.

For what it's worth, while some of the "engagement" seems to be grudging and more aimed at attempting to placate me, others have been very receptive to ideas, with constructive discussions as to how to move forward. Most recently, for example, a managing editor shared a correction with the whole of the online team as an example of what needs to change.

Conspiracy theorists have bizarrely suggested that my motives are to control the media, with the aim of silencing criticism of Islam or even introducing a blasphemy law through the back door. Such individuals or groups fail to provide a shred of evidence, and have even resorted to blatant lies to back up their assertions. One example is the claim that the press regulator forced Mail Online to state Islam does not support honour killings, when it did no such thing and only required accuracy and justification for Islam as a driver.

I am an advocate for free speech as well as frank and honest discussions on challenging issues. Yet I am also wary of those who masquerade behind this important principle in order to seek a privileged position to attack minorities. None of us want to live in a world where our children feel the media is out to get them. All I'm looking for is responsible reporting. Is that too much to ask?

Polanski pulls out of 'French Oscars'

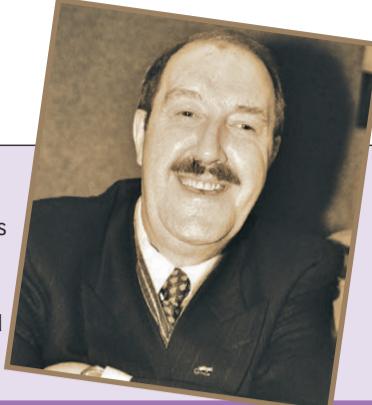
Roman Polanski will not preside over the "French Oscars"—the Césars—next month after women threatened to protest about the director's rape of a 13-year-old girl almost four decades ago. Feminist groups called for a boycott of the Feb 24 awards in Paris after the maker of "Chinatown" and "Rosemary's Baby" was chosen to head the event.

BORN TODAY

American singer Alicia Keys is 36
 Spanish footballer Xavi Hernandez is 37
 Australian musician Calum Hood is 21
 Brazilian footballer Robinho is 33
 American actor Jenifer Lewis is 60

Actor Kaye no more

Actor Gorden Kaye, who was best known for his role in the long-running sitcom 'Allo 'Allo!, has died aged 75. Kaye played cafe owner Rene Artois on the hit show, which centred on the fictional exploits of resistance fighters in World War Two in German-occupied France. He appeared in all 84 episodes of the sitcom.



SIMENS: FOCUS ON STORYTELLING, NOT COMPETITION

Two Day Film School concludes

POST REPORT
 KATHMANDU, JAN 24

The Dov Simens 2 Day Film School held at Nepal Tourism Board concluded on January 23. Acclaimed for pioneering the 2-day film festival, and having mentored filmmakers such as Quentin Tarantino and Spike Lee, Dov Simens has been teaching film to filmmakers around the world.

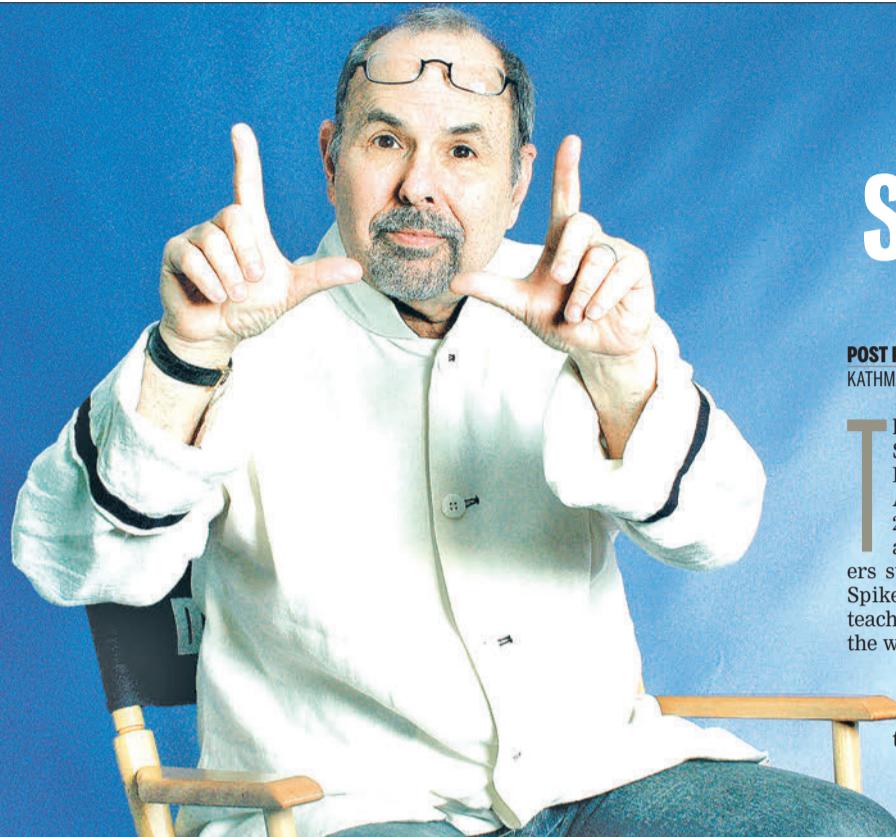
The two-day event, organised by Kathmandu School of Cinema in association with the American Embassy in Nepal, was attended by film students, journalists, actors and filmmakers.

The first day of the workshop revolved around the basic components of filmmaking, such as screenwriting, shooting, directing and editing. During the session, Simens talked about the process that involves in the making of an independent film, linking it to the current condition of Nepali cinema industry and how filmmakers can produce a film with whatever resources they have. "First, learn how to tell a story. That is what is marketable. People around the world are curious about Nepal and you can sell that," he said.

Presenting examples of how films made with limited budget and resources are thriving in international film market, Simens stressed on the will and passion needed on a

filmmaker to tell a story. "Shoot your first feature in one location, with a few actors, with whatever camera you have with you (you can do it with a mobile phone as well)," Simens suggested.

On the second day of the event, Simens touched upon issues relating budgeting and marketing of the film. "We are in the age of globalisation," Simens started. "There are a myriad ways how you can sell your films. First, there are film festivals happening around the world. And one advantage you've got is these fests prioritise films coming out of a third world country like yours. Then, there's the internet and Television. You have no use competing with Hollywood but focus on telling your story right."



