



# THE KATHMANDU POST

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## NEWSLINE

### Singh backs Nepal

COPENHAGEN: Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said India supports the Madhav Kumar Nepal-led government and expressed his hope this government would take the peace process to a logical conclusion and promulgate the constitution on time. During his meeting with Prime Minister Nepal in Copenhagen on Friday, Singh expected that Nepal-led government would draft the constitution as per the people's sentiment. Singh reportedly expressed hope Prime Minister Nepal could lead all political parties and succeed in giving a meaningful political outlet. The Indian prime minister said his country was committed to providing all possible help for Nepal's stability. (RSS)

### Maoists stick to strike

KATHMANDU: The UCPN (Maoist) on Saturday decided to enforce its three-day nationwide general strike starting Sunday, rejecting desperate appeals to call off the agitation. The decision came at a standing committee meeting of the party. Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, after talks with top leaders of the Nepali Congress (NC) and the CPN-UML, accused the leaders of not being serious about resolving the political deadlock. "We will continue to hold talks with the parties," said Dahal. Earlier in the day, the NC, UML and the Cabinet asked the main opposition to behave as a responsible party by calling off the strike. "The strike will invite trouble to the general public and we cannot shy away from our responsibility of maintaining law and order.

(Details on page 4)

### WEATHER

	High	Low
Kathmandu	20°	04°
Delhi	22°	08°
Bangkok	30°	20°
Singapore	28°	25°
Hong Kong	16°	11°
Kathmandu	Sunrise 06:50	Sunset 17:17

### FOREX

CURRENCY	UNIT	BUYING	SELLING
Indian Rupee (INR)	100	160.00	160.15
US Dollar (\$)	1	74.64	75.24
Euro (€)	1	107.35	108.22
Pound Sterling (£)	1	1120.77	121.75
Japanese Yen (¥)	10	8.31	8.38

Exchange rates fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank



## Dollar theft case reaches China

### POST REPORT

CHAUTARA, DEC. 19

The US \$300,000 theft case that gave Additional Inspector General of Police Kalyan Kumar Timalsina, going beyond his jurisdiction and informing the Police Headquarters, had arrested police personnel Makar Lal Shrestha and Ram Hari Subedi on the charge of looting the dollars belonging to 19 Chinese and Nepali traders in Khasa now.

Chinese traders have seized goods worth Rs. 150 million in a bid to get back from Nepali authorities the money that a group had looted from their driver in Swoyambhu two months ago.

Chairman of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Sindhupalchowk chapter Rajendra Kumar Shrestha said the Chinese side had seized 26 sealed containers.

The goods had got clearance from the Khasa customs and were to be shipped to Kathmandu.

The Chinese have accused police of involvement in the dollar theft.

"The Chinese have said they will not release the containers unless they get back their money," according to Chairman of the Truck and Container Entrepreneurs' Association Sang Dorje Sherpa.

Chinese traders have seized goods, seeking US \$0.3m looted from Kathmandu

Additional Inspector General of Police and then Metropolitan Police Commissioner Kalyan Kumar Timalsina, going beyond his jurisdiction and informing the Police Headquarters, had arrested police personnel Makar Lal Shrestha and Ram Hari Subedi on the charge of looting the dollars belonging to 19 Chinese and Nepali traders in Khasa now.

After the case came to light, Home Minister Bhim Rawal transferred AIG Timalsin a from the

Metropolitan Police and the headquarters formed a panel to probe the case. The panel could not trace the money but submitted its report to the headquarters nonetheless. The report concluded that AIG Timalsina had made a serious mistake while investigating the case. However, the headquarters has not made the report public. Sources said senior police officers are trying to dismiss the case and keep the report secret.

Traders said it was wrong to put the traders in trouble for somebody else's deeds. "Recent developments have made us feel insecure," Chairman Shrestha said.

## UN seals climate deal

REUTERS

COPENHAGEN, DEC. 19

UN climate talks avoided a total collapse on Saturday by skirting bitter opposition from several nations to a deal championed by US President Barack Obama and five emerging economies including China.

"Finally we sealed a deal," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said.

"The 'Copenhagen Accord' may not be everything everyone had hoped for, but this decision...is an important beginning."

But a decision at marathon 193-nation talks merely took note of the new accord, a non-binding deal for combating global warming led by the United States, China, India, Brazil and South Africa.

The 193 nations stopped far from a full endorsement of the plan, which sets a target of limiting global warming to a maximum 2 degree Celsius rise over pre-industrial times and holds out the prospect of \$100 billion in annual aid from 2020 for developing nations.

(Details on pg 5)



## Flesh trade: Police round up teens

### BABURAM KHAREL

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Police on Friday night rounded up 12 teenage commercial sex workers and their 21 clients from two Thamel "guest houses", but, as usual, the operators sneaked through the back door leaving no trace behind. Most of the arrested girls are aged 13 to 15 years.

Police said the Friday night arrests from Star Hotel and Shree Guest House painted a bleak picture and that exploitation of children in flesh trade was going unabated with their attempts turning rather futile.

"The latest arrest indicates children's involvement in sex trade is beyond control," says Superintendent of Police Ganesh

K.C., in-charge of the Metropolitan Police Range, Hanumandhoka. "It is shocking that some of the girls are under the age of 14."

"Our hands are tied in the absence of strong laws to curb flesh trade,"

"I had to opt for this line of business for want of a job,"

More shocking, according to the police, is the vicious circle: the girls, and guest house and massage parlour owners are "back to

business" just as they are released.

In the last two weeks, police rounded up nearly 25 girls below 18 years of age from different Thamel-based 'guest houses'.

For police, stopping flesh trade in Thamel area has become "a heck of a job due to the lack of clear laws to take a firm initiative against the sex workers and parlour and guest house operators".

The most, say police, they can do is they can hand some of the minors over to non-governmental organisations dealing with children.

One of the arrested girls said she had to opt for this line of business, for she did not have a decent

job. Typically, most others would only echo her.

The girls get 50 percent of the money charged from the clients while the rest goes to owners and agents who fish clients for them.

Even as prostitution is illegal in the country many rural girls end up selling themselves for easy money in an occupation "thriving under the police protection".

But police refuse. "Our hands are tied for the lack of strong laws too curb prostitution," said K.C. "Police and public must work in tandem to control this indecent business."

According to a rough estimate, the Capital has more than 10,000 sex workers.

## Indian Army has reservations on bulk integration

DINESH WAGLE

NEW DELHI, DEC. 19

Chief of the Army Staff (CoAS) Gen. Chhatra Man Singh Gurung during his nine-day India visit succeeded in winning strong Indian support for the Nepal Army in the ongoing peace process.

The Indian side made it clear that the rebels should not be incorporated en masse in the National Army.

Chief of the Indian Army Gen. Deepak Kapoor, who attended the dinner hosted by Gen. Gurung at the Nepali Embassy in New Delhi, expressed this quite strongly that the Maoists should not be integrated into the Nepal Army en masse.



Gen. Gurung

squarely mean politicisation of the Army, Gen. Kapoor said, "However, Maoist combatants can join the Army as any other Nepali citizens if they qualify and meet the parameters."

"Nepal Army has always maintained that any eligible Nepali citizen can join the national force through a due procedure," added Gen. Kapoor.

"This sounds pretty logical. If the Maoist fighters wish to join the Nepal Army, they should follow the due recruitment procedure as other Nepali citizens aspiring to join the Army do. Those meeting the norms and standards automatically qualify to join."

When told that the Maoists consider a Nepal Army sans integration an epitome of feuds, the Indian Army chief, pointing at a busy host Gen. Gurung, shot back: "Do you see a feudal in him?"

Stating that Nepal and Indian Army share long-standing and close relations, Gen. Kapoor said that Indian Army had no influence in the Nepal Army and refuted speculations that the then Army chief Rookmangud Katawal established communications with the Indian Army while the Maoist-led government was planning to sack Katawal. "I never had talks with him in this regard."

Meanwhile, Military Attaché in the Nepali Embassy in New Delhi Col. Ashok N. Rana ruled out Indian media reports that said Nepal had shown interest to buy some 'phased out' tanks. "That's completely baseless news," said Col. Rana.

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**D**id you see your photographs?" asks Suntali Choudhary.

"Yes, I saw. I am shelling corn in the photo. The photographers didn't tell me

thing happened to me. They have put up a photo in which I am glaring angrily at them. It was taken all of a sudden, and I didn't even know that they had taken it, let alone put it on display," says Choudhary.

*Hamra Hajurama: Our Grandmothers*, an exhibition organised by photo.circle.

The women express their happiness at being the chosen ones for the photo exhibition, and have much to say.

"I am telling you the truth when I say that I didn't go to school because my parents refused to buy me a school uniform. I felt too shy to go to school wearing the traditional *Gunyo-cholo*," Choudhary recalls.

The eight-day-long photo exhibition began on Friday at the Valley's Nepal Art Council and on display are the stories and photographs of 15 grandmothers in Nepal. A book which shares the same title, was released on the same day and consists of 68 photographs and the accompanying stories of 12 grandmothers from 11 districts in the country.

*Hamra Hajurama: Our Grandmothers* is a story-telling project in photographs," says Nayan Tara Gurung Kakshapati of photo.circle, "The project involves inspired storytellers going beyond headlines to remote regions of Nepal, and spending time with grandmothers with stories to tell."

The project kicked off formally in May, with seven photographers and six writers. "But we had been working towards it for the past three years," Kakshapati said, "The idea for the project came when we began collecting photographs and stories of our grandmothers."

(PR)

# CHRISTMAS

## Concert moves many



With Christmas just around the corner, the youth in Kathmandu are in the festive mood and busy making music.

On Saturday, Patan Durbar

Square saw hundreds of music lovers rocking at a concert organised by the students of Jesus College of Music, Bhaishipati. As in the past years, the Dean of the college, Michelle Ko, was present with his team to deliver the message of peace and love to Valley dwellers.

The welcome concert for the upcoming Christmas and New Year opened with the song *Joy to the World*, which had the audience enthusiastically engaged. The concert also saw many young talents perform pieces on the piano, flute, drums, guitar, and violin. A play on the birth of Jesus

Christ was also performed as part of the event. (PR)

Fire your queries at [agonyaunt@kantipur.com.np](mailto:agonyaunt@kantipur.com.np). Aunty is here to help every Friday



Rai who hails from Muga in Dangkuta, and Choudhary, who lives in Ghorahi in Dang, are two of the 12 grandmothers portrayed in the collection

"I am happy that I am in the picture, but it would have been better if they had at least told me how I looked and allowed me to wear new clothes," repeats Rai.

I should change my clothes, so I am still wearing old, tatty things," replies Lila Maya Rai shyly.

"The same



# MISCHIEF MOMENTS

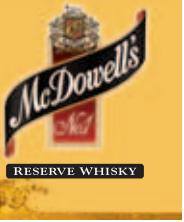


USN/1080/09

## EVENT GRAPH

### FOOD & DRINKS

- Christmas Cake shop - Step in for Christmas hampers like Christmas pudding, chocolate Santa Claus, hampers and much more at The Lounge from November 30 to December 31, 2009. For details please call 4491234 or 4489362.
- Strawberry Etager - Enjoy the festive season high tea with Strawberry Flavours at The Lounge from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Please contact Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234 or 4489362 for details.
- Oriental Nights - Enjoy the flavours and specialities of Asia every Wednesday at The Cafe from 6:30 pm onwards. For details please call Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234/4489362
- Mediterranean Culinary Delights - Taste the culinary delights from the Mediterranean region of Greece, Italy and the Middle-East at The Cafe every Friday from 6:30 pm onwards. For details please call Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234/4489362
- Enjoy the real taste of Tibetan Gyakol (Sherpa's famous steam boat, minimum for two) at MANDARIN OF THE EVEREST Hotel daily from 12:00 hrs - 14:30 hrs & 19:00 hrs - 22:30 hrs FOR RESERVATION: TELEPHONE: 977-1-4780100 EXT:7712 / 7811
- The Corner Bar - The Radisson Hotel's upscale bar offers an array of sumptuous snacks, exotic drinks and cocktails. From 3:00 pm till 11:00 pm, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu
- Enjoy the various pizzas , home made pastas, juicy and succulent steaks, fresh water trout and delicious Tirra Misu at Al Fresco, Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu Open for Lunch: 1230 Hrs to 1445 Hrs and Dinner: 1900 Hrs to 2245 Hrs. For Reservations, call 977-01-4273999 Ext: 6155
- Experience the varieties of Biryanis, Curries and mouth watering Kebabs at our Indian Specialty restaurant, Kafork at Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu. Open for dinner only from 1900 Hrs till 2245 Hrs. For reservations call: 4273999 Ext: 6555
- Relax and enjoy the weather while you sip some of the finest drinks at our open Porch Bar at the Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu from 6 pm till 10 pm. Enjoy dishes from throughout the orient, amidst the minimalist set up in China Garden, Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu Open for Lunch: 1230 Hrs to 1445 Hrs and Dinner: 1900 Hrs to 2245 Hrs For reservations call 977-01-4273999 Ext: 6159
- Mouthwatering Himalayan Rainbow Trout from the fresh waters of the mighty Trishuli River. For reservation contact Hotel Yak and Yeti- 4248999.
- Norwegian Salmon - Taste from a selection of delicious Norwegian Salmon served marinated, grilled or smoked exclusively at the Rox Restaurant from 6:00 pm onwards, November 15, 2010. For details please call Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234/4489362
- The Mandarin at The Everest Hotel introduces a four course Oriental Executive Lunch at NRS 599 + taxes per person. For reservation contact: 014780100, Ext: 7811.
- "Tripti Bar @ Gokarna Forest Resort is serving mouth watering sizzlers and a bottle of beer or a glass of wine everyday at just Rs. 1250 Net. For more info call 4451212
- Gokarna's Rudra Night- every Friday, 7 p.m. onwards. Live Fusion Music with Nepali BBQ at just Rs. 1,000 Net. For more info call: 4451212 or E-mail us at: [reservation@gokarna.net](mailto:reservation@gokarna.net) or [info@gokarna.net](mailto:info@gokarna.net)



