

THE RISING NEPAL

ALL BE HAPPY, ALL BE WELL



Minister for Education and Sports Sasmit Pokharel, who is Pro-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University, and officials of concerned agencies attend the university's 67th General Assembly.

PHOTO: RSS

NC ELECTION POSTPONED FOR TODAY

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

The voting for the election of the Nepali Congress 15th General Convention has been postponed until Friday morning after the printing of ballot papers was delayed on Thursday.

Talking to the media, party's election committee member secretary Raju Katuwal informed that voting will begin at 7:00 am on Friday, October 9, and continue until 3:00 pm.

The committee said all ballot papers had now been printed and preparations for the voting had been completed. It said personnel deployed for the election, volunteers and security personnel were ready,

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Today's Supplement Highlight

Living beneath glacial threats



Initiate action against professors misusing study leave: Minister Pokharel

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

Minister for Education and Sports and Pro-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University (TU) Sasmit Pokharel has directed to initiate action against university professors who have failed to return to the university after taking study leave and those who have remained out of contact for a long time.

Addressing the 67th annual meeting of the TU Senate meeting held at the Tribhuvan Smriti Bhawan in Kirtipur, Minister Pokharel, who is also the government spokesperson, directed the university to make the process of recovering allowances and imposing fines on professors who have misused study leave more effective.

He also instructed the university to write to the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) and other concerned

agencies for further action against professors who have remained out of contact and refused to cooperate with the process. Minister Pokharel also urged the university to prioritise efforts to reclaim its encroached land.

"I request that the recovery of all encroached land belonging to Tribhuvan University be prioritised and necessary action be taken," Minister Pokharel said. "The process of recovering allowances and imposing fines on professors who have misused study leave and failed to return to the university or remain out of contact be expedited."

He stressed the need for a fixed academic calendar, good governance and optimum use of technology to improve the university's academic system.

Minister Pokharel said the university should be made more responsive to changing times, research-oriented and competitive at the international level.

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Bhotekoshi flood becomes IPU emergency agenda

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

The devastating Bhotekoshi flood of August 26 has become an emergency motion at the 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), with Nepal's proposal to discuss the disaster securing the required two-thirds majority.

The proposal was approved at the ongoing IPU Assembly in Arusha, Tanzania, with 901 votes in favour, 78 against and 140 abstentions.

Following the approval, the proposal was discussed on Thursday. Parliamentary representatives from South Africa, India, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, Timor-Leste, Myanmar, Tanzania, Nigeria and Iran, among others, expressed their views.

The remaining process, including a decision on the proposal, will continue on Friday.

Speaker of the House of Representatives Dol Prasad Aryal thanked all member countries for supporting Nepal's proposal and participating in the discussion. He said the support reflected "shared humanity, shared responsibility and shared commitment".

Speaker Aryal said the issue raised by Nepal was not the concern of a single country, but an important question of how parliaments can seek solutions to global challenges through

dialogue, cooperation, peace and multilateralism.

He said the proposal was also linked to environmental balance, water security and livelihoods across the world.

Nepal's proposal states that discussing and adopting a resolution on the Bhotekoshi flood is not only Nepal's responsibility but also that of all 184 IPU member parliaments and their lawmakers.

Nepal believes the proposal could initiate a good practice in parliamentary climate diplomacy.

Its adoption, according to the proposal, could help establish legal frameworks to facilitate cross-border early warning systems and access to technology related to climate and weather disasters.

The proposal also says a joint IPU declaration would give lawmakers the legal and moral authority to press their

respective governments to fulfil climate commitments.

It further argues that adopting the proposal would not merely support Nepal but also help member countries fulfil their responsibility to establish legal, financial and technological safeguards to protect their populations from future climate disasters.

Under Rule 11 of the IPU Rules of Procedure, member parliaments may request that an emergency item be included on the Assembly's agenda. Such a request must include a brief explanation of the emergency issue, a draft proposal and the subject for discussion, submitted to the Secretariat in writing.

The issue must be recent and of international concern; matters of purely domestic interest cannot qualify as emergency items. Such items are intended to enable a parliamentary response to issues of common concern.

A proposal receives permission for discussion if it secures a two-thirds majority of votes cast by members present and voting. The Assembly may include only one emergency item on its agenda. If more than one proposal secures the required majority, the proposal receiving the highest number of votes in favour is selected.

Two or more proponents may also combine their proposals into a joint submission if they concern the same issue. Proposals withdrawn by their proponents or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft emergency item.

TikTok faces questions over monetisation, child safety and accountability

BY BIBEK SHRESTHA
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

TikTok officials faced a flurry of questions over monetisation, copyright, child safety, misinformation and content moderation at a masterclass on journalism and digital storytelling held at the Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (CDJMC), Balkhu, on Thursday.

The TikTok Masterclass on Journalism and Digital Storytelling, organised by TikTok in collaboration with CDJMC, brought together journalism scholars, content creators, influencers and media professionals to discuss creative storytelling, responsible content creation and emerging practices in digital journalism.

The event was divided into four sessions: a masterclass on modern journalism and storytelling; a trust and



safety session on misinformation and responsible content; a panel discussion on the future of journalism; and a session on newsroom experience and content creation.

'Nepal needs investment to reform export'

BY MODNATH DHAKAL
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

Minister for Industry, Commerce and Supplies Dipak Kumar Shah said that Nepal can't reform its export sector without increasing both domestic and foreign investment.

"To reform the export sector, we need to reduce the cost of production and improve productivity, establish an effective product certification system and implement digital upgrade in the entire system," he said while speaking at an event on 'European Union-India Free Trade Agreement's impact on key sectors in Nepal' organised by the European Economic Chamber (EEC) – Nepal in Kathmandu on Thursday.

According to him, Nepal needs to make investment easier, faster, and more attractive, from approval to implementation and from production to export. He also emphasised a mutual recognition arrangement between Nepal and the EU, so that a product tested in Nepal is accepted in Europe. Stating that paperless border trade in Nepal is only around 33 per cent compared with about 94 per cent in India, Minister Shah said, "The question is not how we protect Nepal from this free trade agreement. The question is how we prepare Nepal to benefit from the new economic architecture created by this EU-India FTA."

According to him, if Nepal can establish appropriate rules of origin, diagonal cumulation, and an efficient border crossing mechanism, Nepal can become a meaningful partner in India and EU collaboration. He said that if Nepal is to access the EU market, it must have global-standard quality certification, reliable delivery, and strong rules for

intellectual property and geographical identity. He further said that the GSP+ should be treated as a project not a policy, requiring rectification of around 30 international conventions, an action plan and enhanced monitoring, while stressing stronger cooperation among the government, European business committees and EEC-Nepal.

Minister Shah presented clean renewable energy and tourism as the sector with strategic advantage for Nepal.

EU interested in hydropower development

Ambassador of the Delegation of the EU to Nepal Charles Whiteley said that products and services such as yarn, natural fibres, leather, processed foods, packaging, and business services offer promise. "In this regard, the private sector's proposal to develop cross-border processing zones in partnership with Indian firms deserves serious consideration," he said.

According to him, the clearest immediate opportunity lies in Nepal's potential to become a stronger supplier to Indian manufacturers exporting to Europe. Commercial linkages already exist. India is the main buyer of Nepal's intermediate textile exports, yet Nepal still accounts for only a very small share of inputs used by Indian industry.

Ambassador Whiteley said that the European investors consistently look for three things - predictable rules, efficient approvals and confidence in the movement of capital. A fully operational one-stop service for investors, clear administrative timelines, simplified procedures for land, forex, exchange, and profit repatriation, and continued progress on financial integrity would make Nepal a highly attractive proposition for European investors, he said.

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FM Khanal urges Australia to highlight impact of climate change

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

Minister for Foreign Affairs Shisir Khanal held bilateral talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia Penny Wong in Melbourne on Thursday.

Talking in the context of shared climate vulnerabilities, FM Khanal urged Australia to utilise its international leadership role, including the upcoming COP31 co-presidency, to highlight the disproportionate impacts of climate change on the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

He also underscored the need for enhanced bilateral partnership in climate adaptation, early warning systems, disaster preparedness, and building climate-resilient infrastructure,



the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) informed in a statement.

During the bilateral talks, the two ministers reviewed the state of Nepal-Australia bilateral relations, and expressed satisfaction over the close, longstanding and cordial ties between the two nations.

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BULLION

Hallmark Gold	: Rs. 292,800/-
Worked Gold	: NA
Silver	: Rs. 4,390/-

STOCK

NEPSE : 2,574.65

Total Amount : 3,930,560,952.76

No. of Share : 11,233,636

PAVILION
HIMALAYAS
NAMED BEST
HOTEL

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

The Paviliosn Himalayas – The Farm, a luxury eco-resort in Pokhara, has been named among the best hotels in Asia in the 2026 Condé Nast Traveller Readers’ Choice Awards.

“Known for its commitment to sustainable tourism, environmental conservation and high-quality hospitality, The Pavilions Himalayas has further strengthened Nepal’s profile in the international tourism sector,” the company said in a statement on Thursday.

It said that it has prioritised environmental sustainability and responsible tourism alongside luxury hospitality services. It has developed its services and infrastructure by integrating the conservation of local communities and natural resources with tourism activities.

The Readers’ Choice Awards, organised by Condé Nast Traveller, one of the world’s leading travel and tourism publications, are based on the preferences and experiences of travellers and readers.

The awards recognise hotels, resorts, destinations and various tourism-related services around the world.

“The Pavilions Himalayas’ inclusion in the international list is expected to help further promote Nepal’s luxury and eco-tourism in the global tourism market.

Tourism entrepreneurs say such international recognition will particularly contribute to establishing Pokhara as a high-end and sustainable tourism destination,” read the statement.

Goods stranded in Mustang to be sent first after one-way road opens

BY HARI KRISHNA SHARMA
Muktinath (Mustang), Oct. 8

Goods stranded in Mustang following the disruption of the road, including cargo containers, electric vehicles, apples and other agricultural products, will be sent through the road once one-way traffic resumes.

Repair work on the Korala–Jomsom–Beni section of the Kaligandaki Corridor, which links the northern and southern parts of the country, has been expedited, with preparations underway to bring the road into operation by next Monday.

Floods in the Kaligandaki River washed away around 250 metres of road at Kunauta in Raghuganga Rural Municipality-2 of Myagdi.

After the washed-out section of the road was restored with soil, repair work is now underway on the approach road to a bridge at Pokharebagar in Annapurna Rural Municipality-6, which was also damaged by floods.

The floods in the Kaligandaki River following heavy rainfall from September 24 to 27 damaged and washed away roads and concrete structures at 46 locations.

Chief of the Beni-Jomsom-Korala Road Project Tejaswi Sharma said around 500 containers carrying festival-related goods and other commodities were stranded in Mustang.

He said all vehicles stranded in Mustang would be allowed to pass under the monitoring of security personnel at vulnerable locations after the repair work is completed and the load-bearing capacity of the bridge is tested.

Citizens asked to pay electricity bills digitally

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Biraj Bhakta Shrestha has urged citizens to pay their electricity bills through digital platforms.

Presenting data showing that 73 per cent of citizens still visit counters to pay their electricity bills, Minister Shrestha stressed the need for everyone to work together to change the situation. He said the support of aware citizens was necessary for this.

According to Minister Shrestha, digital payments save citizens’ time and transportation costs, while reducing cash transactions enhance financial transparency and security. He said the financial and human resources currently engaged in operating payment counters could be utilised for other essential customer services.

Rs. 597.9M spent on operating counters annually

According to Minister Shrestha, around 73 per cent of electricity customers still visit physical counters to pay their bills. The annual cost of operating the bill collection counters for these customers amounts to around Rs. 597.9 million.

Minister Shrestha said the cost could be saved through digital payments and the personnel currently working at the counters could be assigned to other tasks.

“There are currently 655 tariff collection countries operating under the



branch offices of 129 distribution centres of the Nepal Electricity Authority. Around Rs. 597.9 million is spent annually just to operate these counters, or around Rs. 50 million a month,” he said in a Facebook post.

“A large number of citizens still have to visit counters, and we should now change this situation together. Digital payments save citizens’ time and transportation costs. Reduced cash transactions enhance financial transparency and security. The financial and human resources used to operate the counters can also be utilised for other essential customer services,” he said.

Minister Shrestha urged citizens to provide information about digital payments to their family members, relatives, neighbours and others they know, and

encourage them to use digital payment services.

He also appealed to citizens to help others pay their electricity bills digitally, starting today wherever possible. “Especially, teach your parents, senior citizens and relatives who do not know how to make digital payments. The few minutes you spend teaching them can save their time every month,” he said.

“This is not merely a campaign to increase digital payments. It is a collective campaign to save citizens’ time, make services more convenient, enhance financial transparency and ensure more effective utilisation of public resources. Let us teach one person to make digital payments today. Tomorrow, that person will teach another. Little drops make the mighty ocean,” he said.

Jajarkot consumers suffer as no fair-price shop operates

BY BASUDEV SHARMA
Jajarkot, Oct. 8

Consumers in Jajarkot have been forced to purchase goods at inflated prices from traders during the festive season due to the absence of fair-price shops in the district.

With major festivals such as Dashain and Tihar approaching, fair-price shops have not been opened in the district headquarters, leaving ordinary consumers with no option but to pay arbitrarily high prices to local traders.

While subsidised food shops are operated in urban and more accessible areas through the Food Management and Trading Company and Salt Trading Corporation, the absence of such facilities in Jajarkot has forced people to buy essential goods at higher prices from local shops.

According to Deep Narayan Karki of Bheri Municipality-4, traders have been charging excessively high prices for essential consumer goods because subsidised shops have not been operated during the festive season.

“The government would have provided some relief if it had operated fair-price shops. In the absence of subsidised shops, we are forced to buy goods at whatever price traders demand,”

He said that retail traders have arbitrarily increased the prices of rice, lentils, cooking oil, sugar, salt and clothing, causing difficulties for people who depend on daily wages for their livelihoods.

As the major festival of Dashain draws closer, the prices of essential goods have risen sharply, causing hardship for ordinary consumers who come to the market to shop.

According to Karki, most people living in the district headquarters depend on employment and daily wage labour for their livelihoods.

“The government would have provided some relief if it had operated fair-price shops. In the absence of subsidised shops, we are forced to buy goods at whatever price traders demand,” he said. He also said that ordinary people who earn their living through daily wage labour have been affected as black-marketing, abnormal price increases and the sale and distribution of substandard and inedible goods increase during the festive season.

He said effective market monitoring had not been carried out by the local government, District Administration Office, consumer protection authorities, Agriculture Development Office, Veterinary Hospital and Veterinary Services Office, and other regulatory bodies.

Netra Prakash Budhathoki of Bheri Municipality-13 said traders had been forced to increase prices because transportation costs had risen and goods were arriving at higher prices from major commercial centres such as Nepalgunj and Dang.

He said the prices of daily essentials including cooking oil, cumin, coriander, spices and sugar had increased compared with previous years.

Govt offices to pay electricity bills digitally

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

The government offices will now be able to pay their electricity bills through digital means. The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and the Financial Comptroller General Office (FCGO) have signed a memorandum of understanding to implement a system for the electronic payment of electricity bills consumed by government agencies.

The system will come into operation following the integration of the FCGO’s Integrated Public Financial Management Service with the NEA’s institutional customer payment system.

The interconnection between the two systems is an important step towards promoting digital payments and modernising and making public financial management and electricity bill collection systems more efficient.

It is expected to strengthen financial and information system coordination among government

agencies, the FCGO and the NEA, while promoting a digital economy and cashless and cheque-free transactions.

Managing Director of NEA Dirghayu Kumar Shrestha said that the new arrangement would end the need for government agencies to use cheques and cash to pay electricity bills, enabling them to make payments conveniently, securely and transparently.

“This arrangement will make a significant contribution to ensuring timely payment of electricity bills, reducing arrears and late fees, and making the bill collection process more effective,” said Shrestha.

He said that the payment system would also be better managed as details of electricity payment obligations of government agencies would be available on time. The new system will also reduce the need to release and keep large amounts of money in advance.

As payments can be made based on actual electricity consumption, it will also make financial management easier for government agencies.

Market monitoring intensified

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

The Department of Commerce, Supplies and Consumer Protection (DCSCP) has intensified market monitoring ahead of the festival season to control the sale of adulterated and expired food items, black marketing and other irregularities.

According to the Department, around a dozen market monitoring teams have been mobilised daily in the Kathmandu Valley, compared with four teams during normal periods.

The teams are inspecting around 40 to 50 business establishments every day, while also responding to complaints received from consumers.

Spokesperson of Department of Commerce, Supplies and Consumer Protection Anil Kiratee said the monitoring teams were mainly focusing on daily essential goods, including food and clothing, as demand for such items increases during the festive season.

“We have mobilised around 11 teams in the market daily for monitoring. The teams are focusing on daily essential

food items - such as rice, edible oil, sugar and cooking gas and clothing,” he said.

After the government deployed additional employees to the Department to intensify monitoring, the Department was able to mobilise a dozen teams in the market. He said the teams were particularly inspecting wholesalers, warehouse and production houses to prevent traders from creating artificial shortages by overstocking goods.

“We are receiving complaints from consumers about price hikes, especially in rice, oil and lentils. We have also received complaints about traders not providing bills and difficulties in getting cooking gas,” Kiratee said.He said the Department would also intensify monitoring of meat shops, as prices could be artificially increased during the festival season when demand rises.

He, however, noted the Department had conducted inspection of meat shops for almost two months while meat price skyrocketed in the market. After market monitoring, price of meat was reduced in the market.

The Department is also monitoring shops offering discounts and sales to ensure that consumers are not deceived in the name of promotional offers.

TRADEMARK FOR 'PERFECT CENTER FILLS' CANCELED

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

Following a Supreme Court ruling in a dispute over the use of a trademark similar to ‘Center Fruit’, the Department of Industry (DoI) has cancelled the registration of the ‘Perfect Center Fills’ chewing gum trademark.

The Supreme Court had ruled that the ‘Perfect Center Fills’ trademark was confusingly similar to ‘Center Fruit’, a trademark owned by Italian multinational confectionery company Perfetti Van Melle.

Following the SC’s ruling, the DoI cancelled the trademark registered in the name of Perfect Foods Pvt Ltd, based in Duhabi, Sunsari. Perfect Foods had initiated the trademark registration process for chewing gum.

