Wednesday, October 30, 2024
Kattik 14, 2081 | Nepal Sambat 1144 | Kaulaaga Trayodashi

NATION'S 1ST ENGLISH BROADSHEET

risingnepaldaily.com
Vol. LIX, No. 315 | Pages 8 | Rs. 5 | National Edition

THE RISING NEPAL

ALL BE HAPPY, ALL BE WELL

PHOTO: PM SECRETARIAT

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli awarding an Armed Police Force (APF) officer for excellent performance at the convocation ceremony of the Armed Police Force, Serial Number-16 of the Police Inspector at the National APF Academy in Matatirtha, Kathmandu on Tuesday.

No room for anarchic acts: PM Oli

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has clarified that attempts to divide the Nepali people under various pretexts and incite chaos and communal hatred will not be allowed to escalate. While addressing a pass-out ceremony of the Armed Police Force, Serial Number-16 of the Police Inspector at the National APF Academy at Matatirtha, Kathmandu, Prime Minister Oli said that anarchic and unlawful activities will not be allowed to succeed or even to flourish. Prime Minister Oli congratulated the trainee police officers who are to be deployed for maintaining peace in the country while facing natural disasters and other challenges.

He said that necessary legal amendments are being prepared to make the APF more effective and enhance its facilities. Prime Minister Oli praised the role of the Armed Police Force in maintaining security in border areas and wished for the organisation to elevate its capacity, status, and work.

Likewise, Minister for Home Affairs Lekhak said that the evolving security challenges could only be addressed through training and deployment that align with modern times. He said that the APF has been building its identity by demonstrating professional skills in carrying out responsibilities entrusted by the state and handling unforeseen crises.

He added that the Ministry is working to make the Armed Police Force technology-friendly and adaptable.

"The Ministry of Home Affairs is working diligently to enhance the infrastructure, management of manpower, and necessary modern equipment for the Armed Police Force deployed across all 77 districts," he said. "I assure you that the Ministry will provide all necessary support in policy development and implementation," he said.

The Home Minister instructed the APF to remain vigilant, as they have in the past and present, in achieving results with the resources at hand. "If each member of the security forces operates within the limits of the constitution and prevailing laws, and works with dedication to protect human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law will be strengthened," he said.

Praising the role of modernised, scientific training in building skilled and pragmatic officers for the state, Minister Lekhak highlighted that a clear and systematic approach benefiting all within the Armed Police Force will be maintained.

He said that the new Armed Police Act aims to specialise the Armed Police Service and will be presented in the upcoming Federal Parliament session.

"We are moving forward with the process of updating the current laws and creating new legislation for the Armed Police Force. I am confident that this will make the APF more capable, strong, and professional," he said.

"The consultation on the new law is in its final stage, and we will present it in the Federal Parliament session for enactment," he said.

The government has also been working on a policy that will enable special appointments for athletes by creating specific positions for them, he said

The ceremony was attended by Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister Bishnu Prasad Rimal, Chairman of the Public Service Commission Madhav Regmi, Chief Secretary Ek Narayan Aryal, Chief of the Army Staff Ashok Raj Sigdel, Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs Gokarna Mani Duwadee, Inspector General of Police Basanta Bahadur Kunwar, and Inspector General of Armed Police Force Raju Aryal, among others. A total of 45 trainees successfully completed the training and are ready to be deployed in the field.

TIHAR FESTIVAL BEGINS FROM TODAY

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

Tihar, the second greatest festival of Hindus, is starting with Kaag Tihar on Wednesday.

People celebrated Dhanteras on Tuesday by buying gold, silver and utensils. It is believed purchasing gold, silver, utensils and making business deals on this day is expected to bring wealth and prosperity.

Nepal Calendar Determination Committee (Nepal Panchanga Nirnayak Samiti), the government authority for deciding festival dates and times as per the traditional Hindu calendar, stated that the auspicious hour for this year's Bhai Tika is 11: 37 am on Sunday, November 3.

According to the Committee, the Yamapanchak, the five days of the annual Tihar festival, begins on Wednesday by worshipping Kaag (crow).

Kaag Tihar and Dhanwantari Jayanti fall on the same day on October 30, Kukur Tihar, Dipawali and Laxmi Puja fall on October 31, Gai Puja, Govardan Puja, Hali Puja and Mha Puja fall on November 2.

» SEE PAGE 6

Nepal earns Rs. 4.75 billion from carbon trading

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

The Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) informed that Nepal has earned Rs. 4.75 billion (US$ 35.27 million) through carbon trading.

The income is made through eight different carbon trading projects operated by the AEPC since 2011 as the country reduced a total of 6 million tonnes of carbon emissions, its Executive Director of Nawaraj Dhakal said at the programme organised to celebrate the 28th anniversary of the AEPC in the Capital on Tuesday.

The centre has earned US$ 2.87 million from carbon trading in the last Fiscal Year 2023/24. According to Dhakal, about 6 million tonnes of carbon has been sold through the centre. Last year, it recorded the minimization of carbon emission by 542,000 tonnes.

Likewise, through the promotion of renewable energy technology, 542,866 metric tons of carbon emissions have been reduced and an income of US$ 28.05 million has been generated through carbon trading.

PHOTO: TRN

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Dipak Khadka attending anniversary function of AEPC.

Dhakal mentioned that the amount of carbon trade will increase in the coming years as efforts and effectiveness of reducing carbon emissions are increasing.

"The key physical progress of the last year includes the installation of 1,312 KW mini/micro hydropower plants, 390 KW solar/wind minigrid plants, 8,306 solar home systems, deployment of 26,256 electric cookstoves and 4,508 metallic improved cookstoves," he said. Likewise, there was construction of 3.042 domestic biogas plants, 349 solar photovoltaic pumping schemes for drinking water and irrigation, and 311 institutional solar photovoltaic systems for powering remote healthcare facilities and community schools.

Addressing the anniversary programme, Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Dipak Khadka, said that the centre is playing an important role in Nepal's electrification and new laws are being drafted to further facilitate it so that it could meet the demands of changing time.

» SEE PAGE 6

'Development and environmental protection should go together'

RSS
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

Minister for Communication and Information Technology Prithvi Subba Gurung has said that the work of development and environmental protection should be carried together.

In a meeting with the newly elected working committee of Nepal Forum of Environment Journalists (NEFEJ) at the ministry today, he mentioned that the welfare of the majority of the people should be considered along with environmental protection while carrying out the development construction works.

Also spokesperson of the Government, Minister Gurung, said both acts of obstructing the development works and cutting down trees randomly in the name of the projects are not right.

Minister Prithvi Subba Gurung

Minister Gurung emphasised the need to call upon the world for compensation by internationalising the issues including the impact of climate change on Nepal's environment.

On the occasion, NEFEJ President Chandra Shekhar Karki shared about the functions of the Forum while seeking more support for the construction of the NEFEJ office building.

Nepal, WB sign Rs. 20bn deal for climate-induced hazard

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

The government of Nepal and the World Bank signed a US$150 million equivalent (Rs. 20 billion) financing agreement for contingent financing that can be availed in the case of a natural or climate-induced hazard or health emergency in Nepal.

The Nepal Disaster Resilience Development Policy Credit with Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option (Cat DDO) operation supports policy and regulatory reforms to increase disaster resilience and strengthen institutional mechanisms for effective disaster response.

It also supports the government in improving early warning communications and building the policies, institutions, and regulatory frameworks needed for risk reduction and risk-informed investment in critical infrastructure, as well as increasing preparedness for public health emergencies.

Ram Prasad Ghimire, Secretary, Ministry of Finance, and David Sislen, World Bank Regional Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka have signed an agreement in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Bishnu Prasad Paudel and World Bank Vice President for South Asia, Martin Raiser on October 23, 2024.

"The Cat DDO is important for Nepal as it helps address climate-related as well as other natural catastrophe and health-related crises by providing contingency financing. It will enhance the country's crisis preparedness, prevention, and response by providing immediate and flexible liquidity that is particularly important during the time of fiscal pressure," stated Ram Prasad Ghimire, Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

Contingent financing through the Cat DDO complements the Government's existing response mechanisms, such as the National Disaster Management Fund and the Prime Minister's Disaster Relief Fund.

» SEE PAGE 6

Mha Puja: A celebration of self in Newari culture

BY SUSHMA MAHARJAN
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

The Newar community celebrates Mha Puja with reverence, marking the start of the Nepal Sambat New Year on Kartik Sukla Pratipada, a tradition tracing back over 1,500 years to the Licchavi era.

This unique ritual, translating to 'worship of the self,' is a day dedicated to self-purification, reflection and receiving blessings from the clan deity for health and prosperity in the coming year. Unlike other ceremonies often led by the family head, Mha Puja emphasises individual worship and personal connection with the divine.

According to Naresh Bir Shakya, a Language and Culture advocate, Mha Puja is the main day of the three-day 'Swonti' festival, meaning three days which is popularly known as 'Tihar' among non-Newars. He explains, unlike other communities Newars observes distinct rituals during Swanti.

"The first day of 'Laxmi Puja' is the

end of the year; we do the closing and submit the accounts to the Goddess Laxmi and worship her and seek blessings," he said. "The second day is a New Year. On the day, we worship own self to be powerful, healthy and self-reliant. That is followed by the Kija Puja, where sisters worship their brothers."

Shakya emphasises that Newari culture celebrates both the tangible and intangible supports in life, with the belief that such items, through reverent use, empower individuals to remain strong, self-reliant and resourceful throughout the year. Therefore, on the occasion of the beginning of the year, during Mha Puja, Newars also worship everyday items that make life easier, from brooms to 'gha' (water vessel), 'hasa' (woven bamboo trays used for winnowing grains), mortar and pestle and stove.

Shakya also explains how Mha Puja aligns with other Newari rituals, like the Dashain festival, where tools and equipment essential for livelihood are worshipped. By recognising the value of these items, Newars ensure that the strength and positive energy of the objects at their homes continue to support them.

Rajendra Manandhar, a 47-year-old resident of Kilagal, shared that his family's Mha Puja traditions centre around family connection and renewal. The day begins with a purifying bath to welcome the New Year, followed by Mha Puja in the evening. "We gather, sitting in rows on the basis of age. The rituals begin by creating mandap for each individual and two additional mandap, one at the beginning and at the end. The first in the name of clan deity and later for Yamaraj's guardians," he said. "We begin the puja by worshiping the mandap first and worshiping oneself for healthy life throughout the year, ending up with family feast."

Dr. Rajan Lal Joshi, Head and Associate Professor at the Central Department of Nepal Bhasa, explains that Mha Puja draws upon the five elements that constitute the human body and the universe. Mandaps are crafted with five ingredients, five colours and five fruits, symbolizing five elements.

» SEE PAGE 6

BULLION
(Rs. per tola)

Hallmark Gold	: Rs. 1,68,500
Worked Gold	: NA
Silver	: Rs. 2,105

STOCK

NEPSE	: 2,692.05
Total Amount	: 6,128,264,580.33
No. of Share	: 13,373,481

Ilam: A choice for Indian tourists

BY KOKILA DHAKAL
Ilam, Oct. 29

With the end of the monsoon season, Ilam, a district known for its stunning tourist attractions, has seen an increase in the number of visitors arriving from India.

The number of Indian tourists visiting attractions from Kanyam and Shree Antu to Sandakpur via Ilam has steadily increased. Other attractions for tourists are Sandakpur, Kaalpokhari, Tumling, Meghma, Manebhanjyang and Pashupatinagar.

According to the Tourism Information Centre in Pashupatinagar, there is also a notable presence of tourists from West Bengal, India, who often visit Darjeeling and cross over to Pashupatinagar on their return trip.

Grishma Subba, Chairperson of the Eastern Jeep and Taxi Business Association in Ilam, said that he guided 38 Indian tourists on motorcycles through Ilam's route to Sandakpur and bid farewell there. He said, "The road from Ilam to Sandakpur via Maipokhari is in better condition now.

Even though it is unpaved, the journey is smooth. We escorted the tourists to Sandakpur on motorcycles and other Indian travellers are also reaching out for similar trips through Ilam."

As part of their journey to Sandakpur, tourists are welcomed and bid farewell with complimentary tea at the Jaribire Tea Industry's sales centre in Ilam's Biblyate.

From Sandakpur, located at an altitude of 3,636 metres, visitors can enjoy close-up views of the Kanchenjunga and Kumbhakarna mountains, as well as the plains stretching to Bangladesh.

PHOTO: KOKILA DHAKAL/TRN
Indian tourists from West Bengal on a motorcycle tour being welcomed in Biblyate, Ilam.

Sandakpur also offers attractions like sunrise views, encounters with local yak and sheep herding and opportunities to explore red panda habitats.

Shree Antu, another popular spot, has also seen a surge of tourists. Even with less clear weather, many are coming to enjoy the area, said Dipen Pulami Magar, a staff member at the ticket counter of the Suryodaya Municipality in Antu.

With schools closed for Dashain, Tihar and Chhath festivals, a larger number of students are making the most of the long break, said Rudra Ghimire, Chairperson of the Shree Antu Tourism Business Association. "This year, the daily number of visitors has been quite high, and the homestays, hotels and cottages here are fully booked. Indian tourists have been particularly drawn to Shree Antu as a favourite destination," Ghimire said.

Currently, around 500 to 1,000 tourists spend the night in Shree Antu each day. This year, there has been a significant influx of Indian tourists from places like Sikkim, Darjeeling, Gangtok, Kolkata, Guwahati and Assam, many arriving with their own vehicles.

According to Ghimire, tourists enter Nepal via Kakarbhitta in Jhapa, visit Kanyam and Antu, worship at the Pathibhara Temple and return through Pashupatinagar. Tourists from the Tarai region are especially charmed by the tea-picking experience and the sunrise views in Shree Antu. The boating experience in Antu Pokhari (lake) is another popular attraction.

In addition to well-maintained hotels and cottages among the tea gardens, homestays have become an appealing option for visitors who wish to understand the local lifestyle and experience a true sense of Ilam's hospitality.