Razzie nominees revealed

REUTERS
 LOS ANGELES, JAN 24

Fashion industry satire Zoolander 2 led nominations on Monday for the annual Razzie Awards, a list of the year's worst films that includes performances by past Oscar winners Robert De Niro, Ben Affleck and Julia Roberts.

The tongue-in-cheek Razzies, created in 1980, serve as an antidote to Hollywood's Oscars ceremony. Winners of the year's worst films—if they turn up—are given a



gold, spray-painted trophy at a ceremony held on the eve of the Academy Awards in February.

Zoolander 2, which bombed at the box office, received eight Razzie nominations, including for its director and star Ben Stiller, as well as co-stars Owen Wilson and Will Ferrell.

Affleck earned a nomination for his role in comic book hero movie Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice, which also

was a Razzie pick for worst film, sequel and screenplay.

Although slammed by critics, audiences embraced the movie, which went on to take in some \$873 million at the global box office. Other worst picture Razzie nominees were the De Niro comedy Dirty Grandpa; action movie Independence Day: Resurgence, starring Liam Hemsworth and Jeff Goldblum; fantasy adventure Gods of Egypt, and the documentary Hillary's America: The Secret History of the Democratic Party.

Nominees and winners of the Razzies are voted for online by around 1,000 Razzie members from 24 countries, who sign up online and pay a \$40 membership fee. The winners will be announced on Feb 25.

WRITER 'SUSPENDED' OVER BARRON TRUMP JIBE

BBC
 NEW YORK, JAN 24

A Saturday Night Live writer has been suspended after posting a tweet mocking US President Donald Trump's son Barron, US media reports say.

They quote a person familiar with SNL's plans as saying Katie Rich was suspended indefinitely. The programme's network, NBC, is yet to comment. On Friday, Ms Rich posted a now-deleted tweet, saying "Barron will be this country's first home-school shooter".

An avalanche of criticism on social media followed.

Ms Rich later deleted her tweet, suspending her Twitter account.

However, on Monday she was back online to issue an apology. One Facebook post in reaction to her previous tweet has been shared nearly three million times.

The post read: "NO child deserves to be talked to in such a manner... He is a child, he is to be respected and he is off limits". Chelsea Clinton, a former first child, joined the support for Barron. SNL has made a number of shows in recent months, parodying President Trump.

Mr Trump, who took office on 20 January, has described the programme as "not funny" and with "terrible" cast.



Colbert to host 2017 Emmys

REUTERS
 LOS ANGELES, JAN 24

Talk show host Stephen Colbert will host the 2017 Emmys ceremony celebrating the highest honours in television, organizers said on Monday.

It will be the first time Colbert hosts the annual ceremony which takes place this year on Sept 17 in Los Angeles broadcaster CBS television said in a statement.

Colbert, 52, is host of CBS's Late Show and made his name on the Emmy-winning satirical news shows The Colbert Report and The Daily Show.

"We look forward to honoring television's best while entertaining audiences with the creative energy and sharp comedy of Stephen Colbert," Jack Sussman, executive vice president of live events at CBS, said in a statement.

Colbert quipped on Monday that the 2017 Emmys would produce "the largest audience to witness an Emmys, period. Both in person and around the globe," as a slight to Donald Trump's inauguration

claims.

Last year's Emmy host was Jimmy Kimmel, who will be hosting the 2017 Oscar ceremony next month.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

VADODARA, JAN 24

One person died of cardiac arrest when he went to catch a glimpse of Shah Rukh Khan at the Vadodara railway station, teeming with fans of the Bollywood superstar, who arrived here on board the August Kranti Express on Monday to promote his upcoming film Raees.

Social activist Farid Khan Pathan of Hatikhana area of Vadodara, who arrived at the railway platform with his wife and daughter as the family was an avid follower of the actor, fell unconscious after suffering a cardiac arrest at the railway platform.

He was rushed to hospital where

he was declared dead on arrival, his family members confirmed.

Earlier, reports said he felt suffocated during a stampede at the railway station and then suffered a heart attack. The police resorted to lathi-charge to disperse the crowd during which some persons sustained minor wounds on their head and face.

Two constables of the Railway police also collapsed during the chaos and are undergoing treatment.

They are said to be out of danger.

The Bollywood actor is travelling with the film's director Rahul Dholakia and producer Ritesh Sidhwani from Mumbai to Delhi on August Kranti Express train to promote Raees which hits the screens this week on January 25.

He was rushed to hospital where



THE GIFT OF SIGHT

AAKRITI DHITAL

KATHMANDU, JAN 24

A travel photo exhibit and musical show, titled Yatri 2.0 by Kaushal Raj Sapkota, which aimed to raise funds for cataract surgeries ended this week by generating a total of Rs 183,600 for the cause.

A high-school educator, traveller and an ardent photographer, Sapkota put up the exhibit at Bikalpa Art Center with a total of 30 photographs from his travels through different parts of Nepal, India, Pakistan, USA

and Japan. The exhibit also included select pictures by photographers Mahesh Dahal, Pradeep Bashyal and Jaya Jung Mahat.

Yatri 2.0, as the name suggests, was an amalgamation of photographs of journeys, of the physical and of the mind.

The photographs explored themes ranging from life and love to childhood and time. At the event, Sapkota also paid tribute to the poet Kahlil Gibran by putting up snippets of his poems and quotes alongside each photograph, bringing out the true

essence of the pictures put on display.

"Kahlil Gibran has affected my choices in life in ways I cannot imagine. This was a small effort from my side to glorify his works," said Sapkota.

The show was initiated with the goal of raising Rs 150,000 for the Make Me See—a cause that works to provide free eye check up services and cataract surgeries to the underprivileged, particularly children and the elderly at Sagarmatha Chaudhary Eye Hospital in Lahan.

"We look forward to honoring television's best while entertaining audiences with the creative energy and sharp comedy of Stephen Colbert," Jack Sussman, executive vice president of live events at CBS, said in a statement.

Colbert quipped on Monday that the 2017 Emmys would produce "the largest audience to witness an Emmys, period. Both in person and around the globe," as a slight to Donald Trump's inauguration

claims.

Last year's Emmy host was Jimmy Kimmel, who will be hosting the 2017 Oscar ceremony next month.