In the dispute, the SC did not merely compare the words used in the two trademarks, but also considered their overall presentation and the potential impact on consumers. The court concluded that there was sufficient similarity between ‘Perfect Center Fills’ and ‘Center Fruit’ to potentially confuse ordinary consumers, according to the legal analysis of the ruling.

The court took the view that determining whether two trademarks are similar requires more than simply comparing their names and words.

According to the legal analysis of the ruling, the pronunciation and visual appearance of a trademark, the nature of the products, the places where they are sold, the level of attention consumers are likely to pay when making purchases, and the overall impact in the market must also be assessed.





Gajuri Rural Municipality
Office of Rural Municipal Executive
Gajuri, Dhading



Invitation for Bids (Hardcopy)

Second Date of Publication : October 9, 2026, 9:00 am

The Office of the Rural Municipal Executive, Gajuri Rural Municipality, Gajuri, Dhading, has budgeted a portion of its funds for the implementation of activities tied to the contract mentioned here.

Contract ID	Name of Project	Estimated amount (including VAT)	Bid Security (NRs)	Fee for Bid Documents (NRs)	Deadline
GRM/W/ NCB/03/2083/084	Risthabote-Siudini- Sagarbhanjyang Road Upgrading in Gajuri 8	1,94,73,227.53	5,00,000/-	3,000/-	October 30, 2026, 12:00pm
GRM/W/ NCB/02/2083/084	Strengthening of Sadikhola- Manebhanjyang-Deurali Road in Gajuri 5	1,55,89,328.68	4,00,000/-	3,000/-	October 30, 2026, 12:00pm

Account Details: Rastriya Banijya Bank, Gajuri Branch

Type	Account Name	Account Number	Office Code	Rajaswa (revenue) Shirshak no.
For Bid document	GA-1-1 AANTARIK RAJS	1050100301010002	80330503300	14219
For Bid Security	GA-3 DHARAUTI ACCOUN	1050100303000002	80330503300	NA

1. Eligible Bidders may obtain further information at the office of Gajuri Rural Municipality, Dhading, email: ito.gajurimun@gmail.com, and contact no. 9851338362. The bid document can be downloaded and printed from website: <https://gajurimun.gov.np/public-procurement-tender-notice> and can be submitted to the office of Rural Municipal Executive, Gajuri, Dhading. Also, visit our Facebook: www.facebook.com/gajuriruralmunicipality

Chief Administrative Officer

There are no strangers here; Only friends you haven't yet met.
-William Butler Yeats

EDITORIAL

Building Back Better

Over a month into the apocalyptic Bhotekoshi flood, Nepal has embarked on a recovery drive to restore services and rebuild the lives and livelihoods of the affected people. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) has invited proposals from partner organisations willing to construct transitional shelters for families displaced by the flood in Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading districts in compliance with Urban Development and Building Construction standards. The call for proposals comes as the government has begun shifting its focus from emergency response to recovery and rehabilitation.

As of October 5, 1085 displaced people were still staying in 17 holding centres. Indeed, for such people, there is an overwhelming need for transitional accommodation. The government has also decided to construct transitional shelters at potentially safe sites identified for the purpose and mobilise partner organisations to support the work. A government committee under the Ministry of Infrastructure Development has identified 277 plots covering 3,270 ropanis in Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading for possible resettlement. It has recommended developing integrated settlements with basic infrastructure and services, including roads, drinking water, sanitation, electricity, schools, health facilities and communications.

The proposal call is part of a broader transition from emergency shelter to organised recovery and eventual resettlement in the affected districts. There have been reports that crowded or exposed conditions in the holding centres have heightened the risk of the spread of infectious diseases. In light of this, the construction of decent transitional shelter with sanitation and clean water has become more urgent. Worryingly, at least 247 individuals staying in the holding centres set up in the flood-affected areas of Rasuwa and Nuwakot have been identified as being at health risk. Among those in the holding centres are nine pregnant women, 25 lactating mothers, three postpartum women, 99 senior citizens, eight persons with disabilities, 21 children under the age of two, and 82 children under the age of five. This at-risk group has special needs, and it behooves the government to take care of them.

After a disaster, a newly built house should drastically reduce the risk in the event of the next disaster rather than simply replacing what was destroyed. Not only do disasters bring doom and gloom, but they also offer a chance to build back better so that the next time they cause fewer deaths, less displacement and less economic damage. To mitigate the risk, construction mustn't be allowed on floodplains, landslide-prone areas, river corridors, among other high-risk locations. Prior hazard and risk mapping must guide decisions on where to build new settlements safely. As the nation is highly vulnerable to landslides, floods, earthquakes, fires, storms, and other natural hazards, houses should be designed in ways that can easily withstand them. Adherence to the Nepal National Building Code is also imperative.

In a good piece of news, the government has given due priority to mental health and psychosocial support in the affected areas. Disasters not only destroy physical things; they also leave a psychological wound on survivors. Making concrete efforts to address this colossal need is indispensable to make recovery smooth and effective. What's more, in addition to housing, roads, bridges, schools, health posts, drinking water, electricity, communications and evacuation routes should also be built. Failing to do this might mean that people remain vulnerable and economically isolated despite receiving houses. And the houses to be constructed should be friendly to persons with disabilities, the elderly, children and women.

Rest To Succeed

BY AMY THAPA

Being busy has become an integral part of who we are. Someone asks how things have been, and the answer which comes to mind is not "I need a break," or "I've been having a rough time," or even "I'm trying to slow down a bit"; but "I've been busy." A packed schedule shows that you are working hard and getting things done. Rest appears the complete opposite and something you need to feel guilty about.

And this is exactly what happens when productivity turns into a self-worth metric.

The pressure is especially felt by the younger generation that are students or working but still figure out life. There is always a "now what" after each achievement. Always another course to take, another skill to acquire, another job to land with better salary, another project to complete. And social media adds to this pressure. We witness people our age or even younger achieve our dream life, dream body, exercising and yet managing their academics while working, getting promoted, travelling to yet another destination.

And this is where the feeling of guilt crawls in. Psychologically, performance then becomes parallel to self-worth. When achievement is the only part of one's identity then taking a "break," "taking things slow" can feel like a crime and failure just becomes a giant mountain rather than the task itself. A rejected application, an average score, missing out gym session becomes "I am just not good enough and a failure."

Yet, this is not the sole problem. Constantly keeping yourself busy and occupied makes it difficult to notice what one really wants. When a student fills every hour possible with a task and a young employee keeps accepting projects beyond

their capacity since being needed feels reassuring, then being caught up becomes the goal.

Our generation is often defined as hardworking youths who will soon be entrepreneurs and graduates which is certainly true, but are incomplete and empty. Young people also need to be taught how to take a pause without having the need to justify it. In this context, taking a break is not a way to run away from one's responsibility or getting too comfortable with doing nothing. Bills still have to be paid, deadlines still need to be met, and work is still a part of one's life. The point here is a person's value cannot merely be defined with how much they produce.

We should be very cautious with what we think of ourselves. "I have not done enough," "I am falling behind," "I need to do more" becomes a state of mind if there is no definite answer to how much is enough.

A healthy life will have fulfilled days and also days that don't. Perhaps, we should stop treating every slow day as something we need to fill with tasks. An ambitious person can still have unfinished works, a slow day, an empty evening all without having a measurable outcome.

There is nothing rewarding about reaching the end of a week or a month being unable to recall when was the last time you did something you actually enjoy doing. A full schedule can turn into an empty life in a blink of an eye if every activity is treated as a proof of one's self worth. Every individual must have interests that produce nothing but a peace of mind, conversations and hangouts that lead you nowhere but something that turns into a memory, and intentional evenings that you spent for just yourself.

Rest is also a crucial part of success.

Develop Resilient Health System

Jhabindra Bhandari



In recent years, climate-resilient health system is gaining a larger public interest. Because health care facilities are grossly vulnerable in rural areas. They have poor infrastructure, limited human resources, poor energy supply, inadequate water and sanitation services. Unfortunately, health policies are broadly silent on how health care facilities can be resilient and responsive to protect and promote health rights of local communities even during disasters or health emergencies. There is limited attention to mitigate health impacts of climate change. But for that to happen, a visionary political leadership is crucial in the local context.

In a country like ours where we experience heavy rains, floods, landslides, fires and earthquake, building climate-resilient health system is an emerging priority in the context of climate change. However, how we well prepare for these hazards and disasters matters more than ever. We experienced an unfortunate disaster of the Bhotekoshi flash floods which claimed hundreds of lives and destroyed property worth billions of rupees. People and their cultural histories behind these disasters are monumental in their everyday life. A senior citizen in his mid-60s from Syaprhubesi shares his concerns and emotions with a frustrating look, "We lost so many things, including our families. I have nothing left so far. Therefore, I have no hope of building house in my life. The only desire is to survive and access health care in the health facilities. But it is all disrupted."

Health facilities

Another senior citizen in her early 70s says: "I am worried whether I will be able to continue my medications. Because I am suffering from diabetes and hypertension." Among others, the physical infrastructures of health posts in Timure and Syaprhubesi were completely destroyed by the floods. The displaced communities are still facing a range of health and livelihood issues, amid immediate relief operations. Likewise, many health facilities were also damaged by the devastating earthquake in 2015.

Recalling the Bhotekoshi floods, Rojina Dangol, Public Health Officer in Rasuwa worries about the growing health care needs of the displaced communities. She says: "Climate-induced disaster is so huge, we never knew it in such a scale. The health facilities along with other physical infrastructures are completely damaged. Despite coordinated efforts, it has still been difficult for us to provide essential health care services for the displaced communities. Capacity building of health workers and communities is crucial to enhance health resilience during the disaster."

Listening to these genuine voices from the communities, the epistemological issues of climate-resilient health system raise some fundamental questions about knowledge: how people know, what counts as evidence, whose knowledge matters, how meaning is constructed and interpretation is produced, and how power shapes the production of knowledge. More significantly, people's lived experiences and perspectives of climate-induced disaster can never be overlooked. Therefore, we need to consider ethnographic approaches to critically examine discourses and activities surrounding concepts of climate resilience, vulnerabilities and subjectivities in the larger context of health systems.

While there is growing awareness of climate change through advocacy campaigns, seminars, policy briefs and high-level technical meetings, there is little understanding and evidence base of the linkages of health and climate, the burden of disease attributable to climate change, and socio-economic gains from ambitious climate change adaption and mitigating actions. The risk factors, including poverty, gender, age, migration, health and nutritional status, displacement and urbanisation increase people's exposure and vulnerability to climate-induced disasters. More worryingly, the implementation of climate change and health related policies and strategies is still dwindling and the unfinished agenda of climate-resilient health system is grossly overlooked.

Driving this priority agenda forward at scale and space, there are enormous opportunities to strengthen capacity of health systems in protecting human health in an unstable climatic condition. Integrating climate change into health systems is a recurring priority to address vulnerability and reliability of health infrastructure or critical services. The ground reality is that climate risks are placing interconnected pressures on health systems that disrupt health infrastructures and delivery of essential health care in the health facilities.

The local health policy response should therefore begin with community engagement, social resilience, and socio-economic impacts on marginalised and vulnerable populations in particular. First and foremost, we need to strengthen real-time data to enhance evidence-driven advocacy and social accountability in addressing the profound challenges of climate-induced hazards, disaster and vulnerabilities. While our socio-ecological risks and vulnerabilities are different and more urgent, the window for investment

opportunity is open now. We cannot simply wait another disaster to come and start preparedness for humanitarian health response. Otherwise, it will be too late to harvest human costs and sustainable development.

Local initiatives

Moreover, local initiatives to strengthen health risk management and disaster preparedness are not sufficient yet in terms of promoting resilient recovery practices. The role of local stakeholders is crucial to advance health resilience, inclusive policy adoption, capacity building, research, networking, and advocacy by strengthening knowledge sharing platforms and learning exchanges. In addition to disease surveillance and risk communication, a larger focus should be on inclusivity where socially marginalised communities are at the heart of disaster risk reduction planning and response. Of course, the overarching aim is to enhance the resilience of health systems and communities by reducing their health vulnerabilities, hazards and disaster.

Therefore, it is necessary to bring people, communities and relevant institutions together to ensure coordinated actions, shared knowledge, experiences and learning towards local solutions. This mechanism is instrumental in raising the voices of those who are often underrepresented and overlooked including people with disabilities, women, children, elderly, gender and sexual minorities who are disproportionately exposed to risks. By improving access to early warnings and responding to the needs and capacities of communities and health facilities, health resilience can be further for timely preparedness and response.

(Bhandari is a health policy analyst interested in anthropology.)

Adopt Rational Development Agenda



Nilam Sangroula

Our development track record is more a matter of execution than ideas. Nepal has not succeeded in terms of economic growth, employment, public services, and overall quality of life despite the numerous vision statements, planning exercises, and federal institutional arrangements. To reverse the culture of 'failed development', we must prioritise institutional, human capital, employment, and resilience-related sectors and strategies.

Nepal's development challenges are multifaceted and deeply rooted in the system of governance. Political instability, corruption, and the lack of capacity have characterised the country's institutional incapacity to lead governance. Federalism has further complicated the challenging policy environment, without providing the promised relief in terms of accountability and service delivery. At the same time, Nepal's economy is excessively reliant on remittances and external trade, with a limited ability to generate employment, domestic investment, and productivity. Meanwhile, disasters and inadequate health security continue to impede the country's development trajectory. Simply stated, Nepal is facing a fiscal paradox of rising expenditures and inadequate governance in the face of limited economic productivity and revenue.

Public investments

Good governance is fundamental to achieving successful development

endeavours. Nepal needs to prioritise institutional reforms and invest in absorptive capacity to identify, assimilate, transform, and use external knowledge, research and practice to strengthen public administration, local governments, and the civil services. This confirmation helps strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at all governance levels. Depoliticising key constitutional appointments is necessary to obliterate systemic governance challenges.

We need to adopt a job-oriented development strategy in order to achieve sustainable growth. Prioritising investment in sectors that offer the best job-creation potential is most. Public expenditure should be mostly directed towards facilitating the public sector that enables the expansion of public enterprises to build unique value and competitiveness. Job-oriented growth should be the centerpiece of Nepal's development agenda, with the ability to absorb surplus labour, especially among the youth and returnees from the Gulf.

Nepal's human capital is a double-edged sword – a valuable asset that has not been harnessed due to systemic governance issues. The country needs to invest more in health and education. School curriculum should be dynamic to meet the needs of the labour market. Decentralisation in education with strict local-level oversight, and innovation and research grants for tertiary education to transform the education system. Similarly, the health sector needs to pivot to preventive care and ensure equitable access to quality care for all.

Nepal's natural resources are a growth option that our country has barely tapped. Sustainable agriculture, community forestry, and hydropower should be placed on the development

agenda to harness community development. A strategic approach to curb unmanaged urbanisation always falls short of promoting sustainability and de-escalating disaster risk. Our focus should be on achieving renewable energy, energy efficiency, climate resilience, and adaptation reactive disaster response to proactive urban resilience planning.

Disasters, either natural or human-made, are often unpredictable. Building communities, systems, and institutions resilience is necessary to reduce vulnerability. Our limited disaster risk management capacity and preparedness are a serious impediment to development. A deliberate policy push in the areas of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery is needed to save lives, minimise community damage, and restore stability after a crisis. Investing in disaster resilience will create a win-win situation for the commitment to sustainable growth and human security.

Remittances are the lifeblood of our economy, yet they are not development-friendly. Nepal needs to pivot towards a policy framework that allows the country to reap maximum benefits from its migrant workforce. Migration and remittances are embedded in our society in such a way that it is hoped to protect families from the vicious circle of poverty and ultimately bring prosperity to the country. There must be a policy intervention for returnees' migrants to invest their knowledge and skills, investments for entrepreneurship and businesses to contribute to the local governance.

Experience in planning

Our experience with development planning posits that we need to break the monotony to prioritise a few strategic goals to prime the pump for

development. There is an urgent need to uplift institutional credibility, create jobs, develop human capital, conceptualise disaster resilience, tap into natural resources, and leverage remittances towards achieving SDGs. Secondly, creating a job-friendly environment and prioritising labour-intensive industries and services. Therefore, the development of human capital is a prerequisite and it is the backbone of growth and development. Quality education and health of citizens need to be prioritised. Using Smart Farming Technologies to ensure agricultural production is necessary to create climate resilience in the face of changing weather conditions.

Disaster-resilient and preparedness programmes and policies need to be in place to build the capacity of communities and systems to anticipate, withstand, respond, and recover quickly from hazardous events such as floods, earthquakes, and climate extremes. Migration and remittances need to be well handled to provide investment resources in the local economy to promote transformation and development. A development agenda needs to be focused and rational in order to provide a clear roadmap to combat challenges. Institutional credibility is the most crucial of all priorities, as it underpins all other reforms and ensures public spending is not wasted on populist measures. Jobs are the second priority, as is prevents demographic stagnation while also promote social and political stability. Building human capital and disaster resilience can contribute to the sustainable development that ensures social and economic progress.

(Sangroula is a PhD Scholar at the NIU-India)

50 YEARS AGO

THE RISING NEPAL

October 9, 1976

Bhairab Aryal Cremated

(By A Staff Reporter)
Kathmandu, Oct. 8: The body of Gorkhpatra Features Editor and noted humorist and satirist Bhairab Aryal was cremated in accordance with the Vedic rites at Arya Ghat Pashupati, today.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

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READER'S MAIL

Adopt Strong Air Safety Measures

We are all talking about the great technological advances taking place around us, particularly the Internet and the continuing revolution in mobile technology. Yet, despite all these remarkable developments, human suffering and our day-to-day problems remain very much the same.

The frequent air crashes, even involving highly sophisticated and technologically advanced aircraft, have been sending shockwaves across the world and giving rise to serious discussions about air safety. These recurring accidents are, in a way, an indication that our understanding, preparedness and technology in the aviation sector still have limitations. As the saying goes, prevention is always better than cure. If I am not wrong, there is perhaps a need for countries across the world to come together and simply talk it out. Many difficult issues can begin to find solutions when people and nations sit together, exchange their experiences



Photo sources: elysiumhr.com

and openly discuss their concerns.

In a similar way, countries from across the world should come forward and collectively look into the serious subject of air safety. They should bring together various ideas, experiences and technological possibilities and discuss the subject without hesitation or reservation. Finally, these discussions should lead to concrete action. Appropriate technology, international cooperation, better systems and stronger safety measures should be brought together to address the problems.

