



THE KATHMANDU POST

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

Nepal's largest selling English daily

Printed simultaneously in Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Bharatpur and Nepalgunj

Vol XXXI No. 130 | 8 pages | Rs.5
Wednesday, June 28, 2023 | 13-03-2080

36.5° C 10.0° C
Dhangadi Jomsom

TODAY

NATIONAL

There are some 200 displaced people living in shelters in Ghyangual of Helambu. Those who could afford have moved out but people who have nowhere else to go are left behind amid the risk of more disasters. **Pg 2**

Jack Ma, founder of tech conglomerate Alibaba and once the richest business leader in China, arrived in Kathmandu on Tuesday afternoon. He landed at the Kathmandu airport on a special flight at 2:30 pm. **Pg 3**

OPINION

Community forestry management policies should prioritise harvesting mature trees and using timber for various wood products rather than allowing trees to decay, says *Bijesh Mishra*. **Pg 4**



A weaver bird hovers close to its nest at Balkhu in Kathmandu on Monday.

POST PHOTO: HEMANTA SHRESTHA

Top court orders relief for conflict-era victims of torture and sexual violence

17 years since Peace Accord, torture victims lack adequate means to seek justice and hold perpetrators to account.

BINOD GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The Supreme Court has directed the government to include the victims of torture and sexual violence from the Maoist insurgency in its interim relief programme. Passing verdicts in two different writ petitions that challenged the 'discriminatory provisions' in the working procedure for relief distribution, a division of justices Sapana Pradhan Malla and Hari Prasad Phuyal on Monday concluded that the victims of the insurgency-era torture and sexual violence should not be excluded from the relief package.

Although successive governments have on different occasions brought various relief packages for conflict victims, those who faced torture and sexual violence at the hands of the state security forces or the Maoist insurgents have not received any relief from the government. Advocate Kashiram Dhungana, who represented the petitioners, said the court has done some justice to the victims who had so far been excluded from the government's relief programmes.

"The Supreme Court has issued a ruling as demanded by the petitioners. The government will have to provide relief to victims of torture and sexual violence although the details of the verdict will be known only after the court releases the full text of the verdict," he told the Post. It generally takes a few days to months for the court to issue full texts.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in its report says at least 2,500 inci-

dents of torture happened during the insurgency. Advocacy Forum, a non-governmental organisation working on human rights advocacy, recorded 1,251 cases of torture between 2001 and 2006 and most of them were committed by state actors.

In its annual report published on the occasion of the International Day against Torture on Monday, the forum said electric shocks, rape and various other forms of sexual abuse, burying people alive, depriving them of basic needs like food, water, and access to bathrooms, severe beatings with iron rods and bamboo sticks on their feet

UNHCR report says at least 2,500 incidents of torture happened during the insurgency.

and back, rolling wooden logs on thighs, pushing heads under water and death threats were the commonly used methods of torture applied by the state security forces during the insurgency. Similarly, the Maoist side also used some of the torture methods.

Seventeen years since the Comprehensive Peace Accord, torture victims lack adequate means to seek justice and hold perpetrators to account and are constantly being deprived of effective redresses, such as reparations, acknowledgment and truth, reads the report.

>> Continued on page 2

Seven held in Lalita Niwas land scam

Former election commissioner Shah and Bhatbhateni supermarket owner Gurung are among those caught.

PRITHVI MAN SHRESTHA & ANUP OJHA
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) of Nepal Police has started arresting people allegedly involved in the forgery of government documents with the intent to transfer the ownership of government land located at Lalita Niwas, Baluwatar, in the name of private individuals.

The police said the CIB on Tuesday had arrested seven individuals including ex-election commissioner Sudhir Shah, owner of Bhatbhateni supermarket Min Bahadur Gurung and former government officials including Kaladhar Deuja, then chief of the Dillibazar Land Revenue Office.

The others arrested are Surendra Kapali, Dharma Prasad Gautam, Hupendra Mani KC and Gopal Karki.

Citing last year's Supreme Court order, the CIB, however, released Deuja, KC and Kapali later in the day.

The Supreme Court, on August 4 last year had issued an interim order to initiate investigations against them without detaining them.