**STUDY IN
AUSTRALIA?**

Direct Representative of
20+ Australian
Uni & Institution

the kathmandupost

theCollegian

PG 09 | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2016

kathmandupost.ekantipur.com

Professional
EDUCATION CONSULTANCY



www.professional.edu.np
fb.com/pe.consultancy
Shree Krishna Sadan, 7th Floor,
New Baneshwor
Tel: +977 1 4785339, 4785439

Faith in fiction

Anamol Mani is the author of the upcoming story collection 19. Author and poet Mani, who is currently working on his first novel, has written five collections of poems and stories. Mani who has worked as an education journalist for almost two decades started his literary journey through short poems and ghazals. In this conversation with the Post's Samiksha Bhattarai, Mani talks about his new book, its inspiration and his love for reading



Tell us about your upcoming book 19 and the inspiration behind it?

19 is an anthology of stories about the condition of education system in the country. Majority of stories in the collection tell the story of how our education system lacks proper infrastructure, especially when it comes to teaching the English language. There is a huge craze for English language here but our community and government schools don't have proper teaching methods or teachers, which has resulted in a huge number of children failing the subject. These are the subjects I have tried to address through 19.

As someone who practiced journalism by reporting on the education sector for almost two decades, I was naturally inspired to write about the subject. I have tried to deal with it through fiction. In a particular case, I remember a bachelor's level student committing suicide because he failed at English seven times. Bittersweet stories like these that I came across during my work served as an inspiration for my book.

How did you first start writing?

One day when I was in grade nine, one of my teachers, Ram Mohan Adhikari, asked us to write a poem. He then praised my poem and encouraged me to write more. He used to constantly inspire me and my classmates to write. His belief in me is what made me fall in love with writing. Besides this, when I came to Kathmandu I started reading a lot. I used to visit the Indian library frequently. There were also lots of people around me who were always very encouraging and pushed me to write. Their support also inspired me to start writing.

You write both stories and poems. Which is more challenging?

I think both of them are equally challenging but in different aspects. Poem is a very artistic and imaginative piece of work. It takes a lot of effort and it has certain restrictions about how you portray your emotions. It's a condensed representation of your thoughts using symbols and metaphors while story is a descriptive piece of writing. A story conveys its message through proper elaborate expression. So the challenging part while writing a poem is to use less to convey more while with story one needs to master proper execution.

What do you prefer reading, fiction or non-fiction?

I love reading both fiction and non-fiction. But I think every fiction writer must read non-fiction as it provides one with lots of ideas about the world and beyond. I also love to read autobiographies and travel memoirs. And being an education journalist, I also had to read books on education and on psychology.

How important do you think it is for a writer to read?

Reading is the most important part of being a writer. Books are whetting stones for the mind of an aspiring writer. It gives them new and good ideas. Only a person who reads vigorously can be a good writer. If writers don't have idea about what is happening around them and what kinds of books are being read, then they will not be able to give readers what they want. So, it is must for any writer to be a reader first.

What do you think makes a good writer and what is a good writing for you?

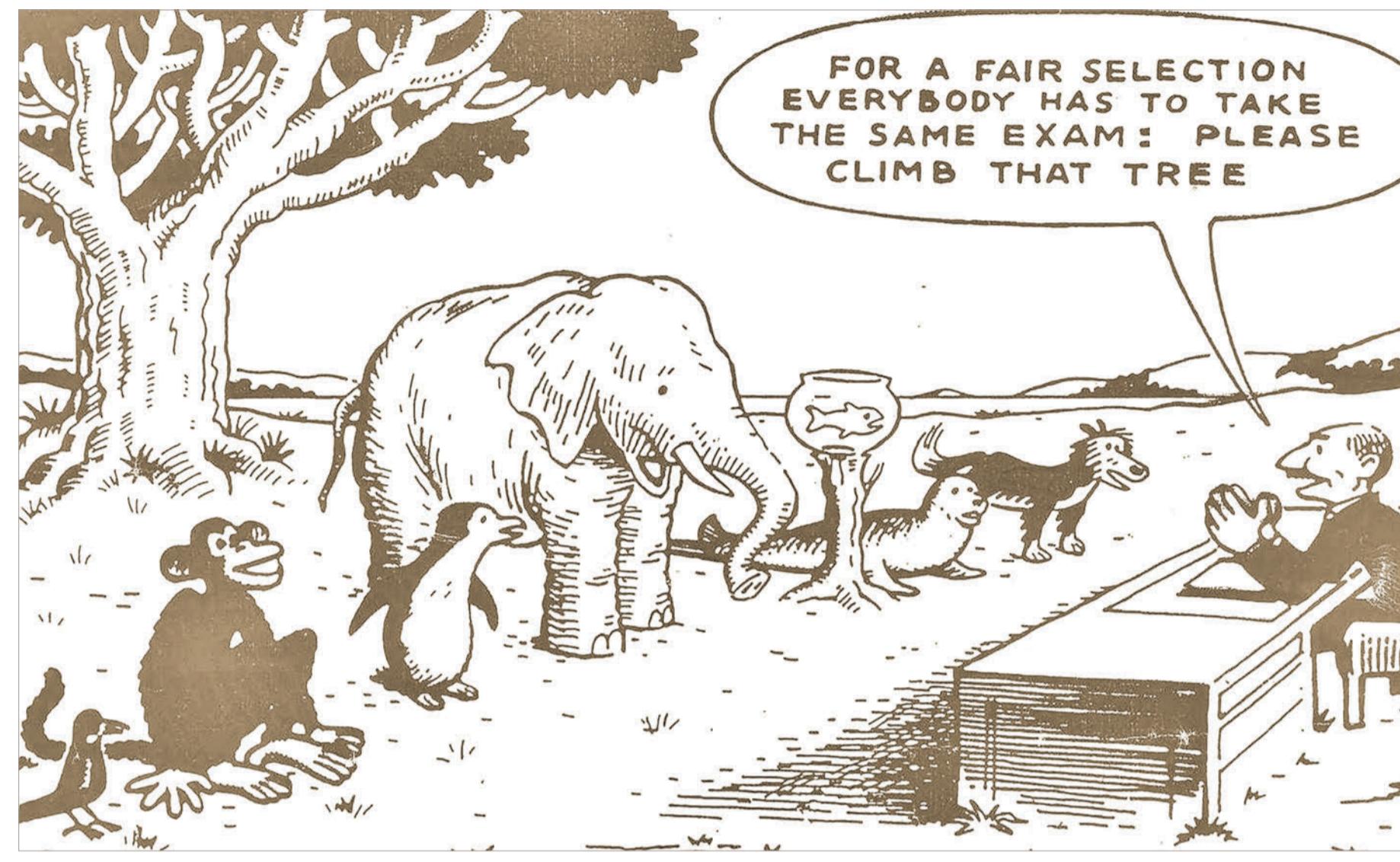
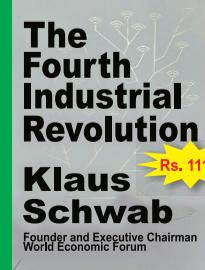
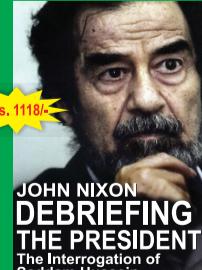
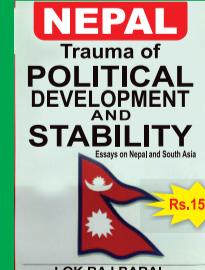
Reading is what makes a writer good. Other than that, a good writer should be able to take constructive criticism and listen to reviews. And I think good writing comes from a lot of practice. The writer should be ready to rewrite and edit their work as many times as it is necessary. Also the writer should be able to write stories that the readers will be able to relate to.