P. Senthil Durai
Bombay, India

TAILPIECE

A climber fell off a cliff, and as he tumbled down, he caught hold of a small branch wedged in the rock. "HELP! IS THERE ANYBODY UP THERE?" he shouted. A majestic voice boomed through the gorge:

"I will help you, my son, but first you must have faith in me." "Yes, yes, I trust you!" cried the man. "Let go of the branch," boomed the voice.

There was a long pause, and the man shouted up again. "IS THERE ANYONE ELSE UP THERE I COULD TALK TO?" +++

Two elderly gentlemen from a retirement centre were sitting on a bench under a palm tree when one turns to the other and says.. "Slim, I'm 83 years old now and I'm just full of aches and pains. I know you're about my age, how do you feel?" Slim says, "I feel just like a new-born baby." "Really? Like a new-born baby?" "Yep. No hair, no teeth, and I think I just wet my pants."

COP31 organisers seek 'ambitious' climate action

AFP
Fiji, Oct. 8

Organisers of an upcoming UN climate summit in Turkey said Thursday they would prepare a summary text for countries to adopt, as they lead a push for "ambitious" action on keeping the goal of global temperature rise of 1.5 C within reach.

The UN-sponsored global climate summit -- known as COP31 -- will be held in Antalya next month, following a "pre-COP" meeting in Fiji and Tuvalu, which wrapped up Thursday.

Co-organisers Australia and Turkey vowed Thursday to get negotiators to vote on a so-called "presidency-led decision" that they would have prepared beforehand.

That would, in theory at least, set a firm and realistic agenda, cutting the endless hours of gruelling negotiations that often dominate COP meetings before votes are taken on individual technical points.

That decision, they said, would focus on binding agreements like one towards electrification -- replacing technologies that burn fossil fuels directly, like diesel cars and gas heating, with electric alternatives.

"We feel that a presidency-led decision gives us the best chance of a strong and ambitious outcome at COP31," Australia's climate minister Chris Bowen said."To send the signal to follow the science to keep 1.5 degrees within reach, against the backdrop of the scientific evidence that we will overshoot it. We've got to overshoot it for as little and as short as possible," he said.

Scientists agree that warming above 1.5C relative to pre-industrial times poses grave risks, and nearly 200 nations committed a decade ago to try and keep global temperature rises to



PHOTO: AFP
The South Pacific is among the regions of the world most vulnerable to global warming -- from rising seas jeopardising homes to increasing temperatures causing coral bleaching.

this safer threshold.

But with rising sea levels already lapping the coastlines of Pacific nations and the corals that sustain them dying, more firm action on ending the use of polluting fossil fuels was needed.

"The outcomes of this week's talks are a drop in the ocean given the scale of need, and urgency of the crisis our communities are facing," Shiva Gounden, Head of Pacific at Greenpeace Australia Pacific, said.

"It is like taking a glass of water to a burning house if we do not urgently act to address the root cause of the existential threat facing Tuvalu, Fiji and all Pacific countries: fossil fuel expansion."

Pacific nations used the pre-COP

platform to push for more backing.

The South Pacific is among the regions of the world most vulnerable to global warming -- from rising seas jeopardising homes to increasing temperatures causing coral bleaching.

In a push to highlight the urgent need for action, leaders this week visited Tuvalu -- a remote island nation already laying plans to relocate its population of 10,600 if the island nation is consumed by the ocean.

And the region's leaders pushed throughout the summit this week for oceans and climate finance to be top of the agenda at COP31, as well as maintaining the 1.5C target.

But regional delegates admitted the

process was tiring.

"The way that the COP process works is not great, I'll be very frank," Pacific climate envoy Tina Eonemto told AFP.

But she said Pacific nations had put their hopes "front and centre" and welcomed plans for a presidency-led decision at the end of COP31.

At a time of rising military budgets in the face of mounting geopolitical tensions, COP31 President Murat Kurum, who is also Turkey's environment minister, urged nations to take the climate crisis as seriously as they did defence.

"Tuvalu is disappearing. What good does it do if we take this decision? What good is defending your borders if there is no livable world left?" Kurum said.

Russian strike on buses kills 30

AFP
Kyiv, Oct. 8

Ukraine on Thursday accused Russia of deliberately targeting civilians after 30 people were killed when two buses were blown up in the frontline city of Kramatorsk, in one of the deadliest single attacks for weeks.

Photos posted by local authorities showed the burnt-out metal shell of the vehicles, with the blurred-out images of bodies and debris strewn across the road.

Police said the buses were hit with a glide bomb.

The strikes come just a day after five children were among 22 killed when a Russian missile struck a five-storey apartment block in Pryluky, in the northern Chernigiv region.

"The Russians are deliberately targeting civilians," Donetsk Governor Vadym Filashkin said, accusing Moscow of flouting "every conceivable rule of warfare and norm of international humanitarian law".

Kramatorsk City Council called it "yet another horrific crime committed by the Russian army against the civilian population".

"Once again, the Russians have struck a location where there are absolutely no military targets," it added.

There has been mounting concern about the increase in civilian casualties in the conflict, as both sides step up long-range attacks beyond their borders.

Since Russia first invaded in 2022, Ukraine has accused its forces of deliberately attacking and killing civilians.

The United Nations has verified more than 17,000 civilian deaths throughout the war, but says the real number is considerably higher.

Last week, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said his Russian

counterpart Vladimir Putin had sanctioned massive attacks on civilian areas.

The Kremlin has denied the claim.

Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, has come under increasing attack, including on Wednesday when Russia launched a barrage of powerful ballistic and cruise missiles, and fast-moving, jet-powered drones.

The city's mayor, Vitali Klitschko, said two people were found dead on Thursday after a fire at a four-storey building that was hit by a drone in the densely populated Solomyansky district.

Klitschko has said the attacks, which have hit key transport bridges in the city, as well as the rail network and energy grid, were "tearing Kyiv apart".

For the first few years of the war, Kyiv had been relatively spared from the devastation wrought on the frontline but should now be on a war footing, he argued.

Kramatorsk, which was home to some 150,000 people before the war, is one of the key cities that Russia has not yet captured in the eastern Donetsk region, which Moscow claims as its own.

It has been a logistics and supply hub for the Ukrainian military for much of the war and is part of the so-called "fortress belt" which troops are fighting to keep hold of.

Russian forces have edged close to the city's eastern fringes, which has prompted calls for the civilians who remain to relocate to safer regions of Ukraine. Filashkin said Thursday's strike, which happened at 10:00 am (0700 GMT), represented a "sharp deterioration" in security and ordered the suspension of public transport in Kramatorsk and neighbouring Sloviansk.

"Under these circumstances, we cannot risk the lives of passengers and drivers," he said. "The safety of the residents of Kramatorsk and Sloviansk is now our top priority."

Ukraine faces shortage of troops

AP
Kyiv, Oct. 8

Ukraine's advances in drone technology and tactics have captured the world's attention. Despite those innovations, one problem has plagued the country since the start of Russia's invasion: a shortage of combat-ready troops.

Ukraine always has been outmanned by Russia, but as the war drags through its fifth year, the need for personnel is increasingly acute, commanders and analysts say, with some units at only half strength. There just aren't enough forces to fully exploit the battlefield advantages resulting from the drone innovations.

"Based on the equipment and the number of people we have today, we barely have enough to hold the sector we currently have," said a deputy commander of the Da Vinci Wolves battalion in eastern Ukraine's Pokrovsk area, a focus of Russia's offensive.

"To move forward would inevitably mean greater losses," said the deputy commander, who insisted on identifying himself only as "Afer" because of military rules.

Long-standing mobilization problems, including draft dodging and desertion, make it harder for Ukraine to build its reserves, according to military experts, resulting in only incremental

changes along the 1,250-kilometer (775-mile) front line.

Ukraine needs to be able to commit forces quickly without taking them from elsewhere on the front. Otherwise, commanders have fewer options to turn a temporary advantage into a sustained operation, said Nick Reynolds of the U.K.-based Royal United Services Institute, a defense and security think tank.

The shortage means that units can't be rotated often enough, he said, "leading to exhaustion and, in turn, exacerbating casualties."

The Defense Ministry, which in July underwent a shake-up by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, is trying to tackle the problem with reforms to mobilization, training and the way the army is organized.

Uneven performance by front-line units worsens the problem. Weaker formations suffer heavier losses, creating a cycle of high attrition and constant replenishment.

The ministry did not respond to Associated Press requests for comment, but one of its officials summarized the problem by saying, "There just are not enough people."

Developing a new mobilization policy, including encouraging deserters to return to duty, is among the most sensitive issues under consideration, said the official, who was not authorized to brief the media and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Protest in Bengaluru demands election chief's resignation

AP
Bengaluru, Oct. 8

Thousands of supporters of India's youth "Cockroach" movement and several student groups demonstrated in the southern city of Bengaluru on Thursday, stepping up a nationwide campaign that is demanding the election chief's resignation over a contentious revision of voter lists that has removed over 130 million people from the rolls.

The demonstration in Bengaluru came a day after opposition leader Rahul Gandhi was briefly detained by police at a protest in New Delhi. Dramatic images of police dragging Gandhi into a vehicle spread widely on social media, adding momentum to the protests calling for the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Gandhi's Congress party has called for more protests in New Delhi later Thursday.

The nationwide voter list review, known as the Special Intensive Revision, has been carried out in most of India's states and federally administered territories. More than 130 million names have been removed so far, a number larger than the populations of countries like Japan and Mexico. Millions of people have appealed the deletions.



PHOTO: AP
Indian influencer and activist join hands during a protest demanding the resignation of the country's election chief Gyanesh Kumar, in Bengaluru, India, Thursday, Oct. 8, 2026.

The opposition says the removals have disproportionately affected voters who support them, while voters more likely to back Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party have been preserved or added to the lists. The election commission and the government reject the allegations, saying the revision is aimed at removing duplicate and ineligible entries.

Those whose names have been struck off the list can appeal, but getting back on the rolls can be difficult. Critics say the requirements are confusing and some people may not have required documents such as older government records.

The anger intensified last month following an investigation by the Indian Express newspaper that found two election commissioners had raised concerns about the process.

The campaign has been led in part by the "Cockroach" movement, which began as an online youth campaign in May and has since organized street protests across the country. Its earlier nationwide demonstrations, sit-ins and hunger strikes over exam paper leaks led to the resignation of Modi's education minister in July.

Housing crisis set to dominate Spain election

AFP
Madrid, Oct. 8

After simmering below the surface for years, anger at unaffordable housing in Spain has bubbled over and precipitated a general election that will be dominated by the crisis.

The spark was ignited on September 23 when 87-year-old Maricarmen Abascal was evicted from her lifelong Madrid home on a stretcher after the real estate firm that owned the apartment drastically hiked the rent.

Abascal, who died on Wednesday, became the symbol of a crisis that cuts across Spanish society: young and old, renters and buyers, workers and pensioners.

The uproar at her eviction triggered national demonstrations, with hundreds of people camping in central Madrid's Puerta del Sol square in the most symbolic protest.

As in other European countries, housing has long been a top public



PHOTO: AFP
The main tenants' unions have spearheaded pressure on politicians to reform Spain's housing market.

concern, particularly for young adults who are priced out of the market and stay with their parents into their 30s and beyond.

Growth in housing prices has far outstripped wages in recent years, eating up far more than the upper limit of 30 percent of income recommended

by public bodies and housing professionals.

According to the latest figures by the National Statistics Institute (INE), the average gross monthly salary in Spain is around 2,460 euros (\$2,750).

Renting a 50-square-metre (538-square-foot) apartment in Madrid

PRISM

1,474 pounds of french fries break record

Idaho: The Idaho Potato Commission teamed up with eatery chain Spud Daddy to cook up a serving of 1,474 pounds of fresh-cut french fries and break a Guinness World Record.

The record attempt took place Friday at Boise Potato Days, where a team of 50 spud chefs transformed 1,700 pounds of Idaho potatoes into 1,475 pounds of fries using six fryers.

"If you're going to hold the world record for the largest serving of french fries, we think it belongs in Idaho," Jamey Higham, president and CEO of IPC said in a news release. "We've always known Idaho potatoes make the best fries, so it was time to bring this title home and celebrate the growers and industry that put Idaho potatoes on the map."

The fries were served to festival attendees after the official weigh-in.

Pet boa constrictor missing

North Carolina: A North Carolina animal shelter is asking residents in a Hoke County neighborhood to be on the lookout for a boa constrictor on the loose.

The Hoke County Animal Shelter said on social media that the snake, about 6-7 feet long, was reported missing by its owner in the area of Calloway Road and Summer Lane.

The shelter urged anyone who spots the missing reptile to keep a safe distance and make sure small children and pets are secured.

Witnesses are being asked to contact animal control with a description of where the boa was last seen.

"Please do not attempt to capture or contain it yourself," the post said.

Agencies

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1238 – James I of Aragon founds the Kingdom of Valencia.
- 1410 – The first known mention of the Prague astronomical clock.
- 1708 – Peter the Great defeats the Swedes at the Battle of Lesnaya.
- 1804 – Hobart, capital of Tasmania, is founded.
- 1806 – Prussia begins the War of the Fourth Coalition against France.
- 1847 – Slavery is abolished in the Swedish colony of Saint Barthélemy.
- 1962 – Uganda becomes an independent Commonwealth realm.
- 1963 – In Italy, a large landslide causes a giant wave to overtop the Vajont Dam, killing over 2,000.

AIRLINES AGREE TO REDUCE AIR FARE

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

Domestic airlines have agreed to sell air tickets at fares below the approved rates amid complaints that they have increased ticket prices ahead of the festive season. The agreement was reached during a discussion held on Thursday between the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) and officials and representatives of the concerned domestic airlines, following a directive from Prime Minister Balendra Shah and the active initiation of Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Khadak Raj Paudel (Ganess).



Airlines have also agreed to publish information about such discounted fares on their respective ticket sales and distribution platforms.

According to the agreement, domestic airlines will be allowed to sell and facilitate the sale of tickets at fares lower than the approved rates, Prime Minister's Office (PMO) informed. Airlines have also agreed to publish information about such discounted fares on their respective ticket sales and distribution platforms. The move comes in response to growing complaints from passengers over rising airfares during the festive period, when demand for domestic flights typically increases. Nepal has had a minimum and maximum fare structure for domestic air services since a ministerial-level decision was taken on December 8, 2015.



Residents of the flood-affected area wait for their turn to cross the Trishuli River on a makeshift swing bridge (tuin) operated at Indrayani Chaur in Bidur Municipality of Nuwakot district.

Canadian author Carson wins Nobel Prize for literature

AP
Stockholm, Oct. 8

Canadian poet, essayist and translator Anne Carson won the Nobel Prize in literature Thursday for "bold and inventive" works that fuse the classical and the modern and blur the boundaries of poetry and prose. The Toronto-born Carson, 76, draws on themes from classical Greek and Roman literature, modern influences and personal experience for genre-blending works that have ranged from translations of ancient Greek



poets to collaborations with dancers and musicians, including Laurie Anderson and Lou Reed.

The Swedish Academy that awards the prize said she won "for her bold and inventive oeuvre that, in playful dialogue with the classical tradition, has created new forms for contemporary literature." The permanent secretary of the academy said the author was in Iceland "listening to the wind" when the academy reached her to notify her of the honor. "She was very taken by surprise," Ingrid Carlberg said. Asked how she felt about the award, Carson told the Icelandic public broadcaster RUV: "I think they're all crazy." She described the conversation with the academy as "rather halting."

'Nepal needs investment to...

He stated that through the Global Gateway, together with the European Investment Bank and EU member states, the EU is keen to help advance bankable projects in generation, transmission, and cross-border electricity trade. Whiteley also said that Nepal's real comparative advantage lies in products with a strong and authentic story - such as tea, cardamom, coffee, medicinal plants, essential oils, carpets, and ashwagandha. "European consumers increasingly value origin, craftsmanship, and sustainability and they are willing to pay for these qualities," he said, "The EU is not always an easy market to export to in

that regard. I'm sure we will work more with the European Chamber to make our regulations, which sometimes seem to fly out of nowhere, better understood and better followed." President of EEC-Nepal Narayan Bajaj said that the impact of EU-India FTA will be severe on readymade garments while Nepal's graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) will bring more complicated requirements. "So, the government has to think in advance how to increase competitiveness of our industry. Pashmina and other textile products from India will also challenge our export to EU as India will have Zero tariffs," he said.

Initiate action against professors...

He also directed university officials to ensure that all academic processes -- from entrance examinations and student admissions to teaching, examinations and publication of results -- are conducted according to a fixed schedule. He said that if the academic calendar is disrupted, the university authorities must publicly disclose the reasons for the delay and announce a deadline for rectifying the situation. "I direct the concerned officials to move ahead with a concrete action plan, setting realistic schedules for entrance examinations, student admissions, the duration of teaching and learning, effective internal assessment, publication of final examination results, and the distribution of mark sheets, transcripts and certificates, while making optimum use of technology to provide services to students," he said. Minister Pokharel also called for reforms in the examination system, saying assessment

should focus not only on how much students write but also on how much they have learned. Stressing the need to produce practical and creative human resources rather than graduates reliant on rote learning, he said, "Let us measure not only how much students write in examinations but also how much they have learned. I would also like to request the professors involved in teaching and research to focus on developing problem-solving abilities, creativity, research skills and practical competencies rather than rote knowledge." Minister Pokharel further emphasised that the university should prioritise research aimed at finding solutions to the country's various challenges. "The university should give greater priority to research that seeks solutions to Nepal's social, economic, cultural, environmental and technological problems. Only by narrowing the gap

"Tap on hydro potential" Economist Nishant Khanal said that Nepal's textile export will suffer the impact from the FTA implementation. This sector is estimated to experience a loss of US\$ 7 million by the end of the FTA. "Hydropower has green advantage. India receives no Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism exemption under the FTA which has affected Indian producers of iron, steel, cement, fertilisers and aluminum," he said. He stated that green power from Nepal lowers embedded carbon in Indian exports and cuts the CBAM certificates Indian manufacturers must

buy, giving them a reason to locate carbon-sensitive processing in Nepal. More than 43,000 MW electricity in Nepal is economically feasible, with 23.6 million Euro of GREEN+ support committed. "Cross-border power trade and India's rising industrial demand make Nepali hydro a prime blending opportunity through European Investment Bank and KfW Germany, aligned to the GREEN+ portfolio," said Khanal. Likewise, branding, design, certification and quality upgrading for high-value, identity-linked products, pashmina, orthodox tea, cardamom and medicinal and aromatic plants can expand opportunity for Nepal.

