

THE RISING NEPAL

ALL BE HAPPY, ALL BE WELL

POLLS FIRST, PRESIDENT TELLS PRIME MINISTER

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

President Ramchandra Paudel has advised the government to direct its full attention to the upcoming election on March 5, 2026, without allowing any political bias.

While receiving the annual report for the fiscal year 2024/25 from the National Security Council from Prime Minister and Chair of the National Security Council, Sushila Karki, at the President's official residence in Shital Niwas on Sunday, President Paudel said the government should ensure that the election process remains unaffected by any partisan influence.

According to the President's press advisor Kiran Pokharel, on the occasion, the President also urged the government to maintain a strict focus on security, ensuring that the election is conducted smoothly and fairly. During the occasion, the President directed the Nepali Army and other security agencies to intensify their efforts in securing the election, demonstrating the same urgency as in previous security operations.

The Prime Minister is the Chair of the National Security Council. The report highlighted the security challenges faced in the current year and outlined strategies to address future security concerns.

President Paudel also expressed confidence that the National Security Council, considering both current and potential future security challenges, would continue to effectively carry out its responsibilities in the coming days.



PHOTO: PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

President Ram Chandra Paudel receiving the annual report of National Security Council for fiscal year 2024/25 presented by Prime Minister and Chair of the Council Sushila Karki at the President's Office in Sheetal Niwas, Kathmandu, on Sunday.

Ministers Ghising tells contractors to complete projects on time

BY AMAR RAJ NAHARKI
Tanahun, Dec. 14

Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport Kul Man Ghising has intensified pressure on contractors and officials to ensure timely completion of major road and bridge projects under the Mugling-Pokhara Road Expansion Project, stressing that delays in infrastructure development are unacceptable.

During a field inspection from Pokhara to Mugling on Sunday,

Minister Ghising instructed contractors to accelerate construction works and complete the project within the stipulated timeframe so that passengers and residents can directly benefit. Reviewing the western section of the project, he assured full ministerial support to resolve on-site problems.

According to the project office, physical progress in the western section stands at 60 per cent, with financial progress at 48 per cent. The Jamune-Pokhara stretch has achieved around 60 per cent completion, with first-layer asphalt paving completed on 37.4 kilometres of the 48.88-kilometre section. Significant progress has also been reported in the eastern section (Anbukhaireni-Jamune).

Information Officer Engineer Bishnu Prasad Pandey said nearly 88 per cent of the work has been completed, with asphalt paving already finished and remaining works advancing rapidly. In the western section, 11 of the 12 bridges have been completed, while construction of one bridge over the Seti River is ongoing. Of the 66 targeted culverts, 65 have been completed, along with 45.2 kilometres of drains. The Rs 7.40 billion western section contract, signed in May 2021, is targeted for completion by mid-January.

Minister Ghising also inspected the under-construction four-lane arch-design bridge over the Madi River in Damauli, Tanahun.



Gokarneshwor Mayor faces Rs. 36.8 million graft case

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

The Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) filed a corruption case against former Mayor of Gokarneshwor Municipality, Santosh Chalise, accusing him of accumulating illegal assets worth more than Rs. 36.8 million during his five-year tenure, at the Special Court on Sunday.

The CIAA accused Chalise of abusing his official position and violating public office ethics to amass unlawful wealth. According to the CIAA, during the investigation period of his term from May 22, 2017, when he assumed office, until July 7, 2022, Chalise's legal income, along with his wife, sons, and daughter-in-law, was approximately Rs. 48.83 million, while his expenditure was approximately Rs. 85.68 million on house construction, land purchases, business



investments, loan repayments, vehicle expenses, insurance premiums, share purchases, and other expenditures.

The investigation concluded that expenditures exceeded declared income by Rs. 36.84 million, the source of which could not be reasonably established.

In the case, Chalise, along with his wife Mandira Chalise, sons Sagar and Sanjiv Chalise, and daughter-in-law Pramila Pokharel have been presented as defendants.

The CIAA claimed a fine of Rs. 36.84 million from Chalise and punishment in accordance with Clause 16 (2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 2002.

Tanahun Hydro builders directed to finish work

BY AMAR RAJ NAHARKI
Tanahun, Dec. 14

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Kul Man Ghising has directed the Tanahun Hydropower Project to complete it within the stipulated timeframe.

While conducting an on-site inspection of the project on Sunday, Minister Ghising, who also holds the portfolio of the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport, instructed the concerned stakeholders of the project to prevent any delays in construction and to move the work forward in a more effective manner.