What advice do you have for readers?

I would like to ask readers not to decide what to read through popular choice. I would like to ask them to choose books wisely and provide constructive criticism and reviews whenever they read books.

Mandala Book Point

Kantipati, Kathmandu, Tel.# +977-1-4245570, +977-1-4227711



RETHINKING EDUCATION

Every aspiring learner must have his own customised syllabus which will propel him toward excellence that he seeks

BIKASH KHATRI

There is a viral picture that has been floating online which satirises the current education system as a whole. The picture portrays a competition where a fish, an elephant, a rabbit and a monkey are competing against each other. The competition is to decide who climbs the tree faster, regardless of the inherent nature of the competitors. The picture sees the tree as the evaluation criteria and the animals as the students who possess unique natural inherent abilities.

Since, a fish cannot climb the tree no matter how great a swimmer it is, it's deemed as a failure under the prevalent evaluation criteria and raises the question of how an education system should be designed. After all, there are many successful people around us who do not possess any formal education or excellent record of the degrees but have become great leaders, personalities and entrepreneurs.

How did the successful people do it then? They did it all by not sticking too close to the inflexible syllabus given by their university or the education board. They built their own personalised syllabi. All the successful people have a unique and peculiar way of gaining knowledge. They choose what they need to know and acquire skills that are useful for achieving their vision.

Do you know that Warren Buffet accredits his success to books like Security Analysis, The Intelligent Investor and How to Influence People and Make Friends. None of these books were prescribed by the university syllabus. These books were hand-picked by Buffet because he had immense thirst for understanding and excelling the security market. The lessons that he

couldn't find inside any textbooks was supplemented to him by his experience.

Bill Gates dropped out from Harvard University because he figured out that something that has not been invented yet won't be covered by the university syllabus; and that he has to wander off and find the stuff he needs for building an operating system by himself. Steve Jobs was one of the greatest communicators and visionary this century has seen. He also had his own customised syllabus: observation. His communication skills were harnessed by his obsessive love of books.

How good, then, are the pre-designed syllabi of the universities? A pre-designed syllabus provides students with a 360 degree view of a particular world and serves as a road map. University education is the best fit for the ones who haven't figured out what they actually want to do in life.

Such education equips students with a number of alternatives. College education increases the aptitude of students towards macro analysis rather than micro analysis.

Every aspiring learner must have his own customised syllabus which will propel him toward excellence that he seeks. You first need to understand your goals and then make sure that the means justify the ends.

Thus, the next time you wish to learn and excel at something, be aware which syllabus best suits you. If you are a fish, make sure you educate yourself with swimming lessons irrespective of what your education system imposes you to learn but if you are a monkey, it's ok to learn and compete at climbing faster—just the way your education system teaches—without any resentment.

Like Albert Einstein said, "Everybody is a genius. But, if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

Khatri is pursuing MBA at KU School of Management

The power of a SMILE

ANJALIKA CHAMLING

It was just another normal day and I had gone to the store to buy cola. There was a long queue so I stayed there waiting impatiently for my turn.

A little girl of maybe seven looked at me and smiled. Although at first, I was not sure if it was for me, later it was confirmed. But then it felt strange for we didn't know each other. Still, in no time I found myself smiling back at her instantly. That was the time



when I realized the power of a smile. It was just a smile but it brought so much of happiness in me that it changed my day completely.

Smile is a way of communicating and expressing yourself to others. That one smile changed my day and how I felt. It could also change yours. So why not smile your best smile and bring a positive change in your own and other's life.

Chamling is a +2 student at St Mary's High School



Forgive me not

MAMINA SHRESTHA

Over years, you've forgiven and forgotten. So many for their mistakes, blunders and crimes. But have you ever, in your entire existence, Forgiven yourself once?

You've sent away dozens of apologies; Written little 'I am sorry' notes to hundreds. But have you ever, for once, looked into the mirror And whispered an apology?

In a crowd, you brush past some shoulders, Saying 'Excuse me, I'm sorry', all

Stages Of Love

SARTHAK BYANJANKAR

List if I were to things, I wish to learn A lifetime would go by with end at sight Hence, you take the helm for the night And I shall in the day wait for the moon to rise

For all the talk of awakening and enlightenment We both know the inevitable faith that awaits us You always the learned and me the ignorant one Yet, why do I always find you lost within me



through the way. In life, your heart is constantly bruised, But what do you have to say?

Learn from your mistakes, they tell you. If you fall, stand up and fight, they say

But there are a thousand souls forgiven, And yours stands alone, drenched in guilt. They are forgiven for breaking

Now, as I mull over the bygones It's not the thought of you with me But the thought of me within you That keeps me up at night, pondering.

You are the future, I wish to have lived in the past You are the past, I wish to live in the future

You are the present, I wish to never have lived at all For you are the daydream of the night and the nightmare of day

Byanjankar is a student at the Pulchowk Engineering College

you down. But are you, for holding out your heart?

Mistakes sure are good teachers. But can you learn with all that guilt? You can save the learning for later. But will you, please, forgive yourself today?