NC election...

while all arrangements had been made at the designated polling centres. The decision to postpone voting until the morning was taken after considering suggestions that conducting the election late into the night would not be appropriate, as well as the possibility of adverse weather. The party leadership had urged the election committee to proceed with the voting process immediately. However, the committee said it considered it more appropriate to conduct voting during the daytime. Voting will begin with the senior-most voters, the committee said. The elections for the respective provinces, sister and affiliated organisations, and Nepali Jana Samparka Samitis will also be held at the polling centres designated earlier.

FM Khanal...

On the occasion, Minister Wong announced an additional AUD 15 million (about Rs. 1.6 billion) in Australian assistance dedicated to relief and early recovery efforts, supplementing the AUD 11 million previously committed for emergency response operations. Minister Khanal said that such solidarity in times of crisis reflects the enduring goodwill between the two countries. According to the MoFA, the two leaders also discussed avenues to deepen educational cooperation, exploring initiatives such as the establishment of Australian-accredited Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutes. Emphasizing the vital contributions of Nepali students and the broader diaspora to Australia's multicultural fabric and economy, Minister Khanal requested favourable considerations for Nepali students under recent student visa policy revisions. They also explored multifaceted avenues to elevate bilateral partnership, with particular focus on trade and foreign direct investment, technology transfer, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, tourism promotion, labour mobility, and the establishment of direct air connectivity between Nepal and Australia. Minister Wong reaffirmed Australia's commitment to further strengthening its partnership with Nepal and welcomed continued collaboration across priority sectors.

UML TO HOLD LOCAL COMMITTEE CONVENTIONS ON DEC.12 AND 19

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

The CPN-UML has set dates for the conventions of its local-level party committees. A meeting of the party's Standing Committee, held at the central office in Chyasal on Thursday decided that conventions of the party's ward committees will be held on December 12, while conventions of the local-level committees will be held on December 19. At the beginning of the meeting, Bidya Devi Bhandari, who was nominated as a senior leader by the party's third Central Committee meeting, took the oath of office and secrecy. The meeting also decided to organise a national gathering in the third week of December, according to Deputy General Secretary Lekhraj Bhatta. The gathering will be attended by office-bearers of provincial committees, office-bearers of district committees, chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of local-level committees, and elected representatives from all levels. A provincial-level gathering will be organised after the completion of the local-level and ward conventions. Likewise, the meeting further decided that, in the case of 13 districts where the party chairperson posts are vacant, the respective district-level committees should appoint chairpersons through their own decisions and transform them into organisational committees before sending them to the higher committee for approval.

TikTok faces questions over...

The response, however, left questions about whether such measures are sufficient to protect children from excessive exposure to potentially harmful or inappropriate content, particularly given the difficulty of enforcing age restrictions and moderating the vast volume of user-generated content on the platform. Participants also questioned TikTok's policies on political, social, religious and health-related misinformation. The discussion also raised questions about the reach of TikTok's digital literacy initiatives. While the platform has begun conducting literacy programmes in Kathmandu, where access to information and digital resources is comparatively greater, similar initiatives may be more urgently needed in rural and remote communities. As TikTok increasingly serves as a source of news and daily information, limited media and digital literacy can leave users more vulnerable to misinformation, manipulated content and misleading claims. According to research conducted

by the Centre for Media Research Nepal (CMR Nepal), 2.94 per cent of misinformation during the 2025 general election was spread directly through TikTok. The figure prompted further questions about the effectiveness of the platform's systems for detecting and preventing misleading content, particularly when politically sensitive information can achieve rapid virality. Kiran Chapagain, TikTok's government relations and public policy officer for Nepal, said TikTok was the only social media platform to have collaborated with the Election Commission in efforts to combat misinformation during the election. Yet questions about the platform's broader responsibilities remained. Participants raised concerns over the moderation of vulgar content, hate speech and misinformation, as well as the challenges faced by users in rural areas with limited digital literacy. The panel discussion was chaired by Dr. Shreeram Paudel, a lecturer at CDJMC, and included Chapagain,

Prateek Pradhan, editor-in-chief of Baahrakhari, and Roneeshma Shrestha, a television host and content creator. Speaking on behalf of the department, Dr. Paudel said Tribhuvan University had already introduced subjects such as AI in Journalism, Combating Misinformation and Digital Media at Master's level. He argued that AI and digital media should also receive greater attention in MPhil and PhD programmes. "The university is becoming digital gradually; however, there is a greater need to include AI and digital media in MPhil and PhD programmes," he said. Having joined the programme later, Prof. Dr. Kundan Aryal, Head of the Department, also announced that the department is starting post graduate programme in content creation and digital production. Pradhan stressed the importance of authenticity over speed in digital journalism. "With the rapid use of smartphones, everyone has become a journalist. Although the medium has changed, journalistic processes

and ethical responsibilities remain unchanged," he said, stressing the need for journalists and content creators to verify information before publishing it. However, some of the most pressing questions of the programme came from content creators themselves. One creator said he had received five million views on one of his videos but had not received any revenue from TikTok, while other platforms such as Facebook had begun sharing advertising revenue with creators. Another participant raised concerns about copyright infringement and the absence of an effective grievance mechanism. "I create very authentic content, investing my time and creativity. Meanwhile, other creators use my content, including my watermark. I reported several cases of piracy five months ago, but TikTok has not responded yet," the participant asked. Addressing the monetisation issue, Chapagain said that, at present, creators in Nepal could earn money through TikTok Live.

RE-NOTICE : EXTENSION OF SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Invitation for Application for Auction of Residual Spectrum in 800 MHz Band

First Publication Date : 25 August 2026 (09 Bhadra 2083 BS)
Re-Notice Publication Date : 09 October 2026 (23 Asoj 2083 BS)

Nepal Telecommunications Authority (the "Authority"), pursuant to the provisions of the Telecommunication Regulations, 2054, and the Radio Frequency (Allocation and Pricing) Policy for Telecommunication Services, 2080 (the "Policy"), hereby invites applications from interested prospective Applicants (Licensees) for the assignment of rights to use the residual spectrum in the 800 MHz band through a competitive bidding process (the "Auction"). This Re-Notice has been issued to notify that the last date for submission of the Pre-Qualification Bid has been extended by 15 (fifteen) calendar days from the date of publication of this Re-Notice. Interested Applicants may obtain the Bid Document and further information from the Authority's office or website. All terms, conditions, eligibility criteria, and instructions specified in the original invitation notice and the Bid Document remain unchanged.

For further information or clarification regarding the Auction, interested Applicants may contact the Deputy Director, Frequency Assignment and Management Section, Nepal Telecommunications Authority.



Nepal Telecommunications Authority
Jamal, Kathmandu, Nepal
G.P.O. Box No. 9754, Phone: 5355474
Email: info@nta.gov.np; ntra@nta.gov.np
Website: www.nta.gov.np

Youths embrace art of Madal making

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Ghorahi, Oct. 8

As the Dashain and Tihar festivals are approaching, 41-year-old Anant Bahadur Sarki of Thatikhola, Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan City-2, is busy making madals (membrano-phone percussion), traditional Nepali drums.

He said he has been making and repairing new madals by employing four workers, as he earns a good income from their sales and repairs during the festive season.

Considering festivals as an important part of traditional culture and folk life, around 15 to 20 customers have been visiting him almost every day to buy new madals or get them repaired. According to him, people from the Tharu community mainly visit during Dashain, while customers from other communities are more common during Tihar.

The Sarki family has continued the skill of making madals as a profession for generations. “My father used to make madals at home, so I learnt the skill at a young age. Now, the same skill has become a source of income for me. I do not have to go elsewhere to support



Anant Bahadur Sarki and others making madals at Thatikhola, Ghorahi-2.

my family,” he said. He also makes other musical instruments such as tablas and dholaks.

Sarki said he has employed four people on a daily wage basis because he cannot manage all the work alone during the festive season. He pays Rs. 700 per day to those involved in making

the drum body and applying the black paste, known as khari, among other tasks.

According to him, the skill of making madals is also being passed on to the new generation. His son, Thamraj, who learnt the skill from his grandfather Tank Bahadur Sarki, has recently

been involved in making, selling and distributing madals. At a time when many young people are leaving their traditional occupations, Thamraj said he chose this profession with the aim of contributing to the preservation of traditional musical instruments.

“After completing their studies, my friends went abroad. But instead of going abroad, I have continued making madals at home with my father,” said Thamraj.

Anant said customers from different parts of Dang as well as Rolpa, Pyuthan and Arghakhanchi come to buy and repair madals. He said his madals are popular because they are made using khamari wood, which is considered stronger than other types of wood, and goat skin.

According to him, such madals are sold for between Rs. 1,800 and Rs. 30,000, depending on their size and quality. The cost of repairing a madal ranges from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 10,000, depending on its size.

Although madals sell well during Krishna Janmashtami, Teej, Dashain and Tihar, they are not sold throughout the year. During the season, he works from home making madals, while at other times he collects khamari wood, animal skins and materials required to make the khari.

Indian actor Nana Patekar passes away

AP
New Delhi, Oct. 8

Nana Patekar, an acclaimed Indian actor and filmmaker, died Thursday at his home in the western state of Goa. He was 75.

Patekar died of a suspected cardiac arrest, the Press Trust of India news agency reported, citing a doctor at the hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Born in 1951 in India's western state of Maharashtra, Patekar built a career spanning nearly five decades in Hindi- and Marathi-language cinema. He was known for intense performances and roles that often portrayed complex or unconventional characters.

Patekar made his film debut in the 1978 Hindi film “Gaman,” and later earned acclaim for “Parinda” and “Krantiveer.” Patekar became popular in mainstream Bollywood films, while also working in India's “parallel cinema” movement, known for its focus on realism and social



issues. He gained wider international recognition with filmmaker Mira Nair's Oscar-nominated “Salaam Bombay!”

He won three National Film Awards, India's highest film honours, and received the Padma Shri, one of the country's highest civilian honours.

In 2018, during India's #MeToo movement, a Bollywood actress accused Patekar of sexual harassment on a film set. Patekar denied the allegation. The case was among several that drew attention as women publicly spoke about sexual misconduct in India's film industry.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi mourned Patekar's death, praising his “intensity, individuality and unmistakable presence” as an actor.

“He brought remarkable versatility and creativity to every role and gave us characters that will be remembered for generations,” Modi wrote on X.

Patekar is survived by his wife and son.

‘Kayata Tanmha Newa’ secures top spot



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 8

A valley-wide comedy-satire drama competition, organised by ‘Munasah’, concluded on Wednesday.

Founding members Madan Krishna Shrestha and Shreeram Shrestha recounted that ‘Munasah’ was established 50 years ago to foster comedy-satire drama in Nepalbhasa.

They noted that the organisation's rule of allowing participation only on an institutional basis led to the birth of numerous other Nepalbhasa organisations. Malla K. Sundar, Chancellor of the Nepalbhasa Academy, said the history behind the establishment of ‘Nepalbhasa Manka Khalah’, which was formed to unite these various organisations.

After a hiatus of several years, the competition was revived by a newly formed executive committee led by president Surendra Tuladhar following a generational handover of the ‘Munasah’ leadership.

Plays featured in the competition

included ‘Dhukuya Chuku’ (The Treasury Latch), ‘Emergency Shraddha’, ‘Wheelchair Kutun Wamha Manu’ (The Man Who Fell from the Wheelchair), and ‘Thwo Chhu Joogu?’ (What Happened?).

A total of seven comedy-satire plays were staged by seven different organisations, including. ‘Thwo Chhu Joogu?’ (What Happened?), ‘Kayata Madumha Ganedyo’ (Ganesh Without loincloth), ‘Kayata Tanmha Newa’ (Newar Who Lost Loincloth), and ‘Chhanta na Thathe Yaye Yola?’ (Do You Like Doing This Too?).

Among them, ‘Kayata Tanmha Newa’ secured first place, ‘Thwo Chhu Joogu?’ took second place, and ‘Emergency Shraddha’ came in third, while ‘Chhantana Thathe Yaye Yala’ won a consolation prize. Additionally, the best actor award went to Umesh Shapit (male) and Santa Maharjan (female).

The award-winning teams received cash prizes, shields, and certificates of appreciation from Kirtipur Municipality Mayor Krishna Man Dangol and comedian Madan Krishna Shrestha, in the presence of Kathmandu Metropolitan City Acting Mayor Sunita Dangol.

52-hand Lingas brought to Chandannath Temple

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Jumla, Oct. 8

The 52-hand-long lingas to be replaced at the Chandannath and Bhairavnath temples in Jumla have been brought from the forest. According to local tradition, the lingas are erected at the temples every year on Ghatasthapana, the first day of Dashain.

The lingas have been brought to the Chandannath Temple after being pulled from the forest. It has been a long-standing tradition for local devotees, members of the Chandannath Temple Management Committee, the Nepali Army, Nepal Police and other stakeholders to go to the forest on Trayodashi and bring the lingas to the temple.

This year, hundreds of devotees went to Radikhella forest in Chandannath Municipality-3 and pulled the lingas to the temple. The lingas for the Chandannath and Bhairavnath temples are prepared in the forest every year and brought to the temple with the participation of local people. The tradition of pulling the lingas from the forest is considered an important part of the local culture.

Along with the 52-hand-long lingas for the Chandannath and Bhairavnath temples, another linga is also brought for the local Dhanathapala community, following the traditional practice.

Members of the Nepali Army, Nepal Police, Armed Police Force and local residents pulled the lingas with ropes while playing traditional musical instruments and chanting slogans in praise of Chandannath and Bhairavnath. As the lingas are long and heavy, hundreds of devotees and security personnel take part in pulling them to the temple.



Devotees pull the 52-hand-long lingas for the Chandannath and Bhairavnath temples.

Amar Bahadur Thapa, chairman of the Chandannath Bhairavnath Temple Guthi Management Committee, said the tradition has been followed for a long time. According to him, people go to the forest a few days earlier to cut the trees, bring the lingas with the participation of devotees on Trayodashi and erect them at the temple on Ghatasthapana.

He said the tradition is an important festival of the Khas community.

The lingas are brought from Radikhella forest, around three to four kilometres from Jumla district headquarters. The lingas will now be cut and shaped before being erected on Ghatasthapana, according to the Guthi Sansthan.

Ramananda Acharya, a local

resident, said Chandannath Temple is one of the major religious sites in the Karnali region. Although various religious fairs are held at the temple throughout the year, the tradition of replacing the lingas and planting barley shoots (jamara) after worship on Ghatasthapana is an important part of Dashain celebrations.

Mia Goth files for divorce from Shia LaBeouf

AP
Los Angeles, Oct. 8

Mia Goth has filed for divorce from Shia LaBeouf nearly 10 years after the two actors were married.

The petition filed Tuesday in Los Angeles County Superior Court says the 32-year-old Goth and the 40-year-old LaBeouf have been separated since July 2025.

The two met and became a couple while filming “Nymphomaniac: Vol. II” in 2012, and married in 2016. They had previously split and said they were divorcing in 2018, but remained legally married, reunited in 2020 and had a daughter in 2022.

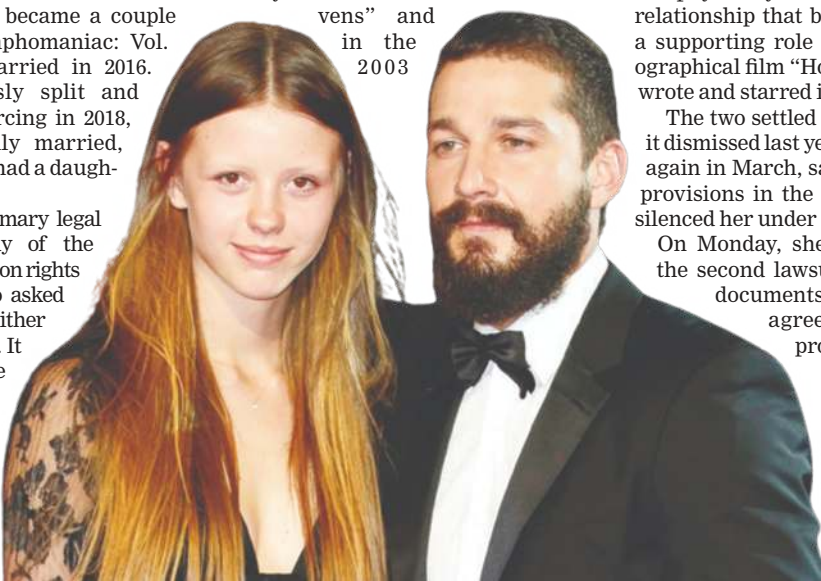
Goth is seeking primary legal and physical custody of the 4-year-old, with visitation rights for LaBeouf. She also asked the court to deny either party spousal support. It was the first marriage for both.

As with most U.S. divorces, irreconcilable differences were cited as the reason for the split. Representatives

for Goth and LaBeouf did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment.

The actor, born Mia Gypsy Mello da Silva Goth in London, most recently appeared as the unfaithful servant Melancho in this summer's “The Odyssey,” and had a dual role in last year's “Frankenstein.” She previously starred in the horror trilogy “X,” “Pearl” and “MaXXXine.”

LaBeouf was a child star on the Disney Channel's “Even Stevens” and



film “Holes.” He later starred in “Indiana Jones and the Crystal Skull” and director Michael Bay's first three “Transformers” films.

The day before Goth filed for divorce, LaBeouf, for the second time, settled a lawsuit with singer, songwriter and actor FKA Twigs, whom he dated when he was split from Goth.

FKA Twigs, whose legal name is Tahliah Barnett, had alleged in a suit filed in 2020 that LaBeouf emotionally and physically abused her during their relationship that began when she had a supporting role in the semi-autobiographical film “Honey Boy,” which he wrote and starred in.