IMMIGRATION OFFICE ESTABLISHED

RSS
Galeshwor (Myagdi), Oct. 29

An immigration office has been established at Korala check point at Lomanthang of Upper Mustang. According to the District Administration Office, Mustang, the office would be officially inaugurated within a few days.

Assistant Chief District Officer, Ram Prasad Subedi, said all preparations for the office inauguration have completed. Import and export would be easier as well as one can travel across the Chinese border once the office comes into operation, he mentioned. "Now, only residents of Mustang have got permit to go to China via Korala check point. With the operation of the Immigration Office, all Nepali citizens can cross the border as well as Chinese tourists can visit Mustang via this border after getting visa", Subedi explained.

MINISTER KHADKA STRESSES RENEWABLE ENERGY PROMOTION

RSS
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Dipak Khadka, has said the government would provide possible support for the promotion of renewable energy sector.

Minister Khadka requested the bodies concerned including the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre to actively involve for the same.

At a programme organized here today on the occasion of 28th anniversary of the centre, he shared that the bill related to renewable energy should be passed at the earliest for its development, adding the bill would be tabled with priority in coming Parliament session.

The Energy Minister underlined that the role of centre is important to fulfill the government's goal of generating 28,500 megawatts of electricity by 2035. On the occasion, he honoured individuals and organisations for their contribution to the development of renewable energy.

Similarly, Minister of State for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Purna Bahadur Tamang, lauded the role played by the centre to illuminate the places, where there is no electricity, through the medium of renewable energy.

Likewise, Executive Director of the Centre, Nabaraj Dhakal, shared that the centre has constructed 40,253 kilowatts-micro and small-scale hydropower projects so far as well as provided renewal energy service to 3.650 million households of the country so far.

Centre employees had donated blood on the occasion of anniversary.

Gold price up by Rs. 1,500 on Dhanteras Day

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

The price of gold in the domestic market set a new record on Tuesday.

According to the Federation of Nepal Gold and Silver Dealers' Association (FENEGOSIDA), the gold price increased by Rs. 1,500 per tola on Tuesday and was traded at Rs. 168,500 per tola today.

This is the record high price in the local market. The gold price reached a record high even on the day of 'Dhanteras'. This is the day when many people purchase gold, silver and other goods.

The traders also wait for this day expecting to increase business. The gold price has set a new record almost every day in the local market for the past few days. A tola of gold was traded at Rs. 167,400 per tola in the local market on Sunday.

Similarly, the price of silver has increased by Rs. 40 per tola to Rs. 2,105 in the local market.

A significant increment in the gold price in the international market has contributed to the increase in its price in the local market during the last few days and set one record after another, said Tej Ratna Shakya, a gold trader.

The price of gold increased by USD 24 per ounce to 2,753 in the international market today, he said, adding that the present fluctuation of gold price in the international market showed that its price would further increase in the local market.

This is the record high price even in the international market, said Shakya.

According to him, the flow of people in the jewellery shops has increased and so has sales on Tuesday. He said that the business of gold and silver is satisfactory today and estimated that around 40-50 kg gold has been sold on a single day.

Similarly, it is estimated that around 1,000-1,200 kgs of silver has been sold. He, however, said that the sale of gold and silver on the day of Dhanteras has dropped this year than last year due to price hikes.

Around 60 kgs of gold and 1,500 kgs of silver were sold on the day of Dhanteras last year.

Consul generals in China urged to address problems of traders

BY CHITRA MIJAR
Sindhupalchok, Oct. 29

Nepal Trans Himalaya Border Commerce Association has appealed to Nepal's consul generals for Guangzhou and Lhasa of China to address challenges faced by Nepali traders in China.

Ramhari Karki, President of the Association, informed that Bharat Khanal, Consul General for Guangzhou, and Lakshmi Prasad Niraula, Consul General for Lhasa, have each been presented with a formal letter requesting assistance in resolving these issues impacting business transactions.

Members of the Association have been importing merchandise goods from China through the northern Tatopani and Rasuwa borders.

Karki stated that the Association has urged the consul generals for measures to expand bilateral trade, reduce non-tariff barriers, ease transport and traffic, and enhance market promotion. Additionally, the Association emphasised the need for a proactive approach to support traders and entrepreneurs, facilitate transportation, and urged them to consider their recommendations for addressing the obstacles Nepali citizens encounter.

Karki also highlighted the deteriorating road conditions on the Nepal side of the border as another critical concern. Similarly, Ganga Bahadur Ghimire, Senior Vice-president of the Association, urged the consul generals to advocate with the Chinese government for Nepali businesspeople to be able to open bank accounts in Guangzhou, where a significant volume of business transactions occurs.

General Secretary Ramchandra Parajuli has also requested arrangements to showcase Nepali products at the Guangzhou trade fair. The Association also requested to facilitate the transport of goods imported by Nepali traders from both provinces to the Tatopani and Rasuw customs points in 40-foot containers.

McDonald's Quarter Pounder back on menu

AP
LOS ANGELES, Oct. 29

McDonald's announced Sunday that Quarter Pounders will again be on its menu at hundreds of its restaurants after testing ruled out beef patties as the source of the outbreak of E. coli poisoning tied to the popular burgers that killed one person and sickened at least 75 others across 13 states.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration continues to believe that slivered onions from a single supplier are the likely source of contamination, McDonald's said in a statement. It said it will resume selling the Quarter Pounder at affected restaurants —- without slivered onions — in the coming week.

As of Friday, the outbreak had expanded to at least 75 people sick in 13 states, federal health officials said. A total of 22 people had been hospitalized, and two developed a dangerous kidney disease complication, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. One person has died in Colorado.

Early information analyzed by the FDA showed that uncooked slivered onions used on the burgers "are a likely source of contamination," the agency said. McDonald's has confirmed that Taylor Farms, a California-based produce company, was the supplier of the fresh onions used in the restaurants involved in the outbreak, and that they had come from a facility in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

McDonald's pulled the Quarter Pounder burger from menus in several states — mostly in the Midwest and Mountain states — when the outbreak was announced Tuesday. McDonald's said Friday that slivered onions from the Colorado Springs facility were distributed to approximately 900 of its restaurants, including some in transportation hubs like airports.

PHOTO : AP
A McDonald's Quarter Pounder sandwich purchased in Chicago.

The company said it removed slivered onions sourced from that facility from its supply chain on Tuesday. McDonald's said it has decided to stop sourcing onions from Taylor Farms' Colorado Springs facility "indefinitely."

The 900 McDonald's restaurants that normally received slivered onions from Taylor Farms' Colorado Springs facility will resume sales of Quarter Pounders without slivered onions, McDonald's said.

Testing by the Colorado Department of Agriculture ruled out beef patties as the source of the outbreak, McDonald's said.

The department of agriculture received multiple lots of fresh and frozen beef patties collected from various Colorado McDonald's locations associated with the E. coli investigation. All samples were found to be negative for E. coli, the department said.

Taylor Farms said Friday that it had preemptively recalled yellow onions sent to its customers from its Colorado facility and continues to work with the CDC and the FDA as they investigate.

While it remains unclear if the recalled onions were the source of the outbreak, several other fast-food restaurants — including Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, KFC and Burger King — pulled onions from some menus in certain areas this week.

Colorado had the most illnesses reported as of Friday, with 26 cases. At least 13 people were sickened in Montana, 11 in Nebraska, 5 each in New Mexico and Utah, 4 each in Missouri and Wyoming, two in Michigan and one each in Iowa, Kansas, Oregon, Wisconsin and Washington, the CDC reported.

McDonald's said Friday it didn't pull the Quarter Pounder from any additional restaurants and noted that some cases in states outside the original region were tied to travel.

The CDC said some people who got sick reported traveling to other states before their symptoms started. At least three people said they ate at McDonald's during their travel. Illnesses were reported between Sept. 27 and Oct. 11.

The outbreak involves infections with E. coli 0157:H7, a type of bacteria that produces a dangerous toxin. It causes about 74,000 infections in the U.S. annually, leading to more than 2,000 hospitalizations and 61 deaths each year, according to CDC.

Symptoms of E. coli poisoning can occur quickly, within a day or two of eating contaminated food. They typically include fever, vomiting, diarrhea or bloody diarrhea and signs of dehydration — little or no peeing, increased thirst and dizziness. The infection is especially dangerous for children younger than 5, people who are elderly, pregnant or who have weakened immune systems.

Ghimire earns living by making soap at home

BY NISHA RAI
Dharan, Oct. 29

Manita Ghimire, 38, a resident of Dharan-15, has been making a living by producing soap from locally available plants around her home.

About seven years ago, she participated in a soap-making training taught by foreign trainers in Kathmandu. She realised she could make soap using plants available in her local area and started making soap upon returning to Dharan.

Ghimire said, "This has provided me an opportunity for employment from home with a small investment."

With the growing use of social media, Ghimire markets her soaps on platforms like Facebook and Twitter, allowing customers to place orders directly. This eliminates the need for her to open a shop. She said, "Since the soaps are made and sold from home, it is especially beneficial for women."

Currently, Ghimire produces soap using ingredients like mugwort (titepati), hemp leaves, charcoal, neem leaves and honey.

Due to high demand, she also plans to make soap from alum. Although she initially started making carrot face wash, the demand for soap has led her to focus solely on it. "I make a 40 per cent profit on my investment, which is enough to cover my household expenses," she said.

Handmade and labour-intensive, the cold-process soap Ghimire produces does not require machinery, making it ideal for women looking to start a small business from home with minimal investment.

PHOTO: NISHA RAI/TRN
Manita Ghimire showing soaps produced by her.

Since starting her soap business, Ghimire has provided soap-making training in other areas as well. Wanting to empower more women, she collaborates with local governments to conduct training sessions in various districts. Currently, the soaps cost Rs. 175 each, with the honey soap costing Rs. 150 for a 70-gram bar. Besides online sales, she also sells her products at local fairs and festivals. She added that Twitter was her primary source of larger orders.

Ghimire believed that if people are trained to make soap using locally available plants, they can earn a sustainable income, utilising locally available materials. Ghimire is an example of how social media can be used positively, reducing the need for renting space or setting up a physical store.

Asta Laxmi: The Source Of Human Potential

Anima Bhandari

In Hindu philosophy, Shakti—the divine creative and energetic force—is regarded as inherently feminine, manifesting in various forms, each representing unique qualities and powers. Among these, Goddess Laxmi is revered as the goddess of wealth, prosperity, and abundance. However, her influence extends beyond material wealth alone, symbolising a more profound understanding of prosperity that includes wisdom, health, courage, relationships, and spiritual growth. Laxmi is embodied in eight distinct forms, collectively known as the Asta Laxmi.

In spirituality, just as there are seven primary chakras (energy centres) in the human body, there are eight primary "ability centres," known as the Asta Laxmi. Though Laxmi is widely known for granting financial prosperity, Hindu philosophy teaches that wealth comes in many forms: knowledge, strength, courage, relationship, progeny, sustenance, victory, and enlightenment. Recognising, activating, and nurturing these forms within oneself can lead to a balanced and prosperous life—physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Let's dig deeper into the eight forms of Laxmi, exploring their cultural, spiritual, and symbolic significance.

Adi Laxmi

In Hinduism, Adi Laxmi, also known as Moksha Pradayani ("Bestower of Liberation"), is the primordial form of Laxmi.

"Adi" means "first" or "original," and in this form, Laxmi symbolises the purest and most ancient source of energy from which all aspects of life emerge. Adi Laxmi helps individuals connect with their inner selves, develop self-awareness, spiritual growth, and a deeper understanding of one's true purpose in life.

Adi Laxmi (the power of self-realisation) inspires us to recognise our inner potential and strengths, guiding us toward our ultimate life purpose. Through her grace, we are reminded of our divine origins and our connection to the cosmic order, enabling us to transcend the limitations of worldly attachments and ego. In this form, Laxmi embodies compassion, calmness, and strength, offering her blessings to those who strive toward spiritual enlightenment.

Dhana Laxmi

Dhana Laxmi represents both material wealth—such as money, property, and material possessions—and inner wealth, which includes qualities like willpower, courage, and determination. "Dhana" translates to "wealth" in Sanskrit, but this wealth isn't limited to tangible assets; it extends to the power of thoughts, intentions, and the ability to manifest one's goals through mental and emotional strength.

After recognising their potential with the help of Adi Laxmi, individuals must then harness their thought power to activate Dhana Laxmi within themselves. This inner wealth drives success, leadership, and prosperity in all areas of life, including business, personal growth, and relationships.

Dhana Laxmi blesses those who work hard and persevere, helping them manifest their goals and succeed in life.

Dhanya Laxmi

Dhanya Laxmi represents the right goal. In the journey toward success, Dhanya Laxmi encourages individuals to set the right goals. Without clear goals, we cannot move forward—just as food is essential for survival, goal-setting is vital for success. Dhanya Laxmi inspires clarity in one's mission, allowing them to pursue objectives with focus and determination.

On the other hand, Dhanya Laxmi signifies wealth in the form of food and nourishment. "Dhanya" means "grains" in Sanskrit, signifying the sustenance and vitality that food provides to life. This form of Laxmi blesses the earth with agricultural prosperity, ensuring that people are provided with the essential nutrients and grains needed for survival. However, her blessings extend beyond physical sustenance, encompassing the importance of a balanced life and proper goal-setting.

Dhanya Laxmi reminds us to show gratitude for the blessings of nature, as they are essential for the survival and well-being of all living beings.

Gaja Laxmi

Gaja Laxmi is the goddess of strength, power, and royal authority. "Gaja" means elephant in Sanskrit, symbolising not only the physical strength of elephants but also the dignity, power, and status they hold in traditional Hindu culture. In ancient times, elephants were a symbol of royalty and wealth; kings and rulers used them as a display of their power.

Gaja Laxmi, the inner strength, empowers humans to pursue their ambitions with determination and focus. She helps in recognising and enhancing one's strength to overcome obstacles in life, both material and spiritual.

Gaja Laxmi's presence reminds us of the importance of strength—both inner and outer—required to achieve success and lead with grace.