Shrestha is a BSc student at St Xavier's College

WRITE TO US
We value your words. Send us your articles, opinions and view for the collegian page (every Tuesday) to thecollegian@kmg.com.np tkpfeatures@gmail.com

TODAY'S HOROSCOPE



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

** If you're avoiding an issue or trying to close your eyes when something is staring you right in the face, change tactics—fast. Avoiding it might just make things worse. If someone close to you is the one who won't face facts, try to open their eyes.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

** Going berserk on someone if they say something that ticks you off is certainly an option, but probably not the one you want to exercise if you want this person to stick around. Take a step back and a deep breath. Be careful before making your next move.



GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Emotions might be running high, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. Think of it as a sign that it's time to do some mental house cleaning, especially when it comes to feelings or something in your past that you've been putting off dealing with.



CANCER (June 22-July 22)

** Does someone keep hanging around even though it's long past time for them to go? If that's the case, now is the moment for you firmly (but gently, gently!) to get them out the door, especially if you want to maintain cordial relations with this person.



LEO (July 23-August 22)

**** If you were a superhero, your name would be Captain Goodtimes. Right now, you're determined to lead you and your crew to the biggest possible source of fun, and nothing's going to get in your way.



VIRGO (August 23-September 22)

**** Playing hide-and-go-seek when you were a kid was lots of fun, but right now it might just confuse things more than you'd like. If there's something on your mind, spit it out. Expecting someone to read your mind just isn't fair, so speak up before it's too late.



LIBRA (September 23-October 22)

**** You're getting that 'freeway feeling' again — as in, you have a serious urge to merge. Is it time to take this relationship just a little bit deeper? Several signs do point to yes. So go ahead — trust yourself and the other person.



SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)

**** They may just have to invent a new word for 'magnetic' once they get a load of you. The power you're exuding could knock someone off their feet if you weren't careful (fortunately, you're almost always careful).



SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

**** Every good tailor knows that the tiny things make a garment fit like it was made for you. All that care and attention will take a simple piece of clothing and turn it into a statement. There's something in your life now that deserves that same kind of care.



CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

**** Have a little patience and hold back on any urge to push, and all the little details might just work themselves out. It's a hard stance to take, especially for someone who's as driven; trick is knowing when to take a step back, and when to push forward.



AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)

**** Ambition can be pretty heady, and you're both drawn to it and a little afraid of it. Ambition is an excellent servant but a bad master. As long as you remain aware of your ambition and make sure it doesn't get too out-sized, you should be just fine.



PISCES (February 19-March 20)

**** Stop going in circles—like being on a merry-go-round. It's lots of fun at first, but then after a few minutes, you could start to feel just a touch nauseous. Even if you're not sure where you want to go just yet, it's imperative that you clear your head.

LAUGH OUT LOUD

Mr. Frobisher always scheduled the weekly staff meeting for four-thirty on Friday afternoons.

When one of the employees finally got up the nerve to ask why, he explained.

"I will tell you why. I've learned that's the only time of the week when none of you wants to argue with me."

A five-year-old boy had never spoken a word, ever. One afternoon, as he sat eating his lunch he turned to his mother and said, "Soup's cold."

She was astonished, and said, "Honey, I've waited so long to hear you speak. But all these years you never said a thing. Why haven't you spoken before?"

The boy looked at her and replied, "Up until now, everything's been okay."

KANTIPUR

5:00	Shuvaramba/Bhaktisur	11:00	Headline News	16:30	New Entry
5:30	Radhe Radhe	11:05	Suman Sanga	17:00	Headline News
6:00	Jeevan Bigyan	11:30	Music Summit	17:05	Call Kantipur
6:30	Jyotish Manthan	12:30	VMAG	18:30	Cinema Fest
6:40	Sky Shop	13:00	Headline News	19:00	Kantipur Samachar
7:00	Kantipur Samachar	13:05	Baliyo Gha	19:30	Markt Watch
8:00	Kantipur News	13:30	Ukali Orali	20:00	Kantipur Samachar
8:30	Rise and Shine	14:00	Kantipur Samachar	21:00	Harke Haldar
9:00	Headline News	14:30	Rise N Shine	21:30	Tough Talk
9:05	Sarkar	15:00	Headline News	22:30	Kantipur News
10:00	Kantipur Samachar	15:05	Sarokar	23:00	Kantipur Samachar
10:30	Market Watch	16:00	Kantipur Samachar	23:30	Market Watch

00:00	Non Stop Nepali	07:30	Voice of Nepal	15:15	Sangitometry
01:00	Adhunik Songs	08:05	Mid Week	16:00	Happy Hour
02:00	Non Stop Nepali	09:00	Morning	17:05	Education Talk
03:00	pop songs	09:10	Kantipur Diary	18:00	Adha Aakash
04:00	Non Stop Hindi	10:15	Traffic Updates	18:30	Kantipur Diary
05:00	Non Stop Bhajan	10:45	Radio Talk	19:00	Close-up Connect
06:30	Non Stop Hindi	11:05	Bi-Scope	20:05	I love it hate it
07:00	Songs	11:45	Taste-Bud	21:00	Kantipur Diary
07:30	BHAUTI	12:00	Kantipur	21:30	Indreni
08:00	ANUSTHAN/ Aachyut	12:30	Diary	22:00	Sanchari
08:30	Kantipur Diary	13:05	Music Box	23:00	Hunuhuncha
09:00	The Headliners	13:30	Ke cha Nepal	23:30	Aajha Samma
09:30	The Headliners	15:00	Kantipur Diary		

FOOD & DRINKS



Savour the cardamom and saffron spice, slow-cooked kebabs and kormas at Indian restaurant serving Awadhi cuisine. Contact: 427399, at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

China Garden offers delectable dishes from across Asia, including Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese and Chinese. Timings: Lunch: 1230-1445 hrs, Dinner: 1900-2245 hrs, contact: 427399 at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

The Italian restaurant serves authentic Italian cuisines in an elegant ambience for both lunch and dinner. Timings: Lunch: 1230-1445 hrs, Dinner: 1900-2245 hrs, Contact: 427399, at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

Every Friday evening enjoy Starry Night BBQ from 7 pm onwards at Shambala Garden Café at Hotel Shangri La with live musical performance by Ciney Gurung. Contact: 441299

Enjoy Bubbly Brunch every Saturday from 11 am to 3 pm at Shambala Gardenca and Club Sundara. Contact: 441299