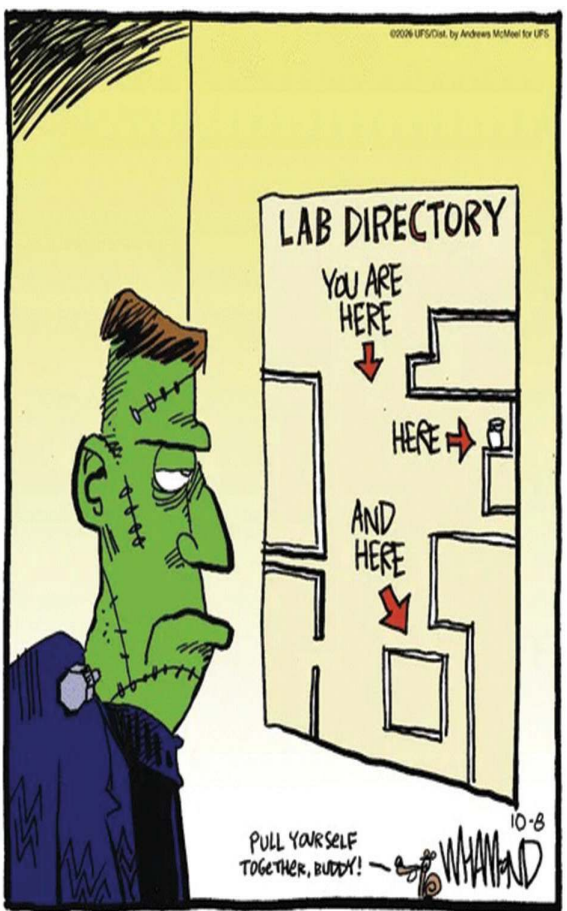
The two settled the lawsuit and had it dismissed last year, but she sued him again in March, saying nondisclosure provisions in the settlement illegally silenced her under California law.

On Monday, she moved to dismiss the second lawsuit, saying in court documents that LaBeouf had agreed to void those provisions.

In June, LaBeouf was sentenced to probation after pleading guilty to punching three people outside a New Orleans bar during Mardi Gras.

CARTOON

gocomics.com



Liverpool cauldron awaits City after verdict

AP
Liverpool, Oct. 8

Erling Haaland and Manchester City's other star players have watched from a distance as the club dealt with the fallout from being found guilty of large-scale financial wrongdoing in the biggest scandal in Premier League history. Now they have to face the music. City's first game back after an international window dominated by the explosive verdict in its long-running case with the Premier League comes on Sunday. And it just had to be at Anfield. A trip to Liverpool has long been considered the toughest, most fearsome away game of the season by City. It just got even tougher, with Haaland, Rayan Cherki and the rest likely entering a cauldron of hate and anger this weekend. Liverpool might consider itself the team which suffered most from the slew of financial misdemeanors carried out by City, according to the findings of an independent investigatory panel, between 2009-18 — the period when City's Abu Dhabi ownership was assembling a squad that would later dominate English soccer. Those findings are the subject of an appeal by City, which continues to assert its innocence. Under former coach Jürgen Klopp, Liverpool won the Premier League in

2020 but the team also finished second to Pep Guardiola's City by one point in the 2018-19 and 2021-22 seasons following memorable title races that raised the bar in terms of points earned and the standard of football played. What helped City to reach that level was nearly a decade of rule-breaking, the independent panel has found. So, expect Liverpool fans to be seething inside and outside of Anfield. They'll believe they are owed some titles. Aside from Phil Foden, who is suspended for the match, no current member of City's squad even played for the club from 2009-18. Enzo Maresca took over as City manager only in June. Still, they will be the ones bearing the brunt of the widespread discontent from fan bases up and down the country in the coming months. What will be intriguing is who from City's ownership or board attends the Liverpool game. How much will the matter weigh on the players under the most intense pressure? And what will be the reaction of City's match-going supporters, with the future of their club so uncertain — the potential sanctions include a huge points deduction, even expulsion from the Premier League — and the violations of its ownership clear for all to see in the commission's verdict? City leads the league on a maximum 15 points from five games — all of which were played when the club was being accused of those financial breaches.

Now the guilty verdict has arrived, it's time to see the impact on the team — and the reaction of its rivals. **Key matchups** The first game back after an extended three-week break for internationals is Arsenal, the defending champion, at home to Leeds on Saturday lunchtime. Manchester United hosts Tottenham — in last place on two points — in one of five other games on Saturday. Players to watch The international window was marked by a raft of injuries to high-profile Premier League players. Now to see how serious they are. Alexander Isak and Cody Gakpo returned to Liverpool for assessment of injuries picked up playing for Sweden and the Netherlands, respectively, and are currently doubts for the Liverpool-City game. So might be Haaland, who asked to be substituted midway through the second half of Norway's final Nations League game, but that might have been because of fatigue. Kai Havertz, who has been the starting striker for Arsenal this season, was injured in the first of four games played by Germany — though that was two weeks ago now. **Out of action** Certain to be missing is Bournemouth midfielder Alex Scott, who is out for up to eight weeks with a



PHOTO: AP
Norway's Erling Haaland claps his hands during warmup before the Nations League soccer match between Portugal and Norway in Porto, Portugal.

RSA READY IF RABADA MISSES

AP
Durban, Oct. 8

The Proteas would of course love Kagiso Rabada to be slinging thunderbolts at Kingsmead on Friday, the first day of Australia's first test cricket series in South Africa since the "Sandpapergate" scandal in 2018. Because of a hamstring injury, South Africa's premier fast bowler hasn't played since May. Rabada has been in the nets lately but the Proteas are leaving it as late as possible to green-light him. They also say they won't push him. Not with eight home tests between now and January and 10 left in this World Test Championship cycle for the defending champion.

Trust in depth And if there's one thing about South Africa's national cricket team, it's the trust in its entire squad to cope with setbacks and excel. Selections from out of the blue have constantly risen to the occasion. Medium-pacer Dane Paterson, out of the test side for four years, helped them qualify for the 2025 WTC final. Lungi Ngidi, out of red-ball cricket for 10 months, then helped them win that final against 2023 champion Australia at Lord's. Inspired by the victory, offspinner Simon Harmer made himself available at the age of 37, and took 30 wickets late last year to help South Africa win in Pakistan for the first time in 18 years and win a series in India for the first time in 25 years. "It feels like every time we win it's somebody else putting up their hand," Harmer said on Wednesday. "There's not this reliance on certain individuals."

CAS to rule on Senegal-Morocco title

AP
London, Oct. 8

Senegal and Morocco played a chaotic Africa Cup of Nations final in January and they contested the title again Thursday — this time at the Court of Arbitration for Sport which expects a verdict within days. A turbulent match, provoking violent clashes between Senegal fans and Moroccan police, and a hugely controversial fallout is being re-litigated at sport's highest court in Switzerland nearly nine months after the referee's final whistle blew in Rabat. The authority of that referee, Jean-Jacques Ndala of Congo, could be decisive in Senegal's appeal to regain the trophy that was stripped from players who earned it on the field of play with a 1-0 win over Morocco after extra time. The result was overturned in March to a 3-0 win for Morocco by a Confederation of African Football (CAF) appeals panel because Senegal's team walked off to protest a penalty being awarded, causing a 15-minute delay in play. CAS appeal hearing Lawyers and officials for the Senegalese and Moroccan soccer federations did not talk with media heading into



a one-day appeal hearing scheduled with three judges behind closed doors Thursday at CAS headquarters in Lausanne. The court's director general, Matthieu Reeb, told reporters the judges aim to give their decision "a few days later" to finally crown the champion of African men's soccer. "I know it's a long wait for the fans, a few months after the final," Reeb said. "The procedural calendar has been established with the agreement of the parties." The next AFCON kicks off in June, co-hosted by Kenya, Tanzania and

Uganda. Leaders of the Senegalese and Moroccan federations had been expected to skip the hearing that clashes with a three-day CAF soccer summit in Cape Verde being attended by FIFA President Gianni Infantino. Soccer laws say ref's word is final Soccer's rule book, The Laws of the Game, is clear about the referee's decision-making power. "The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored and the result of the match, are final," Law 5.2 states.

Pradip Rai Memorial Gold Cup today

BY BABURAM KARKI
Barahakshetra, Oct. 8

The first night-time football tournament is set to be held in Prakashpur of Barahakshetra Municipality-10, Sunsari. The 'First Pradip Rai Memorial Prakashpur Gold Cup-2083' will be held from October 9 at the ground of Shree Prakash Secondary School. Organised by Prakashpur Youth Group, the tournament will feature eight football teams from eastern Nepal, according to the organisers. Matches will begin at 6:00 pm. According to Manish Magar, chairman of Prakashpur Youth Group, the tournament is being organised for the first time as a night-time football competition in Barahakshetra Municipality. He said the tournament was being organised in memory of the late Pradip Rai. "We have organised the tournament to honour the memory of Pradip Rai and encourage young people to engage in sports," said Chairman Magar. The tournament, being organised with the message 'honouring memories, providing opportunities to youth and promoting sports', will be played under a knockout system. The winner will receive a cash prize of Rs. 222,222, while the runner-up will receive Rs. 111,111. Likewise, the highest scorer, best goalkeeper, best forward, best defender



PHOTO: BABURAM KARKI
The ground of Shree Prakash Secondary School.

and best coach will each receive Rs. 3,500. The player of the tournament will receive Rs. 5,000. The winner and runner-up teams will receive trophies, while players will be awarded medals and certificates. Prakashpur Football Club will provide technical support for the tournament. The organisers estimate that around Rs. 4.92 million will be required to organise the tournament. The organisers said efforts were under way to raise support from the

local government, ward office, businesspeople, social workers, sports enthusiasts and well-wishers to make the tournament a success. A press conference was organised at the ward office hall of Barahakshetra-10 to provide information about the preparations for the tournament. Ward Chairman Tej Bahadur Gurung, ward members, relatives of the late Pradip Rai, office-bearers of Prakashpur Youth Group, journalists and sports enthusiasts attended the event.

Bartunkova beats Muchova to reach China Open semifinals

AP
Beijing, Oct. 8

Nikola Bartunkova reached her first WTA 1000 semifinal after beating fellow Czech Karolina Muchova 6-3, 6-0 at the China Open on Thursday. Bartunkova stamped her authority on the quarterfinal by racing to a 5-0 lead against her seventh-seeded opponent. It was the 20-year-old Bartunkova's third career win against a top 10-ranked opponent. She next faces French Open champion Mirra Andreeva or Ekaterina Alexandrova, who played their quarterfinal later Thursday. Similarly, two-time major finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas beat qualifier Kimmer Coppejans 6-3, 7-5 in the Shanghai Masters first round on Thursday, continuing his slow climb back up the ATP rankings. Tsitsipas reached a career-high No. 3 ranking in 2021. He lost in qualifying at last week's Japan Open. At his previous tournament, the U.S. Open, he lost in the fourth round to eventual finalist Ben Shelton.



PHOTO: AP
Nikola Bartunkova of the Czech Republic celebrates after winning against Karolina Muchova of the Czech Republic during the quarterfinals of the women's singles match at the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing.

After slipping to No. 87 mid-year, Tsitsipas has worked his way up to 43. He next faces 18th-seeded Luciano Darderi. Big-serving Polish player Hubert Hurkacz had 19 aces in a 6-3, 7-6 (4) win against James Duckworth and next

plays No. 10 seed Djokovic, who won the China Open on Tuesday for a 102nd career title. Bernard Tomic, a former world No. 16 whose ranking dropped to as low as 825 four years ago, qualified for an ATP 1000 main draw for the first time in seven years. He lost his first-round match to Matteo Arnaldi 6-3, 6-1. The top seeds including Djokovic, U.S. Open champion Alexander Zverev and third-ranked Carlos Alcaraz received first-round byes and were not scheduled to play until the weekend or later. No. 1 Jannik Sinner withdrew from Shanghai this week when he announced he was taking the rest of 2026 off due to a right knee injury. Meanwhile, the Australian Open's 1 Point Slam will again have some star power in January with Carlos Alcaraz, Coco Gauff, Naomi Osaka and Jannik Sinner among the players set to compete against pros and amateur qualifiers for a 1 million Australian dollar prize. At the Australian Open launch on Thursday, organizers said qualifying events for the 1 Point Slam are underway at clubs and tennis communities across the country, and a further two

days of qualifying will be held during opening week ahead of the first Grand Slam tournament of the year from Jan. 17-31. The 1 Point Slam final will see the pros competing against amateurs and wild cards for the million dollar Australian prize (about \$700,000) at Rod Laver Arena on Jan. 13. Jordan Smith, a little-known local amateur player beat Sinner and went on to make himself a millionaire after winning the 1 Point Slam last January. Smith won on the third stroke of the final when Joanna Garland, the women's No. 117 from Taiwan, sent a two-handed backhand wide. All the matches lasted just one single point in a knockout bracket that included men and women, professionals and amateurs, plus celebrities such as Taiwanese pop star Jay Chou, who was knocked out without hitting a ball after an ace from Petar Jovic. "At the heart of the creation of the 1 Point Slam is our desire to even more deeply connect the Australian Open to every tennis community in the country," Andrew Abdo, Tennis Australia's new chief executive, said Thursday.

FIA to strengthen software testing

AP
Singapore, Oct. 8

The FIA has defended its handling of the Formula 1 car software bug which delayed the start of the Bahrain Grand Prix in Malaysia last weekend and pledged it will "strengthen" how the code is tested in future. Several drivers, including seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton, were left stuck on track when their cars lost power and had to be restarted on formation laps before Sunday's race. The on-board software failed to cope with drivers taking a more cautious approach ahead of the first wet race for the 2026 cars, which have a near 50-50 split between engine and electrical power. The FIA, the governing body for F1, on Thursday said its investigation found that cars "experienced a loss of power beyond the original intent and that could not be recovered." After the cars were stuck on track, the start was suspended as the FIA rushed out a software update. The

race eventually started almost an hour later, with no obvious software-related incidents, though the track had dried much more by then. The FIA says that update will be used again if it rains at this week's Singapore Grand Prix — the forecast says that's likely — with more changes at the following race on Oct. 25. "As a result, the configuration established for the Sepang event will be reinstated for the Singapore Grand Prix should similar weather conditions be expected," the FIA said. "Additionally, a further update to the wet weather software will be released for the United States Grand Prix." The FIA added that it, the teams and engine manufacturers "will continue to strengthen power unit software testing and verification capabilities, enhancing the overall validation process through independent assessment and collaborative feedback." Drivers were scathing of the software bugs last week in Malaysia. Hamilton likened driving the sluggish cars to gimmicky pre-race exhibitions the drivers have done previously and four-time champion Max Verstappen called for a "lesson learned."



Moscow Thru Eyes Of A Nepali Journalist

B

Friday, October 9, 2026

THE RISING NEPAL

Friday

SUPPLEMENT



Tea Auction For Sustainability

C

risingnepaldaily.com

Mountains Face Growing GLOF Threat



Indra Aryal



PHOTO: A. BYERS

Village of Tapetok (1380 m) on the Tamor River. Eyewitness claimed that the floodwaters of the 1963 Olangchun Gola 1 GLOF nearly reached the level of the houses in the foreground, or about 100 m above the river channel.

“Travelling through this area, one gets the feeling of entering a forgotten village, far removed from basic development facilities such as roads, schools and health posts. The rough and difficult road makes the journey even more challenging. At times, waiting for a vehicle for an entire day just to reach the site can make a reporter wonder whether they have lost the trail of the story altogether, especially when the vehicle breaks down in the middle of nowhere.”

At around 6:00 on the morning of June 23, 1980, Chunglamo Sherpa was grazing yaks in a large open pasture above Olangchung Gola in northern Taplejung when she heard a loud crash echoing through the mountains.

She did not know what was happening. Then the flood came. Water, rocks and debris rushed down the valley after Nangama (Nagi) glacial lake burst high above the settlement. Chunglamo and her husband, Chosang, ran towards higher ground. They survived because they were near the edge of the pasture. Others were not so fortunate.

“If we had been in the middle of the taar (field), we all would have been swept away,” Chunglamo recalled. “We were saved only because we were near the edge.”

Nearly 46 years later, the memory of that flood remains alive in Olangchung Gola and in the memory of Sherpa. The settlement lies at around 3,200 metres above sea level in the upper Tamor valley, surrounded by glaciers, glacial lakes, steep slopes and narrow valleys.

The flood swept away ten people, including two neighbouring children. Sherpa and her husband, Chosang Sherpa, managed to escape just in time. The flood destroyed their house and livestock shed and swept away six yaks belonging to her brother-in-law.

The Nangama Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) was triggered when an avalanche entered the lake and generated a large impulse wave, according to a study titled “Reconstructing the history of GLOF in the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA), East Nepal: An Interdisciplinary Approach”.

The study was conducted by researchers including Dr. Alton C. Byers, a US-based mountain geographer and glaciologist associated with the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research (INSTAAR) at the University of Colorado Boulder, and KU Associate Professor Dr. Mohan Bahadur Chand.

The flood originated from Nangama Glacial Lake in the Kanchenjunga region of eastern Nepal, about 8 km south of the Tibetan border. Debris from the flood dammed the Pabuk Khola about 2 km downstream, forming what is now known as Chheche Pokhari Lake, according to a 2020 study by the team.

The Nangama event was identified as one of the largest GLOFs recorded in the region, while ongoing landslide activity along the lake’s right lateral moraine has raised concerns over the possibility of another GLOF.

Dr. Chand said scientific studies and accounts from local historians indicate that at least six GLOF events occurred in the KCA up to 1980.

Another witness to the 1963 GLOF, Chungdak Sherpa, now 76, recalled that he was seven years old when the flood struck Olangchung Gola at around 6 to 7 p.m. He and his sister were in their fields when a debris-laden flood suddenly swept

through the area, destroying houses and farmland. They ran towards the Olangchung Gola monastery for safety along with other villagers. The monastery, located within the settlement, became one of the places where villagers sought refuge as the flood moved through the lower parts of the village. By the following morning, several houses and large areas of farmland had been swept away.

Chungdak said the disaster originated after a lake near the foot of the Khanglung Himal burst. Water initially flowed down as a small stream, but as it carried away trees, rocks and other debris, the flow became increasingly destructive and eventually swept through the settlement.

No one in the village was killed, as residents managed to flee in time. However, the flood destroyed much of the village and farmland. He recalled that the area gradually became more unstable, with houses collapsing one after another as the river deepened and eroded the land.

He also recalled that the lower part of the village, which once had a large market, was almost completely swept away. Only a small section of the market remains today.