### MUSIC

- HyJazz - Relax with your favourite drinks at the Rox Bar every Friday evening and set your mood with live Jazz tunes by "Inner Groove". For details please call Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4489362/4491234
- Sunday Jazz Brunch - Enjoy a relaxing Sunday in The Terrace at Hyatt Regency Kathmandu with barbecue and live Jazz music by "Inner Groove" from 12:00 to 3:00 pm. For details please call Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234/4489362
- Live continental BBQ Fiesta, Exclusive BBQ Dinner at Splash Bar & Grill, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu Rate: Rs. 1400 plus taxes per person Time: 6:30 pm to 10:30 pm everyday.
- Live music at JazzyBelle Cafe every Wednesday and Friday with great food, drink and old friends from 6 pm onwards every Friday. JazzyBelle Cafe, Jhamsikel, Patan Contact: 2114075.
- Every Friday, International Trio play Smooth Funky Lounge and Jazz at the Comfort Zone, Thamel. Free Entry, Barbeque NRs 500, for reservations, contact 9803509358.
- Baji Gaia playing live every Tuesday at Moksh, Pulchowk, time 7.30 PM onwards. For details, contact 5526212.
- Some Like It Hot- BBQ with live band "Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds" every Friday night at the Fusion Bar Dwarika's Hotel, 7:00 pm onwards. Price NRs. 999/- plus 10% Service Charge per person includes BBQ dinner and a can of Carlsberg beer or soft drink. Contact: 4479448.
- Friday with Dharmendra (Nepali Tara) playing unplugged at Bottles n Chimney, Thamel every Friday from 7 pm onwards. Contact 2123135.
- Thursdays with Peanuts- Quite possibly the only place in Kathmandu where littering is actually encouraged. Bottles n Chimney, Thamel, 7pm onwards. Contact 2123135.
- Live music by fusion band far away from Philippines are performing at the BUGLES & TIGERS BAR of the Everest Hotel from 19:00 hrs - 22:30 hrs every evening except monday. FOR RESERVATION: TELEPHONE: 977-1-4780100 EXT:7711 / 7811
- Blues with Nekham at Bottles n Chimney every Monday from 7 pm onwards. Contact 2123135.
- Humble bee playing live @ Moksh every Tuesday from 7. 30 PM onwards. Contact: 5526212.
- Live music by the 'Strings' @ G's Terrace Restaurant N Bar, Thamel every Tuesday.
- Wednesday Ladies' Night- Live unplugged music & one free cocktail for the ladies at Jatra Cafe & Bar, Thamel. Happiest cocktail hours from 5-7pm. Contact: 4256622.
- Live fusion & classical music by Anil Shahi, 8pm onwards every Wednesday at Absolute Bar, Hotel Narayani Complex, Pulchowk. Contact: 5521408.
- Karaoke with Ryan on Saturdays at Nowhere Pub in Thamel from 7pm.

### MISCELLANEOUS

- "Special Christmas Package at Gokarna Forest Resort. At Rs. 5000 single and Rs.6000 double with accommodation, use of our spa facilities, gala dinner plus Nepali Fusion Music."
- "KJC is organizing Winter Camp for kids from 3-12 years old. Please contact us at 5013554 or email us at [info@katjazz.com.np](mailto:info@katjazz.com.np) to reserve your place."

### GETAWAY

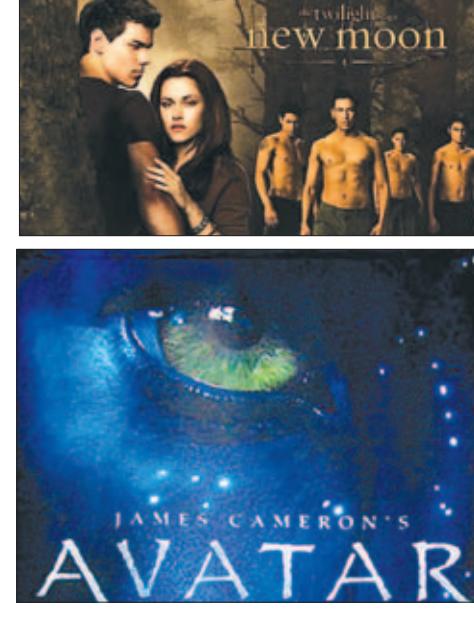
- The Famous Farm, Nuwakot, 3.5 hrs drive north of Kathmandu, wonderful river-valley views, a short walk to Nuwakot fort and palace. A Stay for a night or a week and enjoy typically luxurious Nepali country living. For Nepal's best trekking, white-water rafting, short breaks & rural heritage experiences contact: Himalayan Encounters on 4700 426 or 4700 335A
- The Fulbari Resort - Casino, Golf & Spa - Pokhara announces Dashain & Diwali Package at special festive rate of NRS 5999 nett on twin sharing for Nepalese, Imr 5999 nett for Indian and NRS 6999 nett for Resident Expats. Package includes 2 nights stay on BB, buffet dinner and lots more. For reservation, contact: 4461918, 4462248.
- Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara launches the Monsoon Madness Package. Spend NRS 6999/- and get back coupons worth NRS 5000/- which you can spend on any of the hotel facilities. For instant reservation, contact 4435741-44.
- Park village, Budhanilkantha on Saturdays and Sundays- Combo: swim + lunch + bottle of beer @ NRS 900 adult, NRS 750 for child with soft drink. Weekend package for couples available at NRS 4900, with half board accommodation per night, and all tax inclusive. Habitat apartments: 1 - 3 bed room apartment, available for short and long term use. Reservations with Satish Shrestha 98510 70936 or Neeraj Bajracharya 9851057642.
- Stay at Glacier Hotel, Pokhara for NRs 1999 a Night per Couple. Package includes a Harbor breakfast, 1/2 city tour, 15% discount on paragliding facilities. Valid for Nepalese only. (061) 463722 / 9851071792.
- Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara launches the Kids Break Package @ NRs 8499/- net per couple, with 2 kids below 12 years sharing parents room complimentary. For more details and reservation, contact 4435741/42/43/44 (Ext. 104/121)
- Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara launches the "Festive Season Family Getaway" @ NRs 7999/- net per couple. Avail 25% festive discount on all hotel facilities. For more details and reservation, contact 4435741/42/43/44 (Ext. 104/121)
- Experience your holiday at Grand Norling Hotel, Gokarna. One night and two days at Rs 4500 and two nights and three days at Rs 7000, residential package at Rs 30000 per month. Contact: 4910193, 4910296, 4910295.
- Enjoy your 'Escape' at the relaxing environment of Hotel Holi Shiva, Pokhara. Deluxe A/C room available at Rs. 1999, normal room at Rs.1299, and budget room at Rs.799. (Breakfast and twin rooms included). Contact: 00977-061-46423 or 9846120785/9804196318.
- "Pokhara Paradise Package" Summer Offer @ The Fulbari Resort. Per person NRs. 3999 net on twin sharing basis and NRs 1999 Nett Supplement on single basis. Offer for Nepalis and Resident Expats only. Includes deluxe room, buffet dinner & breakfast with attractive discounts during happy hours, spa & golf. Contact: 4461918.
- Oversight Package and Great Escape Package available at The Dwarika's Himalayan Shangri-La Village Resort, Dhulikhel for local residents. Contact 4479488.
- Two-day free Yoga workshop at Mind Body Retreat, Sitapal (beside Harisiddhi Temple) at 0800 hrs on Dec. 12 and Dec. 13. In the tranquil and lush natural setting of the retreat, the aspirant can harmonise the relation between body and mind through the Yoga and Meditation instructions. Contact 9841-896000

### MIND AND BODY

- Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre: Meditation Mon - Fri 5-6pm; Yoga Mon - Fri 9-10am; Tai Chi Sat 10-11.30am; Buddhist Films & Library; Himalayan Vegetarian Garden Café at HBMC, Keshar Mahal Marg, Thamel. 4410402.
- Sahara Matru Samuh: Join free classes every Saturday to learn about Reiki, Yoga, Meditation and Healthy Life Styles. Contact: 9841393760 OR 9803763214.

### FILMS

#### NOW PLAYING



#### JAI NEPAL

*Avatar*: 8:30\* am, 11:45 am, 3:00 pm,

#### KUMARI I

*New Moon*: 9:00\* am, 12:00 pm, 3:00 pm;

#### KUMARI II

*Rocket Singh*: 9:15\* am, 12:15 pm;

*Paa*: 3:15 pm;

*New Moon*: 6:15 pm, 9:15 pm

#### EXHIBITION

- 'MARFA TO MANHATTAN' - An exhibition of photographs by Kashish Das Shrestha at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited from 11th December to 31st December 2009, 11:00 am - 5:00 pm. Daily. Contact 4-218048 / 4438979.

#### FILM

- Exciting Adventure Movie Show at Cozy cafe & Restaurant Thamel. Every Evening 5:30 to 7:30 contact 4259367

## ON YOUR television

SONY

ESPN

ESPN

9:15 Telebrands, 7:45 Chartbusters,

8:15 Teleshopping, 9:15 Dance Premier

League, 13:15 Kuch Kuch Hota Hai,

17:15 CID, 20:15 Slumdog Crorepatti,

23:15 Friends,

7:15 Fina Aquatics World, 10:45 World Of

Gymnastics, 11:15 X Games 15 All Access

Review, 12:15 2009 Big 12 Conference

Basketball Match: North Carolina vs. Texas,

14:45 Great Ethiopian Run, 14:45 Fina Aquatics

World Of Gymnastics, 15:45 Fina

World Swimming Championships, 16:45

Albertville 1992: One Light One World, 18:25

Sportsweekend 2009, 18:45 Super

Sunday, 18:55 Barclays Premier League

2009/10 Match: Wolverhampton Wanderers vs.

Burnley, 21:15 Super Sunday, 21:25 Barclays

Premier League 2009/10 Match: West Ham

United vs. Chelsea, 23:45 Final Score

23:45 Star Plus Special

STAR WORLD

08:15 Ba Bahoo Aur Baby, 09:15 Tere Mere

Beach Mein, 10:15 Tere Mere Beach Mein,

11:15 Star Saansar, 12:15 Sarkar Raj (2008),

15:15 Star Plus Special, 16:15 Singh Is King (2008), 19:15 Star Plus Special, 20:15 Ba

Bahoo Aur



Maoist activists and supporters take part in a torch rally in Kathmandu on Saturday as part of the third phase in a series of protests demanding civil supremacy.

POST PHOTO: SHRUTI SHRESTHA

## Two-wheelers theft rises in the Valley

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

The Metropolitan Traffic Police Division (MTPD) has recovered a total of 341 motorcycles stolen in the Valley in the last five months from neighbouring districts.

"We have been receiving many complaints of missing vehicles in the Valley and corresponding evidence of stolen motorcycles being used in neighbouring districts. Two-wheelers are sometimes sold for less than Rs. 20,000," said Bibhuti Raj Pandey, deputy superintendent of police at the MTPD.

At least 710 cases of motorcycle theft were registered in the Valley in the

same time period. In Mangsir (Mid-Oct.-Mid-Nov.) alone, 201 motorcycles were stolen and 45 different people charged for stealing two-wheelers.

### THEFT CASES

- Mid July - mid Aug. — 131
- Mid Aug.-mid Sept. — 150
- Mid Sept.-mid Oct. — 108
- Mid Oct.-mid Nov. — 120
- Mid Nov.-mid Dec. — 201

"Most motorcycles are stolen from residences," said Binod Singh, chief of the MTPD. "The owners' negligence is the main reason behind the frequent number of cases."

The police also stated that the neighbouring districts of Sindhupalchowk, Kavre, Makwanpur, Ramechhap, Nuwakot, Dhading, Dolakha, and Chitwan are the main markets for the sale of the stolen two-wheelers. According to police records, 72 motorcycles were recovered from Sindhupalchowk, 35 from Kavre, 43 from Makwanpur, and 48 from Nuwakot. According to Pandey, two-wheeler thieves fake registration papers and sell the stolen vehicles at cheaper rates.

The MTPD has been recovering the stolen vehicles as part of a campaign that was launched to curb vehicle theft in the Valley.

## Unleashing Nepal again

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

The second edition of Sujeet Shakya's take on Nepal's economy, *Unleashing Nepal: Present and Continuous* is now being printed by Penguin India. The first edition of 3,000 copies, which released in Nepal on Oct. 12, and Nov. 9 in India, has sold out in less than three months.

Rahul Dixit, Sales and Marketing Manager at Penguin India, said, "We are very pleased with the overwhelming response to the book and are making efforts to make the book available to a larger audience." Author Sujeet Shakya stated that the biggest challenge for the book was to translate it into Nepali so that it would be more accessible to Nepali readers. Shakya has travelled through India, Thailand, and Nepal to promote the book.

*Unleashing Nepal* narrates the history of Nepal's economy, from the time of Nepal's unification, through the conflict-driven policies during the people's war, and into the country's economic state today.

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

The question of the resettlement of families living at a bridge construction site over the Bagmati in Sinamangal remains unanswered.

Earlier, the construction project gave the five families living on the land 15 days to relocate on Nov. 12, and extended the date by another fortnight to Dec. 18. The families have demanded that they be given land for resettlement, which the project has been unable to find. The settlers are demanding compensation as well as land for resettlement. "We will leave only once the government provides us with an alternative space. We have not been compensated either," said settler Mandira Shahi.

The settlers chose land behind the Ministry of



Information and Communication. However, the land belongs to the Pashupati Area Development Trust and the Trust is planning to relocate settlers around the Pashupati area to that land," said Dinesh Dhoj Rana, member of the All Party Local Construction Committee, which was created to find a solution to the problem.

Rana further added that the settlers had initially planned to relocate on the other side of the

bridge, but were unable to do so because the land there was to be used by the Mirmire Club for its Green-Belt project. Land was also found between Shantinagar and Tinkune. It was a densely populated stretch but it would have housed five more families, but the families have shown no interest," Rana added.

According to Balaram Mishra, division chief of the Kathmandu Road Division, the Department of Roads (DOR) is not responsible for

providing compensation. "The DOR provides compensation only when it takes privately owned property. The land around the bridge belongs to the department itself. There is no question of compensation," Mishra said. Mishra further added that the DOR is trying to settle the problem through compromise.

Meanwhile, a single-lane diversion bridge, adjacent to the old bridge which collapsed 14 months ago, opened to the public on Dec. 3. A budget of Rs. 40 million has been allocated for the entire project, which will build a 40 meter long bridge with two lanes. Nearly 80 percent of the work on the two of the three foundations of the bridge has already been finished. The resettlement must take place before construction can be continued.

## ACE DAY 2009

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Students of management, as well as practicing managers and executives, participated in a series of events organised by the students of Ace Institute of Management to celebrate ACE DAY 2009 in Sinamangal on Saturday.