Santana Laxmi

Santana Laxmi represents fertility, family, and progeny. "Santana" means children or offspring, and this form of Laxmi blesses individuals with the ability to build and nurture strong family ties, including the birth of children or develop new relationships. Beyond physical offspring, Santana Laxmi signifies the growth and development of relationships—whether with one's family, society, or nature.

In modern contexts, Santana Laxmi helps individuals build meaningful connections that support their goals. She encourages the development of strong relationship skills, reminding us that success is not achieved in isolation; it requires the support and cooperation of others and teamwork.

Santana Laxmi ensures the continuity of life, supporting families and nurturing healthy and prosperous relationships.

Veera Laxmi

Veera Laxmi, also known as Dhairya Laxmi, represents bravery, courage, and strength. In life's journey, obstacles and challenges are inevitable, and Veera Laxmi provides the strength and mental resilience needed to face them head-on. She is the embodiment of fearlessness, giving her devotees the courage to persevere through difficulty and hunt their spiritual and material goals with confidence.

Veera Laxmi teaches that courage is not the absence of fear but the determination to move forward despite it.

Veera Laxmi's energy empowers individuals to face their fears, defeat difficulties, and emerge victorious, both in the material world and on the spiritual path.

Vidya Laxmi

Vidya Laxmi is the example of knowledge, education, and wisdom. "Vidya" means "learning" in Sanskrit, and this form of Laxmi helps individuals acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve success, both in material and in spiritual growth. Once the other forms of Laxmi have introduced strength, wealth, and courage, Vidya Laxmi enables individuals to understand how to wisely use these resources.

Vidya Laxmi is not limited to academic knowledge but encompasses spiritual wisdom—the understanding of life's deeper meanings and truth. She helps individuals transcend ignorance and attain enlightenment.

Through her blessings, individuals develop the intellectual and spiritual insight needed to make informed decisions, helping them on their journey toward self-realisation and spiritual growth.

Vijaya Laxmi

Vijaya Laxmi, the goddess of victory and achievement, gives success and achievement to her devotees. "Vijaya" means victory, and after one has cultivated the qualities represented by the other forms of Laxmi—wealth, courage, knowledge, and relationships—Vijaya Laxmi brings about final success and fulfillment in all aspects.

Her blessings help individuals achieve their goals, overcome obstacles, and emerge victorious in both worldly endeavors and spiritual journey. Vijaya Laxmi ensures that the fruits of hard work and dedication are realised, leading to prosperity and achievement.

Vijaya Laxmi's blessings ensure that one achieves success in all aspects of life, from material to spiritual, ultimately leading to a life of fulfillment and joy.

Conclusion

The eight forms of Laxmi, the self-abilities, known as the Asta Laxmi, represent the diverse aspects of prosperity and success. These blessings, from material wealth to spiritual enlightenment, offer a holistic path to fulfillment. By cultivating self-determination and Sadhana, one can unlock these inner abilities and achieve balance, peace, and prosperity across physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual realms.

(The author is associated with Jeevan Vigyan Foundation.)

Lumbini CM Acharya assures to address conflict victims' issues

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Deukhuri, Oct. 29

Lumbini Province Chief Minister Chet Narayan Acharya has said that the government has prioritised addressing the issues of conflict victims by establishing inclusive policies and legal structures to protect their rights.

Speaking at a provincial-level inter-dialogue programme organised by the National Human Rights Commission Nepal and the Conflict Victims Committee Bardiya in Lamahi of Dang on Monday, Chief Minister Acharya said that the government had been ensuring access to justice for victims and upholding their rights. He said that the provincial government had moved forward with a compensation plan to fulfil the needs of transitional justice.

He said that the government was focused on policy reforms to protect all rights of women and girls, ensuring their participation in policy-making on conflict and post-conflict peace processes. He said, "The work of determining justice for transitional justice cases is moving forward. The government at the provincial level is effectively fulfilling its role. The lack of laws had hindered the resolution of transitional justice, but a bill has now progressed based on national consensus and the Act has been verified."

PHOTO : TRN

Lumbini Province Chief Minister Chet Narayan Acharya speaking at a provincial-level inter-dialogue programme organised by the National Human Rights Commission Nepal and the Conflict Victims Committee Bardiya in Lamahi of Dang.

Additionally, the Chief Minister said that the provincial government had prioritised justice and compensation for women and children affected during the conflict period. He said, "The provincial government will work to deliver justice to those who have not yet received it and we will focus on protecting the lives of conflict-affected women and children."

Internal Affairs and Law Minister Aadesh Agrawal, Vice Chairman of the Provincial Planning Commission Dr. Dilli Raj Aryal, Lumbini Province Police Chief DIG Kuber Kadayat, District Coordination Committee Chief Nityananda Sharma, as well as conflict victims, were present at the programme.

The dialogue programme was focused on the second National Action Plan concerning United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 related to women, peace and security.

URALABARI MAYOR KHAREL ASSAULTED

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Uralabari, Oct. 29

Ganga Prasad Kharel, Mayor of Uralabari Municipality in Morang, was assaulted on Monday afternoon. The person involved in the assault has been identified as Milan Bhandari of Uralabari-7.

Bhandari visited the Mayor's office around 11: 00 am on Monday to meet Mayor Kharel, reportedly to request a budget for a yoga programme, according to Bhandari's relatives.

Mayor Kharel advised him to follow the proper procedures and return after the Tihar festival, then proceeded to a meeting. However, Bhandari waited for the mayor. As soon as Mayor Kharel departed the building at around 4:45 pm, Bhandari punched him.

Following the assault, the municipal police arrested Bhandari and handed him over to the Area Police Office in Uralabari. Inspector Rakesh Yadav of the Uralabari Area Police Office said that an investigation into the incident is underway.

About 10,000 heron nests washed away by floods

BY BABURAM KARKI
Barahakshetra, Oct. 29

A huge flood in the Saptakoshi River in the last week of September washed away the forest area of the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve.

According to the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve Office, the habitat of wildlife and birds has been washed away.

A preliminary study of the Reserve shows that about 10,000 heron nests in the western section of the reserve have been washed away.

Ram Dev Chaudhary, Senior Conservation Officer at the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve Office, said that the flood caused the biggest damage to the reserve after 2008.

According to him, four wild water buffaloes (Bubalus arnee) have been washed away by the flood and two of them have returned from the Indian territory.

Similarly, seven Asiatic deer have been washed away by floods. He said that more animals may have been washed away, he said.

The wild animals were affected due to the submergence of the reserve's forest area.

However, the reserve office does not have data on how many small animals in the reserve area died, and how many were injured due to the flood. According to Conservation Officer Chaudhary, the reserve office only has the data on large animals that were affected.

There are 500 wild water buffaloes, 553 birds, 12 wild elephants and 5,000 flowering and non-flowering plants in Koshi Tappu.

According to the Reserve Office, 127 species of fish are found in the Saptakoshi River. Data on small animals has not been kept, he said.

The Koshi River witnessed the highest water flow in five decades. The flow has washed away the habitat of wild animals including Nilgai, deer, rabbits and other wildlife dependent on the forest area.

Government of Nepal
Ministry of Physical Infrastructure & Transport
Department of Roads
Mechanical Branch
Babarmahal Kathmandu, Nepal
E-mail: mechb@dor.gov.np

Notice regarding Price Bid Opening

(Date of Notice: October 30, 2024)

This is to inform to undermentioned qualified bidder (after technical bid evaluation) under IFB mentioned below, published on August 4, 2024 in "The Rising Nepal", that the "Price Bid" shall be opened at DoR, Mechanical Branch on November 08, 2024 at 1:00 pm.

S. No.	Contract Identification No.	Bidder's Name & Address
1.	DORMEB/33701011/081-82/03 *(Supply and delivery of Soil Compactor – 8 Units)*	M/S MAW Earth Movers Pvt. Ltd. Kathmandu, Nepal

हिमालय एअरलाइन्स
HIMALAYA AIRLINES

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Himalaya Airlines' network consists of Dammam, Dhaka, Doha, Dubai, Kuala Lumpur, Riyadh, Kuwait & various China sectors. Interested candidates are requested to send in the applications for the following posts not later than 15 days from the date of publication.

First date of publication : October 30, 2024

DEPARTMENT : FLIGHT OPERATIONS

Position: TRE | **Vacancy Code : H9/FOD/0032024** | **Required No: 05**

Qualification Requirements:
• Below 63 years of age • Holds a valid ATPL and a TRE certificate for the applicable type • Minimum 12 months appointment as a TRI • Minimum 3000 hours on type • Minimum 3000 hours PIC including 2000 hours PIC on type • English Language Proficiency 5 preferred but minimum 4 is mandatory

Position: TRI | **Vacancy Code : H9/FOD/0042024** | **Required No: 05**

Qualification Requirements:
• Below 63 years of age • Holds a current ATPL and rating on the applicable aircraft category • Minimum 3000 hours on type • Minimum 3000 hours PIC and 2000 hours PIC on type • Without any unsatisfactory report during the last 4 Proficiency Checks • English Language Proficiency 5 preferred but minimum 4 is mandatory

Position: LTC | **Vacancy Code : H9/FOD/0052024** | **Required No: 08**

Qualification Requirements:
• Below 63 years • Holds a current ATPL on type • Minimum 2500 hours on type • Minimum 2000 hours PIC and 1500 hours PIC on type • Should have approved Instructor Course Certificate with minimum of 1000 hours experience on A-320 series as LTC • English Language Proficiency 5 preferred but minimum 4 is mandatory

Position: Line Captain (LC) A320 Type Rated | **Vacancy Code : H9/FOD/0062024** | **Required No: 28**

Qualification Requirements:
• Below 63 years • Holds a current ATPL pilot license on type • A minimum of the last two Pilot Proficiency Checks successfully completed • Has a total flight time on multi crew transport aircraft of at least 3000 hours; including 1000 hours on A320 family • Minimum 500 hours PIC on type • English Language Proficiency 5 preferred but minimum 4 is mandatory

Please fill-up the form & upload your updated resume, a copy of pp size photo, scanned copy (ies) of your qualifications & copy of citizenship etc. using the link: **https://forms.gle/WUrfF2nnTaRZ4eLm6**. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Phone calls will not be entertained.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

People are not disturbed by things, but by the view they take of them.
- Epictetus

EDITORIAL

Karnali's Climate Crisis

Agriculture sector is perhaps hardest hit by the climate change. The altering weather patterns often put farmers in soup. Erratic rainfall that is characterised by short- and heavy rainfall disrupts the calendar of crop planting. The crops shrivel and die out due to the drought or short rainfall. Other times, heavy downpours inundate and wash away the standing crops. Negative impacts of climate change do not end here. Crops are becoming the home of new kinds of diseases, and insects that were once unknown in the given areas. As a result, farmers find it difficult to grow healthy crops, jeopardising food security and economic stability. The news published in this daily has shown the grave situation of Karnali Province due to the climate change triggered by the soaring global warming. The emerging climatic crisis has threatened the livelihoods of vulnerable communities. The concrete action is needed urgently as traditional farming methods falter and natural resources dwindle.

Such crises have particularly serious implications for women and children, who often bear the big burdens. Women, who play crucial roles in farming, are struggling with increased pressures as they attempt to adapt to new agricultural challenges while managing household chores. The lack of resources and support only adds to their difficulties, creating a cycle of hardship that seems impossible to break. Likewise, the drying up of traditional water sources has forced many families to relocate to higher ground, leaving behind their homes for a stable future. This migration puts additional strain on community resources and has led to rising rates of malnutrition among children—an alarming consequence of a crisis often overlooked.

Recently, stakeholders gathered at Rara Lake to discuss the impacts of climate change in Karnali Province. The group included local-level representatives, climate change activists, government officials, relevant authorities, and conservationists. These conversations reveal that communities in Karnali are not just passive victims of climate change; they are actively seeking solutions to the challenges they face. It is vital that these local concerns are acknowledged at a national level, but this recognition must translate into concrete actions that support communities, whose livelihoods are under constant threat.

The proposed Karnali Declaration is a positive step that aims to bring local issues on a global stage, especially as COP 29 approaches. However, declarations alone are insufficient. What is needed is a comprehensive approach that includes funding for sustainable farming practices, investments in climate-resilient infrastructure, and educational programmes that equip farmers with the skills to adapt to their changing environment. Policymakers must listen to the voices of those directly affected by climate change. Their insights should be incorporated into strategies and action plans that are practical and culturally sensitive.

Collaboration among government agencies, local organisations, and international partners can provide pragmatic idea to the solutions of this problem by addressing the immediate impacts of climate change as well as its root causes. As the world gears up for COP 29, the woes enduring the Karnali people must resonate through the high-level negotiations involving global leaders, policy makers and experts. The concerned authorities must mobilise resources, share knowledge, and build resilience to tackle the growing climate challenges. The future of Karnali — and the world — depends on our collective response to this pressing issue.

Festival Of Light And Sibling Bonding

DIXYA POUDEL

Tihar is a five-day Hindu festival celebrated joyously by Nepali communities globally. Also known as Deepawali, a festival of lights, Tihar is one of the most awaited festivals of Nepal and is the second longest festival after Dashain. The first day of Tihar is Kaag Tihar on which people worship crows and offer them foods conveniently placed on rooftops. Crows are thought to be messenger of the God of death, the fearsome Yamaraj. It is believed that worshipping of crows brings good luck. The second day of Tihar is Kukur Tihar during which people offer tika, garlands and foods to dogs.

The third day of Tihar is Gai Tihar and Laxmi puja. On the morning of Gai Tihar, people worship cows which are considered sacred animals in Hindu religion. Cows are worshipped with tika and garlands along with offerings such as fodder. In the evening, the Goddess of wealth, Laxmi is worshipped during which people light diyos or candles around their houses so that Goddess Laxmi can bless their homes with good luck, fortune and prosperity. The fourth day of Tihar is Govardhan Puja in which Govardhan parvat is worshipped. On the night of Govardhan Puja, the Newari community performs Mha Puja which is the worship of self.