Olangchung Gola lies at around 3,200 metres above sea level in the upper Tamor valley of northern Taplejung, close to the Nepal-China border. The remote settlement, historically a trading post on the route to Tipta La Pass, is part of the 2,035-square-kilometre Kanchenjunga Conservation Area, where the landscape rises from about 1,200 metres to the 8,586-metre summit of Mt. Kanchenjunga and includes steep valleys, glaciers, high-altitude lakes and deep mountain gorges.

This rugged terrain, combined with narrow valleys and numerous glaciers and glacial lakes, leaves settlements and infrastructure downstream exposed to sudden flows of water, ice and debris.

“Travelling through this area, one gets the feeling of entering a forgotten village, far removed from basic development facilities such as roads, schools and health posts. The rough and difficult road makes the journey even more challenging. At times, waiting for a vehicle for an entire day just to reach the site can make a reporter wonder whether they have lost the trail of the story altogether, especially when the vehicle breaks down in the middle of nowhere.”

History of GLOF risks

Historical records also document a 1921 GLOF from Lhonak Lake, which affected Khangpachen and Ghunsa. The flood destroyed agricultural fields in Khangpachen, forcing surviving residents to move down the valley to Ghunsa and effectively abandon their settlement.

The 1963 Tiptola Lake GLOF severely damaged Olangchung Gola, Jaritar and Tapethok, destroying around 45 houses and killing two children at Jaritar. In Tapethok, floodwaters rose nearly 100

metres above the riverbed, destroying farmland, according to Dr. Byers.

In 1980, the Nangama (Yangma) Lake GLOF affected Yangma, Olangchung Gola, Lunthun, Siwa, Dobhan and Jongin. An estimated 11.2 million cubic metres of water was released, destroying about 4.5 square kilometres of yak grazing land, according to research by Dr. Byers.

Talking to The Rising Nepal, Chheten Walung (Lama), chairman of Olangchung Gola Ward No. 7 of Phaktanglung Rural Municipality in Taplejung, said that after the GLOF, most of the residents moved elsewhere, with many now living in Kathmandu and the district headquarters.

There are currently 20 houses in Yangma Valley, but only nine families are living there. He added that he lost his own house in the 1980 flood. However, an earlier flood in 1963 had displaced almost half of the valley’s 90 original households, while others had already migrated. They never rebuilt their houses, he said.

“I still see Khanglung Lake as the highest risk because there is no official study on the depth of the lake or how much water would flow into the village if it bursts,” he said.

The history of repeated floods in the area is now being viewed against a changing Himalayan landscape, where glaciers are retreating, ice is being lost, and new glacial lakes are forming.

Dr. Byers said 22 glacial lakes in the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA) had been identified as potential flood risks, of which eight were ranked as “high priority” and required detailed flood modelling, risk assessment, hazard mapping and community preparedness planning.

The KCA covers about 2,035 square kilometres in the north-eastern corner of Nepal, along the borders with China and India, and covers about 56 per cent of Taplejung district. The conservation area includes several high-altitude valleys and settlements, including Yangma, Olangchung Gola, Ghunsa, Khangpachen and Lhonak, which lie downstream of or close to glaciated mountain catchments.

A 2025 study using high-resolution satellite imagery identified 140 glacier-proximal lakes in the KCA in 2023, including 76 supraglacial and 27 proglacial lakes. The study assessed 10 larger lakes for GLOF hazard, highlighting the changing nature of the region’s glacial lakes and the need for continued monitoring.

The rapid retreat of glaciers, loss of ice and formation of glacial lakes are increasing the potential for larger and more frequent floods. Glacial retreat in the region has been documented since the 1850s.

The number of glacial lakes larger than 5,000 square metres in the Kanchenjunga region of the upper Tamor River basin increased from 31 in 1964 to 157 in 2018, according to a 2020 study by researchers including Dr. Chand and Dr. Byers. The study covered six sub-basins of the Kanchenjunga watershed region and found that the total area of these lakes increased from 1.74 square kilometres in 1964 to 5.74 square kilometres in 2018.

At least eight GLOFs have occurred in the KCA since 1963, three of which caused major damage to downstream infrastructure. In addition to visibly growing glacial lakes, some lakes have not yet formed but are likely to develop in the near future.

Nepal has a large number of glacial lakes distributed across the country, with recent studies showing that the Koshi Basin has a particularly high concentration. Within the basin, the Tamor, Arun and Dudh Koshi river systems contain significant numbers of glacial lakes, with the Dudh Koshi having especially many.

However, the classification of potentially dangerous glacial lakes is based on their size and potential hazard and can change over time. Statistics for Kanchenjunga and Taplejung may therefore have changed, but an updated classification is not yet available.

“There are probably three or four lakes that have already been identified as potentially dangerous, but comparatively little field-based research has been conducted in the area,” Dr. Chand said.

The risk remains significant as existing lakes continue to grow and new ones form. In one recent case, modelling showed that a proposed visitor centre near a river in the Kanchenjunga area could be at risk if a glacial lake burst. Researchers advised that the facility should not be built so close to the river, and an alternative location is now being considered, he said.

Climate scientist Dr. Sudeep Thakuri warned that the risk extends across the Nepal-Tibet Himalayan region, where interconnected mountains, steep valleys and large ice masses at high elevations could trigger disasters with impacts far downstream.

Citing the Khumbu Valley, Arun Valley and Tamor Basin, he said the recent Bhotokoshi incident showed the urgent need to strengthen monitoring and preparedness in Nepal’s mountain regions.

“If an ice mass can fall and cause such a massive event this far downstream, we need to think much more seriously about the risks in our major valleys,” he said, urging close monitoring of river valleys originating both in Tibet and Nepal.

Although major rivers are monitored through water-level measurements, he said monitoring remains inadequate in border and high-mountain areas. Nepal needs to identify critical locations for additional monitoring systems and establish mechanisms to share information in real time.

Lessons to be learned

The recent devastating Bhotokoshi flood is therefore another reminder of the need for Nepal to systematically map, assess and monitor glacial lakes and other potential ice-related hazards in the country’s mountains.

With climate change accelerating glacier melt and increasing instability in high-altitude areas, experts said identifying vulnerable lakes, ice masses and river valleys, along with establishing effective early warning and monitoring systems, should be an immediate priority, particularly in remote border and mountain regions.

While talking about the government policy on monitoring glaciers and glacial lakes, Dr. Maheshwar Dhakal, spokesperson at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forest and Environment, said Nepal’s mountains are facing increasing climate risks, but the country still lacks adequate information on the level of risk and vulnerability of individual mountains.

“Therefore, research institutions in Nepal should periodically assess mountain hazards, risks and vulnerabilities. Based on these assessments, local, provincial and federal governments should introduce climate adaptation programmes according to the level of risk, while local governments should prioritise adaptation measures related to GLOFs, forest fires and other climate-related hazards in their budget planning,” he said.

Nepal has been implementing the National Climate Change Policy 2019 and is now revising it based on five years of experience. The revised policy is expected to give greater priority to studies and research on the mountains.

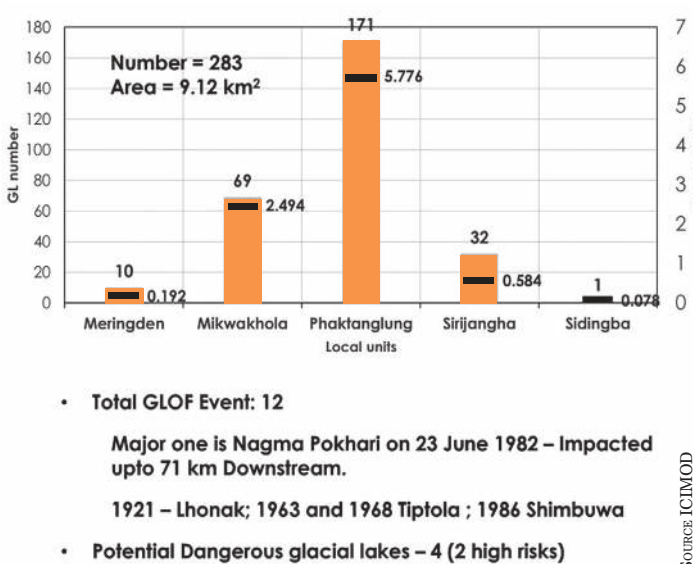
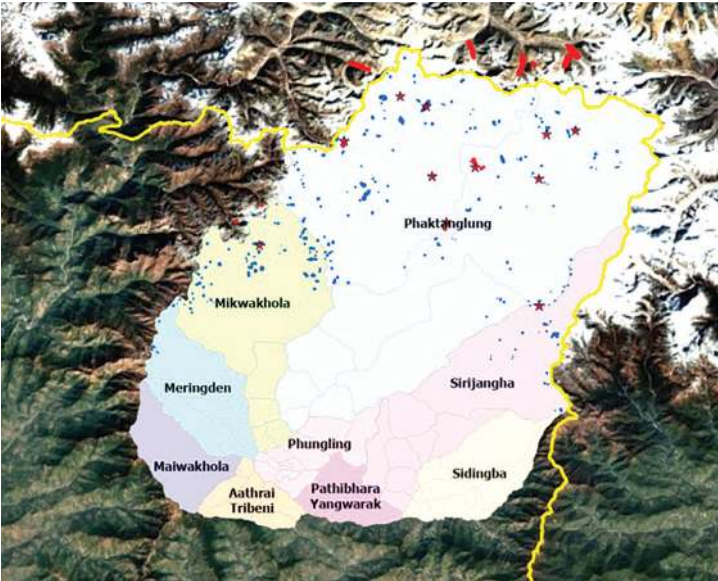
The recent Bhotokoshi flood has also shown that existing research is not sufficient, requiring greater investment, resources and support for both research institutions and government agencies to strengthen mountain and glacier studies, Dr. Dhakal said.

According to the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)’s latest report, Nepal has seen over 90 GLOFs since the early 1920s, and the Everest region has withstood five significant events in less than 50 years- including the 1985 GLOF of Dig Tsho, which struck the neighbouring valley to the Thame event, wiping away a newly constructed hydropower plant.

Walung said, “The Mountains may appear quiet today, but for communities living beneath them, that silence does not necessarily mean the danger has gone.”

(Aryal is a journalist at The Rising Nepal.)

Glacial Lakes in Taplejung



Moscow Thru Eyes Of A Nepali Journalist



Renuka Dhakal

Russia has been home to some of the world’s greatest literary figures, including Anton Chekhov, Alexander Pushkin, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy. Their contributions have become an important part of the country’s cultural heritage, and their legacy continues to be preserved and celebrated.

A short trip to Moscow, Russia, was far more than a journey from Nepal to another country. This tour provide an opportunity to witness firsthand the beauty and culture of a country built through thousands of years of history and culture.

From September 20 to 26, I had the opportunity to visit Moscow as part of the Sputnik Pro International Agenda under the New Generation programme. The visit offered an opportunity to experience the city’s distinctive character, historic landmarks and vibrant urban life.

The journey began at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu at 11:30 pm on September 19. Excited and overwhelmed by the thought of visiting Russia for the first time, sleep was difficult during the flight. The journey included a transit in Guangzhou, China, before finally arriving at Sheremetyevo International Airport in Moscow.

After completing immigration formalities, I was welcomed by a member of the organising team, along with another Nepali participant. We then drove towards the city. Looking through the car window, the roads, buildings and surrounding landscape offered my first glimpse of Moscow. Everything felt new and fascinating, particularly the well-managed roads, orderly urban landscape and impressive surroundings.

We reached the AZIMUT City Hotel Smolenskaya at Smolenskaya Square, in the heart of Moscow. Its central location, close to Arbat Street and the iconic Ministry of Foreign Affairs building, made the arrival even more memorable.

A warm welcome from the organising committee and the view from my room on the 15th floor added to the excitement. The first call was to my husband and family, with whom I shared the breathtaking view of Moscow from the hotel window. Being thousands of kilometres from home while sharing that moment with loved ones made the experience particularly special.

There was also excitement about trying Russian food and experiencing the local flavours and culture that I had heard so much about.

About the programme

I participated in a journalism workshop organised by Rossotrudnichestvo in partnership with the Sputnik International News Agency and Radio in Moscow. The programme covered various aspects of journalism through sessions led by experts in the field.

On the second day, participants from 18 countries, including Nepal, Nicaragua, Thailand, Tanzania, Mongolia, Malaysia, Morocco, Bangladesh, Mexico, India, Cambodia, China, Lebanon, Egypt, Uruguay, Ethiopia, Oman and Serbia, were welcomed by Vasily Pushkov, Director of International Cooperation at the Rossiya Segodnya Media Group; Konstantin Kolpakov, Deputy Head of Rossotrudnichestvo; and Magomed Mezhev, Head of the Directorate for Work with the Countries of the Middle East, Africa and Europe at Mosturism.



A group of journalists from different countries, including Nepal pose for a group photo in Moscow recently.

Vasily Pushkov delivered a keynote speech on the “Future of Global Media”, followed by a tour of the Rossiya Segodnya newsroom.

The workshop covered a wide range of subjects, including news angles, headline writing, breaking news, geopolitics, news-feed operations, new media, fake news, misinformation, military journalism, media features and brand monitoring. The lectures and practical sessions offered valuable knowledge and new perspectives while creating opportunities to exchange ideas with young journalists from different countries.

Moscow attractions

Beyond the journalism programme, Moscow displayed its history and creativity in the form of its historical monuments and film infrastructure. A visit to Red Square, one of Moscow’s most iconic landmarks, was another memorable part of the trip. Surrounded by some of Russia’s most important landmarks, Red Square brings together history, architecture and modern city life. St Basil’s Cathedral, the historic walls and towers of the Kremlin, the State Historical Museum and the famous GUM department store make the square particularly spectacular.

What fascinated me most was its architecture and the way the historic surroundings reflect Russia’s cultural and political past. The experience left a lasting impression.

We visited Moskino Film Park, about 27 kilometres from central Moscow. The huge open-air film complex offers visitors a glimpse into the world of filmmaking. It features more than 36 outdoor sets, six film pavilions and 14 supporting facilities, including hotels, warehouses and parking areas.

According to the tour guide, the park was designed to accommodate large-scale film productions while also allowing visitors to explore the filmmaking process. Its extensive sets include Yurovo Airport, Vitebsky Railway Station, a live-action chroma-key set, Moscow as it appeared

in the 1940s, Cathedral Square, Moscow during the Constructivist era, a Tu-154 aircraft, a Far Eastern town, cities inspired by the Middle East and Central Asia, and contemporary Moscow.

The park combines cinematic creativity with natural landscapes, allowing visitors to experience different periods, cities and cultures in one place.

Spread over 519 hectares, the park is also set to expand to more than 1,100 hectares by 2030, according to the tour guide. Hundreds of feature films and television series have been shot there. The visit offered a new perspective on the scale of Russia’s film infrastructure and its efforts to promote filmmaking and the creative industries.

On the final day of the programme, participants visited the Ostankino TV Tower, which stands 540.1 metres high and is one of Europe’s tallest free-standing structures.

The strict security arrangements were noticeable from the moment we entered the park. Several layers of security checks were required, including passport verification. Interestingly, Russian citizens also have to present their passports before entering the tower.

Completed in 1967, the tower is an impressive example of Soviet-era engineering. Originally built for television and radio broadcasting, it has also become a popular attraction for both local and international visitors. From the observation area, visitors can enjoy a panoramic view of Moscow.

Standing high above the city and looking across its vast urban landscape was a surreal experience. From that height, Moscow appeared completely different.

The view also prompted reflection on how Russia has developed its infrastructure, technology and urban spaces. It raised an important question about what Nepal can learn from such development.

There is much to draw inspiration from in infrastructure, technology, cultural preservation, art and filmmaking. Nepal, too, has enormous potential. Its stunning landscapes, diverse cultures and

rich traditions provide a strong foundation for developing tourism and making the country a more attractive destination.

The visit to Ostankino Tower therefore became more than a sightseeing experience; it was one of the most memorable moments of the Moscow trip.

Lasting impressions

One of the first things that stood out was Moscow’s architecture. The consistency in the colours and heights of buildings gives the city a distinctive appearance. Many structures are built in off-white tones, while the numerous tall buildings and skyscrapers add to the impression of a highly developed urban centre.

The roads were another noticeable feature. There appeared to be relatively little dependence on traffic police, while drivers generally waited patiently for pedestrians to cross.

The Moskva River, with ships moving along it, adds another dimension to the city. At the same time, Moscow’s modern character exists alongside a strong commitment to preserving its history, literature and culture.

Russia has been home to some of the world’s greatest literary figures, including Anton Chekhov, Alexander Pushkin, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy. Their contributions have become an important part of the country’s cultural heritage, and their legacy continues to be preserved and celebrated.

The Russian House in Kathmandu had already helped me learn more about Russia before the trip. The Moscow visit, however, provided an opportunity to experience some of that history and culture firsthand.

The journey would not have been possible without the organisers and everyone involved in the programme. Their time, effort and hospitality made the visit both meaningful and memorable.

(Dhakal is a journalist at The Rising Nepal.)

A Month Of Celestial Wonders



Dr. Rishi Shah

ASTRONOMY

The night skies of this month offer the fascination and enchantment of planets, constellations, stars and enigmatic entities of the heavens. Planets Mercury and Venus would be concealed in the Sun’s brilliance. Cherishing them is not easy this month. They would be marching through the constellations Virgo (maiden) and Libra (scales). Mercury reaches its greatest eastern elongation on 12 October. One could marvel at Mercury tersely. It climbs above the horizon in the evening sky. Otherwise, it could be lying low in the western sky after sunset. Lament star Spica (Chitra) would bejewel Virgo. It is whooping 250 light-years away. Planet Mars can be manifested after sunset in the eastern sky.

It creeps high after midnight. It would vanish from view as morning dawn breaks. It is roaming through a congenial but compact constellation, Cancer (crab). Planet Jupiter rises almost at midnight in the eastern sky. It would crawl up in the sky and become unobtrusive as the day commences. It is trudging through the charming constellation Leo (lion). Blue-white star Regulus (Magha) scintillates below Jupiter. It is remarkably 79 light-years away. Ringed planet Saturn appears in the eastern sky as dusk fades to darkness. It sneaks away up to a towering height in the

southern sky. It would then dip down towards the western horizon by sun-up. It is sliding through a confounding non-zodiacal constellation.