Niraj Neupane, an MBA student, said that the event helped in generating practical knowledge regarding management. "Being a student, it was both interesting and challenging competing with professionals," Neupane added.

The event started off with Business Quiz - *Quizphrenia*. For this event, four teams were selected from a total of eight teams. Bibhusan

Bajracharya and Sachindra Pradhan of Spice Nepal were the winners of the quiz.

The event was then followed by the game - *Lights! Camera! Auction!* Each team was given an initial budget of Rs. 100,000 and various products were displayed for which the various teams had to bid.

A game of Scrabble followed, where each team was given five letters with which to create words. *Mad Ads* ended the day with teams creatively coming up with advertisements for a range of wacky products.

Other games and food stalls were put up by the students in the premises. A DJ session with DJ B'Man was also included in the programme.

## Chinese book store opens

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

The inauguration of the China's Tibet Book Store took place in Thamel's Mandala Street on Friday.

The book store houses a number Chinese books as well as books about China in the English language. Common themes include Chinese culture, art, history, and literature. Zhu Linying, the General Manager of the Xinhua Book Company in China, which is the biggest supplier of books for the store, said "Many friends I met here said that they wanted to learn more about China, lamenting on the lack of books on China in Nepal." The store aims to better cultural understanding between the people of the neighbouring countries.

## Waste disposal to be obstructed

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Kathmandu dwellers, who have enjoyed several months of respite from having to walk over piles of garbage thanks to the uninterrupted disposal of waste in the Valley, will have to hold their noses again. Agitating employees of local bodies announced on Thursday that the collection of Valley waste would be obstructed from Sunday onwards.

Frequent obstructions took place in the recent past when the locals at landfill sites halted the disposal of garbage, putting forward different demands. On

Thursday, however, the announcement for the strikes was made by employees of different local bodies, including those responsible for the collection and disposal of waste. With the obstruction in the collection of waste, valley dwellers will also see the indefinite closure of all local bodies.

"I am very worried about the upcoming protest," said Rabinman Shrestha, chief of the Environment Department of Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC). "We have asked protesters not to halt the garbage collection, as it will affect daily life."

Meanwhile, Gangadhar Gautam, President of the Local Body Employees Union (LBEU) said that the obstruction of garbage would not be withdrawn until the government fulfills the employees' demands. "We will not collect any waste until the government addresses our demands," said Gautam.

The employees have asked the government to fulfill a four-point demand to ensure a permanent status for all local bodies, basic staff facilities, promotion policy on par with civil servants, and trade union rights. There has been no response from the Government on this issue.

## Online Challenge

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Nepali internet geeks now have a chance at an online challenge. Started by TheNepaliClub.com, the challenge features a weekly online quiz which covers topics on current affairs, history, geography, sports, technology, IQ, and science.

Sunil Rijal, Director of TheNepaliClub.com said, "Online challenges for internet savvy people run deep, particularly among the teenage college-goers."

TheNepaliClub.com was officially launched on Aug. 14 2009, with the aim of providing Nepalis with a social media platform.

## Making money selling water

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Private tankers carrying drinking water, which are Kathmandu dwellers' only solution to the acute water shortage in the Valley, are making good business.

Suman Pathak, Chairman of the Nepal Drinking Water Suppliers, estimates that sales of drinking water alone generate nearly Rs. 4,000,000 every month in the Valley.

At least 90 drinking water suppliers, owning nearly 400 tankers, are currently in operation in the Valley. "We are supplying water to at least 60 percent of Kathmandu dwellers," Pathak stated, adding, "If the operations stop, Kathmandu will face a severe water crunch."

Pathak himself has been running the New Balaju Water Supply, which has five tankers in operation, for the last 20 years.

"With the earnings from the water business I am paying my children's college fees and running my household quite comfortably," said Pathak. According to Pathak, he earns at least Rs. 60,000 a month from the business. Pathak said that the water for distribution is collected from nearly 30 bore wells in the Kathmandu valley. The quality of the water is ascertained from the depth of the well, which can be 40, 100 or, 300 meters deep. "We only sell water that is taken from wells that have a depth of at least 100 meters," said Pathak,

Ujjwal Shakya of Satdobato has

been running the Satdobato Water Supply for the last 14 years. Shakya supplies water for both drinking and construction purposes. "This business selling water is pretty good. I have been earning enough to run my household," said Shakya, adding, "And this is despite the fact that it's a seasonal business-six months good and six months okay."

Shakya earns at least Rs. 30,000 a month from his two tankers. He charges a fee of Rs. 1200 - Rs. 1500 for a drinking water tanker of a 6,000 litre capacity, depending on the distance covered during delivery. Water for construction in the same capacity costs between Rs. 800 - Rs. 1100. "The power-cut last year greatly increased the demand for drinking water," Shakya added.

## Gamblers arrested

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Police, accompanied by State Minister for Tourism, Satrudhan Prasad Sinha, carried out a raid in a Capital-based casino on Friday night and arrested nine Nepali nationals on charge of gambling in a casino, which is prohibited by law.

The Police raided the Everest Casino following orders from Sinha, who was in the area at the time. Sinha reportedly instructed Inspector General of Police, Ramesh Chand Thakuri, to carry out the raid, stating that Nepali nationals were gambling in the casino. Police personnel, could not find any Nepalis inside the casino, and made the arrests out-

side the building.

Addressing media persons on Saturday, Superintendent of Police, Ganesh K.C. stated that the police would put all Capital-based casinos under surveillance to restrict the entrance of Nepali nationals. K.C. expressed his commitment to bringing casino owners and Nepali gamblers to book if they were found to be violating regulations in days to come.

The arrested have been identified as Bal Krishna Maharjan, Mukti Maharjan, Deependra Maharjan, Hari Maharjan, Bikram Maharjan, Jeetendra Tamrakar, Rajendra Shakya, Prabesh Puri, and Minendranam Bajracharya.

## Musical Caravan for Peace

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

With the aim of spreading the message of co-existence to different groups in the country in an effort to promote and protect cultural diversity, Lead International, in partnership with Kutumba and Minap, is organising a nation-wide musical tour.

The musical initiative, entitled *Celebrating Cultural Diversity: A Musical Caravan* will feature musicians from different ethnic groups including, Limbu, Tharu, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Abadhi, and Doteli, each representing different regions of the country. The caravan will be led by the Kathmandu based-folk musical band Kutumba and Janakpur.

Based Minap. According to Manish Jha, the head of public relations at Lead International, the musicians have selected one piece for each ethnic group, which will be performed in its original language and accompanied by traditional instruments. According to Dependra Chaunlagain a coordinator from Lead International,

ethnic politics has led to people in the country becoming divided in the name of caste, religion, and geography. At a time when tension is surging in the name of federalism, Chaunlagain adds "This musical journey is an answer to that question. It is a way to spread awareness that the diversity of the nation is an asset and that our identities must be preserved, protected, and promoted. Music is some-

thing common to and loved by us all, and it will help keep us together in these difficult times." The caravan has been scheduled to begin in Dadeldhura, Jan. 8, and continue to Kapilavastu (Jan. 12), Bara (Jan. 14), Siraha (Jan. 16) and Panchthar (Jan. 18). Two events will then be held in the Valley. "With this we want to give a message of tolerance and brotherhood among different ethnic groups of the country through the music," added Jha. The event has been funded by the Norwegian Embassy.

According to the census of 2001, over 92 languages

being spoken by more than one hundred ethnic groups in the country.

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**NEWSLINE****Climate change concern**

KATHMANDU: A climate change activist expressed concern over developed countries' apathy towards climate change. "Global leaders' failure to agree on measures against climate change is a setback for vulnerable countries, including Nepal," said Country Representative for WWF Nepal Anil Manandhar at a programme. He noted that people living in the drainage system of the Himalayas will be hit hard. "It is highly disappointing that countries that are responsible for climate change are not taking corrective measures," said Manandhar.

**'NC stance on states soon'**

DHANUSA: Nepali Congress (NC) acting President Sushil Koirala said here on Saturday that his party would soon come up with its official stance on the federal states. Accusing the UCPN (Maoist) of inviting a civil war through nationwide declaration of autonomous states, Koirala further said the Maoists have mocked peace process Constituent Assembly. "The Maoists are trying to impose authoritarian rule."

**Cold claims two**

UDAYPUR: Two persons have frozen to death within the past 24 hours in Udaypur district. According to the District Police Office, Krishna Khadka of Triyuga Municipality-2 died of severe cold near his house on Saturday morning. Similarly, cold claimed the life of Binod Rai (55) in Gaighat Bazaar on Friday.

**Lamjung jail sans chief**

LAMJUNG: District Prison, Lamjung, has been without its chief for months. The Home Ministry five months ago had appointed Haris Chandra Poudel as the prison chief. But he has been remaining absent. Peon Sunita Tamang said they have been facing problems in handling administrative works. (PR/RSS)



**HOPE AGAINST HOPE:** Patients rest on the premises of Doti District Hospital after undergoing uterine surgery.

POST PHOTO: MOHAN SHAHI

## Amnesty: Arrest Maj Basnet

**POST REPORT**  
KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Amnesty International (AI) has called on the Nepal government to immediately fix the flawed vetting process that allowed an army major charged with murder to participate in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic.

Nepal Army (NA) Maj. Niranjan Basnet was expelled from a UN peacekeeping mission in Chad for his alleged involvement in the murder of Maina Sunuwar, 15, in February 2004. He was repatriated to Nepal on Dec. 12.

In a letter sent to Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal on Friday, the AI said the inclusion of Maj. Basnet in the peace keeping force revealed serious shortcomings in the vetting of troops from the Nepal Army to UN missions that could put civilians at risk in countries where they are deployed.

"The Nepali government has failed to provide accountability for the many atrocities committed by Nepali security forces as well as

Maoist cadres during Nepal's civil war. The resulting culture of impunity undermines the rights of victims and their families, and potentially carries over to the Army's involvement in UN missions and threatens the rights of those they have been assigned by the United Nations to protect," said Sam Zarifi, Amnesty International's Asia Pacific Director.

The AI urged the government to reassess every member of the NA currently participating in UN missions to ensure that they are not implicated in serious human rights violations.

The NA has taken Maj. Basnet under its control when he arrived in Nepal, and has refused to hand him over to the police. "The Nepali army is shielding Major Basnet from serious and credible allegations; he should be immediately surrendered to a civilian court for trial. The ongoing failure

to address his case properly casts serious doubt on the Nepali government's commitment to international human rights standards and the fitness of Nepali forces to serve as UN peacekeepers," said Sam Zarifi.

Meanwhile, the AI has welcomed the United Nations decision to expel and repatriate Maj. Basnet and called on the UN to insist that the government of Nepal review the troops it contributes to UN peacekeeping.

"Nepali troops have played a very important role in UN peacekeeping around the world. The Nepali government should work closely with the UN to ensure no Nepali troops accused of human rights violations are deployed as UN peacekeepers," said Sam Zarifi, in a separate letter to the UN Under-Secretary-General.

The AI also called for all outstanding allegations of crimes committed by the Army, the police and Maoist forces to be investigated and, where there is sufficient admissible evidence, prosecuted by competent, independent and impartial civilian courts.



## Leaders hard-pressed

**POST REPORT**  
KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Constitutional Committee (CC) Chairman Nilambar Acharya on Saturday urged senior UCPN (Maoist), Nepali Congress and CPN-UML leaders to help finalise the CC's concept paper and the preliminary draft during the committee's next meeting scheduled for Dec. 24.

Acharya made this call during a meeting with Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Vice-Chairman Narayan Kaji Shrestha, leaders Dev Gurung and Barsha Man Pun, Nepali Congress Vice-President Prakash Man Singh and UML leaders Bhim Rawal and Surendra Pandey at the Constituent Assembly Secretariat Singhadurbar.

"The leaders have told me that

they would continue their efforts for consensus. I am hopeful that they will be able to sort out differences on some issues by our next meeting," said Acharya. The committee, among other things, is yet to decide on the

name of the constitution in the making, the new flag and the definition of the state and the nation. The Maoists are against using the word "pluralism" in the preamble of the constitution,

while the NC and UML are adamant that the word should be there.

"I asked the leaders to continue intra-party dialogue on issues," said Acharya. "I also told them to attend the debate on the committees on a regular basis." The CC chairman said he stressed the need for compromise among parties for consensus.

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**NEWSLINE****BJP names new party boss**

NEW DELHI: India's Hindu nationalists completed a leadership change on Saturday, naming a new party chief after appointing a woman as parliamentary opposition leader in a bid to revive their political fortunes. Nitin Gadkari, 52, was greeted with bouquets and garlands as outgoing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Rajnath Singh announced his successor at the group's headquarters in New Delhi. "There was complete unanimity on Gadkari's name for president," Singh said.

**Iran seeks diplomatic fix**

BAGHDAD: Tehran wants to solve by diplomatic means a dispute with Baghdad over accusations that Iranian troops seized an oil well inside Iraq, a spokesman at the Iranian embassy said on Saturday. The Iraqi government also called for a peaceful solution without any military escalation and said the dispute, which pushed up world oil prices on Friday, would not affect the nation's crude output or exports. Iran's ambassador to Baghdad Hassan Kazemi-Qomi met Iraqi government officials to discuss Baghdad's charges of an incursion.

**Poland tightens border**

OSWIECIM: Polish police and border guards stepped up security checks at airports and border crossings Saturday as the search intensified for the infamous sign stolen from the Auschwitz death camp memorial. The brazen overnight theft of one of the Holocaust's most chilling and notorious symbols early Friday sparked outrage from around the world, and Polish leaders declared recovering the 5-meter sign a top priority.

**2,000 stranded in tunnel**

LONDON: More than 2,000 passengers spent a chilly and hungry night stranded in the Channel Tunnel linking France and Britain after cold weather caused five trains to break down. The trains failed as they moved from the freezing air in northern France into the warmer temperatures of the tunnel on Friday evening, operator Eurostar said. All Eurostar services were suspended until Sunday, causing pre-holiday chaos on one of the busiest travel weekends.

**Hackers steal army secrets**

SEOUL: South Korea's military said it was investigating a hacking attack that netted secret defense plans with the United States and may have been carried out by North Korea. The suspected hacking occurred late last month when a South Korean officer failed to remove a USB device when he switched a military computer from a restricted-access intranet to the Internet, Defense Ministry spokesman Won Tae-jae said. (Agencies)

# Divided UN conference okays climate deal

**AP**  
COPENHAGEN, DEC. 19

The UN climate conference narrowly escaped collapse on Saturday as bitterly divided delegates agreed after all-night talks to recognise a political compromise that US President Barack Obama brokered with China and other emerging powers.