The fifth day of Tihar is Bhai Tika which celebrates auspicious bond between brothers and sisters. According to the Hindu mythology, Yamaraj visited his sister Goddess Yamuna and she adorned his forehead with tika and offered him garlands and delicious dishes. This led to the tradition of celebrating Bhai Tika as an expression of affection between brothers and sisters. On Bhai Tika, sisters adorn their brothers' forehead with tikas of seven colours and offer garlands and delicious foods. Brothers in turn put tika on their sisters and offer them gifts. Additionally, in Terai, Tihar is followed by Chatt Parva in which the Sun God is worshipped over the rising and setting sun.

Tihar is rich in traditions which are observed with certain meaningful rituals. Youngsters play bhailo and deusi from the third and fourth day respectively on Tihar. They are ceremonies in which groups of boys and girls visit their neighbourhood and perform traditional songs and dances. Homeowners in return offer these singers and dancers money along with sel rotis which are made with rice flour and sugar. People decorate their houses with marigold flowers. They adorn front door steps with rangolis made out of vibrantly coloured rice flour. Likewise, cards games are played in a spirit of joviality.

In the evenings of Tihar, lights in the form of candles, diyos or electric bulbs are decorated on homes to welcome Goddess Laxmi. However, fireworks have been banned in Nepal these past few years keeping in view the risks of sound pollution and unanticipated accidents. Tihar is synonymous with bright lights that illuminate the whole community at nights in an atmosphere of festivity.

In Hindu religion, light is an essential part of worship. It signals the victory of good over evil, thus, before every religious pujas Hindus light diyos. It is said that it invites the deities such as Goddess Laxmi into the homes of devotees blessing them with good fortune. In conclusion, one can say that Tihar is a symbol of light over darkness. Happy Tihar!

World Health Summit
From Pledges To Achievements

Jhabindra Bhandari

Around the world, we have seen remarkable and unprecedented gains in global health. However, there are significant health inequities within and across low-income countries. The progress is still uneven as the countries have not achieved the desired progress. Consequently, a widening gap is experienced in global north and south in terms of progress in social sector. This is truly a genuine concern that demands critical discussions to identify the drivers of health inequities and prioritise local solutions.

Undoubtedly, the global context is complex and diversely challenging. In the recent years, a range of historical, social, cultural, economic, geo-political and environmental factors are enormously affecting sustainable human development. Evidence suggests that COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, climate change, poverty, food and nutrition insecurity, political instability and economic downturn have regressed the progress to some extent.

Priority

The global health priority must include strategic actions to realistically address the wider determinants of health for more equitable, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable global health ecosystems. While emerging issues of equity, inclusion, diversity and social justice are considered as priority agenda in health policies and strategic plans, the progress in terms of implementation and outcomes has been slow in many low-income countries.

In this context, World Health Summit (WHS) took place from October 13 to15 this year in Berlin, Germany which largely aimed at building trust for a healthier world. More importantly, the WHS offered a strategic forum for a range of key stakeholders from politics, science, the private sector, researchers, practitioners, and civil society to set a high priority agenda for building a healthier and more equitable world

Furthermore, the WHS provided a good platform for various disciplines and sectors to discuss pressing global health issues, intersecting challenges, knowledge and evidence use, good practices, and innovations in global health research, policy, and practice. In an increasingly connected world, global efforts to tackle human health challenges require trust and cooperation within and across the countries. In this context, the WHS has been instrumental in exchanging insights and experiences, strengthening evidence-informed polices, stimulating innovative solutions to health challenges, reviewing the political commitments and progress made so far, and identify key issues for actions at all levels.

Moreover, considering global health as a key political issue, it is relevant to discuss pertinent issues impacting global health in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Additionally, the summit has underscored the relevance and criticality of harnessing international cooperation, solidarity, health diplomacy, and sustainable solutions to emerging global health challenges triggered by science, climate change, globalisation, urbanisation, migration, neoliberal economies and capitalistic policies.

Some important yet diversely intersecting challenges surrounding global health are key concerns for political leaders, policy makers, diplomats, researchers, practitioners, civil society, private sector and development partners including UN agencies. Thus, key takeaways from the WHS must be systematically reviewed, prioritised and contexualised to address the institutional bottlenecks and systemic challenges in achieving health equity and social justice.

> Strengthening inclusive and equitable health systems is crucial to reach social goal of building healthier, inclusive and resilient future.

The first and foremost, health for all is still an unfinished agenda as the low-income countries in particular continue to experience notable challenges of achieving universal health coverage and ensuring equitable quality health care for all. The fragmented health systems in many countries are further jeopardised by occasional health emergencies, pandemics and other natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and landslides in different socio-cultural and geographical contexts.

The health of women, children and elderly is particularly vulnerable during emergencies and disasters as they lack easy access to health care services. Moreover, the community systems for care and support to the affected families are usually weak in different socio-cultural contexts. From the perspectives of humanitarian health, it is crucial to ensure that the countries have the adequate preparedness, readiness and capacity to efficiently respond the health emergencies in a more coordinated approach. Unfortunately, it is easier said than done.

In the context of SDGs, the human rights approach to health, equity, inclusion and diversity are key prerequisites for sustaining gains in health for better outcomes. Globally, planetary health is an increasing priority to safeguard the health of people and planet. Considering natural ecosystems, planetary health broadly aims to explore how communities are creating new ways to use the planet's resources wisely to protect their health at large. In emerging economies, investments in global health is significantly shrinking. Considering geo-politics, multilateralism, and foreign policies, many countries are still struggling to secure adequate resources for health. Innovative health financing models for health system strengthening such as impact investing need to be further explored as there is a growing need to promote health in policies.

Domestic resources

Like many other countries, Nepal needs to effectively mobilise domestic resources and seek more opportunities of partnerships with other key development partners to address operational and programmatic gaps. On the other side, strengthening e-health, m-health including digital surveillance systems can be useful to track and monitor the health services and performance of health systems at all levels.

Apart from this, political economy of global health can be further explored to better understand how historical, political, cultural, and socio-economic factors intersect and exacerbate health inequities within and across countries. Learning from other countries, Nepal must strengthen governance, leadership and accountability to promote evidence-informed policies, good practices, technological innovations and transformative health outcomes in the federal context. Strengthening inclusive and equitable health systems is crucial to reach social goal of building healthier, inclusive and resilient future.

(Bhandari is a health policy analyst.)

Delhi Bracing For Annual Pollution Pall

Namrata Sharma

INSIGHT

As winter's chill begins creeping into the morning calm of Delhi, the Indian capital is once again enveloped in air pollution, with smoke from crop stubble burning by farmers in nearby states adding to the already serious problem. The smoke levels rise so much that doctors advise residents to forgo outdoor activities like morning walks. According to a BBC report, India loses an estimated USD 95 billion to air pollution every year. The smoke affecting Delhi primarily originates from the states of Haryana and Punjab. Although air pollution remains an issue year-round, it worsens during the winter months, even impacting flights between Kathmandu and Delhi due to the dense smog.

With October's end and the rains subsiding, north-westerly winds begin to carry fumes from burning fields. November brings the festival of Deepawali, among other celebrations across South Asia. In India, Deepawali especially sees millions lighting firecrackers in celebration. Despite growing awareness of the need to stop crop stubble and firecracker burning, the air quality in Delhi continues to deteriorate at the onset of winter, dominating media coverage as it makes life in the capital increasingly challenging.

Court order

For over four decades, this issue has been taken to court, and India's top courts have tried to address it, issuing orders to both government and citizens to implement air quality improvement measures. However, an ongoing conflict exists between India's central government, currently led by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), and Delhi's local government, led by the Aam Adami Party (AAP). Both the parties are accused by the public that instead of sorting this issue, their nerve-ending disputes are only worsening the situation. Farmers, dissatisfied with government policies, are equally impacted, as are local residents, who suffer economically and health-wise from the worsening air.

The Supreme Court of India has led reform efforts to reduce pollution in Delhi. Measures include regulating vehicles plying on Delhi's roads, instituting an odd-even rule for vehicle use, relocating or closing polluting factories, and enforcing stricter emissions standards. While the Supreme Court has sometimes been praised for compelling governments to act, it has also faced criticism for the ongoing severity of Delhi's air pollution, particularly in winter, despite decades of efforts. The apex court began addressing Delhi's pollution in 1984, when environmentalist M.C. Mehta filed petitions on three key issues: rising vehicular pollution in Delhi, pollution's impact on the Taj Mahal, and the contamination of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers. These cases remain open till date, with new concerns added over the years.

According to India's government-run SAFAR website, the levels of PM 2.5 — tiny particles that penetrate deep into the lungs and cause multiple diseases — reached 350 micrograms per cubic meter in some parts of Delhi on October 28, 2024. SAFAR categorises air quality as "very poor" when PM 2.5 levels reach 300–400 and as "severe" when levels exceed 400. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), last week's pollution levels in Delhi exceeded safe limits by 25 to 30 times.

> The Indo-Gangetic Plain is a hot spot for atmospheric pollutants, with seasonal crop residues burning being a major contributor.

Stubble burning is a result of farmers needing to clear crop residues before planting new ones — a vital process that ensures food security. However, due to limited resources such as water storage systems and waste management equipment, many farmers resort to burning crop residues. This creates smog that blankets Delhi and surrounding areas. Farming groups report a need for financial and technical support to manage crop waste through alternative methods, but existing government schemes have proven inadequate. While there are compensation programmes offering payments per acre for not burning stubble, farmers say these payments often fail to materialise.

Scientific studies indicate alternative farming methods, like sowing wheat directly over crop remains with specialised tractors that mulch and sow simultaneously, could help reduce stubble burning. Although some farmers have adopted this method, it has yet to use widely and thus lacks a substantial impact. Effective collaboration among governments, civil society, businesses, and farmers is needed to implement and scale up these solutions.

Atmospheric pollutants

According to a study done by Muyang Lin and Toritseju Bego on crop residues in South Asia, the Indo-Gangetic Plain is a hot spot for atmospheric pollutants, with seasonal crop residues burning being a major contributor. The burning of crop residues is reported to degrade soil, increase risk of erosion and amplify the soil temperature, consequently destroying soil microorganisms. The study emphasises that this subsequently impacts the monetary cost involved in recovering the soil fertility and the potential for further pollution through the increased use of fertilisers. Reasons for burning crop residues are mainly the high cost of incorporating, collecting, transporting, and processing crop residues in South Asia. Labour shortages and the time span between one harvest and another influences the farmers to resort to burning the residues rather that process it.

Also, marketability of crop residues in South Asia, in general, seems to be difficult. It is often easier to burn the residues. Adoption of machines to help farmers in clearing the residues can help them, however lack of awareness and access to easy finance to buy these machines often stops farmers in South Asia from changing their generations old practice of burning the crop residues. While the Kathmandu Valley may not face winter smoke levels as severe as Delhi's, its pollution levels are also a growing concern. Last year, fires in surrounding forests filled the valley with smoke, blackening streets and buildings in areas like Lalitpur. It's essential to prevent fires and contain possibility of any outbreaks swiftly.

(Sharma is a senior journalist and women's rights advocate. namrata1964@yahoo.com, Twitter handle: @NamrataSharmaP)

50 YEARS AGO

THE RISING NEPAL

October 30, 2024

Women Killed By Bull

Silgadi, Oct. 29: A woman was fatally knocked down by a bull recently at local Baphi village, reports RSS

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

TRN welcomes articles, letters and comments from our valued readers and contributors.
Please email your contributions to:

trnfeatures@hotmail.com
trnfeatures@gmail.com

Or send them to
P.O. Box 23, Kathmandu, Nepal

READER'S MAIL

Tihar Strengthens Social Connections

I am writing about the festive season in Nepal as Tihar nears. It is during such festivals that Nepalis unite. Those living abroad return home while those who have migrated to cities return to their villages. There is thus a mass shift of Nepalis to their homes. And Tihar holds significance to Nepalis with its unique rituals, traditions and rites. As the festival nears, many students will be on a holiday. Even officers can take a break from their work to partake in the Tihar festivities.

However, they should take caution that this holiday is spent in balanced manner. It is necessary to take this time to spend quality moments with family and friends, try out festival cuisines, visit temples, watch movies, read books and so on.

More importantly, it is necessary to participate in the various traditions of Tihar. It is during such moments that social connections are strengthened to the background of traditional rituals of a significant festival such as Tihar.

Rajiv Aryal
Morang

TAILPIECE

A lawyer defending a man accused of burglary tried this creative defense:

"My client merely inserted his arm into the window and removed a few trifling articles. His arm is not himself, and I fail to see how you can punish the whole individual for an offense committed by his limb."

"Well put," the judge replied. "Using your logic, I sentence the defendant's arm to one year's imprisonment. He can accompany it or not, as he chooses."

The defendant smiled.

With his lawyer's assistance, he detached his artificial limb, laid it on the bench, and walked out.

60 killed in Israeli strikes on eastern valley of Lebanon

AFP
Lebanon, Oct. 29

PHOTO: AFP

The Bekaa Valley, seen here last week, is a Hezbollah stronghold

At least 60 people have been killed in Israeli attacks on Lebanon's eastern Bekaa Valley, the Lebanese health ministry said.

Two children were among those killed in strikes which targeted 16 areas in the Baalbek region, officials said.

The ministry said 58 people were wounded, adding rescue efforts were still under way in the valley, which is a Hezbollah stronghold.

The Israeli military has not yet commented.

Israel has carried out thousands of air strikes across Lebanon over the past five weeks, targeting what it has says are Hezbollah's operatives, infrastructure and weapons.

Baalbek governor Bachie Khodr called the attacks the "most violent" in the area since Israel escalated the conflict against Hezbollah last month.

Unverified video posted on social media showed damage to buildings and forests ablaze, as rescuers searched for the injured.

In the town of Boudai, videos on social media appeared to show residents pleading for heavy equipment to be sent to help rescue people believed to be trapped.

The regional head of Baalbek's Civil Defence crews told the BBC that the air strikes were like a "ring of fire".

'It was a very violent night," Bilal Raad said.

"It was like a ring of fire has suddenly surrounded the area."

He added the attacks had targeted "residential quarters where civilians live or near them", and said a lack of equipment had hampered search and rescue efforts.