Experience The Last Resort, the perfect place for family fun adventure and relaxation. Special packages for residents. Contact: 4700525/ 4701247 or mail us at info@thelastresort.com.np

Dip yourself at probably the best pool in the town at Park Village Resort. Rate: Rs. 1500 for adults & 1300 for children and includes french fries, free Wi-Fi & 20% discount on Food & Beverage. Contact: 980103114

Relax and Unwind this summer at Waterfront Resort. Sedi Height, Pokhara @ Rs. 6000 Nett per night on Bed & Breakfast basis. Contact: 980133378 / 9849143552

Mako's offers traditional Japanese food served. Don't miss out on Mako's special Tempuras, and green tea ice cream. Time: 11:30-14:30 & 19:00-22:00, contact: 4479448

Relax and unwind at Momo's Eatery and bar introduces a special lunch package that is affordable, tasty, nutritious and quick enough to fit your lunch break, lunch, dinner, specialty tea's, coffees and pastries, contact: 4425341

The Toran, an ideal location for all day lounging and informal dining offers multi-cuisines. Contact: Dwarika's Hotel, 4479448

Asia World Travel Pvt Ltd presents fascinating luxury escapades to amazing destinations: Prague, Ladakh, Bangkok, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Mount Kailash and Panchphokhari in North East Nepal. Contact: 6222604

Weekends brunch @ Hyatt Regency—treat yourself with a lavish buffet lunch, splash by the swimming pool or laze around outdoor, Jacuzzi, all for just Rs 2300 plus taxes per person. Contact: 4491234

We serve nothing but the finest Arabic coffee's at great value prices at Barista Lavaza Coffee Restaurant, Lazimpat, Contact: 4005123/4005124

Bourbon Room, Lal Durbar Marg is open for lunch from 12 noon. Enjoy affordable and delicious meals starting from Rs 99! We are currently offering Indian & Chinese combos along with momos. Call: 4441703

Latin-Gypsy Jazz at The Corner Bar, Radisson Hotel, Kathmandu with Hari Maharan feat Monsif Mzibri, 7 pm onwards, Wednesdays & Fridays. Contact: 4411818

Jungle Safari Lodge, Sauraha Chitwan offers 2 Nights 3 Days package only for Rs 6500 per person. Suman 9851008399

Make your weekend more exciting with family and friends with sumptuous Satay, Dimsum, Mongolian Barbecue and Pasta at The Cafe from 12:30 noon to 4:00 pm. Call: Hyatt Regency, at 4491234

The most delightfully awesome chicken momos & yummy rich chocolate cake on this part of the planet @ Just Baked Bakery & Cafe, Battisputali, offering much more specialties at affordable price.

Experience the Gyakot @ Shambala Garden, Hotel Shangri-la only @ Rs.1700 Nett per person and Rs.3000 Nett for couple. For more details and reservation: 4412999

Sandwich and Crepes: Taste the sandwiches and crepes at The Lounge from 11 am to 6 pm everyday. For further details call Hyatt Regency at 4491234.

Rosemary Kitchen and Coffee shop, Thamel, opening hours: 7:00 am to 10:00 pm offers an international cuisine in reasonable prices. Contact: 01-4267554

Out-of-Africa Lunch amid rural splendor: Sat & Sun from 1130 to 1630 hours at The Watering Hole, Indrawati River Valley. For prior reservation contact: indrawaterville@gmail.com

Starry Night BBQ—every Friday Evening from 7:00 pm at Shambala Garden Café, Hotel, Shangri-La only @ Rs 1799 net per person and live performance by Ciney Gurung. Contact: 4412999

Revolution Cafe, AmritMang, Thamel, away from busy crowded street, offers great music, fast wi-fi and wide menu with reasonable prices. Operation hours: 7 am to 10 pm, contact: 4433630

Experience the Gyakot @ Shambala Garden, Hotel Shangri-la only @ Rs.1700 Nett per person and Rs.3000 Nett for couple. For more details and reservation: 4412999

Enjoy Gourmet Saturday Brunch with your family and friends at the Sunrise Restaurant, Hotel Yak & Yeti from 12-7 pm every Saturday. Contact: 4248999

Enjoy live DJ nights, on every Sunday chill out/ ambient, Wednesday tech' funk house/ psy/ proggie/ full on from 6:00 pm to 10 pm at garden and 7:00 pm onwards at club at Funky Buddha Restaurant & Bar, contact: 4700091

Set within the historic Garden of Dreams, the Kaiser Cafe Restaurant and Bar, Thamel, offers a continental menu and serves as an atmospheric venue for anything from a quiet coffee or intimate meal. Contact: 4425434

Jasmine Fitness Club and Spa, fully equipped gym and spa, Zumba, aerobics and cardio classes; therapeutic massage, beauty parlour and men's salon, Tripathi, Contact: 4117120

Yoga detox and Ayurveda treatments and retreats every day at Himalayan Peace & Wellness Centre, Park Village Hotel. Get 10% discount on all Ayurvedic treatments. Contact: 980106661

Learn cardio, gym, aerobics, zumba, spa, boxing, kick-boxing, b-boying, bollywood dance at Oyster Spa and Fitness Club, Sinamangal. Time: Sunday to Friday from 5 am to 8 pm. Contact: 4110554

Escape, relax and get in shape @ Hyatt Regency. Embark on a personal well-being at Club Oasis. Remember us for tennis, sauna, Jacuzzi, swimming, fitness centre and Beauty Salon. Contact: 4491234

MIND & BODY



Enjoy live DJ nights, on every Sunday chill out/ ambient, Wednesday tech' funk house/ psy/ proggie/ full on from 6:00 pm to 10 pm at garden and 7:00 pm onwards at club at Funky Buddha Restaurant & Bar, contact: 4248999

Set within the historic Garden of Dreams, the Kaiser Cafe Restaurant and Bar, Thamel, offers a continental menu and serves as an atmospheric venue for anything from a quiet coffee or intimate

Porto recruit striker Soares

Brazilian striker Francisco Soares on Monday signed for Portuguese top flight outfit Porto in a deal reported to be worth seven million euros. The 26-year-old arrives from Portuguese league rivals Vitoria Guimaraes having scored nine goals since the beginning of the season, FC Porto said in a statement.