The Copenhagen Accord was bogged down for hours by protests from delegates who felt they were excluded from the process or said the deal didn't go far enough in cutting the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming.

After a break, the conference president gaveled a decision to "take note" of the agreement instead of formally approving it. Experts said that clears the way for the accord to begin even though it was not formally approved by the conference.

"We have a deal in Copenhagen," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, adding "this is just the beginning" of a process to craft a binding pact to reduce emissions.

Disputes between rich and poor countries and between the world's biggest carbon polluters - China and the US - dominated the two-week conference in Copenhagen, the largest and most important UN meeting ever on fighting global warming.



**AMID CONDEMNATION:** A delegate member rests prior start of the late night plenary at the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen early Saturday. Protesters hold a picture of US President Barack Obama and signs during a demonstration outside the Bella Centre, the venue of the conference. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon reacts during a press conference.



COPENHAGEN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2009 UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE AP/RS

Obama met twice with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in hopes of sweeping aside some of the disputes that had blocked progress.

The US president appeared to have salvaged the faltering talks on Friday when he declared a "breakthrough" with China, India, Brazil and South Africa. But the three-page document they agreed upon ran into trouble in the plenary, where delegates from Bolivia, Cuba, Sudan and Venezuela denounced it.

Decisions are made by consensus in UN climate negotiations. Obama's day of hectic diplomacy produced a document promising \$30 billion in emergency climate aid to poor nations in the next three years and a goal of

eventually channeling \$100 billion a year by 2020 to developing countries.

It includes a method for verifying each nation's reductions of heat-trapping gases - a key demand by Washington, because China has resisted international efforts to monitor its actions. It requires industrial countries to list their individual targets and developing countries to list what actions they will take to cut global warming pollution by specific amounts. Obama called that an "unprecedented breakthrough."

The document said carbon emissions should be reduced enough to keep the increase in average global temperatures below 2 degrees Celsius, but it omits the usual reference to pre-

industrial levels. Without that language, the starting point for limiting temperatures would be 0.7 degrees C higher - the amount of warming in modern times.

However, some of the most vulnerable nations believe the limit should be held to no more than 1.5 degree C rise. Since leaders failed to agree on a binding deal to reduce greenhouse gases, delegates also scrapped a plan to protect the world's biologically rich tropical forests early Saturday that would have paid some 40 poor, tropical countries to protect their forests.

Deforestation for logging, cattle grazing and crops has made Indonesia and Brazil the world's third- and fourth-biggest carbon emitters.

**COPENHAGEN PACT**

- Recognises the need to limit global temperatures
- Developed nations to set a goal of mobilising \$100bn a year by 2020
- Emerging nations monitor own efforts and report to UN every two years.
- No detailed framework on carbon markets

## Pak crisis talks start, govt in jeopardy

**AFP**  
ISLAMABAD, DEC. 19

Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari chaired crisis talks with Pakistan's ruling party on Saturday on how to prevent his government unravelling after a court scrapped an amnesty on corruption charges.

In a bid to head off what could be the worst political crisis of his troubled 15 months in power, the president convened the central executive committee of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in the capital Islamabad.

The meeting comes after the Supreme Court annulled a decree protecting more than

8,000 people, including Zardari and top allies, from corruption charges, in a move welcomed by a public increasingly fed up with the government.

A court has since summoned Interior Minister Rehman Malik over re-opening a corruption case and officials also banned Defence Minister Ahmed Mukhtar from leaving the country on an official visit to close ally China.

Pakistan's anti-corruption National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has called for travel bans on 253 people since Wednesday's court ruling, sparking calls for Zardari to resign and rattling the US-backed government.



**IN JITTERY TIMES:** Asif Ali Zardari

An official in Zardari's office said party loyalists were tight-lipped on the options up for discussion.

"The meeting will discuss the present political situation," said Zardari spokesman Farhatullah Babar.

### Attack kills 15

PESHAWAR: The death toll from a suicide attack on a Pakistan mosque rose to 15 on Saturday after bodies were plucked from the rubble and people succumbed to their injuries, officials said. The bomber rammed a vehicle rigged with explosives into a mosque next to a police headquarters in Lower Dir, a northwest district that Pakistan claims to have cleared of Taliban fighters after a major offensive this year. (AP)



**HOT ON MILITANT TRAIL:** A US Marine is silhouetted during an operation in the Garmisir district of volatile Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, on Saturday. AP/RS

## Surgeons remove needles from lung

**AP**  
SAO PAULO, DEC. 19

Doctors will evaluate the boy's recovery before deciding when to perform at least two more surgeries to remove more needles, she said.

Police say they believe the lover, Angelina Ribeiro dos Santos, told Magalhaes the ritual would keep them together, but she was really seeking revenge on Magalhaes' wife by having him hurt her son.

The bricklayer told detectives that dos Santos would enter into trances and give him commands to insert the needles, police inspector Helder Fernandes Santana said. The stepfather told police the rituals happened every few days for a full month, with him inserting several needles during each session.

Dos Santos paid to have the needles blessed by a woman who practiced the Afro-Brazilian religion Candomble, Santana said.

Authorities initially estimated the boy had as many as 50 needles were inside the boy. After batteries of tests were performed, doctors now believe there are closer to 30 needles inside, but they don't know for sure.

Doctors will evaluate the boy's recovery before deciding when to perform at least two more surgeries to remove more needles, she said.

Police say they believe the lover, Angelina Ribeiro dos Santos, told Magalhaes the ritual would keep them together, but she was really seeking revenge on Magalhaes' wife by having him hurt her son.

The bricklayer told detectives that dos Santos would enter into trances and give him commands to insert the needles, police inspector Helder Fernandes Santana said. The stepfather told police the rituals happened every few days for a full month, with him inserting several needles during each session.

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## Karzai unveils new Cabinet

**AP**  
KABUL, DEC. 19

Afghan President Hamid Karzai's nominees for a new Cabinet provoked dismay among many parliament members on Saturday but a cautiously positive response from the United Nations mission in the war-torn, corruption-plagued country.

Officials from the United States and Britain - top troop-supplying countries who have been vocal about the need for reform - did not have immediate comment on the list that was presented to parliament.

But he also needs to mollify domestic political allies, including warlords, who have kept him in power. Some parliament members expressed strong concern about the new names among the nominees, suspecting they would do the bidding of

warlords who are widely reviled for their brutality in the 1990s civil war and who still hold significant power in their regions.

"My fear and that of many MPs is that they maybe are the puppets of those warlords so that despite that they are considered civilized people and more educated people, they cannot implement their own ideas and initiatives," said Khaled Pashtun, a parliament member from Kandahar.

I think that if this Cabinet gets a confidence vote from the parliament of Afghanistan, it would not be able to put medicine on the injuries of the Afghan people," said Gul Pacha Mujedi, a parliament member from Paktia province.

## Beauty is between 'eyes, mouth of beholder'

**AP**  
WASHINGTON, DEC. 19

Beauty is not so much in the eye of the beholder as in the measurements between the eyes, mouth and ears of the woman being observed, US and Canadian researchers found.

In four experiments aimed at finding "an ideal facial feature arrangement," US and Canadian researchers asked students to compare color photographs of the same woman's face, in which the vertical distance between the eyes and mouth, and horizontal distance between the eyes, had been doctored using Photoshop.

The features -- eyes, mouth, nose, contour and hair -- remained the same

and a woman's face was only compared to her own, never to another's.

Students looked at different pictures of the same woman's face laid out side by side and selected the face they found more attractive.

In all four experiments, they chose the faces with specific proportions that the researchers have dubbed the "new golden ratio."

Two of the experiments tested for the ideal distance between the eyes and mouth as compared to total face length, measured from the hairline to the chin. Both came up with 36 percent as the golden ratio for "the maximally attractive face." The other two experiments measured both the

ideal length and width ratios. They both confirmed 36 percent as the golden ratio for the length of the maximally attractive face, and 46 percent as the ideal width ratio -- where the distance between the eyes is 46 percent of total face width, measured between

the inner edges of the ears.

Happily, the 36/46 percent ratios "correspond with those of an average face," the study said, meaning there's no pressing need to get out the measuring tape and calculator or to rush to the plastic surgeon. In fact, there are easy, non-invasive ways to trick beholders into thinking a woman's face is "maximally attractive," says the study, published in Vision Research.

Changing the hairstyle, is one example. "Our study... explains why sometimes an attractive person looks unattractive or vice versa after a haircut, because hairdos change the ratios," said Kang Lee, a professor at the University



**BEAUTY BREAKTHROUGH?**

of Toronto and one of the lead authors of the study.

Lee also said that the researchers studied the faces of a few celebrities. "Angelina Jolie does not have golden length and width ratios," he said.

"Elizabeth Hurley gets the golden ratio for length but is different from the width golden ratio by one percent." But Canadian country pop musician Shania Twain has "both the length and width ratios."

The study looked only at white women. More research is needed to determine if the golden ratios for men's faces, the faces of people of other races, and children's faces, are the same as for the women's faces in the study.



## Editorial

## What's up, doc?

## The government should ensure the security of health professionals

In what may appear to many to be a drastic step, the Nepal Medical Association (NMA) has announced that, as the government has not paid enough attention to the needs of those in the medical profession, it will begin protests towards the end of December. The protests are to consist of a closure of all facilities at public and private hospitals excluding emergency services. There are many demands that the NMA has put forth to the government. The list includes various specific measures that should be undertaken to improve health facilities across the country, for instance, and to abolish particular fees imposed upon the health sector.

Among all these demands, however, one stands out: That the government should immediately implement the law that ensures the security of health professionals. It is evident that over the past few years it has become common — and seen as legitimate — to organise a group and take forceful action against anyone or any policy that one is unhappy with. This has been mostly seen in the political arena. But medical professionals have increasingly felt the brunt of such organised force as well. It has become common practice in the event of the death of a patient under care, for example, for the patient's relatives to organise a group against the particular doctor responsible for the care of the patient. The doctor will then be charged with negligence and will either face some kind of physical action or be forced to pay reparations out of his or her own pocket.

One issue here is, of course, the inability or unwillingness of the police force to come and act on behalf of medical professionals against their harassers. There is certainly a need for the security forces to pay more attention to the harassment that medical professionals face, especially as this has developed into a general trend. There should also be an effort to implement existing legislation that protects doctors.

The large question, however, is regarding the kind of society that is developing in this country. With the growth in the belief that everything can be achieved by force, there has been severe erosion in societal trust. This is nowhere more evident than in the relation between doctors and patients. This relationship differs from that between other service-providers and clients. It requires a much greater degree of trust and comfort between the two parties. And with doctors fearing harassment from patients, the quality of this relationship is bound to suffer. There may come a day when medical professionals refuse to admit into their care patients afflicted with severe injuries or illnesses. For, if they did so, and something untoward were to happen to the patient, it would be they who would suffer. General awareness regarding the erosion of societal trust and its negative consequences should be spread, and the state of affairs remedied before it becomes too late.



## THE GLOBAL AND THE LOCAL

**Sushma Joshi**  
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The music was akin to jatra music. I was walking on the Lazimpat road and assumed the music was for some festival. Oil lamps burnt on the ground, and men carefully put red powder on the words. I mimicked the dance — one man smiled. Then I looked down and realised the words said: The autonomous Newa state. Ah. Then I looked deeper into the crowd, and readjusted my eyesight. Except for the one woman dressed up in her lone jyapu outfit, the rest of the men were a familiar species — Brahmin men.

Now this was an intriguing sight indeed. A group of Brahmin men celebrating the birth of the Newa nation. I took out my camera to document this interesting fact. The leader of this little group took out a little mike, in response. "Down with anybody against federalism!" he intoned. Immediately the tenor of the group changed — threatening, more intimidating. My hackles rose. Having grown up fighting authoritarian Brahminism, I can recognise an orthodox tone of morality when I hear one. And this guy was definitely one of these old *bahun bajays* telling me what to think. I am not against federalism, as those of you who've read my previous articles know. It was the authoritarian manner in which he was using the mike against me that made me go: Ah ha. I know your kind.

Well, is it any surprise that the Brahmin men who run this country have now decided to split up the country into little ethnic pieces? After the Second World War, the Europeans gathered together to do something pretty similar. In their term, it was known as "the cutting of the cake." In the Western world, after a marriage, the bride and the groom cut the cake and this is seen to cement the marriage. The Europeans used this trope to cut Africa into little pieces — the English got the East, the French got the West, the Dutch got Congo and Belgium got another part of

Congo. If you're wondering, as I often did, why African nations always have very straight national boundaries, it's because the Europeans literally sliced through the heartland with a knife. You take this part, I take this part. It worked very well for the Europeans, who enjoyed, for the next half century and even now, unprecedented access to natural resources, precious minerals and stones, petroleum and other riches of Africa free of cost, as the small African leaders squabbled within themselves and proceeded to kill their own people. The Hutus killed the Tutsis, the Tutsis killed the Hutus. Sierra Leone's rebel leaders drugged and chopped off the hands of their own youngsters. Meanwhile, diamonds, gold, bauxite, other precious minerals, and oil continued to flow out of Africa into Europe while the people continue to die of preventable diseases and starvation.

The straight lines that cut off Gabon from the Cameroon also cut off the small ethnic groups from each other. So if you take a knife and cut off little chunks of Nepal into Sherpaland, Tharuland, Newarland and god knows what else, you are saying that the smaller groups of Rais and Magars and Dalits and Brahmins who live within those nations may one day not find themselves so welcome there. A British journalist told me an interesting story of what she'd observed in Limbuwan. Two best friends, one Rai, one Limbu girl, were sitting together in a little meeting when the topic of Limbuwan came up. The Rai girl was so upset she ran out crying and wouldn't come back. Seems familiar? This is known as the old strategy: Divide and conquer.