The town of Al-Allaq was hardest hit with 16 people killed, all from the same family, he said.

Earlier on Monday, Israeli air strikes on the coastal city of Tyre left seven dead and 17 injured, Lebanon's health ministry said. Israel issued a warning for people to leave the centre of the city.

Hezbollah said it clashed with Israeli troops near Lebanon's southern border on Monday and fired rockets at a naval base inside Israel near Haifa.

Cross-border hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah broke out after the armed Lebanese group started firing rockets in and around northern Israel in support of Palestinians on 8 October 2023, the day after its ally Hamas's deadly attack on southern Israel.

The Lebanese health ministry says more than 2,700 people have been killed and more than 12,400 wounded in Lebanon since then.

Israel invaded southern Lebanon in a dramatic escalation on 30 September to destroy, it said, Hezbollah weapons and infrastructure in "limited, localised, targeted raids".

Lebanon's government says up to 1.3 million people have been internally displaced as a result of the conflict.

North Korea sends foreign minister to Russia

AP
South Korea, Oct. 29

North Korea said Tuesday its top diplomat is visiting Russia, in another sign of their deepening relations as rival South Korea and Western nations say the North has sent thousands of troops to support Russia's war in Ukraine.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said a delegation led by Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui departed for Russia on Monday, but didn't specify the purpose of the visit. In a closed-door hearing at South Korea's parliament, the South's spy agency said Choe may be involved in high-level discussions on sending additional troops to Russia and negotiating what the North would get in return, according to Lee Seong-kweun, a lawmaker who attended the meeting.

The announcement of Choe's visit came hours after the Pentagon said North Korea has sent about 10,000 troops to Russia, who are expected to arrive in battlefields in Ukraine within "the next several weeks."

South Korean and Western leaders have expressed concern that North Korean involvement could help prolong Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and that Russia may offer technology in return that could advance the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile program.

Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh told reporters Monday that some of the North Korean soldiers have already moved closer to Ukraine and were believed to be heading for the Kursk border region, where Russia has been struggling to push back a Ukrainian incursion.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service told lawmakers it's examining the possibility that some groups of North Korea's military personnel in Russia, including generals or other high-ranking officials, may have already moved to frontline areas. The spy agency also said the two sides appear to be struggling to resolve communication issues although the Russian military is training North Korean troops on Russian military terminology, Lee said.

The agency said space-based reconnaissance is an area where North Korea is likely receiving Russian help. It said North Korea may be acquiring advanced components from Russia as it prepares to launch another military reconnaissance satellite following a failed attempt in May, said Park Sun-won, another lawmaker who attended the hearing.

North Korea first placed a spy satellite in orbit last November. Its leader Kim Jong Un has described those assets as crucial for monitoring South Korean and U.S. military activities and enhancing the threat of his nuclear-capable missiles.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol in telephone calls with European Union Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte on Monday shared South Korean intelligence assessments that North Korean troops could be deployed to battlefronts "more quickly than anticipated." He called for closer coordination with European governments aimed at "monitoring and blocking "illegal exchanges between Pyongyang and Moscow, Yoon's office said in a statement.

After initially denying the claims about North Korean troop deployments, Pyongyang and Moscow have adopted a vaguer stance, asserting that their military cooperation conforms with international law without directly admitting the presence of North Korean forces in Russia.

Congo wants UN peacekeepers gone

AP
Congo, Oct. 29

The end of one of the world's deadliest and yet most shadowy wars is as difficult to predict as the end of the large peacekeeping force meant to contain it.

Congo desperately wants stability in its mineral-rich east, of intense interest to the global economy. But political friction means the government wants the longtime United Nations peacekeeping force there to get out.

That would leave the vast region, overrun with dozens of armed groups including one affiliated with the Islamic State organization, with even less defense for millions of displaced civilians. But frustration has become so high with the peacekeepers that many Congolese want them gone, too.

The Associated Press witnessed the dilemma on a rare visit and night patrol with the U.N. force now known as MONUSCO, which entered Congo more than two decades ago and has 14,000 peacekeepers on the ground.

It patrols a landscape that feels far from the authority of Congo's government, with its dirt roads churned into slippery mud in pounding rains and residents long accustomed to feeling that, security-wise, they are on their own. Some of the region's armed groups are self-defense collectives.

During a visit to one frontline town, Sake, about 14 miles (24 kilometers) from the regional hub of Goma, the AP spoke with militia members trying to defend the population from a resurgent group, the M23, and its sniper fire from surrounding hills.

The M23 is backed by neighboring Rwanda, whose government denies it. The involvement of better-equipped Rwandan forces, with U.N. experts estimating up to 4,000 of them in Congo, has led to talk of war by Congo's government.

A July truce brokered by the United States and Angola has reduced the fighting between Rwandan and Congolese forces, but clashes between M23 and other militias continue.

"We are fighting the enemy who is a foreigner in our country. They are not Congolese, but they want to take Congo," said one fighter, Amini Bauma.

Sake is one of the last main routes into Goma under government control, but fierce fighting this year forced most residents to flee, leaving boarded-up homes.

About 160 civilians and soldiers came through Sake's military hospital during the summer, most with gunshot wounds, said Omar Kalamo, a nurse. In August, a bomb exploded behind the building, he said.

Some who fled are now returning, finding little safety elsewhere. Bitakuya Buhesha found his house destroyed. But he said he'd rather brave the gunfire than live in displacement camps, which have been infiltrated by fighters.

"We've waited a long time and we do don't know whether our army will win this war or if it'll be the M23 rebels," he said.

Many Congolese who once looked to the U.N. peacekeeping force with hope are now angry. Multiple protests, some of them violent, have targeted the force in recent years.

Last year, at Congo's request, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to draw down the peacekeeping force and gradually hand over its security responsibilities to Congo's government by this December.

But the soaring violence means that departure is now delayed.

On a recent day, peacekeepers in armored vehicles pulled into a small base in the hazy hills outside Goma, its tents surrounded by looping razor wire and sandbags. Troops perched with a machine gun pointed in the rebels' direction.

Trump rebuffs authoritarianism claims as Harris condemns divisive rhetoric

AFP
USA, Oct. 29

Donald Trump denied accusations of authoritarianism at a rally Monday, rejecting claims he is a "Nazi" or "modern-day Hitler" as Kamala Harris targeted swing state Michigan, accusing Trump of division. Both candidates have intensified rhetoric in the final days of a tightly contested election.

Donald Trump told supporters Monday he is "not a Nazi," using a rally in the final week of a bitter White House race to push back on accusations of authoritarianism, including from a former chief of staff who branded him a fascist.

As he and rival Kamala Harris entered the final stretch of one of the closest US presidential elections in modern times, each candidate and their teams have ramped up the political rhetoric, bringing an already simmering campaign to a boil.

Democrat Harris, who has accused Trump of stoking divisions, was crisscrossing Michigan on Monday while Republican Trump headed to Georgia, another of the decisive swing states, where he said critics are accusing him of being a modern-day "Hitler."

"The newest line from Kamala and her campaign is that everyone who isn't voting for her is a Nazi," Trump told a boisterous rally in Atlanta.

"I'm not a Nazi. I'm the opposite of a Nazi."

The comments come a day after Trump held a mega-rally in New York's famed Madison Square Garden that was widely condemned for racist remarks that his allies made during the event.

They also follow recent publication of a New York Times interview in which Trump's longest-serving White House chief of staff, retired general John Kelly, said the Republican fits the definition of a fascist -- something Harris said she agreed with in a live CNN event last week.

Kelly also told the paper that Trump had remarked that "Hitler did some good things too" and that instead of the US military, he "wanted generals like Adolf Hitler had."

Tensions are soaring in a race that polls suggest is too close to call, fueled by fears that former president Trump could again refuse to recognise a defeat, as in 2020, and by his harsh rhetoric threatening migrants and political opponents.

Concerns increased after a fire reportedly consumed hundreds of early ballots cast in a supposedly secure drop-off box in a highly competitive district in northwestern Washington state. Arson was reportedly suspected in another ballot box fire hours earlier in Portland, Oregon.

And Trump has faced renewed outrage after one of the warm-up speakers at his huge Sunday rally in New York's Madison Square Garden called US territory Puerto Rico "a floating island of garbage."

"Last night, Donald Trump's event in Madison Square Garden really highlighted a point that I've been making throughout this campaign," Harris told reporters as she headed for Michigan on Air Force Two.

"He is focused and actually fixated on his grievances, on himself, and on dividing our country. And it is not in any way something that will strengthen the American family, the American worker."

The former president's campaign said the comments on Puerto Rico did "not reflect the views of President Trump."

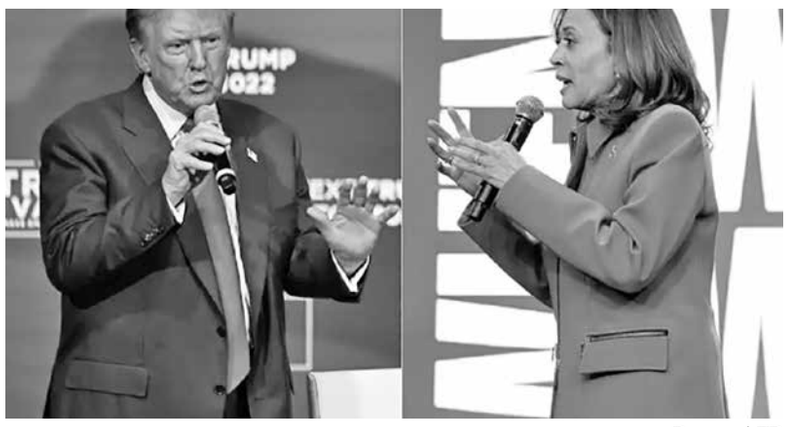

PHOTO: AFP

Donald Trump and Kamala Harris.

PRISM

Man reunited after 54 years

Florida: A Florida man who lost his U.S. Naval Academy class ring on a Pennsylvania golf course was reunited with the prized item by a fellow golfer 54 years later.

David Lorenzo, 82, said he lost his Class of 1964 ring while golfing with his father at Uniontown Country Club, near Pittsburgh.

"It survived combat, but it couldn't survive my golf game," Lorenzo told the Pensacola News Journal.

Michael Zenert, 70, was golfing at the same club recently when he spotted a shiny object in the clay that had been exposed by recent rains near the fourth green.

"I saw this shiny thing and I thought it was a beer can tab," Zenert said. "I dug it out so no one would step on it and I saw it was a ring."

Zenert searched for the ring's owner online, and found a podcast episode in which Lorenzo talked about his experiences in the military.

'Halloween crab' stows away on plane

Denver: A "Halloween crab" that stowed away on a flight from Costa Rica to Denver International Airport has a new home at the Denver Zoo.

The Denver Zoo Conservation Alliance said on social media that a flight crew discovered the blackback land crab -- also known as a Halloween crab, moon crab and Bermuda land crab -- was found by a flight crew after a plane from Costa Rica landed in Denver.

"Thanks to our amazing conservation partners at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this crab has found a safe and cozy home with us at Denver Zoo Conservation Alliance," the post said.

The crab's arrival came just in time for Halloween.

"To lean into the Halloween spirit, you can catch this crab in our Animal Ambassador demonstrations at the Gates Amphitheatre all month long. After October, it will scuttle over to its permanent home in Tropical Discovery, where you can continue to learn about this charming crustacean," the post said.

(Agencies)

TODAY IN HISTORY

758 – Guangzhou is sacked by Arab and Persian pirates.
1864 – The Treaty of Vienna is signed, by which Denmark relinquishes one province each to Prussia and Austria.
1956 – Hungarian Revolution: The government of Imre Nagy recognizes newly established revolutionary workers' councils.
1968 – A squad of 120 North Korean Army commandos land in boats along a 25-mile long section of the eastern coast of South Korea in a failed attempt to overthrow the dictatorship of Park Chung Hee and bring about the reunification of Korea.
1983 – The first democratic elections in Argentina, after seven years of military rule, are held.

Slight progress in global biodiversity protection efforts

AP
Colombia, Oct. 29

PHOTO: AP

McCain Maximo runs back into the trees filled with bridled tern nests on the northern end of the sand bar on Helen Island, Palau, on July 17, 2024.

Global efforts to protect the world's plants and animals have made slight progress and some species remain in serious decline, according to two reports released Monday at a major United Nations biodiversity summit in Colombia.

A report from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) evaluated global progress since its biodiversity report in 2020. Two years ago, 196 countries signed a historic treaty to protect biodiversity on 30% of the planet by 2030.

The biodiversity summit underway in Cali, Colombia is a follow-up to the 2022 accord in Montreal, which includes 23 measures to halt and reverse nature loss. One calls for putting 30% of the planet and 30% of degraded ecosystems under protection by 2030.

The UNEP report found countries have made some headway on pledges, but that expansion of the global network must accelerate over the next six years to meet the goal. The report says 17.6% of land and inland waters and 8.4% of the ocean and coastal areas globally are within documented protected and conserved areas.

"The increase in coverage since 2020, equivalent to more than twice the size of Colombia, is to be celebrated," UNEP said in a news release. "But it is a rise of less than 0.5 percentage points in both realms."

An area of land roughly the size of Brazil and Australia combined and sea area larger than the Indian Ocean need to be protected and conserved by 2030 to meet the global target, said UNEP.

"It is ... equally important that these areas are effective and that they do not negatively impact the people who live in and around them, who are often their most valuable custodians," said UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen. "Today's landmark report shows some progress has been made in the past four years, but we are not moving nearly far or fast enough."

The UNEP's report uses the latest official data reported by governments and other initiative stakeholders.

"The '30 by 30' is an ambitious target, but one that is still within reach if the international community works together across borders, demographics and sectors," said Grethel Aguilar, director general at The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The IUCN reported Monday that 38% of the world's trees are at risk of extinction.

The Swiss-headquartered organization says its Red List of Threatened Species now includes 166,061 species — 46,337 of them threatened with extinction.

Trees now account for over one quarter of species on its endangered list, and the number of threatened trees is more than double the number of threatened birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians combined, IUCN said.