"More arrests will follow," a CIB source told the Post. Except Gopal Karki, the other six are also defendants in a corruption case filed by the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) on February 5, 2020 in connection with the land scam.

CIB chief Additional Inspector General Kiran Bajracharya told the Post that seven people were arrested on Tuesday after the District Court, Kathmandu issued an arrest warrant against them at CIB's request. "They will be investigated for possible prosecution in connection with the

forgery of government documents," said Bajracharya. "We will consult the District Attorney Office, Kathmandu, to explore if any additional accusations apply."

Nearly a year and a half after the District Attorney Office, Kathmandu returned the investigation report to the CIB requesting further investigation, police have again started apprehending people on the charge of their involvement in the land grab scam.

Police said new arrests were made based on separate investigations against the persons involved in the forgery of government documents.

Police say new arrests were based on probe against persons charged with document forgery.

Even though the former election commissioner Shah was not made a defendant in the corruption case filed by the CIAA, his wife Urmila Shah was. The anti-graft body had filed cases against 175 people. Of them, 110 were accused of graft while 65 faced cases as the government sought to reclaim the lands illegally transferred.

Former deputy prime minister and minister for physical infrastructure and transport Bijay Kumar Gachhadar, and two former land reforms ministers Dambar Shrestha and Chandra Dev Joshi, along with three former government secretaries, are among those accused of corruption over the illegal transfer of government lands.

>> Continued on page 2

MONEY

Chinese Premier Li Qiang slammed efforts in the West to "de-risk" their economies as a "false proposition" on Tuesday, hitting back against US and EU policy aimed at reducing their reliance on China. **Pg 6**

SPORTS

Aashish Chaudhary struck late in the second half as Nepal defeated Pakistan 1-0 at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in their last Group A match to exit the SAFF Championship with a consolation win. **Pg 7**



CULTURE

In 'Charulata' and 'Savitri,' the women feel an emptiness in their lives and find ways to fill it up—daring to tread forbidden routes. For Savitri, it's relishing Navaraj's gaze as they sit across each other having lunch. **Pg 8**

Civil aviation boss hauled up over Yeti Airlines crash

Tourism ministry accuses the director general of consistently failing to ensure aviation safety, with five aircraft incidents and accidents on his watch.

SANGAM PRASAIN
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The Tourism Ministry has accused the civil aviation regulator of neglect resulting in the crash of Yeti Airlines Flight 691 last January. The ATR 72 plunged to the ground while coming in to land at newly opened Pokhara International Airport, killing all 72 persons on board.

At that time, experts had demanded a criminal investigation alleging that a serious crime and mass murder had taken place.

On Monday, Pradeep Adhikari, director general of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal, was hauled up by the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and told to submit an explanation over the disaster.

"Adhikari has been asked to furnish clarification on nine points," said Rajendra Kumar KC, spokesman for the ministry. "We have given him seven days to do so."

The nine-point clarification note, which has gone viral, states that the



Pradeep Adhikari, director general of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal.

director general's actions violated government policy. He has been charged with misusing his position and failing in his duty.

The ministry has accused the director general of consistently failing to ensure aviation safety as there have been five aircraft incidents and acci-

dents on his watch, including two major disasters.

"As serious incidents and accidents continue to happen, the country is suffering losses, and serious questions are being raised about Nepal's aviation safety. As an accountable executive for the state safety programme, why shouldn't we charge you that you failed to fulfil your responsibility to make aviation safety effective?" the note stated.

"Without receiving the final report of the flight calibration and without completing all the preliminary preparations for the operation of the international airport, including the flight safety assessment, why did the test flight of the airport take place without receiving the report?" the note stated.

Adhikari has been asked to explain why he allowed a Himalaya Airlines Airbus A320 to land under visual flight rules at Pokhara International Airport during its inauguration on January 1, even though the airport had not been tested.

>> Continued on page 6

WHERE EVERY MEAL IS A FAMILY REUNION

FOR RESERVATIONS:

9815597346

Durbarmarg

FREE PARKING AVAILABLE AT HOTEL ANNAPURNA