Do you think these Brahmin men from autocratic backgrounds really care about ethnic autonomy, or are they just using this in the old-age way? Cut up people's linkages to each other, throw them a few bones, and watch them fight? If Brahmins seem happier at the formation of the Newa state than the

Newars themselves (some of my urban Newar friends are pretty embarrassed about this whole business), then we have to ask why. Don't get me wrong, I am a great fan of Newar culture and am delighted to be living within the Newa autonomous state — in fact, I don't think we ever stopped living in it. The Shahs were deposed but the Taleju ceremonies goes on, as it always did. One layer of colonisers gives way to another, but the Newars seem indestructible in their pride for their culture. I'd be the first to be secretly delighted if an architectural Nazi started to impose Newari architecture on the Kathmandu Valley and took down all the ugly wedding cake homes. Recently at a *jankhu* I was the only one demanding bhoj food (the Newars apologised and said it took too long to make — would I like some greasy alao gobi?) I support the Bhaktapur fabric industry more than your average hip young Newar. And I still blame my friends for fooling me and telling me "shyau" (apple) was "miaw" (as in cat's miaw) when I was sixteen and wanted to learn Newari. Now I am stuck with a teenage vocabulary of three phrases — "I am hungry," "shut the door," and "Shut up or I'll beat you." Maybe if I'd grown up in the Newa autonomous nation, I may know a new language, eat healthier food and secretly assuage my Gandhian need to wear handloom fabric. But as the times show, these (dare I say Brahmin) ideas of cultural purity can barely be imposed on a nation of multi-cultural and modern identities and aspirations.

So what exactly will these autonomous nations do, besides giving the Maoists a platform to plant their flags on their little ethnic pieces? The Shah kings used to make the ethnic groups dance in their costumes, and now the Maoists are doing the same. What is the difference in this divide and conquer strategy? Will it cause more quarrels as 59 different ethnic nationalities all start to resent the heavyweights who got their own states? I am not against an ethnic state or two if those are mixed in with states that are formed for other reasons — geographical or linguistic. But to have Nepal split up along ethnic lines seems foolhardy and against the fabric of a multi-ethnic nation.

Recently I met with two Bosnian filmmakers who were in town. When asked about the ethnic fighting in Bosnia, the woman said simply: "Our family was multi-cultural. We had everybody in it. There were Muslims and Christians and Bosnians and other nationalities. We didn't want to choose, so we left the country instead of having to choose one side or the other."

Most Nepali villages are a mixture of ethnic groups. I don't think we should be surprised if the Maoists (or their offshoots) start to trigger ethnic cleansing, as seen in parts of the Tarai. The only thing that might save Nepal is its famous tolerance. I was in Janakpur about five years ago, sitting in a bangle shop, when a janjati man came into the shop and started raving about the Madesh. He was a former Army man, he said. He'd lived all his life in the Tarai, given his life to the place. Now they wanted him out. He was upset feeling the heat of local politics. His tone, aggressive, was meant to provoke. The bangle seller listened with phlegmatic calm, and did not say one word in response. In the end, as the old man left, the bangle seller said: "he's been here all this life. That's his personality." I still remember the encounter if only because it was an emblematic moment in which a local situation that could have spiraled into conflict was defused by one wise bangle-seller.

That same calm and tolerance may save the people of Nepal as they weather this next storm. There are always leaders who seek to divide, rather than to unite. It is Nepal's bad luck that our revolutionary leader originates from atavistic Gorkha rather than liberal Dharan or Dhankuta. The key is to recognise that the aim of leaders may not always jive with those of real lives and real people. Whether they get applause in the Asia Society or get money from international donors, whether they are elected officials or well-known academics, the incredible and inborn common sense of the Nepali people should win over fanatics and fanaticism. Ethnic warfare has defined this age for other countries and continents. We must all be vigilant that this doesn't happen in our own country because some Brahmin men decided this was the only way to hold on to power.

## Staying positive

## AAYUSH NIROULA

"get in".

In Nepal, staying positive is not a luxury, it's a necessity. And I am not being cynical. I can't also say that it is a matter of choice for people of other countries to do so. But for us more so, because we are struggling not only to arrive at the basics of a firm political system, but also find ourselves adrift on moral and ethical issues. Our culture of hospitality, natural goodness, kindness and beliefs aside, there are people here who are still in the nascence of work ethics or in terms of good moral conscience. They

suffer from the mentality of thrusting others down to get themselves into a better position. This in turn makes life a difficult task to get through. We struggle just to get on our feet and when we do, we are pushed down again, making it a compulsion for so many of us to stay positive if we are to survive in this world.

Watching that movie has made me think that being positive is not something we can enforce upon ourselves. It is perhaps engrained in the nature of a man and hence an issue of habit. The idea of positivism is something that needs to be cultured into young minds as they are growing up so that they can face their circumstances hoping for the best. As Ani Choyng says in one of her songs: The world is as beautiful as a flower only if your eyes are the same.



**Krishna Hari Baskota**

A gender responsive budget is an assessment of the different impacts of budgetary expenditure on women and men. It ensures that the needs and interests of individuals from different groups are addressed in the budget. Therefore, a gender responsive budget is one of the most effective tools to mainstream gender in policies and planning to redress inequalities and promote women's economic and socio-political rights. However, gender responsive budgeting needs to be extensively used by the government and non-governmental sectors because the country cannot move on the path of development without addressing gender as women comprise half of the human resources.

Nepal has embarked on the process of institutionalising the gender responsive budgeting (GRB) system by establishing the Gender Responsive Budget Committee at the Ministry of Finance which is primarily responsible for making the budget gender responsive by reviewing and monitoring the patterns of budget allocation and implementation, evaluating public expenditure from a gender perspective, disseminating information on gender responsive budget to the government and making recommendations for improvements. This committee, which is coordinated by a joint secretary from the budget division of the Ministry of Finance, has representatives from the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Local Development and UNIFEM as members.

The Ministry of Finance has given emphasis to translating policies to address inequalities and empowerment of women through deliberate efforts to direct the flow of resources to specific and targeted programmes and also track public expenditure from a gender perspective. In the past, various efforts have been started in Nepal to integrate the gender perspective in the development policy framework. Some of the important initiatives taken so

## Gender responsive

This ensures that the needs of persons from varied groups are addressed in the budget

far include gender assessment studies, gender audit of various ministries, gender orientation and sensitisation efforts at all levels of the government, establishment of gender focal points and development of gender-sensitive programmes. The significant contribution of women to the national economy has been recognised in the annual budget speech. The Tenth Plan/PRSP and the TYIP has also recognised women empowerment as a key objective and gender mainstreaming as an operational strategy to meet this objective.

The Ministry of Finance has used five quality indicators to analyse the fiscal year's budget from a gender perspective. All the indicators have been given equal weightage, 20 percent for each indicator. These indicators comprise capacity building of women, participation of women in

technical and financial support. In this context, the Ministry of Finance has revised the budget forms, planning guidelines, manuals and related software to make them compatible with GRB approaches. Similarly, the ministry has conducted training and orientation programmes for officials of various ministries. The total budget for the current fiscal year 2009/10 is Rs. 286 billion, out of which Rs. 49 billion has been earmarked for programmes directly benefiting women. This is about 17.3 percent of the total budget.

Similarly, the share of the indirect gender responsive budget allocation is Rs. 104.16 billion, or 36.4 percent of the total budget. Likewise, the proportion of the budget allocation that has been termed gender neutral is 46.3 percent, or Rs. 132.32 billion. These figures provide us valuable pol-

icy feedback indicating that more efforts need to be made to make future budgetary processes more gender responsive.

The major sectors identified for gender responsive budget allocations are women children and social welfare, education, health, local development, infrastructure, industry, commerce and supply, culture and tourism, agriculture, forest preservation, science and technology and governance reform.

Nepal is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Beijing Platform for Action, Millennium Development Goals, United Nations

## GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

No.	Fiscal Year	Directly Supportive	Indirectly Supportive	Neutral
1	2007/08	19.09 b (11.30 percent)	56.03 b (33.16 percent)	93.87 b (55.54 percent)
2	2008/09	32.91 b (13.94 percent)	83.58 b (35.41 percent)	119.53 b (50.64 percent)
3	2009/10	49.46 b (17.30 percent)	104.16 b (36.43 percent)	132.32 b (46.27 percent)

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(The author is revenue secretary, Ministry of Finance)

# A tale of two cities

Delhi isn't a great city of the world that is vastly different from Kathmandu



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that things are happening at a very slow pace (and the people of Kathmandu deserve better than this).

In the past one year that I was away from Kathmandu, I noticed during my visit that something had improved. The interior roads have been paved at several residential areas including at Sinamangal (that is popularly known as Pepsi Cola Town Planning). Even the dust smelled good, as my friend put it, on the part of the Araniko Highway where a massive road widening and improving project is underway. Of course, the dust and traffic disturbance causes annoyance; but I felt people were willing not to think about that as long as the work went unhindered. They knew that whatever is happening is for the betterment of the city. That is why, I observed, they took it as a treat from the project when a truck sprinkled water on the road twice a day to minimize the impact of dust on the people passing on the road. "Where there is nothing," said my friend, "even the smallest of a good thing comes as a grand gesture."

Being big in geographical size and population shouldn't necessarily mean the city can provide better services to its people. With an area of 1,484 sq km, Delhi, officially called the national capital territory of Delhi, is almost thrice the size of the Kathmandu Valley (556 sq km). There are more cars (about two million) in Delhi than the entire population of Kathmandu district. The estimated population of the valley is 3.5 million, whereas around 15 million people live in Delhi. Around 350 aircraft land at

friend said. "No services to the public from the city. The people are the last priority for anyone." Parties shamelessly indulge in big slogans like "civilian supremacy" while the people are in fact suffering. They call *bandas* on a wedding day and create anxiety. I almost became a victim when the Maoists announced a *banda* on the day I planned to marry and withdrew it at the eleventh hour. Many brides and grooms, as the Economist later put it, had extra blessings to count when they married on Dec. 9.

The country's Maoist party had called a nationwide strike on one of the year's few auspicious nuptial dates. But fortune smiled. The Maoists postponed their blockade, and hundreds of weddings took place.

In Kathmandu, things are a bit chaotic for its size. And this is not because it does a large volume of business. We didn't plan our city, the residential areas and business zones. Construction is taking place in a way that reflects anarchy. On the road, as stated earlier, our sense of traffic is zero. Delhites are not any better, but that can't be a reason for us to be satisfied. Bikers and microbus drivers behave like the rule should follow them, not the other way around. I was almost hit by a bike at Thapathali, and it was not my fault. I was on the pedestrian lane and the biker had abandoned the road. Motorists jumping red lights is a common sight in Kathmandu roads. Not that there aren't enough traffic police on the streets (or maybe); but the problem is, I feel, such "acts" have become kind of

**S**o how's Delhi?" many of my friends asked me when I was in Kathmandu recently.

I had stayed away from Kathmandu and lived in Delhi for a year.

The question expected two different answers: Some wanted to know about city life while others were interested in the political happenings in the Indian capital vis-à-vis the Nepali situation. Some had asked out of curiosity while others for formality. The conversations inevitably moved towards comparison. Some said "Delhi ma ta ramro hola hai?" (It must be good in Delhi, no?) citing things gone disappointingly bad in Kathmandu.

Delhi isn't a great city of the world that is vastly different from Kathmandu. The only major difference is that the Indian capital is, to some extent, cared for by its government and citizens. It is well served. The government is pouring money into the city to build infrastructure. Apart from creating the "world-class" metro rail system, they are making flyovers to free the roads from traffic congestion, paving roads and constructing stadiums to host games of interna-



tional importance. A new flyover was scheduled to be inaugurated this week on the outer ring road of Delhi (Kathmandu has been only talking about the outer ring road for years). Delhi is gearing up at war pace to host the Commonwealth Games next year. Apart from the developmental activities, a general sense of order and discipline prevails in Delhi though incidents of crime, some of them horrifying, do occur.

It's not that we are too poor to build an overhead bridge or pave a few roads in Kathmandu. It was reported last year that the Finance Ministry was having a hard time finding projects to spend money on. The problem is that we don't have what it takes to spend the money properly. We don't seem to be able to purchase an airplane without creating a national controversy, let alone bigger projects that can truly change the life of a city or its people. The growth of different aspects of Kathmandu including its economy is not entirely negative. It's just

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport every day (at Tribhuvan, it's hardly a dozen or two). Size and numbers should not be the good reasons to make us feel smaller. What should really trouble us is the general state of affairs in Kathmandu for which we the citizens and the government are responsible.

Who is to blame other than us if our public transportation system is so dysfunctional? Every evening, there's a chaotic scene at the old bus park as people struggle to find and get into buses and microbuses. The same situation can be seen in Delhi during office hours, but the difference is that there's certainty in Delhi about the arrival of next bus. Delhi's three-wheeler autos are notorious for not turning on the meter, but they never charge exorbitantly like the cabs in Kathmandu do. A taxi charged me Rs. 150 to Durbar Marg from New Baneshwor, and another's meter showed Rs. 250 for the return trip via the same route.

"Welfare of the mass is nil," my

legal in the chaotic society that Kathmandu is. After all, this is a place where anyone, at any point in time with little help from a comrade or two, can easily and proudly stop traffic movement, break a few railings and smash a few windows.

I was pleasantly surprised when a friend took me to a movie for a night show (starting at 9 p.m.) at the Kumari. Such shows and other late evening activities had become casualties of the "security" situation of the country. City life had suffered a lot. "Early to bed and early to rise" could make a human being healthier, but great cities hardly sleep. They stay awake all night because their residents are busy at work or pleasure. In the darkness that Kathmandu falls asleep every late evening is reflected lack of life and opportunities in the city. The city desperately needs to wake up to reality. We, the people of the city, and the government should work together, rather than shouting slogans and blocking traffic, to make that happen.

# Better to have no deal at Copenhagen

NAOMI KLEIN

**O**n the ninth day of the Copenhagen climate summit, Africa was sacrificed. The position of the G77 negotiating bloc, including African states, had been clear: a 2C increase in average global temperatures translates into a 3-3.5C increase in Africa. That means, according to the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance, "an additional 55 million people could be at risk from hunger", and "water stress could affect between 350 and 600 million more people".

Archbishop Desmond Tutu puts it like this: "We are facing impending disaster on a monstrous scale ... A global goal of about 2C is to condemn Africa to

resource: the right to the sky. There is a limited amount of carbon that can be emitted into the atmosphere. If the rich countries fail to radically cut their emissions, then they are actively gobbling up the already insufficient share available to the south. What is at stake, Stilwell argues, is nothing less than the importance of sharing the sky".

Europe, he says, fully understands how much money will be made from carbon trading, since it has been using the mechanism for years. Developing countries, on the other hand, have never dealt with carbon restrictions, so many governments don't really grasp what they are losing. Contrasting the value of the carbon market — \$1.2 trillion a year, according to leading British econo-



Ethiopia's Prime Minister Meles Zenawi

incineration and no modern development."