Tree species are at risk of extinction in 192 countries around the world, the organization said. The highest proportion of threatened trees is found on islands since they are particularly at high risk due to deforestation for urban development and agriculture, as well as invasive species, pests and diseases.

"This comprehensive assessment presents the first global picture of the conservation status of trees, which enables us to make better informed conservation decisions and take action to protect trees where it is urgently needed," said Malin Rivers, Global Tree Assessment lead at Botanic Gardens Conservation International.

Global loss of trees is a major threat to thousands of other plants, fungi and animals, according to IUCN.

The report also noted the conservation status of the Western European hedgehog has deteriorated and it's now listed as "near threatened," with numbers reduced by an estimated 16 to 33% over the past 10 years.

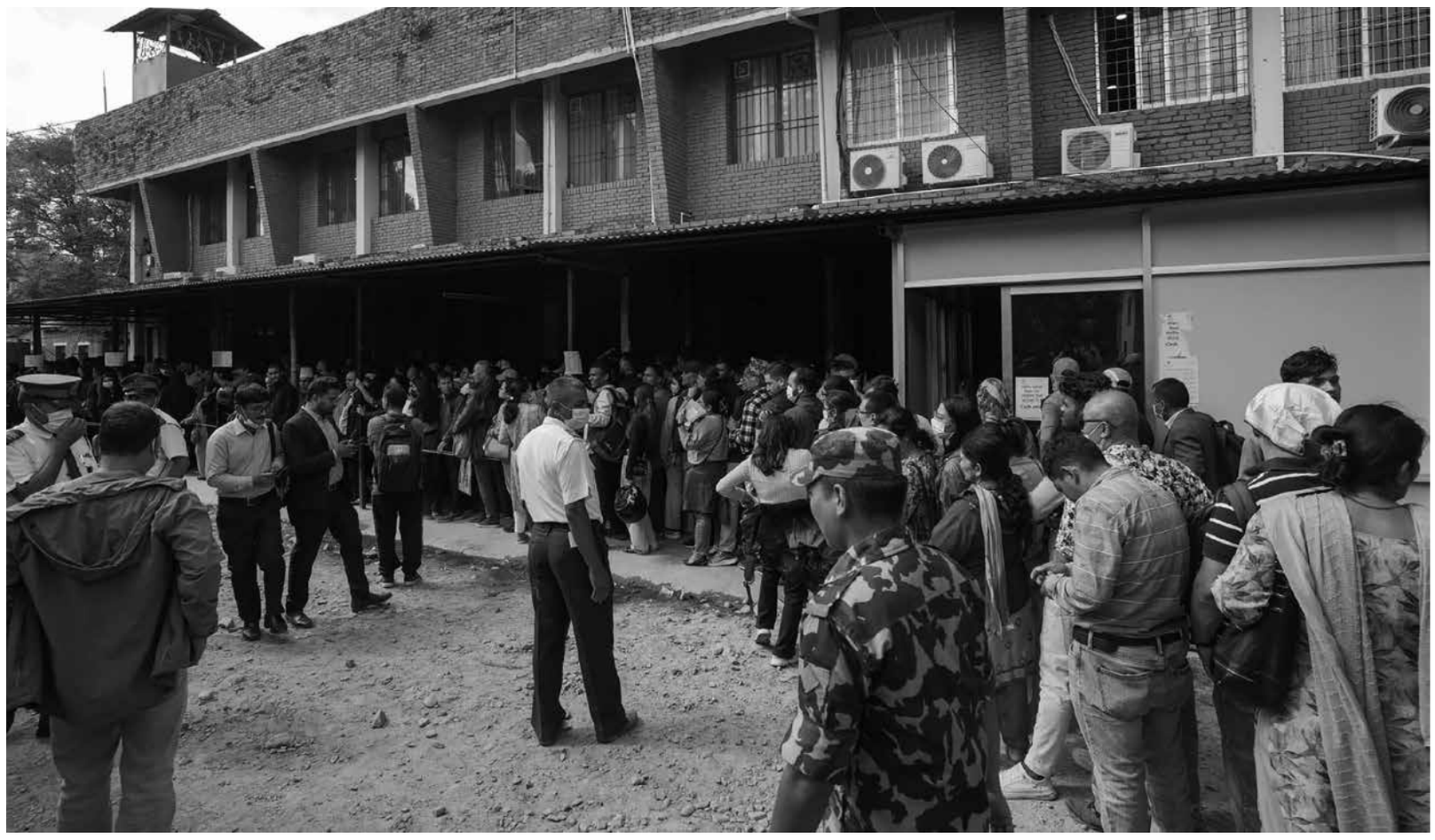

PHOTO: SUJAN GURUNG/TRN

People queuing up to buy newly minted coins for upcoming Tihar festival at the Mint Division of Nepal Rastra Bank, Babarmahal, Kathmandu on Tuesday.

NC will recognise those aiding disaster survivors: Deuba

RSS
Patan (Lalitpur), Oct 29

Nepali Congress (NC) President and former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba said his party would recognise and honour those aiding the disaster survivors.

At a relief distribution programme organised by NC Lalitpur here on Tuesday with the slogan 'Congress in sweet and sour, a message of shared journey', Deuba stressed the urgency of aiding disaster victims and addressing their problems rather than delivering speech during the time of disaster. "I would like to express my condolences to the families of all the deceased in such a tragic situation where many people have lost their lives due to the disaster across the country", Deuba said.

On behalf of the party, he extended gratefulness to all those who played an important role in the distribution of rescue and relief materials in the aftermath of the disaster. He urged the party leaders, cadres as well as the people's representatives elected from the NC to work for relief and rehabilitation.

Former Minister and NC central member Mohan Bahadur Basnet said it was the responsibility of every person, including himself, to provide support during floods, landslides and disasters.

Also speaking on the occasion, NC Lalitpur President Jitendra Kumar Shrestha said the people's representatives elected from the party and the party have played an important role in supporting those affected by the disaster.

He shared that Rs 227,505 collected by the party for the flood and landslide survivors has been distributed to the families of the flood victims in Ashrang of Bagmati rural municipality. A relief package worth Rs 25,000 each was distributed to 51 families.

It may be noted that 46 people were killed while five are still missing in the recent floods and landslides in Lalitpur.

Youth from Jogi community reviving the 'Feri' practice

BY HARI PRASAD KOIRALA
Urlabari, Oct. 28

Young people from the minority Jogi community have returned to their ancestral occupation of performing 'Feri' (blowing animal horn in each house by visiting villages in the nighttime) rituals.

Once marginalised, the Jogis used to visit Nepali-speaking villages in India to conduct the ritual and return home after a month. They used to travel to villages in Sikkim, Darjeeling and Kalimpong in India to perform Feri.

Around 60 families from Siddhapokhari in Sankhuwasabha, who later resettled in Kanepokhari-7 of Morang district, used travel to India to perform 'Feri'. One local, Durgalal Jogi, said, "Our ancestral occupation is performing 'Feri.' During the conflict period, travel at night was restricted and for nearly a decade, we could not perform the ritual, which must be done at night."

The Jogis also perform a ritual to honour the land in the months of Kartik (mid-October to mid-November) and Chaitra (mid-March to mid-April), hoping to protect it from disease and misfortune. Each year, on the day after Chandi Purnima, they conduct a ritual to honour their clan deity at a nearby crossroad, intended to prevent diseases like cholera. However, during the conflict period, the tradition of travelling to blow the ceremonial horn called 'barath ko singha' (Feri), was disrupted. To perform the 'Feri,' the Jogis travel from house to house silently, blowing the horn without speaking a word.

After the conflict period, the younger generation began to view the Jogi community as beggars and many of them were drawn more towards foreign employment or alternative jobs in place of continuing the job of blowing horn in the night. Some even pursued other professions.

However, times have changed. As the government reached each village, programmes were introduced to preserve the traditions of every ethnic group and religion. Today, even the younger generation is returning to the practice of 'Feri.' Tek Bahadur Jogi, 33, from Kanepokhari-7, said, "Blowing the Feri twice a year is believed to protect the

family from evil spirits, diseases and misfortune, bringing peace and harmony into the household."

Now, society seems to be returning to its roots, with people reverently offering donations when the Jogis come in the month of Kartik, asking them to return in Chaitra.

He said younger people today were less familiar with traditional donation customs. In the past, people would offer rice, money, lentils, vegetables, salt, turmeric and oil to the Jogis. But, today's youth are less inclined to continue these practices.

Not only Tek Bahadur, but 50-year-old Mohan Bahadur Jogi, who returned after 11 years abroad, observed how society has changed. Previously, the Jogis were seen as beggars, but now people invite them and willingly offer donations. "In the past, the alms collected in Kartik and Chaitra would sustain us for the year. Now, instead of rice, lentils, vegetables and oil, people tend to offer money and clothes," he said.

Mohan, originally from Fedap in Tehrathum and now living in the Tarai, travels to places like Letang, Pathari and Madhumalla to perform the 'Feri' ritual.

Every male member of the Jogi community is traditionally required to perform the 'Feri' ritual at least once in his lifetime, regardless of his education or occupation. Thus, no matter their level of education or employment, all male Jogis are expected to perform the 'Feri' ritual at least once.

Nepal and India decide to control cross border crimes

BY NAGENDRA KUMAR KARNA
Mahottari, Oct. 29

The Nepal-India Border District Coordination Committee meeting has concluded with decisions aimed at controlling border-related crimes.

The meeting that took place in Matihani, Mahottari, was attended by over 30 security officials from Nepal and India.

Chief District Officer of Mahottari, Shivaram Gelal, said that discussions and decisions were made on various issues, including border security, crime control along the border, protection of boundary pillars, human trafficking, control of alcohol and drug smuggling, prevention of illegal currency transactions and mutual cooperation and coordination.

He said that agreements were reached on information-sharing mechanisms between the two countries on these issues and emphasised that the meetings should be organised regularly between security agencies of both nations concerning border security issues.

The meeting was attended by the CDO of Rautahat, Hiralal Regmi, CDO of Sarlahi Gopal Kumar Adhikari, DIG Sri Babu Ram of Tirhut Division, Muzaffarpur, SP Manoj Kumar Tiwari of Sitamarhi, DM Richie Pandey, SDM Sanjeev Kumar, along with customs officials and heads of security agencies.

Mahottari District has seen an increase in illegal alcohol trafficking, currency transactions and drug smuggling because of an open border between India and Nepal.

Tihar festival...

Moreover, Nepal Sambat, an indigenous calendar of Nepal enters the year 1145 on the same day.

Bhai Tika or Kija Puja falls on November 3. Among the various tales associated with the celebration of the Tihar festival, one of the most popular tales is that of Yama, the god of death and his sister Yamuna.

It is said that Yamuna used a crow to send messages to summon Yama, her brother, after being apart for a long time.

Yamuna worshipped Yama by putting tika, consisting of seven colours, on her brother's forehead. She also circled her brother with mustard oil, flowers and Dubo and asked him not to leave till the oil, flowers and Dubo dried.

On Bhai Tika sisters put a tika on the brothers' forehead wishing for good health and long life of their brothers.

Nepal, WB...

"The Cat DDO is an innovative disaster risk financing instrument that can help the government respond quickly to emergency needs without diverting resources from its ongoing development programmes," said David Sislen, World Bank Regional Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. "Beyond providing financing, the operation is designed to ensure results on the ground and further strengthen the capacity of the government in disaster risk mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery."

The operation is also supported by technical assistance from the Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the Earthquake Housing Reconstruction Multi-Donor Trust Fund supported by the Canadian government, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Nepal earns Rs. 4.75 billion...

"The government has set a target of 100 per cent electrification within one year. In order to achieve this goal, a working group including the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Nepal Electricity Authority and AEPC has made a joint integrated action plan and started its implementation," he said.

Minister Khadka also mentioned that Nepal is trying to make carbon trade and electricity export the basis of prosperity. He informed that although there is an agreement with Bangladesh to export 40 megawatts of electricity, the government has made an action plan to export up to 8,000 megawatts. According to him, the Ministry has been trying to mobilise its subordinate bodies like the NEA and AEPC to achieve the set goals in the energy sector.

Likewise, Kushal Gurung, President of Renewable Energy Confederation of Nepal (RECON) and a member of the AEPC, pointed out the need to prioritise solar energy projects for Nepal's electricity development. He said that the solar energy project is becoming very effective in terms of technology and cost, and it is necessary to change the current share of the energy mix.

Gurung said that according to the energy mix policy, the goal is to achieve 10 per cent share of solar energy, but it is necessary to change it to 30 per cent. He suggested that while the reach of the national transmission of electricity is expanding, small hydroelectric power plants with millions of rupees of investment are facing problems and the government should repair them and create an environment to sell electricity to the NEA.

Meanwhile, through a close cooperation with the Green Climate Fund and local governments, the AEPC has initiated the implementation of the first GCF-funded project 'Mitigating greenhouse gas emissions through modern, efficient and climate-friendly clean cooking solutions.

This project aims to collaborate with local governments and private sector for accelerated deployment of clean cooking solutions and transform residential cooking sector by the installation of 500,000 electric cookstoves, 490,000 tier 3plus improved cookstoves and 10,000 biogas plants in 150 local levels of 22 districts in Tarai region of Nepal in five years period.

According to the AEPC, the project will benefit 1 million households.

Meanwhile, the AEPC has awarded Tara Khola Hydropwer Limited of Baglung district with the Suprabidh Memorial Renewable Energy Award in Small and Micro Hydropower Category. In Solar Energy Category, the award is given to Suryodaya Urja Pvt. Ltd. while in Biomass Energy Category, Jandadevi Nepal Urja Pvt. Ltd. and Dumkibas Poultry Farm Pvt. Ltd., Nawalparasi received the award.

Mha Puja: A celebration of...

An interesting aspect of the ritual, Joshi adds, is the inclusion of all parts of life, living and non-living, that support one's livelihood, such as household items animal sheds or even bird nests around the home.

This act of reverence is believed to maintain the balance of elements in our body and strengthen one's connection to the divine, ensuring that they stay fit and healthy to fully benefit from the blessings.