Cetus (sea monster). Startling star Mira the variable beautifies Cetus. Planet Neptune is noticeable on its eastern flank. On 04 October Saturn will make its closest approach to Earth (dubbed opposition). It will be bedazzling more than any other time of the year all night long. Through telescopes avid fans could admire Saturn’s tilted rings and its mesmerising moons. Planet Uranus is discernible after evening twilight as a gleaming dot of light in the eastern sky. It will be aloft in the southern sky during wee hours of the night. It is lost in the western sky at dawn before sunrise. It would be loitering in the constellation Taurus (bull). The orange-red-coloured huge star Aldebaran (Rohini) sparkles below Uranus. It is unprecedentedly 65 light-years away. The far-flung bluish planet Neptune could be appreciated in the eastern sky after sundown. It would be ascending the southern sky. By day’s beginning it will not be distinguishable in the western sky. It is perceptible in the southern realm of the sprawling constellation Pisces (fishes).

NIGHT SKY IN OCTOBER 2026

The new moon falls on 10 October, while the full moon (Kojagrath Purnima) occurs on 26 October. This full moon is popularly proclaimed as the hunter’s moon because at this time of year the leaves are falling and wild games are ready for hunting. Venerated Bijaya Dashami is cheerfully celebrated on 21 October. The Draconid meteor shower would be exhibiting sparsely ten meteors per hour.

It is produced by dust grains left behind by comet 21P/Giacobini-Zinner, which was disclosed in 1900. Draconids are unusual showers. Its best performance would be presented during the

evening instead of early morning like most other showers. It can be savoured from 06 to 10 October. It displays its peak this year on the night of 07 October.

The waning crescent moon will not hamper its watching during the evening from murky venues far away from disturbing city lights. Draconids will exude energetically from the circumpolar constellation Draco (dragon). Numerous deep-space objects abound in Draco. The Cat’s Eye Nebula (NGC 6543), approximately three thousand light-years away, would bewitch Draco. Inconspicuous but historically important binary star Thuban resides in Draco. The radiant for Draconids stands in the neighbourhood of the orange-hued star Eltanin and the yellowish supergiant star Rastaban that are tagged as dragon’s eyes in the imaginary head of Draco in the northern sky.

They are circa 154 and 380 light-years away, respectively. Draconids are enjoyed during the evening because the shower’s radiant flies high in the October sky. Michel Giacobini unveiled the comet on 20 December 1900 from Nice Observatory in France. Now it bears his name. 21P/Giacobini-Zinner is periodic with a 6.6-year trail around the Sun. On 23 October 1913, German astronomer Ernst Zinner recognised the same comet. It became the first comet to be encountered by a space probe. The International Cometary Explorer (ICE) visited this comet in September 1985.

Astronomers in the 20th century speculated that meteors and comets were related by justifying spectacular meteor showers raining down from 70 kilometres on average towards Earth.

The Orionid meteor shower would divulge up to paltry twenty shimmering shooting stars this month per hour at its maximum moments during the night of 21 October till the morning of 22 October. It originates as it passes through tiny pieces left behind by comet 1P/Halley, which has been witnessed since ancient times. The shower is seen annually from 02 October to 07 November.

The waxing gibbous moon (82 per cent lit) adds a fair bit of light pollution and blocks fainter meteors in the evening.

As the moon sets after midnight, tenebrous skies will act as a backdrop for an excellent morning show that can be relished in inky locations. Meteors will spring out from the renowned constellation Orion (hunter alias Mrigasira or Kal Purush). The radiant sits just above the red supergiant star Betelgeuse (Ardra) that seemingly marks the hunter’s left shoulder. Orionids emanate from a prominent point near the mythical raised club of Orion. Meteors are deemed the fastest (roughly 66 kilometres per second) while entering the atmosphere. Bewildering Betelgeuse is beguilingly 640–1000 times the Sun’s radius. If placed at the centre of our solar system, Betelgeuse would extend enormously beyond Jupiter’s trajectory. It is absolutely 548–650 light-years away. The moon mingles with stars in Aquarius (water bearer). Meteor showers ardently arise when earth tumbles through streams of debris particles left behind in the wake of comets and asteroids.

The progenitor of the Orionids is the famed iconic comet 1P/Halley. It hurries around Sun assertively every 76 years. Dusty dreags expelled from the comet’s nucleus are left behind in its track. We intercept this path in late October each year. The nucleus of the comet loses between 0.1 and 0.3 metres of material on each passage through the inner Solar System. Measuring 08 by 14 kilometres in size, it can handle aeons of orbits around the Sun.

It was the first comet to have its return predicted by Edmond Halley. The comet typically gets bright enough to be easily visible with recorded observations since 240 BC. It is one of few comets identified not after its discoverer but after the person who calculated its circuit. Presently, it is at its farthest point from the Sun at 35.55 AU near the head of the captivating constellation Hydra (water snake). Halley’s Comet had a

rendezvous with Earth in 1986 and will hopefully sprint back in 2061. One astronomical unit (AU) is the mean distance between the sun and earth. It is comfortably equal to 150 million kilometres. Light from Halley requires quirkily 04 hours and 55 minutes to greet us.

Astronomers using the massive MeerKAT radio-telescope array in South Africa for studying short, repeating bursts of radio waves have ferreted out a peculiar planet outside our solar system. They were not dispatched by an alien civilisation trying to contact us. The source could be a magnetic field around a planet interacting weirdly with auroras resembling the Northern and Southern Lights on earth.

The signal was from young gas giant star Beta Pictoris, which is meagerly 63.4 light-years away with three puzzling planets dwelling in scanty southern constellation Pictor (painter’s easel). It has been immensely difficult to filter out any planetary signals from the noise of nearby stars. Separation of these from a particular type of star was made possible for the first time. These were circularly polarised, which is a classic signature emitted by a planet’s aurora. Beta Pictoris is larger, hotter and structured differently from stars like our Sun. Radio waves were coming from one of the exoplanets, rather than the star itself. Meticulous investigation confirmed those bacons were ejected from Beta Pictoris-b, the second planet out from the star. Beta Pictoris-b indicates a star that is strangely ten times the mass of Jupiter.

The planet’s magnetic field further insulates the surface from harmful radiation that would destroy any life and helps to hold the atmosphere together against the ravages of solar wind. If aurora signals could be isolated from exoplanets, conditions favourable for life on exoplanets could perhaps be figured out.

(Dr. Shah is an academician at NAST and patron of NASO)

Tea Auction For Sustainability



Dr. Ganesh Prasad Khanal

Nepal’s tea industry stands at a crossroads as growers continue to struggle to determine fair market prices for their products. With thousands of farming households depending on the sector, tea has the potential to become a major foreign exchange earner for the country.

However, the industry remains heavily dependent on India’s market and has yet to establish a systematic tea auction system. Analysts say the debate over introducing a tea auction system in Nepal is closely linked to the very survival of the country’s tea industry.

According to the National Tea and Coffee Development Board, Nepal currently has around 20,600 hectares under tea cultivation, with an annual production of more than 26.1 million kilograms of finished tea. The industry directly involves more than 15,000 tea farmers, 170 tea estates, and 120 large and small processing centres, which altogether employ roughly 60,000 people. In fiscal year 2081/82 (2024/25), Nepal exported 15.6 million kilograms of tea, earning close to Rs.4.59 billion.

However, behind these positive numbers, there may be a potentially dangerous situation. Over 96 per cent of Nepal’s tea exports are heading to one country, India, and almost 99 per cent of these are black (CTC) teas. The situation over the past 15 years shows almost no signs of improvement, as the export volume to India was 98.3 per cent in FY 2008/09 and currently stands at 96.2 per cent as of FY 2023/24. While analysing monetary value, around 86 per cent of earnings come from India and the remaining from other countries. Two eastern districts account for 99.4 per cent of national tea processing, with roughly 68.3 per cent of processed tea being CTC. Analysts state that such a heavily monopolar and singular export structure poses a serious long-term threat to the nation’s tea industry, as even a single wrong step from a policy standpoint in the only market may cripple the entire domestic industry.

Although India has never outright banned the import of Nepali tea, the industry repeatedly runs into trouble due to pressure, quality and pesticide-testing pretexes, and other strict non-tariff barriers. As Nepal has no internationally recognised testing laboratory, it has to rely on Indian laboratories to certify its tea.

Importance

A tea auction is an organised market mechanism in which registered producers present graded, sampled tea for open, competitive bidding among registered buyers. A neutral broker handles listing, sample distribution and payment reconciliation, while an independent warehouse stores the tea until it is sold. The flow of goods runs from producer to warehouse to buyer, while payment flows in the opposite direction from buyer to broker to producer, minus commission.

In the world’s major tea-producing countries like India (Kolkata, Guwahati, Siliguri, Kochi), Sri Lanka (Colombo) and Kenya (Mombasa), the auction model is the internationally recognised and proven standard for price discovery. In each of these countries, the respective tea board handles regulation, while private associations such as the Colombo Tea Traders Association in Sri Lanka or the East African Tea Trade Association in Kenya operate the auctions themselves. In Sri Lanka, roughly 95 per cent of tea is still sold through the Colombo auction today; in Kenya the figure is 75–80 per cent; in India, only about 50–60 per cent of tea goes through auction, with the rest sold via private agreements.

Nepal’s own journey toward an auction system has not been smooth. Starting in fiscal year 2014/15,



“The absence of a domestic professional auctioneer firm means the country would have to depend on international brokers — and if trading volumes fail to meet expectations, brokers or auctioneers could simply withdraw their services, leaving tea stranded in warehouses with no buyers.

the National Tea and Coffee Development Board conducted feasibility studies, drafted auction guidelines and built auction software. In 2015, the "Nepal Tea Auction Operation Directive" was formally approved, defining a regulatory committee, broker rules, warehouse standards and quality benchmarks. But the proposed financial incentive package — a 60 per cent VAT refund, a 5 per cent buyer subsidy, and 75 per cent warehouse loan financing — has still not been approved by the Ministry of Finance. The result: a full year’s rent on the auction centre went to waste, and the system was never launched. More than a decade later, this stalled initiative remains an underpinning question mark over Nepal’s capacity to implement its own policies.

The most important function of an auction is to reduce Nepal’s strong dependence on the Indian market and help internationalise Nepali tea. Many countries are still unaware of Nepal’s tea production and its quality. A well-structured auction system can help introduce Nepali tea to international borders and establish it as a recognised product in global markets. Auctions can support sustained growth in Nepal’s tea industry by creating transparent and competitive price discovery. They can reduce information asymmetry and ensure that tea is valued according to quality. Auctions can also diversify markets by connecting Nepali tea with buyers across India, South Asia, and international markets. Standardised testing and grading can improve quality assurance, strengthen Nepal’s tea reputation, and encourage higher-quality production. A well-managed auction system can improve payment reliability, giving growers greater confidence to invest in tea cultivation. Auctions can also increase international awareness by providing a platform for new buyers to discover and trade Nepali tea. Together, these benefits can strengthen market access, quality, farmer incentives, and the long-term competitiveness of Nepal’s tea industry.

Challenges

The biggest risk is weak institutional capacity: the Tea Board currently lacks the technical manpower, budget and sustainable structure to regulate an auction system effectively, and this is widely seen as the

single greatest long-term obstacle. Beyond that, the absence of a domestic professional auctioneer firm means the country would have to depend on international brokers — and if trading volumes fail to meet expectations, brokers or auctioneers could simply withdraw their services, leaving tea stranded in warehouses with no buyers.

There is also a genuine fear that premium orthodox and organic estates — tea that can fetch more than NPR 4,000 per kilogram in markets like EU and China — could be undervalued on the auction floor as if it were ordinary bulk tea, although mandating that only about 50 per cent of production go through auction could partly mitigate this risk. Divisions within the industry itself are another serious challenge: smaller producers largely favour the auction system, while larger producers, including the Nepal Tea Development Corporation, have reportedly opposed it, partly out of concern that price transparency will strengthen farmers’ demand for fair prices, and partly out of reluctance to expose past pricing or tax irregularities.

The lack of an internationally recognised testing laboratory compounds the problem, forcing Nepali tea to sell at a discount into India simply because certification from Nepal’s own food and quality-control authority is not always accepted abroad; different countries demanding different certification protocols could make the process especially costly and difficult for small producers, a structural bottleneck that needs resolving before an auction system can truly succeed. On the production side, a chronic shortage of organic, nitrogen-rich fertiliser further complicates the broader sustainability picture.

Way forward

The real question is no longer whether Nepal should introduce tea auctions, but how to implement them effectively and sustainably. This requires aligning tea policy with federalism, strengthening the Tea Board, establishing an independent regulator, and adopting a phased approach that initially brings around 50 per cent of tea production to auction.

Existing facilities in Jhapa and Ilam can support the initial phase, while Nepal should develop internationally standard warehouses for about 25 million kg of tea. An internationally experienced auction operator, an accredited tea-testing laboratory, and a public-private partnership model are also essential, with the government focusing on regulation and infrastructure and professionals managing day-to-day trading.

The most immediate step of all is swift approval of the incentive package that has sat pending for years. Only if all of these pieces move forward together can an auction system become the genuine foundation for a sustainable future for Nepal’s tea industry. Otherwise, an initiative launched more than a decade ago risks remaining confined to paper, leaving thousands of Nepali tea farmers to endure the same price injustice they have faced for years, even longer.

(The author has completed a PhD in economics from Peking University.)

FUTURE WATCH

(Based on birth names)

From October 9th to 15th, 2026

- D. N. Lohani



ARIES

Obstacles will gradually be removed. You will retain partial progress. Financially a productive period is in store for you. Travel will turn profitable. A health disorder is predicted. The family won't cooperate.



TAURUS

Income and expenditure will maintain balance. Hardship will be key to progress. Opponents will remain active. Family may not provide adequate support. Prayer of Indrayani will help. Weekends can contain challenges. Travel is likely.



GEMINI

Health-related expenditure will rise. Trade and profession both will turn profitable. Friends and family both will cooperate. The present period is creative for authors. You may even create a new memorable article.



CANCER

Initially, major tasks will be completed successfully. A high level of confidence will guide you ahead. You may have to tolerate a cold-cough-related problem from Sunday. Important tasks will be completed successfully on Wednesday and Thursday. Business will turn profitable.



LEO

Excessive expenditure can cause concern. Circumstances will improve from Sunday. The job will provide a limited return. Trade and profession both will turn profitable. The prayer of Lord Ganesh will help.



VIRGO

Celebration or similar events will occur. You may have to treat others at your own expense. Trade and profession both will turn profitable. With some effort, study will take a progressive course. Family will cooperate. The opposite sex will provide good support.



LIBRA

Handle valuable goods carefully during the initial period. Circumstances will improve from Sunday. You will enjoy pleasant meetings with friends and relatives. Philanthropic activities can keep you engaged.



SCORPIO

You will find it difficult to control expenses but enjoy sound income. Travel is in store for you. Religious activities can take place. You may develop less interest in the job. Monday will bring challenges.



SAGITTARIUS

A busy timetable will also yield an impressive return. You will be drawn toward entertainment. Friends may not provide adequate support. Recreational activities can keep you engaged. Investment will generate a return.



CAPRICORN

An advantageous week is in the store. Financial status will improve. Religious activities can occur. Misunderstanding with a family member is likely. The prayer of the goddess will help.



AQUARIUS

You may have to tolerate health disorders and other challenges during the first half. Social prestige won't rise. Opponents will remain active. Trade and profession will both turn profitable. Students will have to work hard.



PISCES

An ordinary week is in store. Income will be lower than expected. You will find it difficult to control expenses. Business will provide some return. Students will have to work harder. Travel will be less comfortable. Prayer of Bhairab will help.

Advancing Nepal’s Bridges



Er. Indu Sharma Dhakal

“The insights presented in this book provide a strong foundation for such future initiatives and underscore the importance of developing indigenous engineering knowledge for Nepal’s sustainable infrastructure development.

Infrastructure development drives Nepal’s economic progress, with bridges serving as essential lifelines connecting isolated communities, commercial hubs, and vital public services. While attention often focuses on striking superstructures, the structural integrity and longevity of any bridge rest almost entirely on what lies beneath: its foundation.

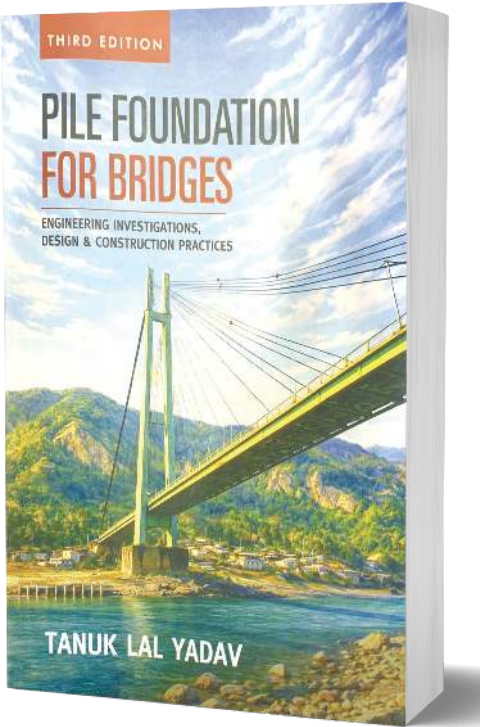
In this context, the third edition of Pile Foundation for Bridges by Er. Tanuk Lal Yadav, former Secretary to the Government of Nepal, represents a significant contribution to the country’s growing body of technical literature.

Practical, field-tested books by working Nepalese engineers remain rare, and rarer still are those that successfully adapt global design standards to Nepal’s unique terrain and complex geology.

The book is much more than a conventional textbook. It begins with the fundamentals of pile foundation engineering and gradually expands into planning, site investigations, design principles, construction practices, quality assurance, and long-term maintenance. The explanations are supported by numerous illustrations, diagrams, tables, flowcharts, and engineering examples that make complex concepts easier to understand.

Perhaps the most compelling addition to this edition is the inclusion of real-world case studies analysing bridge failures. In a landscape regularly threatened by flash floods, severe river scour, seismic hazards, and unstable slopes, understanding structural vulnerability is crucial.

By examining the technical causes behind past failures, the author prompts readers to critically evaluate initial design assumptions, river morphology, and site quality assurance – offering lessons often missing in standard academic curricula.



While engineering fundamentals are universal, local geography demands contextual application. Many standard texts available in South Asia reflect flatland or coastal conditions; Yadav’s work directly addresses the engineering realities of the Himalayan region.