And yet that is precisely what Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, proposed to do when he stopped off in Paris on his way to Copenhagen: standing with President Nicolas Sarkozy, and claiming to speak on behalf of all of Africa (he is the head of the African climate-negotiating group), he unveiled a plan that includes the dreaded 2C increase and offers developing countries just \$10bn a year to help pay for everything climate related, from sea walls to malaria treatment to fighting deforestation.

It's hard to believe this is the same man who only three months ago was saying this: "We will use our numbers to delegitimise any agreement that is not consistent with our minimal position ... If need be, we are prepared to walk out of any negotiations that threaten to be another rape of our continent ... What we are not prepared to live with is global warming above the minimum avoidable level." And this: "We will participate in the upcoming negotiations not as supplicants pleading for our case but as negotiators defending our views and interests."

We don't yet know what Zenawi got in exchange for so radically changing his tune or how, exactly, you go from a position calling for \$400bn a year in financing (the Africa group's position) to a mere \$10bn. Similarly, we do not know what happened when secretary of state Hillary Clinton met Philippine president Gloria Arroyo just weeks before the summit and all of a sudden the toughest Filipino negotiators were kicked off their delegation and the country, which had been demanding deep cuts from the rich world, suddenly fell in line.

We do know, from witnessing a series of these jarring about-faces, that the G8 powers are willing to do just about anything to get a deal in Copenhagen. The urgency does not flow from a burning desire to avert catastrophic climate change, since the negotiators know full well that the paltry emissions cuts they are proposing are a guarantee that temperatures will rise a "Dantesque" 3.9C, as Bill McKibben puts it.

Matthew Stilwell of the Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development — one of the most influential advisers in these talks — says the negotiations are not really about averting climate change but are a pitched battle over a profoundly valuable

mist Nicholas Stern — with the paltry \$10bn on the table for developing countries for the next three years, Stilwell says that rich countries are trying to exchange "beads and blankets for Manhattan". He adds: "This is a colonial moment. That's why no stone has been left unturned in getting heads of state here to sign off on this kind of deal ... Then there's no going back. You've carved up the last remaining unowned resource and allocated it to the wealthy."

For months now NGOs have got behind a message that the goal of Copenhagen is to "seal the deal". Everywhere we look in the Bella Centre, clocks are ticking. But any old deal isn't good enough, especially because the only deal on offer won't solve the climate crisis and might make things much worse, taking current inequalities between north and south and locking them in indefinitely.

Augustine Njamshi of the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance puts the 2C proposal in harsh terms: "You cannot say you are proposing a 'solution' to climate change if your solution will see millions of Africans die and if the poor not the polluters keep paying for climate change."

Stilwell says that the wrong kind of deal would "lock in the wrong approach all the way to 2020" — well past the deadline for peak emissions. But he insists that it's not too late to avert this worst-case scenario. "I'd rather wait six months or a year and get it right because the science is growing, the political will is growing, the understanding of civil society and affected communities is growing, and they'll be ready to hold their leaders to account to the right kind of a deal."

At the start of these negotiations the mere notion of delay was environmental heresy. But now many are seeing the value of slowing down and getting it right. Most significant, after describing what 2C would mean for Africa, Archbishop Tutu pronounced that it is "better to have no deal than to have a bad deal". That may well be the best we can hope for in Copenhagen. It would be a political disaster for some heads of state — but it could be one last chance to avert the real disaster for everyone else.

The Guardian

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## letters to the editor

### Federating Nepal

The Maoists' declaration of autonomous states displays their desire to create political chaos in the country ("Maoists declare two more states," Dec. 16, Page 1). What has been surprising is the silence of other political parties on the issue of federalism. I don't believe a federal setup is right for Nepal. Those who invoke the examples of Switzerland and the U.S. as successful federations clearly don't understand our unique history and geo-politics. It is also unclear whether the majority of Nepalis support federalism. Thus, the best way to settle this issue is through a referendum.

**Shivalal Panthi**  
By email

states without the agreement of other political parties who are equally accountable for the future of the state. Moreover, the Maoists have threatened to create a parallel government if the incumbent government does not pay heed to their demands. Unilateral declaration of autonomous states and creation of a parallel government is an invitation to civil war.

**Pritam Bhattachari**  
R.R. College

Times are difficult for Nepalis right now. Cabinet ministers themselves seem to be opposed to the peace process. Instead of working to take the process to its logical end, Defence Minister Bidya Bhandari wants to revise the Comprehensive Peace Accord in the middle of the peace process. The international community is rightly insisting on national unity and cooperation, but the politicians are quick to chastise them for interfering in the country's internal affairs.

As Subedi says, being the largest political force in the Constituent Assembly (CA), the Maoists share the greatest responsibility to resolve the present political crisis. But by obstructing the parliament for months, they have shut themselves out of a legitimate place to voice their concerns. Trampling on the jurisdiction of the CA by unilaterally announc-

ing autonomous states does nothing to sensitise people about federalism but instead sows seeds of ethnic and communal violence.

Despite all this, the leaders of warring political parties came together to congratulate former prime minister K.P. Bhattarai on his 88th birthday at Osho Tapoban. This shows that, if need be, our political leaders are capable of seeing eye to eye and that the differences between them aren't as entrenched as people have been led to believe.

**Ushak Karki**

Old Baneshwor

**Sujata for Airbus deal," Dec. 17, Page 1)**. Instead of utilising available opportunities, the politicians and bureaucrats are busy blaming each other over a routine aircraft deal with the Airbus company.

Shame on the so-called Public Accounts Committee (PAC) that smells rat in every Nepali airline deal. A few months ago, an NAC aircraft had to be grounded after PAC raised concerns over repairs of a wheel!

Envoy of France, the EU and Germany have reportedly expressed their concerns with Foreign Minister Sujata Koirala over the delay in the procurement of two Airbus craft. The deal, the envys have made clear, is both clean and fair. NAC needs the two aircraft urgently to salvage its image of a national carrier. Let the deal go ahead. There is not a second to waste.

**Rajendra Gurubacharya**

New Baneshwor

At a time when it is virtually impossible to read an independent analysis of the latest political developments, Abhi Subedi fills in the gap through his balanced write-up ("Hopes in Tapoban," Dec. 17, Page 7).

### Airbus deal

The major airlines are minting money in our country while our national flag carrier continues to lose copious amounts ("Envoy press

I have grown tired of the violent ways of the Maoists. They have declared autonomous



Salemen show gold jewellery to customers at a jewellery shop in Mumbai. India's December gold imports are likely to rise to 15-20 tonnes.

REUTERS

# business

## NRB checks won't slowdown realty business: Developers

### ■ POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Land and housing developers have said that central bank's restrictive measure on realty loan would not affect the ongoing housing and real estate projects but curtail new mega projects.

In view of commercial banks increasing loan exposure on real estate and housing sector, Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) on Thursday had issued a directive to the banks and financial institutions to limit their lending in these sectors to 25 percent.

"Even after NRB imposed limit to 25 percent on realty loan, there will be around Rs. 400 billion available for investment in this sector," said Ichcha Raj Tamang, President of Nepal Land and Housing Developers' Association (NLHDA).

"For genuine developers, there is nothing to about as only Rs. 100-150 billion have been invested so far." But the new directive would discourage investment in the mega projects like satellite cities, maintained developers. The association has planned to establish 10 satellite modern cities - two each in five development reasons.

NLHDA General Secretary Min Man Shrestha said that the



Bijay Kumar Gachhadar (centre), deputy prime minister attends the inaugural session of the 9th annual general assembly of Nepal Land and Housing Developers' Association in Kathmandu on Saturday.

POST PHOTO: KAUSHAL ADHIKARI

new directives should have come into practice only after consulting the concerned stakeholders. "The directive will mainly affect those small and short-term investors who were putting their money for quick profit," said Shrestha.

Real estate developers say central bank's initiative to curb the loan exposure will not slowdown the realty sector. "Our sector won't face any slowdown as long as we keep on receiving the remittance," said Shrestha.

"This initiative by the NRB to divert the investment is but good," said Om Raj Bhandari, another developer, questioning, "Without any other avenues for investment, what will we do with remittances?" Developers also expressed fear that the current NRB restriction could rather prompt capital flight.

"We are ready to put the money in hydropower but the government should come up with some policy to guarantee

our investment," said Tamang. He said that NLHDA will soon make a request to the government to make the directives investor-friendly soon.

Tamang, however, ruled out the possibility of land and housing price going down. He but accepted constructions of new projects will slow down. According to NLHDA, despite the annual demand of 43,000 units of house and apartments, it is not even able to construct 10,000 units per year.

ital market down. Except trading and insurance, all the major sub-indices plummeted. The hydropower sector lost the most shedding 22.53 points followed by the banking sector that saw a fall of 21.02 points.

Stock analysts say book closure of many companies affected the secondary market.

With liquidity crunch still continuing and book closures of few companies on the card second-

### WEEKLY REVIEW

#### TOP FIVE IN TURNOVER

Company	Turnover (in million)
Nepal Bangladesh Bank	75.15
Prime Commercial Bank	40.79
Standard Chartered Bank	36.47
Sunrise Bank	26.18
Alpic Everest Finance	21.84

Date	Nepse Index (in points)
13/12/2009	553.40
14/12/2009	554.54
15/12/2009	548.61
16/12/2009	542.10
17/12/2009	539.21

SECTOR/S THAT WENT DOWN	Nepse Index (in points)
Commercial Banks	21.02
Development Banks	8.52
Hydropower	22.53
Finance	0.12
Others	10.57
Hotels	3.26

three trading days.

However, turnover of the secondary market shot up by 14.56 percent last week. NEPSE saw a turnover of Rs. 369.55 million against Rs. 322.57 million in the previous week.

Weak performance of banking sector, major component at the NEPSE, dragged the cap-

ary market is expected to slide further down.

In terms of turnover and number of shares traded, Nepal Bangladesh Bank topped the chart whereas Arun Valley Hydropower Company stayed atop in terms of number of transaction.

Likewise, 1,409,894 rights shares of Fewa Finance were also listed.



A vendor arranges flowers at her stall for sale at the Pak Klong Market in downtown Bangkok, Thailand.

AP/RSS

## Birat Expo to kick off on Jan. 19

### POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

In a bid to promote agro and industrial products and boost tourism industry in the eastern region, Industrial Organisation Morang in association with the local and private



Expo is to provide market access to the local products by expanding network among business entrepreneurs and local producers," said Bhim Ghimire, coordinator of the Expo. Ghimire said that Indian, Chinese and Bangladeshi industrial

## India to grow by 8 percent but food inflation a worry: Govt

### AFP

NEW DELHI, DEC. 19

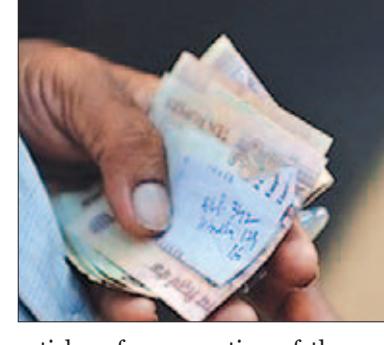
India's economy has turned around and could grow by over 7.75 percent this year, the government said Friday, but warned surging food inflation was hitting the "common man" and must be tackled fast.

"The clouds of uncertainty (about economic growth) have lifted," the finance ministry said in a review of Asia's third-largest economy submitted to parliament that surveyed the first half of the fiscal year.

"The macro-economic situation confirms signs of a turnaround," said the report which underscored India's new role in helping spearhead global economic recovery.

But the report added the Congress-led government, re-elected in May on a pro-poor agenda, was worried about rising food prices -- traditionally a potent political trigger -- and said the issue must be addressed on an "urgent basis".

"The rise in the prices of primary



articles of consumption of the common man observed in recent times is indeed a cause of concern," said the report presented by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee.

Food inflation hit a more than decade high of 19.95 percent for the week ended December 5 from a year earlier on the back of the weakest monsoon in nearly four decades that hit crop output, data showed this week.

Prices of staples like potatoes have surged 136 percent from a year earlier while pulses cost 40 percent more.

On Wednesday, opposition law-

makers forced parliament to adjourn as they staged a raucous protest against the food price rises.

The food price rise has pushed overall inflation to a 10-month high of 4.78 percent in November, prompting predictions by analysts that the central bank may soon raise interest rates to check inflation.

However, the finance ministry report said the increase in food prices could be tackled by boosting supplies.

It sought to play down any need to raise rates quickly from record lows and highlighted a need to ensure economic recovery is firmly entrenched.

The timing of the withdrawal of government stimulus measures "will depend on the strength of the recovery and its sustainability," the report said.

The government has already "taken a number of important measures to improve the domestic availability of essential commodities," said Mukherjee, who has suggested the government may also increase food imports to boost supplies.

## Google fined \$14,300 a day in France

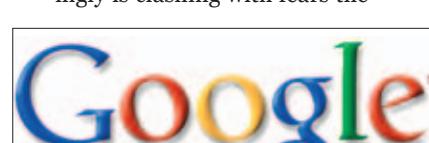
### AP

PARIS, DEC. 19

A Paris court ruled Friday that Google Inc.'s expansion into digital books breaks France's copyright laws, and a judge slapped the Internet search leader with a euro10,000-a-day fine until it stops showing literary snippets.

Besides being fined the equivalent of \$14,300 for each day in violation, Google was ordered to pay euro300,000 (\$430,000) in damages and interest to French publisher La Martiniere, which brought the case on behalf of a group of French publishers.

Google attorney Alexandra Neri said the company would appeal. The decision erects another legal barrier that may prevent Google from realizing its 5-year-old goal of scanning all the world's books into a digital



library accessible to anyone with an Internet connection.

A U.S. legal settlement that would give Google the digital rights to millions of books is in limbo because U.S. regulators have warned a federal judge in New York that the arrangement probably would thwart competition in the budding electronic book market and compromise copyrights, as well.

The top U.S. copyright official and the governments in Germany and France also have raised objections about that settlement overstepping its bounds.

Google is trying to address the critics with a revised settlement that is still under court review.

The French case is relatively small in comparison. It didn't even seem to faze investors as Google shares gained \$3.86 to

\$597.80 in Friday afternoon trading. Still, the ruling served as a reminder that Google's ambitious push into other markets beyond Internet search increasingly is clashing with fears the

are not the kings of the world and they can't do whatever they want," said Serge Eyrrolles, president of France's Syndicat National de l'Edition. He said Google had scanned 100,000 French books into its database, 80 percent of which were under copyright.