Rogers back to Somerset as mentor

Ex-Australian Test opener Chris Rogers is to return to English county side Somerset as both batting coach and player mentor for three months. The 39-year-old who played 25 Tests scoring five centuries of which four were against England—skipped Somerset to within a hairs breadth of their first county championship last year—only to be denied by Middlesex.



Liverpool loan out Markovic

Serbian international winger Lazar Markovic has been sent straight back out on loan to Premier League strugglers Hull on Monday by rivals Liverpool after a spell at Sporting Lisbon was cut short. The 22-year-old returned to Liverpool after all three parties agreed it was best to bring his year long loan to Sporting to a premature end.



SPORTS DIGEST

Semi-finals lineup complete

LALITPUR: The semi-final lineup of the CoAS second National Men's Volleyball Championship was complete after Tuesday's matches. Tribhuvan Army Club (TAC) advanced as Group 'A' winners and Nepal APF as runners-up. Nepal Police Club (NPC) topped Group 'B' ahead of Western Region. Army will play Western Region an NPC will take on APF in the last four clashes. On Tuesday, TAC beat Eastern Region 25-19, 25-15, 25-19, NPC saw off Western Region 25-21, 25-19, 21-25, 25-11, Central Region defeated Far-Western 25-19, 12-25, 26-24, 25-15 and APF got the better of Mid-Western 25-19, 25-11, 25-7 (PR)

Montpellier sign defender Pokorny

PRAGUE: Czech club Slovan Liberec says captain Lukas Pokorny has agreed to move to France to play for Montpellier. Liberec says the 23-year-old defender has signed a 3½-year contract. Financial details were not given. Pokorny played 60 league games for Liberec, scoring two goals. He has also played one international game for the Czech Republic. (AP)

Deulofeu joins Milan on loan

ROME: Spanish striker Gerard Deulofeu has signed a loan contract with AC Milan until June 30 this year from England's Everton, according to the Italian football side. The player underwent the relevant medical tests on Monday after which he went to the headquarters of the club to sign the contract. He then went to Milan sports centre in Milanello to meet his new coach, Vincenzo Montella and his teammates. (IANS)

Fifa going to Kremlin for World Cup draw in Dec

ZURICH: The 2018 World Cup draw will be staged on December 1 at a Kremlin concert hall in Moscow. The draw will take place at the 6,000-capacity State Kremlin Palace, a grand structure built inside the Kremlin walls in the Soviet era to hold Communist Party conferences. Nowadays, the venue usually plays host to veteran Russian pop stars, ballerinas and awards shows. The draw at State Kremlin Palace is expected to attract the coaches of the 32 teams which qualify. (AP)

Sankata set up MMC date



■ Bishwo Adhikari of Sankata Club and Habibur Rahaman of Narayangunj FC vie for the ball during their quarter-final match of the Aaha-Rara Gold Cup football tournament in Pokhara on Tuesday. POST PHOTO: BHIM GHIMIRE

POST REPORT
POKHARA, JAN 24

aaha-rara gold cup

into the last four. In the semi-finals, Sankata will take on title contenders Manang Marshyangdi Club.

It was the visiting side who had the first attack in the frame when in the 13th minute Habibur Rahman Sohag's free kick found Md AS Yousuf inside the box but the latter's

shot was saved by Sankata goalkeeper Binay Shrestha. Two minutes later, skipper Rajon Miah was in hand to give Narayangunj the lead after he his shot beat the goalkeeper and found unmarked Mohammad Rony but was quickly intercepted by Saroj Dahal.

Narayangunj suffered a blow when their first choice goalkeeper Mohammad Rajib was stretchered off following an injury and replaced by Sowrab Sarkar in the 24th minute. Sankata gradually began piling pressure on the visitors and Shrestha was close to scoring in the 27th minute after he was set for one-versus-one with Sarkar.

Dahal. Sankata coach S Islam blamed the long travel by road for their below-par performance. "We only arrived late on Sunday evening and were unable to find our feet. We went straight into the game without any sort of practice," said Islam. Considering the circumstances, Islam believed his team played a good game against "a strong opponent."

Sankata coach Salyan Khadgi said his team played with tremendous pressure after their failure to score early goal. "We played well but we took pressure on ourselves as we were unable to score early goals. Khadgi was looking forward to meeting Manang Marshyangdi Club in the semi-finals and said: "We hope to give a tough fight to them on Thursday." Sahara Club will take on Tribhuvan Army Club on Wednesday.

Zidane dismisses Real criticism

REUTERS
MADRID, JAN 24

copa del rey

Frenchman added. "Tomorrow we have a really exciting game."

Celta rested players in their league defeat at Sociedad at the weekend in preparation for the second leg and Zidane will field a full-strength team.

"We're going to try and win everything we have in front of us and that's not going to change, we're not going to throw in the towel," he said. "If we don't win (the tie) it wouldn't be our biggest failure, although I'm not contemplating that at the moment."

Real are missing six players through injury with James Rodriguez ruled out unexpectedly after straining a calf muscle just after recovering from another leg problem. Midfielder Luka Modric and defender Marcelo sustained injuries against Malaga while full-back Dani Carvajal's absence means Fabio Coentrao has been called in.

Fixtures

Eibar vs Atletico
Celta vs Real

'Sevilla title challenge a reality'

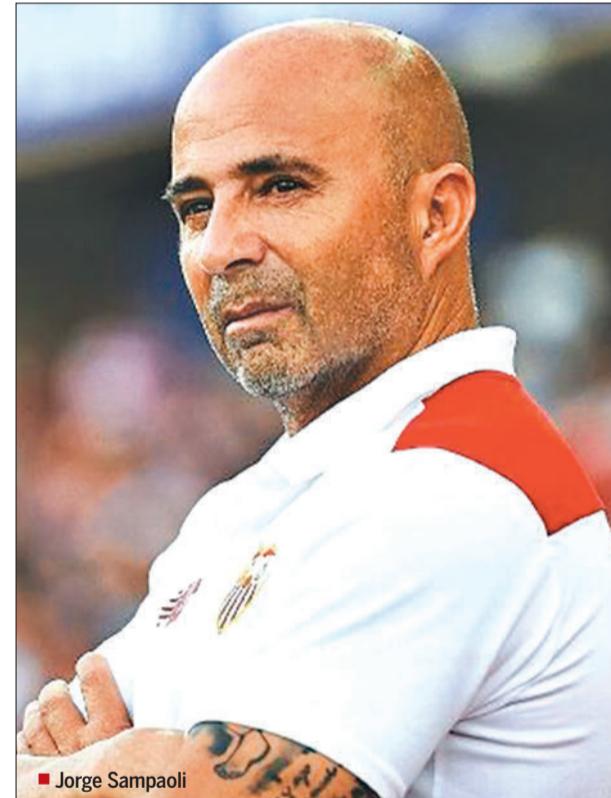
REUTERS
BARCELONA, JAN 24

Sevilla have serious aspirations to win La Liga for the first time since 1946 after gate-crashing the usual two-horse race between Real Madrid and Barcelona, their coach Jorge Sampaoli said on Tuesday.