The language is clear, concise, and accessible. Senior undergraduate students will find it an effective learning resource, while consulting

Book: Pile Foundation for Bridges

Publisher : Tanuk Lal Yadav

Publication date : 7 April 2026

Edition: Third Edition

Language : English

Print length : 460 pages

ISBN-10 : 9905002545

ISBN-13 : 978-9905002548

Reading age : 18 years and up

Generic Name : Structural Engineering Book



BOOK REVIEW

engineers, contractors, project managers, researchers, and government officials involved in bridge projects can use it as a practical reference. The recent adoption of the book as a reference text for a Bachelor’s-level bridge engineering course at the Institute of Engineering, Tribhuvan University further reflects its academic value and growing acceptance within engineering education.

While engineers seeking cutting-edge numerical modelling or niche research algorithms may need supplementary materials, Pile Foundation for Bridges achieves its primary goal with distinction: providing a clear, practical, and localised manual for bridge foundation engineering.

As Nepal expands its strategic road corridors and invests in resilient infrastructure, the need for indigenous technical literature authored by

experienced local practitioners has never been greater. Er. Tanuk Lal Yadav’s latest edition sets a high standard, earning a well-deserved place on the shelves of university libraries, consultancy firms, and government departments nationwide.

The publication also highlights the need to strengthen Nepal’s research and institutional capacity in transport infrastructure. In this regard, the establishment of a Transport Research Board (TRB) under the Ministry of Infrastructure Development, in collaboration with the Federation of Contractors’ Associations of Nepal (FCAN), the Society of Consulting Architectural and Engineering Firms (SCAEF), the Institute of Engineering (IOE) Tribhuvan University, and the Society of Transport Engineers Nepal (SOTEN), would provide a national platform for coordinated research, innovation, and policy support.

Such an institution could spearhead research in: development of Nepal-specific design codes and standards; advanced construction materials suitable for Nepal’s diverse climatic and geological conditions; innovative construction technologies for mountainous and challenging terrain; and long-term performance monitoring, asset management, and maintenance systems for transport infrastructure.

The insights presented in this book provide a strong foundation for such future initiatives and underscore the importance of developing indigenous engineering knowledge for Nepal’s sustainable infrastructure development. Details regarding the book, its contents, and ordering information are available on the website: www.tanuklalyadav.com

(Dhakal is a former director general of the Department of Roads.)

Vultures Rising From Brink Of Extinction



Krishna Prasad Bhusal

Vultures are large-sized, efficient scavenging birds, feeding mostly on the carcasses of dead animals and are found on every continent except Antarctica and Oceania. Vultures play a highly important ecological role through the rapid consumption of animal carcasses. They safely dispose of dead animals and help in preventing the spread of zoonotic diseases such as rabies, anthrax, tuberculosis and brucellosis.

Vultures also have an important cultural role. In sky burials practised in Nepal and Tibet, the dead are cut into pieces and offered to vultures following the advice of priests. This practice is associated with the Lama people of the Trans-Himalayan region and other communities, including the Sherpa. In the dry Himalayan environment, where burial and cremation can be difficult, vultures help dispose of human remains. In Hindu mythology, a vulture is said to be the carrier of Shani (Saturn), while the vulture Jatayu fought Ravana in an attempt to rescue Sita in the Ramayana.

Vultures were common in Nepal in the 1990s but faced a dramatic population decline across the Indian subcontinent in the early 2000s. The major cause was the veterinary drug diclofenac, which was widely used to treat livestock in Asia. Vultures are highly susceptible to the drug and are exposed when they feed on the carcasses of treated animals. Consuming sufficient amounts of diclofenac-contaminated tissue can cause kidney failure and visceral gout.

Of the nine vulture species found in Nepal,

four—the White-rumped Vulture, Slender-billed Vulture, Red-headed Vulture and Indian Vulture—are listed by the IUCN as Critically Endangered, the highest category of endangerment. The Egyptian Vulture is Endangered, while the Himalayan Griffon and Bearded Vulture are classified as Near Threatened.

Nepal has implemented both in-situ and ex-situ conservation measures to halt and reverse the decline. One of the initial challenges was the process of withdrawing diclofenac from the veterinary market with little awareness in government circles, civil society, and the private sector. Another difficulty was the magnitude of the task and the necessity of coordinating conservation efforts over large areas.

In Nepal, the production and use of veterinary diclofenac have been prohibited since 2006, and Vulture Conservation Action Plans for 2009-2013, 2015-2019, and 2023-2027 were adopted. The purpose of such programs is to save the existing vulture species through re-introduction, food safety measures, protecting the natural habitat, and studying the ecological importance of vultures with the ultimate purpose of ensuring the viable population of wild species.

Nepal's vulture recovery programme, initiated in 2002, has adopted a participatory approach involving advocacy, education, monitoring, research, captive breeding, supplementary feeding and site protection. Over the past two decades, government agencies, conservation organisations, communities, veterinarians, pharmacies and livestock owners have worked together to protect vultures.

The country pioneered the concept of working with local communities to establish Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) in 2009. Sustained efforts and partnerships led to the declaration of the world's first Vulture Safe Zone—the Gandaki-Lumbini VSZ—in Nepal in 2021. The zone covers nesting, roosting and foraging areas in Gandaki and Lumbini provinces.

The declaration was based on pharmacy surveys showing that veterinary diclofenac had been removed from sale, the absence of NSAID-related mortality among GPS-tagged vultures and high survival rates typical of Gyps vultures. The removal of diclofenac and increased



use of meloxicam, a vulture-safe alternative, have contributed to population recovery. The recovery of two Critically Endangered vulture species in Nepal has been linked to progress in the Vulture Safe Zone programme.

The Gandaki-Lumbini VSZ was declared during the 11th annual general meeting of Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction (SAVE) on December 2, 2021. Following Nepal's lead, Vulture Safe Zones are being implemented in Cambodia,

Myanmar, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and African countries. SAVE, a consortium of 24 partners working to conserve Asia's threatened vultures, leads this approach. Nepal's partners include the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, National Trust for Nature Conservation and Bird Conservation Nepal.

Nepal also established the world's first community-managed Vulture Safe Feeding Site, known as a Jatayu Restaurant, in 2006 at Pithauli, Kawasoti, Nawalparasi. Similar sites have since been established at six other locations. These facilities collect old and unproductive cattle from nearby villages, keep them for at least seven days to ensure they are free of diclofenac and feed their carcasses to vultures after natural death.

Jatayu Restaurants link biodiversity conservation with ecotourism and livelihood opportunities. They also provide shelter for aged and unwanted cattle that might otherwise become a burden on farmers. Communities around these sites have developed plans to conserve vultures and other wildlife while promoting sustainable practices and eco-tourism.

Scientific research has shown encouraging signs of recovery. The White-rumped Vulture, one of South Asia's most endangered birds, has continued to increase in Nepal since around 2012-2013. A recent study found that its population grew by about 12.7 per cent annually from 2013 to 2025.

GPS tracking of wild White-rumped Vultures found estimated annual survival rates of 94.7 per cent for adults and 95.5 per cent for immature birds. The study identified adult survival as the most important factor influencing population growth. Between 2007 and 2025, 6,410 nests were monitored, with an average of about 69 per cent successfully producing young. Nesting success also increased over time, indicating that vultures are not only surviving but reproducing successfully.

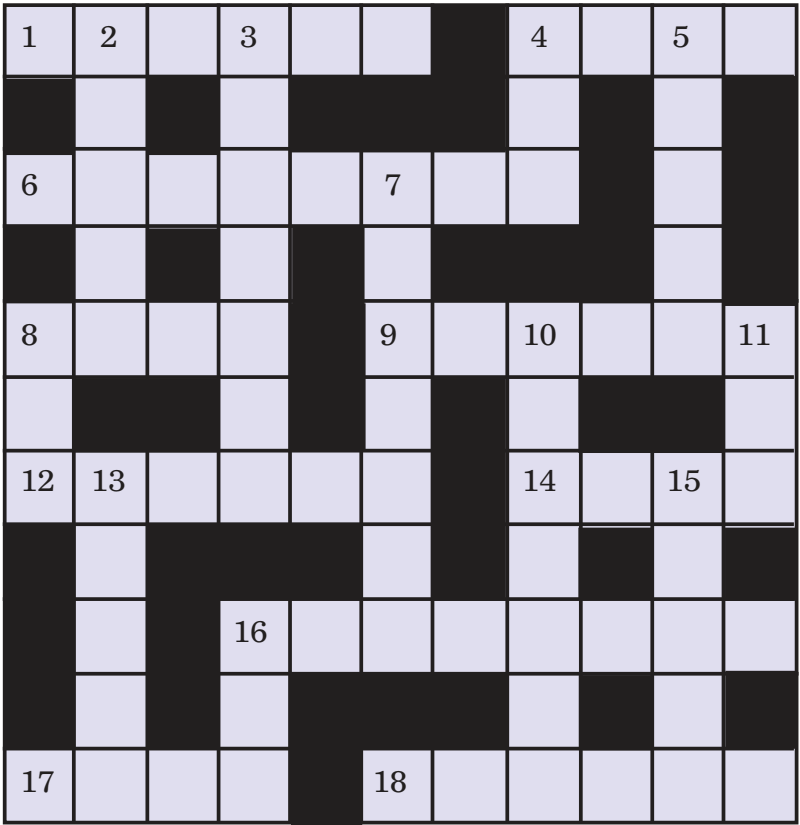
Despite this progress, the recovery remains vulnerable. Although veterinary diclofenac has been removed from Nepal, other vulture-toxic drugs, including nimesulide, aceclofenac and ketoprofen, have recently been banned but may still be available in the market. All vulture-toxic drugs used in veterinary medicine must be removed from the environment to ensure the continued recovery of Critically Endangered species.

Other threats, including carcass poisoning, human persecution, electrocution and localised shortages of food caused by alternative carcass-disposal practices, could also limit population recovery. Continued efforts to strengthen Vulture Safe Zones are therefore essential. Because vultures move across borders, stronger transboundary cooperation with India is also needed at both conservation and government levels.

The story of the White-rumped Vulture offers a powerful lesson: a species can decline from abundance to the brink of extinction in a remarkably short time, but concerted conservation can bring it back. After more than a decade of recovery, the results are visible in Nepal's skies. This success, however, cannot be taken for granted. It depends on the choices made today.

Photos: Author
(The author is a Co-chair of the Asia Regional IUCN Vulture Specialist Group.)

TRN CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO. 1898



Across

1. Somewhat fat
4. A fibre used for weaving
6. Typical characteristics of a person
8. A public gathering
9. To take non-serious interest in an activity
12. To collapse
14. A board game
16. A very bad or unfair society
17. A precious stone
18. A colourless, odourless gas

Down

2. To lift a heavy object
3. A defensive wall
4. An animal
5. Related to royalty
7. To deal with a problem
8. An angry group of people
10. A platform on an upper floor
11. A sense of self
13. To take someone's property illegally
15. To operate a vehicle
16. A dish made from lentils

Last date of entry:
October 14, 2026

Win a prize of Rs. 600. In case there are more than one correct entry the prize will be split into three sums of Rs. 200 each. The winner will be selected by a lucky draw. Only cuttings (not photo copy) that include the Crossword Puzzle no. will be accepted.

Name:

Address:

Solutions to TRN Crossword Puzzle No. 1897

ACROSS: 1. ACCEDE 4. ICON 6. TRIBUNAL 8. META 9. UPBEAT 12. PANEER 14. NOVA16. CONVULSE17. USER 18. ASTRAL
DOWN: 2. CURSE 3. EMBRACE 4. ILL 5. OMEGA 7. NEUTRON 8. MAP 10. BANQUET 11. TEA 13. AMASS 15. VISTA 16. CAR



Mahendra Kumari Nath, Mulpani, Kathmandu
Bal Krishna Shrestha, Kanya Mandir Galli, Kathmandu
Archana Devi Shrestha, Nhyokha, Kathmandu

AI Weakens Minds



Kashyap Gautam

Artificial Intelligence, or AI, has been a revolutionary tool – some people call it the greatest discovery after fire. It is one of the most profound inventions of humankind, to an extent where some actually fear it. It has gained mass popularity in recent years and become a household topic for people to discuss. Its unique intellectual capability intrigues humans, both fascinating and alarming them.

Whether we see AI as a positive or negative outlet, the truth is it has taken over. Nowadays, AI is almost everywhere, inside and outside the digital screens. Most of the posters and banners are created by AI tools. The logos, the placard, and even the billboards are generated with the help of AI. Official works take place with the help of artificial intelligence. These changes signal a lack of human creativity – the human race being reluctant to use their own cognitive ability.

However, AI's most prominent usage can be seen in the virtual world. Social media is filled with low-effort AI content creation, undermining actual human-made, high-effort media. In recent years, spending absurd hours on social media has become a norm. In addition, the content most people watch on it has also been noted as low in productiveness and knowledge. Therefore, when we include 'slop' AI content in the already synthetic media, it becomes hazardous.

For instance, approximately 20 per cent of new YouTube content is said to be made with the help of some sort of artificial intelligence. Five years ago AI's role was almost non-existent in the context of content creation; AI just existed behind the scenes as a tool for content moderation and content personalisation. Back then most of the content was original or at least required human

effort. Quality channels that used animation as their way of presenting spent countless hours ensuring their work is distinct and first-rate. Thumbnails (a video's preview image) require skill and creativity. Whereas fast forward to now, it is totally different. AI channels use prompts to replicate human-made thumbnails or even the whole video. The unsettling part is they make huge profits from it. In simple terms, it's open plagiarism with a few low-effort generative changes that allow the media to run freely.

On platforms like Instagram and TikTok, the situation is equally worse. Fake clips showcasing disasters or gruesome events go viral, deceiving some users. Low-purpose content featuring animals or famous celebrities gains millions of views. The content is low-effort and nonsensical with no real thought. The sad reality is these videos are actually becoming trends and gaining recognition.

This type of content is generally referred to as 'AI Slop'. The type of media that requires no real human effort and has no meaningful incentive is simply AI-generated and highly fabricated and deceiving. It goes against the very idea of creativity and unique ideas. 'AI Slop' pushes the agenda that cognitive labour is a waste of time. This exact agenda creates a false narrative on how life works. In life you must put your effort and time in order to achieve your goals, but when tools like AI literally spoon-feed you, your ability to think and create starts deteriorating.

Artificial intelligence is not necessarily the problem. The issue arises when it's used to undermine human effort. When we use AI for tasks that simply don't require an external intelligence, we are slowly decreasing our own thinking capacity. Artificial intelligence should be used as a helping tool rather than a replacement for basic human thinking. At the end of the day, it is humans who made AI, not vice versa. Therefore, it is essential we balance AI usage and not let it consume us in any way. We must keep thinking and keep creating on our own – for we are the most innovative species.

Modern Indian School, Grade: X

QUIZ OF THE WEEK

64

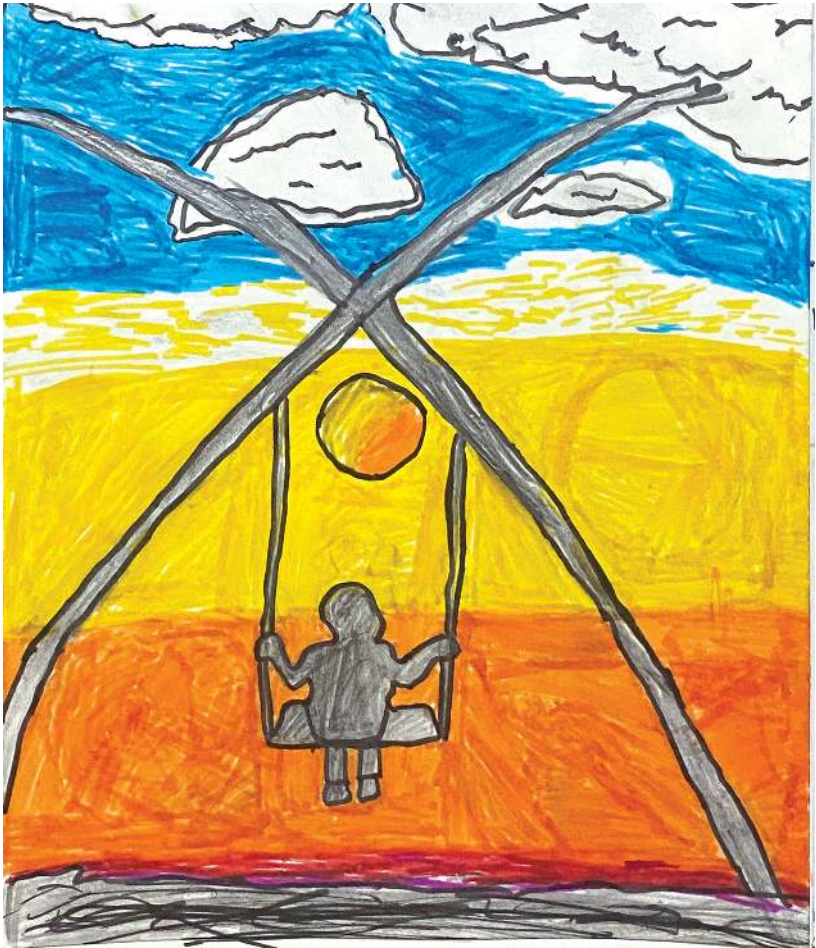
Prepared by: Bishwo Nath Kharel

Questions

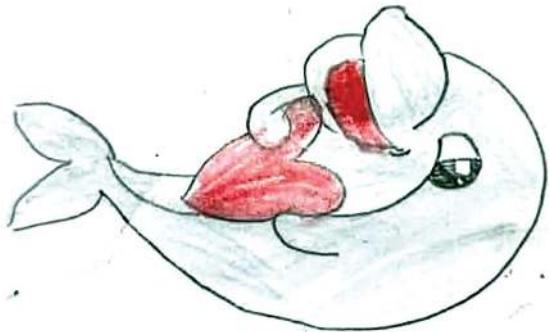
1. What is the place where bees live called?
2. Which states were known as the Trishakti during the Nepal unification campaign?
3. When was WhatsApp founded in social media?
4. Which is the northernmost district of Nepal?
5. How many countries are there in the 'European Union' (EU)?

Answers

Shreya Shrestha, Dikshanta Pathshala



Sashwat Ghimire, Grade: III, Kalpabrikshya Shikshya Sadan, Kathmandu



Ridhvik Adhikari, Grade: I, Kastamandap Vidhyalaya



Monsoon Kandel, Grade: XI, LRI School