Eyrrolles said French publishers would still like to work with Google to digitize their books, "but only if they stop playing around with us and start respecting intellectual property rights."

Philippe Colombe, the head of Google's book-scanning project in France, said the company disagrees with the court's ruling.

"French readers now face the threat of losing access to a significant body of knowledge and falling behind the rest of Internet users," Colombe said in a conference call with reporters. "We believe that displaying a limited number of short extracts from books complies with copyright legislation both in France and the U.S. - and improves access to books." Colombe declined to answer questions about whether Google would remove the books from its database or pay the fine.

"We are going to study the judgment carefully over the coming days," he said.

The judgment will have little or no effect on Internet users outside of France. And French books that are in Google's database with publishers' consent will remain searchable, even in France. Colombe could not say how many French books Google has scanned overall, or how many French publishers allowing Google to show its works.

## Porsche sales crash

### AFP

BERLIN, DEC. 19

German luxury sports car maker Porsche saw unit sales sink 40 percent on the year in its first fiscal quarter and turnover plummet 30 percent but on Friday forecast a better year ahead.

The company said in a statement it sold 11,385 cars from August to October in a severely weakened high-end auto market, with its Cayenne model, minus 57 percent,

and iconic 911 models, down 64 percent, performing worst.

It saw a 51-percent drop in sales in the United States and a 34-percent decline in Germany. Total first-quarter turnover crashed 30 percent to 1.1 billion euros (1.6 billion dollars).

Porsche, which German giant Volkswagen is buying, was nonetheless bullish for the rest of the year because November sales had picked up sharply.

## NEWSLINE

## BOK CSR for HIV people

KATHMANDU: Bank of Kathmandu as a part of its corporate social responsibility is planning to support income generation activities of people living with HIV in Dhangadhi in Kailali through Dev Training and Management Service Centre (DTMSC) based in Dhangadhi. In order to raise fund for the cause the bank organised a premier show of the movie Avatar in Jai Nepal on Friday.

## Yasuda launches phone

KATHMANDU: Yasuda mobile has launched a dual sim phone called GC188. The phone has a 1.3 megapixel built-in camera, and MP3/ MP4/ FM radio along with preloaded games. GC188 has also been fitted with a Qualcomm™ chipset of the United States. The phone is priced at Rs. 9990 and is covered with a one-year warranty on hardware and software and six-month warranty on the battery.

## Royal to issue bonus

KATHMANDU: Royal Merchant Banking and Finance concluded its 8th Annual General Meeting in the Capital on Friday. The AGM of the company has approved to distribute bonus share of 10 percent and a 0.5263 percent of cash dividend for its earning of the fiscal year 2065/66. During the meet the finance informed that it has earned a net profit of Rs 21.88 million in 2065/ 066.

## NLIC share allotment

KATHMANDU: NLIC Capital Markets, issue manager of the initial public offering of Nepal Life Insurance Company Ltd. has allotted 1.08 million units of shares. Altogether 117,249 people applied but 29,708 including 108 staffs have received the shares.



A worker dries salted fish at a fishing village in Jakarta, Indonesia on Friday.

# Housing, real estate loan interests to go up

## POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, DEC. 19

Development banks and finance companies have started facing the heat with commercial banks raising interest to more than 10 percent to cope with liquidity crunch. These financial institutions will have to offer higher interest rates than the banks to attract deposits. They are also facing pressure to reduce their loan exposure in real estate.

The interest rate of development banks and finance companies, categorised by the Banks and Financial Institution Act as 'B' and 'C' level financial institutions, are usually 2-4 percent higher than that of the banks.

"Liquidity crunch and banks' move to increase the interest rates have compelled us also to hike the interest rate," said Jhapat Bohara, chairman of Association of Nepali Development Banks.

Now onwards, the development banks will have to raise interests on

## DECIPHERING THE DIRECTIVE

- Housing loan interest from dev. banks and finance compaines to hit 16%
- Interest on real estate to reach 18%
- Dev. banks and finance compaines to cut loan exposure on real estate

yearly deposits to 12-13 percent. "Development banks' have to hike the interest in deposits due to liquidity crunch," said Bohara. "In order to get deposits, we've to offer at least 2 percent more interests to the depositors than what the commercial banks offer."

Though the common people may be getting higher interests in deposits, they have to pay more interest on loans. According to Bohara, the spread rate gap of the development banks is between 3 and 5.5 percent. It means, the development borrowers should pay a minimum 16 percent interest on the loan.

This could further mean that the real estate interests

going as high as 18 percent, according to Ram Shanta Shrestha, chairman at Nepal Finance Companies Association. "Interest on housing loans may reach 16 percent, though." Banks treat commercial loans for house and land as real estate loan and individual loan for residential building as housing loan.

The development banks and financial companies are also in pressure to reduce their loan exposure to real estate sector. The development banks' average loan exposure in real estate is around 40 percent.

According to Bohara, exposure of development banks' of urban area is higher than that of the rural area. "Pressure is on those whose exposure is high," said Bohara. The directive issued by the central bank on Thursday are applicable to development banks and finance companies also. The loan exposure of finance companies in the real estate is estimated to be around 45 percent.

## Farmers, sugar mills strike deal

## POST REPORT

SARLAHI, DEC. 19

Two sugar mills in Nijgadh and Sarlahi have agreed to purchase sugarcane from local farmers.

Indu Shankar Sugar Mill at Sarlahi and Mamkaur Sugar Mill at Nijgadh have agreed to hike the sugarcane price as demanded by the Nepal Sugarcane Peasants Association (NSPA). As per the revised price, the farmers will get Rs. 401 for a quintal of sugarcane.

After five-month long dispute between sugarcane farmers and sugar mills, the two companies agreed to address the farmers' demand. The two mills had held separate meetings on Thursday and Friday.

Indu Shankar Sugar Mill and sugarcane producers of Sarlahi reached an agreement on Friday

while, Mamkaur Sugar Mill had already reached a decision on Thursday. With this new price agreement, farmers will get Rs. 171 more on each quintal compared to old rate.

The NSPA had been demanding Rs. 401 per quintal of sugarcane in line with the price hike in India.

However, the sugar producers were refusing to give more than Rs. 344 per quintal.

Sugar producer's representatives left the meeting after NSPA delegates stuck to the price of Rs. 401 per quintal on Dec. 7.

"The increased amount will be included as extra facilities in the existing price of Rs. 230," Dev Narayan Mahato, president of Sugarcane Producers, Peasants Society, who was in the Indu

Shankar Sugar Mill meeting informed. The sugar producers had agreed to increase the price to Rs. 256 per quintal at the first meeting held on Sept. 6, and then raised it to Rs. 288 at the meeting of Nov. 23 in Hetauda.

The price row intensified after Indian sugar mills in Bihar hiked the rate to IRs. 250 (Rs 400) per quintal. Since then, the NSPA has been demanding Rs. 401 per quintal. "As we have already reached an agreement, we have purchased over 1,000 quintals sugarcane just in three days," said Dipesh Agrawal, director of Mamkaur Sugar Mills.

According to him, his mill has a target to purchase 1.2 million quintals of sugarcane this season.

There are 500,000 sugarcane farmers in the country.

## World air travel falls record 3.1pc

## AFP

MONTREAL, DEC. 19

World airline passenger traffic fell 3.1 percent in 2009, the biggest drop in aviation industry history, fueled by the global financial downturn, the International Civil Aviation Organization said.

Preliminary figures for airline travel this year showed that international traffic declined by about 3.9 percent and domestic traffic by 1.8 percent, despite sharp growth in some regions.

Total passenger traffic -- both domestic and international -- fell in all regions except the Middle East, which posted 10 percent growth. All other regions recorded negative growth, with Africa hardest hit at minus 9.6 percent overall, the ICAO said. The 3.1 percent drop in passenger traffic this year compared to 2008

was the largest on record for the industry and "reflects the one percent drop in the world gross domestic product for the year," the organization said in a statement.

"The double-digit domestic passenger traffic growth in the emerging markets of Asia and Latin America, and the relative strong performance of low cost carriers in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific helped curtail the decline in total traffic." The ICAO predicted a moderate recovery of 3.3 percent growth for the airline industry next year, in line with improving economic conditions around the world.

For 2011, it forecast momentum to build to return to the traditional 5.5 percent yearly growth rate in airline passenger traffic.

## Honda plant in China

TOKYO: Japan's Honda Motor plans to build its fifth car plant in China to cope with mounting competition in the fast-growing auto market.

The new plant, with an annual capacity of 120,000 units, will boost Honda's production in China by 20 percent to 730,000 units a year, the business daily Nikkei said. It will be built next to the existing factory of Honda's Chinese joint venture Dongfeng Honda Automobile in the central city of Wuhan and is due to be operational by 2011, the report said. (AFP)



Construction cranes work over the rising steel frame of 4 World Trade Center in New York. The tower is designed by architect Fumihiko Maki and is being developed by Silverstein Properties.

AP/RSS

## Tag to drop Woods from campaigns

## AP

PORLAND, DEC. 19

Swiss watch maker Tag Heuer said Friday that it will "downscale" its use of golfer Tiger Woods' image in its advertising campaigns for the foreseeable future.

The company said it will continue its relationship with Woods but is modifying its marketing programs in certain regions out of respect for his request for privacy.

How long the change last will depend on Woods' decision about returning to professional golf, the company said. Woods has been a pitchman for Tag Heuer since 2002.

The company said it will continue to support Woods' charitable foundation, which is based in Irvine, Calif.



After initially standing by Woods, the company moderated its support Monday by saying it would assess its relationship with the world's highest-earning athlete.

The Swiss company, a unit of luxury goods empire LVMH Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton, is at least the third sponsor to back away from Woods since his admission of

extramarital "transgressions." Consulting firm Accenture dropped the athlete Sunday, saying he was "no longer the right representative" of the company's values.

Gillette, a unit of the Procter & Gamble Co., said over the weekend that it won't air ads for its razors that include Woods or include him in public appearances. AT&T said it is evaluating its relationship with the golf superstar. Woods has taken an indefinite leave from golf to work on repairing his marriage after numerous allegations of infidelities that surfaced following a November car crash near his Florida home.

Tag Heuer did not specify in which markets it was curtailing use of Woods' image.

## GM to shut down Saab, fails Spyker talks

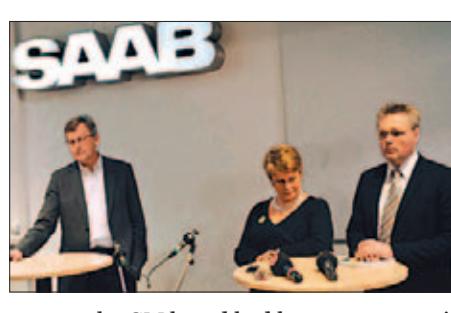
## REUTERS

DDETROIT/STOCKHOLM, DEC. 19

General Motors Co said it would begin shutting down its money-losing Saab brand after last-ditch talks to sell it to a small Dutch sports car builder collapsed on Friday.

The move by GM to abandon the 60-year-old Swedish auto brand would eliminate 3,400 jobs in Sweden and drop 1,100 Saab dealers who have watched with increasing concern as 10 months of talks to sell the brand sputtered out in recent weeks.

Swedish government officials and representatives of GM had been negotiating as late as Friday morning in Stockholm before the automaker concluded that it was not going to be able to conclude a deal to sell Saab to



the GM board had been a long shot he compared to trying "to make a shoestring catch." GM said it would shut down Saab operations, including its production hub in Trollhattan, Sweden, starting in early January. It said Saab would satisfy debts, including supplier payments and honor warranties.

John Smith, the GM executive who steered Saab negotiations, said trying to complete a deal with Spyker against the month-end deadline for a deal set by

about \$340 million in 2008 and had projected a similar loss this year.

Autos analyst Erich Merkle of Autoconomy said GM was spread too thin before it decided this year to retain only the Chevrolet, Buick, GMC and Cadillac brands. It couldn't give Saab the sustenance it needed to compete, he said. "Saab has been starved by GM which had so many mouths to feed that Saab was like the smallest puppy pushed out of the litter," Merkle said.

Efforts by GM to cut costs by building more recent Saab models on GM platforms diluted the brand's cachet and an effort to sell Saab as "Born from Jets" fizzled.

"GM is better off just clearing the decks and taking the pain now," said George Magliano, an auto analyst at IHS Global Insight. "This was inevitable." GM bought 50 percent of the Saab car operations in 1990 for about \$700 million. It paid \$125 million and assumed debt for the remainder of the unit in 2000.

GM, which took \$50 billion in U.S. government aid and emerged from a bankruptcy brokered by the Obama administration in July, had been counting on the sale of its laggard brands including Saab as a key element of its restructuring. Under new Chief Executive Ed Whitacre, who took charge earlier this month, GM had set a deadline of end-December to find a buyer for Saab.

## HOROSCOPE

### TODAY

Aries ☽☽☽ (March 21- April 19)

Your leadership style is working to your advantage today — so make the most of it! You may find that people are looking for a little prodding, but only you can say how it has to get done.

Taurus ☽☽ (April 20 - May 20)

You are feeling a bit conservative today, though not so much that you feel compelled to resist any change that comes your way. It may be necessary to say no to someone whose being a big jerk, though!

Gemini ☽☽ (May 21 - June 21)

You may change your mind on a dime, but that doesn't mean you don't believe in anything. Now is a good time for you to show that changing the details can strengthen what matters most.

Cancer ☽☽☽ (June 22 - July 22)

Your ability to handle sums of money and figure out what to do with them is stronger than ever. Now is a great time to make new deals, take out loans or otherwise make your money work for you.

Leo ☽☽ (July 23 - Aug 22)

You've got to use every brain cell to come up with the answer or answers to today's big problem — but once you do, you're sure to be hailed as a hero! It's a really great time for brainstorming.

Virgo ☽☽ (Aug 23 - Sept 22)

Inspiration strikes and you feel the urge to rearrange your closet or find some new way to manage your stuff it's a really good time to get your people to follow your lead, as they are open to the new.

Libra ☽☽ (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

You're socially adept even on your worst days, but today you are extra-great with people. See if you can get your friends to throw an impromptu party, or just get out there and meet new folks.

Scorpio ☽☽☽ (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

You're inspired to do something dramatic around the house — changing furniture, redecorating or even moving. This could be tough if you live with friends or family, of course, so be polite!