Additionally, to further the spirit of Mha Puja, the Newar community organises a cultural rally - Bhintuna Rally-, where people gather to celebrate their shared heritage and offer blessings for the New Year. Such event once introduced by the Nepal Bhasa Manka Khala is now widely popularised by many organisations and communities. As the community gathers for this cultural rally, people wear beautiful traditional haku patasi attire, filling the streets with colour, joy and a shared sense of heritage hooting 'Nhu dan ya Bhintuna!' (Happy New Year!) as they march through the streets.

NCP condemns attacks on Palestine, Lebanon

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct 29

Nepal Communist Party (NCP) has condemned the attacks and bombing in Palestine and Lebanon, terming it genocide and heinous crime against humanity.

In a press statement, issued by NCP chairman Lok Narayan Subedi on Tuesday, the party has called for a peaceful resolution to the conflict based on the UN Charter and international laws.

"We urge for respecting the independent Palestine state and withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the occupied territories," it stated.

The NCP has requested Nepal government to side with the Palestine people fighting for independent state, peace and liberty.

India temple firework explosion injures over 150

AFP
Mumbai, Oct. 29

Indian police detained two people Tuesday after a temple fireworks show erupted into a ferocious explosion, leaving almost a hundred people in hospital, eight in a critical condition.

Hundreds were crowded around a Hindu temple at Nileshwaram in the southern state of Kerala on Monday evening to watch the fireworks, videos posted by Indian newspapers showed.

Then, from inside a building, a surge of crackles can be heard, before a powerful ball of flame surges high into the sky.

"Around eight people are critical, and around 154 have been reported injured, out of which 97 people are admitted in hospital," local police chief Shilpa Dyavaiah told AFP.

"They burst firecrackers very close to the place where they have stored the firecrackers," Dyavaiah said, adding that sparks from the burst crackers reached the cache.

Indian media reports, citing officials, said the blaze caused burns to the faces and hands of those in tightly packed crowd. Local government official K. Inbasekhar said no permission had been given for the fireworks show.

The temple president and secretary had been taken into custody, The Hindu newspaper reported.

Religious gatherings in India have a grim track record of deadly incidents caused by safety lapses and poor crowd management.

In 2016, at least 112 people were killed after a huge explosion caused by a banned fireworks display at a temple marking the Hindu New Year.

India is readying for its major fireworks season, a traditional celebration for the Hindu festival of lights, Diwali, later this week. The spectacular and colourful festival celebrates the Hindu goddess Lakshmi and symbolises the victory of light over darkness.

The fireworks also spew hazardous acrid smoke, and the capital New Delhi has banned firecrackers to curb hazardous air pollution. Police are often reluctant to act against violators, given the strong religious sentiments attached to the crackers by Hindu devotees.

LEADERSHIP TRANSFER PROGRAMME CONDUCTED

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct, 29

Dipshikha Tharu of Bardiya district took over the position of Executive Vice President of the National Youth Council on Tuesday for a day

Under the Girls Takeover Programme, Tharu became the Executive Vice President of the Council for a day.

Surendra Basnet, Executive Vice President of the Council, handed over the post to Tharu in the leadership transfer meeting held in the capital in the meeting hall of the Council.

Plan International Nepal has been conducting leadership transfer programmes across the country to give girls the experience of working in leadership positions since 2019.

Like previous years, this year's leadership transfer programme started on the day of the International Day of Girl Child, according to Plan International Nepal.

Similarly, Sima Chaudhary of Bardiya district also took over the position of Ambassador of the UK on Monday. Laxmi Chaudhary, champion administrator of Plan International Nepal, said that four girls from several districts took the positions of several officers.

Total 22 girls from five districts-Jumla, Sindhuli, Dhanusha, Bardiya and Kalikot are participated in the leadership transfer programme till now this year.

Around 30 girls will take positions in several government offices, ambassadors and others till the day of International Women's Day.

The theme of this year's leadership programme is 'Girls in Crises'.

Kunti, Shila Bahadur Moktan: A legacy of timeless Nepali melodies

BY RENUKA DHAKAL
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

Kunti has sung timeless songs such as Gaunchha Geeta Nepali, Khutta Tandai Gara, Choli Ramro, Lali Gurans Ajambari, Gothalo Jada, and Mathi Mathi Sailungema. She has over 600 songs to her credit.

Kunti Moktan and Shila Bahadur Moktan are enduring pillars of grace and talent in the Nepali music industry.

Born and raised in Darjeeling, India, they took a career in music and moved to Kathmandu. Since then, they have been living in Kathmandu earning both fame and fortune.

Not only the couple, but also their daughters, Subani Moktan and Shital Moktan, have become successful and accomplished singers in the Nepali music sphere. Both daughters, successful singers Subani and Shital, are married and live in Nepal, where they continue to thrive in music with their soulful voices and popular songs

Kunti has sung timeless songs such as Gaunchha Geeta Nepali, Khutta Tandai Gara, Choli Ramro, Lali Gurans Ajambari, Gothalo Jada, and Mathi Mathi Sailungema. She has over 600 songs to her credit.

Currently, Kunti Moktan works as a music teacher at various schools and colleges while staying engaged with performances and music recordings.

Shila Bahadur Moktan, a much-loved musician and singer, continues to be a vital member of the music world, arranging and creating songs with the same passion as ever.

After retiring from Music Nepal, he initially planned to enjoy his retirement, but his passion for music has kept him busy with musical endeavours.

Both Kunti and Shila Bahadur have dedicated around 50 years to music. Despite this long journey, Kunti remarked, "Even though I have been in music for about 50 years, I still feel that I have not learned enough and need to keep working." Shila Bahadur echoed this sentiment, saying, "We still have the energy to try new strokes in music."

Kunti has sung over 600 songs and released 13 albums while Shila Bahadur has contributed to around 1,200 songs.

Together, the couple has produced hundreds of songs.

Interestingly, Shila Bahadur was once on the path to becoming a Lama Guru, as his grandfather had many disciples and hoped Shila Bahadur would follow in his footsteps.

However, Shila Bahadur's love for music led him in a different direction.

He received formal music training from JC Rai, and his first recorded song, Aakha Kahile Najudos, was released on All India Radio in Kurseong in the 1980s.

Folk songs like Hoina Maile Dhakeko Badulki Lageko and Topi Hataile Bunera, along with the modern song Kahile Kahi Malai Pani Herideuna Pharkera, have established Shila Bahadur in the music field.

The song Kahile Kahi Malai Pani Herideuna Pharkera introduced Kunti as a singer and Shila Bahadur as a musician in the Nepali music landscape. And the same song was the first of Kuti's songs to be recorded in Nepal.

She first came to Nepal at the invitation of Swor Samrat Narayan Gopal to perform during the late King Birendra's birthday celebration

The couple met in a music class, where JC Rai was their teacher. As they learned music together, they grew close and eventually decided to marry. They moved to Kathmandu in 1983 to pursue their musical careers.

Kunti recalled that they chose to stay in Kathmandu for the vast opportunities it offered, and Nepal has indeed fulfilled their dreams.

"We received huge opportunities and respect here, which helped us flourish in our musical careers," she said.

Both Kunti and Shila Bahadur feel blessed, as many of their contemporaries have left the profession, but thanks to the love and support of their audience, they continue to thrive in Nepali music.

Moktan couple and their two married daughters often sing and perform together at various programmes.

"In our time, we used to sing songs that touched the heart and soul," said Shila Bahadur.

"We chose songs that evoked emotions, but music has become fast-paced now."

Kunti added, "We never expected our songs to become famous, we sang songs that had a lasting impact and became timeless. But nowadays, songs are often created with the aim of going viral.

She recalled receiving only Rs. 20 for one song, with payments based on how many cassettes were sold. This is how they earned their living.

Despite the changes in the music industry, the couple plan to continue making music and bringing new songs for as long as they live.

FRENCH ACTOR SAYS DEPARDIEU'S SEX ASSAULT CASE UNDERLINES A NEED FOR CHANGE

AP
Paris, Oct. 29

Renowned French actor Anouk Grinberg says the sexual assault trial against fellow actor Gérard Depardieu reflects the slow path toward awareness of sex abuse in France, especially in the film industry, after years of silence.

Grinberg, 61, who has appeared in about 30 films, spoke Monday at what was supposed to be the start of Depardieu's trial but which was postponed until March because of concerns over the 75-year-old actor's health.

She has known Depardieu for over three decades, appearing with him in a 1991 film and in the film "The Green Shutters." The trial centres around the alleged sexual assault of two women, a production designer and a director's assistant, on the set of the latter film in 2021.

Sayami's 'Swar Samrat Narayan Gopal' launched

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Lalitpur, Oct. 29

A book, Swar Samrat Narayan Gopal, was launched amid a programme held in Lalitpur on Tuesday.

Senior Nepali film director, writer, and producer Prakash Sayami is the writer of the biography of legendary singer late Narayan Gopal Gurubacharya.

The book was jointly launched by senior musician Karma Yonjan, former Vice Chancellor of Tribhuvan University Kedar Bhakta Mathema, CK Rasaili, filmmaker and artiste Neer Shah, the comedy duo Madan Krishna Shrestha and Hari Bansha Acharya (Maha Jodi), actress Basundhara Bhusal and writer Sayami himself.

Speaking at the programme, Sayami shared that he wrote the book to present a concise portrayal of Narayan Gopal's life and personality.

Actor Saroj Khanal said that Narayan Gopal's music has immortalised him, and he continues to live in the hearts of every Nepali. Khanal shared many memories with Narayan Gopal, adding that the singer would always remain alive through his timeless music.

Senior lyricist Nagendra Thapa expressed confidence that the book would serve as a milestone for future researchers.

Chief guest and former Vice Chancellor of Tribhuvan University Kedar Bhakta Mathema praised Sayami's efforts, acknowledging that writing a biography is challenging, as authors often face criticism after publishing.

He added that the book is engaging, well-written and will help pass on Narayan Gopal's contribution to the music sector to the new generation.

The 386-page book is priced at Rs. 500.

'Bob's Burgers' actor sentenced to 1 year in prison for role in Capitol riot

AP
Washington, Oct. 29

An actor known for his roles in the television comedies "Bob's Burgers" and "Arrested Development" was sentenced on Monday to one year in prison for his part in a mob's attack on the U.S. Capitol nearly four years ago.

Jay Johnston, 56, of Los Angeles, joined other rioters in a "heave ho" push against police officers guarding a tunnel entrance to the Capitol during the Jan. 6, 2021, riot. Johnston also cracked jokes and interacted with other rioters as he used a cell phone to record the violence around him, prosecutors said.

Johnston expressed regret that he "made it more difficult for the police to do their job" on Jan. 6. He said he never would have guessed that a riot would erupt that day.

"That was because of my own ignorance, I believe," he told U.S. District Judge Carl Nichols. "If I had been more political, I could have seen that coming, perhaps."

The judge, who sentenced Johnston to one year and one day of imprisonment, allowed him to remain free after the hearing and report to prison at a date to be determined. Nichols said he recognizes that Johnston will miss out on caring for his 13-year-old autistic daughter while he is behind bars.

"But his conduct on January 6th was quite problematic. Reprehensible, really," the judge said.

Johnston pleaded guilty in July to interfering with police officers during a civil disorder, a felony punishable by a maximum prison sentence of five years.

Prosecutors recommended an 18-month prison sentence for Johnston. Their sentencing memo includes a photograph of a smiling Johnston dressed as Jacob Chansley, the spear-carrying Capitol rioter known as the "QAnon Shaman," at a Halloween party roughly two years after the siege.

"He thinks his participation in one of the most serious crimes against our democracy is a joke," prosecutors wrote.

Johnston played pizzeria owner Jimmy Pesto Sr. in "Bob's Burgers," a police officer in "Arrested Development" and a street-brawling newsman in the movie "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy." Johnston also appeared on "Mr. Show with Bob and David," an HBO sketch comedy series that starred Bob Odenkirk and David Cross.

HOROSCOPE

tarot.com

ARIES: You can't control how others view you. Accepting that someone in your life sees you in a way that you don't perceive yourself may be tough, but this is their viewpoint and their truth.

TAURUS: Your security can trigger the insecurity of others. There may be people in your life who are focused on you and pushing your buttons to see if you're truly as stable as you seem.

GEMINI : Creativity can heal where words could not. There might be an emotional wound from your past that still pains you, even as you struggle to put the details into words.

CANCER: An authority figure in your life might be acting in worrying ways. Perhaps you're concerned that you haven't accomplished enough, are too far behind to catch up, or aren't talented enough to get where you want to go.

LEO: Regrets may be on your mind today. It's possible that reminders of missed past opportunities are complicating the process of figuring out where to go from here.

VIRGO: Stagnancy can be difficult to escape -- particularly if other people are involved as friends or co-workers. When you're all stuck in a rut, whether they're relying on you or vice versa, you risk reinforcing each other's unhealthy patterns.

LIBRA: Release yourself from the weight of unrealistic expectations. You might have thought you "should" be someone, pushing yourself to pursue a dream that soon felt distant. Embrace who you genuinely are instead.

SCORPIO: Hidden emotions might be having a stronger effect on you than you realize. Perhaps you believed that your heart was holding you back, and so you tried to stuff it down to deal with at a later time.

SAGITTARIUS: Hurt may incite rash behavior. You may feel like you've been cornered by your emotional wounds and the people or events that caused them, and that taking random action is better than doing nothing.

CAPRICORN: Long-standing emotional wounds may still be affecting you. You might have thought that you had fully left these feelings in the past, but this won't be the case if you decided to ignore them.

AQUARIUS: BSometimes you have to insist on moving on. There may be other people who want to constantly revisit the past, and when you're with them, they bring up all sorts of things that you thought you had set down already.

PISCES: Comparing yourself to others may be holding you back. As paths diverge, seeing peers succeed differently can lead to self-doubt. Instead, focus on your unique journey, valuing your progress without questioning your worth.