Sevilla are second in the standings, one point ahead of champions Barca and one behind Real Madrid, who they beat this month to become the first team to topple Zinedine Zidane's side since last April. Real have a game in hand on both their title rivals.

Argentine Sampaoli has proved a roaring success at Sevilla since taking over from triple Europa League winner Unai Emery last year although up to now he has been cautious about his team's title hopes. But after securing their biggest ever points total in the first half of a season following Sunday's 3-2 win at Osasuna, a fifth straight league victory, the coach said he was deadly serious about the title tilt.

"We're not being deluded, it's a reality, we're going to fight for the title. We may not have the strength in the end and we may not be capable of



■ Jorge Sampaoli

doing it but we're going to fight for it," Sampaoli told radio station Onda Cero.

"Our hope is to take an extra step forward," added Sampaoli. "We have managed to instill an idea of play which the players like and enjoy, the idea of playing the same way against every team, always

ITALY COACH VENTURA OPENS DOOR TO BALOTELLI

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MILAN, JAN 24

Italy coach Gian Piero Ventura plans talks with Mario Balotelli, paving the way for the striker to put his troubled past behind him and rejoin the squad for World Cup qualifying.

The 26-year-old Balotelli has not played for Italy since the ill-fated 2014 World Cup campaign in Brazil, where the four-time champions exited at the first hurdle for the second successive edition. But following his disastrous stint at Liverpool and an ineffective loan spell at AC Milan, Balotelli has revived his flagging career at French side Nice, hitting eight goals.

Balotelli is currently embroiled in a dispute with Ligue 1 club Bastia after claiming to have been subjected to monkey chants at the Corsicans' ground last week. Born in Palermo to Ghanaian immigrants before being adopted by the Balotelli family, the forward's career has been blighted by controversy. But he has also suffered racist abuse and in April 2015 British anti-discrimination body Kick It Out said he had received more than 4,000 racist messages via social media during the 2014-15 season.

Italy are tied with Spain at the top of their 2018 Fifa World Cup qualifying group after winning three and drawing one of their first four games. They host Albania on March 24 and are expected to fight for top spot, which offers direct qualification for Russia, when they play Spain away on September 2.



■ Mario Balotelli

Impatient Chinese owners chase glory at all costs

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING, JAN 24

European clubs Inter Milan, Aston Villa and Sochaux have had a high turnover of managers since Chinese takeovers, sparking fears that their trigger-happy new owners have little patience and no strategy.

"Many buyouts are irrational and defy the laws of the market," Zhou Jiming, a football analyst and director at the official China Sports Journal, said. "The majority of investors lack patience," he said. That certainly appears to be the case with Aston Villa, currently under their third manager, after a takeover by Chinese business man Tony Xia last June.

Xia spent 38 million euros to hire Roberto Di Matteo as manager, hoping he would be able to lift Villa's flagging fortunes. But Di

Matteo was sacked just 11 games later and replaced by Steve Bruce.

Inter Milan, who are owned by Chinese electronics retailer Suning, in November named Stefano Pioli as their third manager in just four months, in a desperate bid to restore their reputation.

Their struggles prompted Chievo president Luca Campedelli to question Suning's commitment to football, mocking the Chinese accent and saying it was "not enough just to pay wages".

Even as China's willingness to splash out on foreign talent has drawn top managers such as Manuel Pellegrini (Hebei Fortune), Andre Villas-Boas (Shanghai SIPG) and Sven Goran Eriksson (Shenzhen FC) to the country, many have not made it past a few months.

Eriksson was ousted from Shanghai SIPG despite leading

them to a third-place finish in the 2016 Chinese Super League. Fabio Cannavaro was dismissed from Guangzhou Evergrande just six months into the job while Jean Tigana fared even worse at Shanghai Shenhua, sacked after only five games in charge in 2012.

Chinese investors in football would do well to look at Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha, the Thai president of Leicester City, reigning English Premier League champion, for pointers, said analyst Zhou. "He has done a lot of substantive, solid basic work, and the success has been there. Chinese investors lack this kind

of involvement," he said. The shopping magnate bought the club in 2010, overseeing the greatest rags to riches story in football when his 5,000-1 shots won the Premier League last year.

According to Peter Kenyon, former chief executive of Manchester United and Chelsea, "The smart people understand it's not about acquisition, it's... what you do with it (afterwards). I think we are going to see good purchasers but the ones that I've been involved with are long-term, they've got a strategy," said Kenyon, who now advises on football business deals.

Some Chinese owners have proven to be patient: West Brom, bought in September by entrepreneur Guochuan Lai, retained its manager, as did French side Auxerre, currently one place off the foot of French second division, following a takeover by China's ORG Packaging in October. "The smart ones... want to have a say, but understand it's not about them picking the team. It's a serious investment", said Kenyon, who has worked on some Chinese acquisitions, including the Wanda Group's purchase of a 20 percent stake in Atletico Madrid in 2015.

That level of seriousness has been the case with Chinese fund IDG Capital Partners which acquired a 20 percent stake in the French club Lyon as part of a "long-term" investment, according to the firm. OL president Jean-

Michel Aulas said IDG carried out "a real investigation" before arriving at a decision and has since put "no pressure" on the club's recruitment of Chinese players.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, a football fan, wants the country to host and win a World Cup, a target which has prompted a flood of money into top-flight teams as well as heavy investment and promotion of the sport nationally. Chinese Super League clubs, encouraged by the government's vision of turning China into a football superpower by 2050, have broken the Asian transfer record five times in less than a year, with Shanghai SIPG paying 60 million euros to lure Oscar from Chelsea.

The push to buy European clubs is part of a larger drive to secure China's place in the global football arena, a quest with heavy political overtones.