Sagittarius ☽☽ (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

You need to use your great social energy today — it's pretty potent, and you are sure to understand folks better, even those who might usually be opaque. Get to know someone new.

Capricorn ☽☽ (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Now is the best time to think about change — though not necessarily for putting it into effect! Make sure that you're considering all of the possibilities of what is likely to happen.

Aquarius ☽☽☽ (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

People are paying you the right kind and quality of attention today — so make the most of it! You can affect them deeply and get them to see that things can be a lot better if they put your ideas into action.

Pisces ☽☽ (Feb 19 - March 20)

It's not so easy to remain focused on work today, but that doesn't mean you should give up or walk away. Just try to select tasks that you can do while chatting or daydreaming, if possible.

## Laugh out LOUD 😊

Three guys, a Canadian, Osama bin Laden, and Uncle Sam are out walking together one day. They came across a lantern and a Genie popped out of it. "I will give each of you one wish. That's three wishes total," said the Genie.

The Canadian says, "I am a farmer, my dad was a farmer, and my son will also farm. I want the land to be forever fertile in Canada." With a blink of the Genie's eye, 'POOF', the land in Canada was forever made fertile for farming.

Osama bin Laden was amazed, so he said, "I want a wall around Afghanistan, so that no infidels, Jews or Americans can come into our precious state." Again, with a blink of the Genie's eye, 'POOF', there was a huge wall around Afghanistan.

Now, Uncle Sam, being a former civil engineer, said "I'm very curious. Please tell me more about this wall." The Genie explained, "Well, it's about 15,000 feet high, 500 feet thick, and completely surrounds the country. Nothing can get in or out—virtually impenetrable."

Shoot your LOL at: lol@kantipur.com.np

## Su Doku No. 1522x

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

Solution in the next issue

Difficulty: Hard

Fill the given grid with the numbers 1 to 9, so that every column, row, and 3x3 box indicated by the slightly heavier lines has the numbers 1 to 9. You can't change the digits already provided in the grid. You have to work around them.

Every puzzle has just one correct solution. There's no math involved. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

# Thank you Nepal

RENSKE N. TROMP



taught me that there is no person in the world who can be totally alone. The few days I had to spend in the hospital, the people I thought I didn't need came to see me every day. It gave me a lesson in humbleness.

Now my life is so different from the one four years ago. I even brought my partner on this trip whilst I thought I would travel alone forever. Nepal made me strong and independent, but things changed when I met a man in Holland who shared so many of the same passions; like travelling. Now Nepal is teaching us that we not only travel together well, but also live together well. We have now been living in Kathmandu for four months and I feel so lucky to be here, and share this with him.

We entered Nepal by car. We drove all the way from Holland to come here and meet again with this beautiful land, and the beautiful people like yourself. And if you doubt our insight, we travelled through eight different countries before arriving in Nepal. We saw a lot of Europe: Belgium, France, Italy, Greece and Turkey. And then Iran, Pakistan, India and finally, Nepal.

Just to cross the border at

Mahendranagar was a relief: to be surrounded by the beautiful lush green fields and the quietness again. Our first stop was Bardia National Park. The next morning we had a great hike through the park. I was not so brave, but terrified of the idea of meeting a tiger or a rhino. The owner of the cottages where we stayed told us how business was so hard for him. We carried a Lonely Planet from 1993 and the prices hadn't changed a bit. The man who guided our hike told us how people had just got 'lost' in his village. A little less than 200 people never returned to their families. I made a picture of him whilst he wasn't looking and he looked so deeply grieved and was far away in his thoughts. The sound of the camera startled him and on the next picture he made a 'happy' pose but I could tell it was just his outer self smiling.

Today after the extension the three of us went out for a chai. We discussed the banda and the killings in the West of Nepal. And that we just don't understand, not even after reading all the political books we can find on this subject. In the area where I live not everyone says 'Namaste' when I greet them, but just give me an angry look. I sometimes feel ashamed for coming from Europe. To look rich compared to other people. Sometimes, during bandas, I'm even scared to be out on the streets. But what about you? Do you dream of a better life?

I hope you can make it here. I hope you can make the choice of not being scared, and to be braver than I am. I hope you have the knowledge that you can make the difference. Thank you Nepal, thanks for the beautiful and friendly people, the spirituality that you bring and the spark to make a difference in the lives of people. I pray, burn incense and light all the candles in the world, for wisdom, peace and strength.

## NEW DIRECTIONS: Read the Following Carefully!

- 01: Stories should be original, and must be balanced by i) Plot (beginning), ii) Narrative (middle), iii) Dialogues, and iv) Conclusion (proper ending)
- 02: Entries must carry at least 1,050 and not more than 1,150 words
- 03: Neat typing, correct spellings (UK English) and proper cases are essential in the texts
- 04: Submissions must include the writer's full name, present status and complete postal/email addresses
- 05: Entries must be sent to [fictionpark@kantipur.com.np](mailto:fictionpark@kantipur.com.np)



## Asha sings for Sri Lankan Prez

A voice as melodious as that of Asha Bhosle can leave anybody mesmerised and the latest name to add to the never-ending list of fans of legendary Indian singer is Mahinda Rajapksa, the President of Sri Lanka.

Bhosle, who was here on a three-day visit to record a song for Sri Lankan musician duo of Bathiya Jayakody and Santhush Weeraman, enthralled Rajapksa, his wife Shiranthi and other guests at the President's official residence 'Temple Trees' as she sang her popular number *Chura liya hai tumne jo dil ko* from the 1973 hit *Yaadon ki Baraat*.

The 73-year-old singer, who has rendered her voice to over 11,000 songs, was a special invitee at the President's residence yesterday.

Bhosle, who concluded her visit here last night, recorded for Jayakody and Weeraman, who have collaborated with her for a striking musical masterpiece titled *Dedunna Sedi*. She also recorded a Hindi version of their recent song *Pethu Pem Pathum*. The Sri Lankan musician duo had recently also come out with a song with another Indian singer Hariharan.

During a press conference yesterday, Bhosle said she had a good stay in Sri Lanka and was touched by the love and respect showered on her by the people of this country. (Agencies)



## BORN TODAY

- Pakistani cricketer, **Mohammed Asif** is 27
- English footballer, **Ashley Cole** is 29
- American singer, **David Cook** is 27
- Former President of South Korea, **Kim Young-sam** is 82



American singer  
**JoJo** is 19

## PARKER WOULD ADOPT

Sarah Jessica Parker wants more children. *The Sex and the City* actress — who has a son James, seven, and five-month-old twin daughters Loretta and Tabitha with her actor husband Matthew Broderick — hopes her family will get even bigger and hasn't ruled out adopting.

Sarah — whose twins were carried and delivered via surrogate mother Michelle Ross — said, "It doesn't mean it's over. It doesn't mean we won't continue to try to have a bigger family... that we won't continue to pursue all sorts of ways of doing it. Adoption, who knows?"

Although the 44-year-old

actress loves "being a housewife" and an actress, she needs help to cope with both roles.

She told the *USA Today* newspaper, "I hear a lot of actresses pretend they don't have help, and that can't be true. It's really unfair to working women in America who read celebrity news and think, 'Why can't I lose weight when I've had a baby?' Well, everyone you're reading about has money for a trainer and a chef. That doesn't make it realistic. I love being a housewife. I am dead serious."

There is enormous satisfaction when you're a mother and you've gotten through a day." (Agencies)



**SPORTSBAR****Goalies selected for SAG**

KATHMANDU: Bikash Malla, Ritesh Thapa, Kiran Chemjong, Sagar Thapa, Rohit Chand, Biraj Maharjan, Rabin Shrestha, Santosh Gurung made it to the second round selection for the 11th SAG. All Nepal Football Association announced the name of 30 players who made it to the second round on Saturday. Suman Subedi, Nur Raj Kafle, Deepak Bhusal, Bikash Singh, Pradeep Maharjan, Nirajan Khadka, Bholi Silwal, Ranjeet Shrestha, Jeevan Sinkeman, Deepen Shrestha, Laxman Ruchal, Raju Tamang and Yogesh Shrestha also made it to the second round. The others in the list are Pukar Gahatraj, Shiva Shrestha, Jumanu Rai, Santosh Shaukhala, Chetan Ghimire, Bharat Khawas, Nirajan Malla, Anil Gurung and Sandeep Rai.

**Schumacher comeback**

ROME: Michael Schumacher is very likely to make a Formula One comeback with Mercedes next year, according to Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo. The Ferrari website quoted Montezemolo as saying it was more the seven times world champion's "twin brother" who was contemplating a return rather than the man who won five titles in a row for the Italian team.

**Volleyball tourney**

KATHMANDU: With back to back wins defending champion Gyanubaba Academy of Pokhara is at the top of the Fourth Dhorpatan Bluesky Cup Women's Double League Volleyball on Friday. Gyanubaba defeated Deepjoyti 25-12, 25-5, 25-6 and New Diamond 25-12, 25-16, 25-14. In the other matches of the day, Nepal Police downed New Diamond 25-13, 25-18, 25-14, and Angel Heart beat PLA 25-17, 25-23, 25-23.

**Father Moran football**

KATHMANDU: Nepal Armed Police Force (NAPF) retained Father Moran Memorial Inter-school Football title on Saturday. NAPF thrashed Little Angels 4-0 in the final. Sushant Karki struck a brace while Pradeep G.C. and Dinesh Shahi scored a goal each for NAPF. Dolphin School came third in the tournament organised by St. Xavier's, Jawalakhel. Samir Silwal's goal helped Dolphin beat Rezina Amoris 1-0.

**NSC official departs**

KATHMANDU: Member secretary of National Sports Council Hari Babu Chaudhary left for Dhaka on Saturday. Chaudhary will take part in the 'Save the Mission' meeting as a part of preparation for the 11th SAG, Dhaka.

# REDS' WOES CONTINUES

## Impressive Portsmouth upset 10-man Liverpool 2-0

**■ AGENCIES**

LONDON, DEC. 19

Liverpool's season of woe continued as they were beaten by the Premier League's bottom club Portsmouth.

Nadir Belhadj screamed in a shot from an impossible angle to Pompey ahead after poor defending from the Reds.

The visitors had Javier Mascherano red carded for a nasty tackle on Tal Ben-Haim before an unmarked Daniel Agger headed high for Liverpool.

Tireless striker Frederic Piquionne's volley from a tight angle sealed the home side's victory. Pompey boss Avram Grant had engineered a Champions League semi-final win over Liverpool in April 2008 during his time as Chelsea boss.

He was at it again for a Pompey side battling survival as his earned a victory over a beleaguered Liverpool outfit, who left manager Rafael Benitez's guarantee his side would finish in the top four on shaky ground.

Grant sent his team out with the task of frustrating and pressuring Liverpool and his Pompey players, as has been the case for them recently, were not lacking in effort and application right from the start.

Liverpool had plenty of possession but struggled to find a way through Pompey's disciplined 4-5-1 formation.

Reds forward Dirk Kuyt did get an early sight of goal after Steven Gerrard had nodded on a Fernando Torres cross only for his first touch to escape him along with the chance to get in a close range shot. Torres sent a shot over as he tried to bend one into the top corner and, although the home side were passionately and purposefully keeping Liverpool at bay, they were lacking a threat in attack.

However, that all changed as a combination of a well-worked move, unconvincing defending from the Reds and a stunning strike put them ahead.

Liverpool's defence failed to deal with a low Hassan Yebda cross and Kevin Prince-Boateng powered in a shot which keeper Pepe Reina did well to block.



Portsmouth's Nadir Belhadj celebrates scoring against Liverpool during their English Premier League soccer match at Fratton Park in Portsmouth.

AP/RSS

**PREMIER LEAGUE**

The visitors should have equalised when Agger had a free header from a Gerrard free-kick only to put his effort high from six yards.

As if Liverpool did not have enough problems, the scale of their task increased when Pepe Reina did well to block.

Mascherano was red carded.

The Argentine went in hard and with his studs showing in a tackle on Ben-Haim and, despite needing treatment as he himself came off worst, Mascherano was dismissed.

Benitez has regularly left onlookers puzzled with his team selection and the inclusion of Andreas Dossena on the left of midfield ahead of Yossi Benayoun will be another to come under the spotlight.

Benayoun eventually came on for the Italian as the Merseysiders tried to salvage something from a game Alberto Aquilani missed

with a calf problem.

Instead, Pompey looked the more likely to score, with Jamie Carragher - making his 600th Liverpool appearance - having to produce a lunging tackle to block a Piquionne strike.

When Liverpool belatedly threatened, Pompey keeper Aasmir Begovic pulled off a great save to claw away a Gerrard shot which took two deflections.

Boateng laid a cross on a plate for Piquionne to nod in and secure victory and, even though he horribly mistimed his effort, the Frenchman atoned when he drove in a late volley.

# Amla, de Villiers fire for Proteas

**REUTERS**

CENTURION, DEC. 19

England were 11 for one wicket in their second innings, requiring a further 353 runs for victory, at the close on the fourth day of the first test against South Africa at Centurion on Saturday.

Top-class century by Hashim Amla and AB de Villiers lifted South Africa to 301 for six at the close on the fourth day of the first Test against England on Saturday.

Amla and De Villiers took control on a

**SUMMARY**

**STUMPS, DAY FOUR**  
England 356 (Swann 81, Harris 5-123) and 111 (Cook 4\*, Anderson 6\*) need another 353 runs to beat South Africa 418 (Kallis 120, Swann 5-110) and 301 (dec) (Amla 100).

pitch with disconcertingly inconsistent bounce to added 119 for the fifth wicket in 137 minutes before tea, frustrating England who claimed three wickets in the morning session. Amla was unbeaten on 76 at tea but De Villiers fell

for a fluent 64 just before the break when Ian Bell reacted quickly at short extra cover to catch a powerful drive off Stuart Broad.

South Africa had resumed on another hot day on nine for one and swing bowler James Anderson quickly removed obdurate night-watchman Paul Harris for 11. Skipper Graeme Smith scored 12 before he was bowled by Graham Onions and first-innings centurion Jacques Kallis also struggled in the testing conditions before hooking Broad to Alastair Cook at deep square-leg.

# Oz forced to wait for victory

**SUMMARY****STUMPS, DAY FOUR**

West Indies 312 (9 for 308 (Deonarine 82, Nash 65) need 51 runs to beat Australia 520 (7 dec & 150 (Bravo 4-42)

**AGENCIES**

PERTH, DEC. 19

AP/RSS