CARTOON

gocomics.com

Nepal aim to avenge Bangladesh and win SAFF Women Championship title for first time

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Oct. 29

Nepal will face Bangladesh in the final of the SAFF Women's Championship at Dasarath Rangasala in Kathmandu on Wednesday. This marks the second time Nepal has met Bangladesh in the championship's final; they lost to Bangladesh 1-3 in the last edition held in 2022 in Kathmandu.

The Nepali women's team has reached the finals five times and has lost each time. They were defeated by their southern neighbor, India, in four of those finals. In 2022, Bangladesh won their first title by overcoming Nepal.

With home advantage and in-form striker Sabitra Bhandari, Nepal has a chance to make history by winning the SAFF title for the first time. This is a golden opportunity that Nepal cannot afford to miss, as they seek to avenge their previous final loss and secure victory on home soil.

Coach Rajendra Tamang expressed confidence in the team's preparation. "With only a win in mind, we will approach the final match. Our victory in the semi-final against India has boosted the players' morale. My team will avoid repeating past mistakes in the title showdown," he stated. "Though Bangladesh is a strong side, we have the support of our home fans, and we plan to use a strategic approach to counter them."

Captain Anjila Tumbapo Subba emphasized the importance of seizing this opportunity. "Nepal must win the title. The team has strong bonds, and if we don't secure victory on Wednesday, it may take another five to ten years to rebuild another competitive team," she said at the pre-match conference held at Dasarath Rangasala on Tuesday. "More than seeking revenge against Bangladesh, this is a significant opportunity for Nepal. We have learned a lot from our past final defeats. The current team is united and high in spirit, and we are confident about keeping the title at home."

Sabitra Bhandari will be a key player for Nepal in the final. The prolific striker can set a record as the top scorer in the SAFF Women's Championship, as she currently has 21 goals, tied with Anu Lama for the scorer's lead. Sabitra recently equalized against India in the semi-final, bringing her goal total to 21. She has scored 54 international goals for Nepal and aims to solidify her status as the leading scorer if she finds the net against Bangladesh.

Bangladesh coach Peter James Butler mentioned the importance of attitude and focus in the final match. "We will approach the game with the right mindset. It's all about managing the occasion," he said. Bangladesh's captain, Sabina Khatun, noted that her team will strive to defend their title. "The match against the host will be exciting, and it will not be easy for either team."

ANFA to sell tickets

After a ticket mishap during the semi-finals, the All Nepal Football Association (ANFA) has decided to handle the ticket sales for the final match of the SAFF Women's Championship directly. On Monday, they canceled their ticketing agreement with Mount Everest Sports and Events Pvt. Ltd due to the violation of the contract, which involved selling more tickets than the capacity of Dasarath Rangasala during the semi-final match.

The Dasarath Rangasala has a capacity of around 15,000, but Mount Everest sold 19,000 tickets for the Nepal vs. India match, leading to a strained security situation due to the overwhelming number of spectators.

ANFA had previously sold the ticketing rights for the SAFF Championship to Mount Everest for 8 million rupees. Tickets were being sold through the digital platform Khalti wallet, but ANFA has now halted online sales and will instead sell tickets in person for the final.

Tickets for the final match will be available for purchase starting at 8:00 AM on Wednesday at the following locations: Jawalakhel Sports Ground, ANFA Headquarters, and the Army Official Center at Bhadrakali.

De Zorzi, Stubbs tons put S. Africa in command

AFP
Chittagong, Oct. 29

Tony de Zorzi and Tristan Stubbs put South Africa in command on 307-2 and left Bangladesh floundering after day one of the second and final Test in Chattogram on Tuesday.

Both men made their maiden Test hundreds in a second-wicket partnership of 201 after the visitors won the toss and chose to take first use of a good batting pitch as they eye a series sweep.

De Zorzi was unbeaten at stumps on 141, with 10 fours and three sixes, and will resume alongside David Bedingham on 18.Stubbs played a more conservative innings and hit the mark on his 194th ball by cutting Mominul Haque to the covers for a single.

"To get to the three figures was a big relief, more than anything", Stubbs said, adding it "definitely ranks as my favourite hundred".

Taijul Islam was the only bowler to make a dent, first in the morning session by removing Aiden Markram when the stand-in skipper went for a big shot and holed out to Mominul Haque at mid-on for 33.

He bowled Stubbs after tea for 106 when the batsman tried a back-foot punch to the leg side but missed the lowering delivery, which crashed into his stumps. Bangladesh, desperate to take a wicket, have lost two of their three reviews for the innings.

They unsuccessfully appealed for lbw against De Zorzi off a delivery pitched outside leg and again for a caught behind when Stubbs tried to cut Taijul away but missed.

'Early wickets'

"We need to come tomorrow morning and try to get early wickets to put ourselves in a position to bowl them out," said Bangladesh coach Phil Simmons, who took up the post just before the series. South Africa made two changes to the side that won in Mirpur as they look to seal the series.

In came Senuran Muthusamy, an all-rounder who can bowl left-arm spin, and fast bowler Dane Paterson in place of Matthew Breetzke and Dane Piedt.

Bangladesh made three changes, bringing in batsman Zakir Hasan, fast bowler Nahid Rana and wicketkeeper Mahidul Islam Ankon for a debut.

Jaker Ali, who made his debut in the first match, is out after suffering a concussion while Nayeem Hasan and wicketkeeper Litton Das were also omitted.

South Africa won the opening Test inside four days with fast bowler Kagiso Rabada taking 6-46 in the second innings.

Bangladesh have played 24 Tests in Chattogram but won only two with seven drawn.

Spaniards Rodri and Bonmatí win Ballon d'Or award as Real Madrid snubs ceremony

AP
Paris, Oct. 29

PHOTO: AP

Barcelona's Spanish player Aitana Bonmati, left, and Manchester City's Spanish player Rodri kiss their 2024 Ballon d'Or trophies during the 68th Ballon d'Or (Golden Ball) award ceremony in Paris.

Spanish midfielders Rodri and Aitana Bonmatí won the men's and women's Ballon d'Or award on Monday as the world's best soccer players, while Real Madrid snubbed the star-studded ceremony in Paris in apparent protest.

The 28-year-old Rodri won the prestigious award for the first time after helping Manchester City win the Premier League and being a key player in Spain's European Championship triumph.

He succeeded eight-time winner Lionel Messi of Argentina and beat Real Madrid's Vinícius Júnior into second place, a result which greatly displeased the Spanish club. Madrid and its players stayed away from the ceremony, then vented their feelings on social media.

Rodri showed his emotion when his name was read out by former winner George Weah, putting his hands over his face.

"Incredible night for me," said Rodri, who is out for the season after injuring his ACL last month and arrived on crutches to the ceremony. "One of my key things is I always try to improve every game."

Known as a hard-working and unselfish player despite his abilities, Rodri was quick to deflect praise onto others.

"I just want to say thank you again to the people who recognize my value in the game," he said. "When I was a kid I never thought of winning the Ballon d'Or, but in the last years I've been playing the highest level."

The 26-year-old Bonmatí retained her award after helping Barcelona win the Spanish league, the Spanish cup and the Champions League. Bonmatí joined Barca teammate Alexia Putellas in winning two titles since the women's trophy was first awarded in 2018. She beat her teammates Caroline Graham Hansen of Norway and Salma Paralluelo of Spain as Barcelona completed a 1-2-3.

"It's a pleasure to be here again," said Bonmatí, who received the award from Oscar winner Natalie Portman. "Thanks to my teammates and the clubs who make me a better football player every year."

Even though attacking midfielder Jude Bellingham was third and Dani Carvajal finished fourth in the voting, and coach Carlo Ancelotti won the coach of the year award, no one from Madrid attended the gala in central Paris.

Ancelotti posted a message on X instead as did Vinícius, who was considered by many to be the favorite for the award, even though Rodri also had an outstanding season.

"I'll do it 10x if needed," Vinicius wrote in Portuguese. "They are not ready."

Madrid midfielder Eduardo Camavinga made it clear what he thought of the vote, calling it "football politics."

"My brother you are the best player in the world and no award can say otherwise," the France international wrote on X along with a photo of him and Vinicius celebrating together. "Love you my bro."

Former Madrid star Karim Benzema, who won the Ballon d'Or in 2022, posted a supportive message in French on Instagram, along with the words "Trop Fort" ("Too Strong").

Neither Messi nor Cristiano Ronaldo — winners of the prestigious individual award a combined 13 times — were in the running for this year's prize — the first time that's happened since 2003.

While Rodri is not a flamboyant player or a prolific scorer like Messi and Ronaldo, he had a huge influence on City's team with his ability to protect the defense and distribute passes cleanly from the back.

"I try to be a leader and try to improve every day from the best," Rodri said.

City looked unbeatable at times with him in the side, while his excellent technical ability enabled him to slot smoothly into the quick-passing style made so effective by Spain at Euro 2024. He is the first City player to win the award.

Bonmatí scored 19 goals for the second straight season for Barca and this year has netted five in five games for Spain, taking her international tally to 26.

The Ballon d'Or was created by France Football magazine and has been awarded since 1956 for the men, and since 2018 for the women. It is voted for by journalists from the top 100 countries in the FIFA rankings.

Each journalist, one per country, selects 10 players in ranked order, with points attributed to each position. The winner is the player who receives the most points. Unlike FIFA's awards for the best players each year, fans aren't part of the voting system.

Yamal's trophy and other awards

On a good night for Spain and Barca players, teen prodigy Lamine Yamal — the youngest-ever scorer at a European Championship — won the Kopa award for best Under-21 player and Barca won the best women's team award.

Absent Real Madrid was voted the best men's team.

Former PSG forward Kylian Mbappé and Bayern Munich striker Harry Kane shared the Gerd Mueller award for most club and country goals last season with 52. Mbappé joined Madrid during the offseason.

Argentina's penalty-saving specialist Emiliano Martínez retained the Lev Yashin award for best goalkeeper.

Ancelotti and Olympic-winning coach Emma Hayes won the Johan Cruyff award for best men's and women's coach.

Spain forward Jenni Hermoso, who has fought sexism in Spanish soccer after she was kissed on the lips at last year's Women's World Cup final by former federation president Luis Rubiales, collected the Socrates award for humanitarian work.

A special award was given by France Football to the wife and son of late Germany great Franz Beckenbauer.

WEATHER

Thursday

Sunrise at 6:14 am, Sunset at 5:22 pm

Forecast for Nepal (Thursday)

Partly to generally cloudy in the hilly areas of Koshi Province, Bagmati Province and Gandaki Province and partly cloudy to mainly fair in rest of the country. Light to moderate rain with thunder and lightning is likely to occur at a few places of hilly region of Koshi Province, Bagmati Province and Gandaki Province and at one or two places of hilly region of rest of the Province.

Expected Temp.: 26 - 28°C
Rain Probability: 30%

Wednesday's Weather Record

Stations	Max. temp. (C)	Min. temp. (C)	Rain (mm)
Dipayal	32.2	18.4	0.0
Dadeldhura	24.8	12.9	0.0
Dhangadi	32.0	21.5	0.0
Birendranagar	31.2	17.4	0.0
Nepalgunj	32.6	22.0	0.0
Jumla	24.4	9.8	0.0
Ghorahi	30.4	18.6	0.0
Pokhara	29.2	20.4	0.0
Bhairahawa	34.2	21.8	0.0
Simara	32.3	21.5	0.0
Kathmandu	28.7	15.7	0.0
Okhaldhunga	24.9	15.5	0.0
Taplejung	23.9	15.6	0.0
Dhankuta	28.5	18.2	0.0
Biratnagar	32.6	22.7	0.0
Jomsom	18.5	7.0	0.0*
Dharan	31.2	23.9	0.0*
Lumle	21.9	15.0	0.0*
Janakpur	37.4	24.0	0.0*
Jiri	23.1	12.5	0.0*

NEPAL RASTRA BANK

FOREIGN EXCHANGE DEPARTMENT

EXCHANGE RATES

October 30, 2024

CURRENCY	UNIT	BUYING	SELLING
Indian Rupee	100	Rs. 160.00	Rs. 160.15

Open Market Exchange Rates
For the purpose of Nepal Rastra Bank

CURRENCY	UNIT	BUYING	SELLING
U.S. Dollar	1	Rs. 134.23	Rs. 134.83
Euro	1	Rs. 144.93	Rs. 145.58
Pound Sterling	1	Rs. 174.25	Rs. 175.03
Swiss Franc	1	Rs. 154.74	Rs. 155.43
Australian Dollar	1	Rs. 88.12	Rs. 88.51
Canadian Dollar	1	Rs. 96.66	Rs. 97.09
Singapore Dollar	1	Rs. 101.32	Rs. 101.77
Japanese Yen	10	Rs. 8.75	Rs. 8.97
Chinese Yuan	1	Rs. 18.81	Rs. 18.89
Saudi Arab Riyal	1	Rs. 35.74	Rs. 35.90
Qatari Riyal	1	Rs. 36.82	Rs. 36.98
Thai Bhat	1	Rs. 3.98	Rs. 3.99
UAE Dirham	1	Rs. 36.55	Rs. 36.71
Malaysian Ringgit	1	Rs. 30.69	Rs. 30.83
South Korean Won	100	Rs. 9.68	Rs. 9.72
Swedish Kronar	1	Rs. 12.59	Rs. 12.64
Danish Kronar	1	Rs. 19.43	Rs. 19.52
Hong Kong Dollar	1	Rs. 17.28	Rs. 17.35
Kuwaiti Dinar	1	Rs. 437.60	Rs. 439.56
Bahrain Dinar	1	Rs. 356.00	Rs. 357.59

Note: Under the present system the open market exchange rates quoted by different banks may differ.

Published by Executive Chairman **Bishnu Prasad Subedi** and General Manager **Lal Bahadur Airi** for the Gorkhapatra Corporation • Printed at G.S. Press, Kathmandu • Acting Editor-in-Chief: **Bhimsen Thapaliya**
Phone: Editorial 5322279 • Advertisement 5327493, 5331394 • Distribution 5320638 • E-mail: mgorkhapatra@gmail.com, trnfeatures@hotmail.com • Registered No. 29/028/022 • G.P.O. 30/053/54