He reviewed the project's physical and financial progress to date and stressed that timely completion of the project is a national necessity. He urged the project management, contractor companies and technical teams to work responsibly by immediately addressing existing problems and ensuring continuity in construction activities.

Minister Ghising also stated that arrangements would be made to enable the Nepali public to hold shares in the Tanahun Hydropower Project as well as the Lower Seti Hydropower Project being developed in Tanahun district.

According to Project Chief Shyamji Bhandari, the overall progress of the Tanahun Hydropower Project has reached 70 per cent. Under the first package, structures including a 140-metre-high dam are being constructed by the Song Da Corporation of Vietnam in a joint venture with Kalika Construction Pvt. Ltd. Nepal.

Work under this package includes construction of the diversion tunnel, excavation of the upper section of the dam, slope construction and upgrading of access roads. At present, the dam has reached a height of 20 metres.

Under the second package, Sino-hydro of China is responsible for the construction of tunnels, the powerhouse, and the supply, installation and operation of hydromechanical and electromechanical equipment.

Govt plans to amend laws on indigenous rights

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

Prime Minister Sushila Karki has reaffirmed the government's commitment to amending laws to protect the rights of indigenous nationalities in line with the constitutional provisions and international labour laws.

Speaking at the 26th meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Foundation of Indigenous Nationalities on Sunday, she said that in response to the directives issued by the Supreme Court, the government is committed to developing and executing an action plan to amend the relevant laws and regulations in line with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

She underscored the vital role the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities plays in the recognition, rights and overall development of indigenous communities in Nepal.

Highlighting the foundation's contribution to Nepal's inclusive development journey, she stressed the

importance of continuing such efforts towards safeguarding the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous nationalities

Stating that it is the state's responsibility to ensure social justice, proportional inclusion, and the protection and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity, Prime Minister Karki said the foundation has made a commendable contribution towards the recognition, rights, culture, and overall development of indigenous nationalities in Nepal.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the continuous support from the government, which has been providing necessary policy reforms, structural changes, and financial backing for the effective implementation of the Institute's programmes.

She also called for greater collaboration between development partners, civil society, local governments and communities to achieve the overarching goals of inclusive development.

"The Government of Nepal stands ready to facilitate this process," she affirmed. "We must work in harmony and coordination, avoiding any overlap in the responsibilities of the Indigenous Nationalities Commission, the Tharu Commission, and the Foundation."

UML's closed session begins at Bhritkutimandap



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

The closed session of the 11th General Convention of the CPN-UML began at Bhritkutimandap at 3:00 pm on Tuesday.

The closed session attended by 2,262 convention representatives was delayed due to a prolonged meeting of the party's Central Committee.

According to Rajendra Gautam, Chief of the UML's Publicity Department, the session began after the representatives finished their lunch.

Earlier, the Central Committee meeting decided to move forward by retaining the party's existing statute. The meeting has decided to retain a 301-member Central Committee, as determined by the party's 10th National Convention.

The meeting decided not to alter the core spirit of the statute, opting instead to make adjustments only to numerical strength and organisational structure. Earlier, the party's statute convention held in Godavari on September 22 decided to alter statute.

Party Chair KP Sharma Oli informed the meeting about the decision. Although Senior Vice-Chair Ishwar Pokhrel and some other leaders spoke against re-entering issues already endorsed by the Statute Convention, the majority decided to maintain the Central Committee structure in line with the party's 10th National Convention.

During the meeting, General Secretary Shankar Pokhrel presented key agendas to be tabled at the closed-door session, including the election schedule, code of conduct, and other contemporary political issues.

BNP rhinos cross border to India in dearth of water

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Babai (Bardiya), Dec. 14

The movement of single-horned rhinos towards India from the Bardiya National Park (BNP) in Bardiya district has not ceased after the scarcity of water surfaced.

The rhinos have started crossing into India through the Khata Corridor, which is connected to the BNP. It has been confirmed by the Indian Wildlife Sanctuary in the Indian region along the Nepal-India border that there are currently 20 rhinos in the Kartaniya Wildlife Sanctuary, while the number of rhinos in the BNP is decreasing.

Due to changes in the flow of the Karnali River in recent years, the water level in the Geruwa Bend of the Karnali River, which flows towards the BNP, has decreased, while there is also a noticeable water shortage within the park. As a result, the rhinos, which prefer to stay in water, have started moving towards



India, according to local people.

Saroj Mani Poudel, information officer of the BNP, confirmed that the Indian Wildlife Sanctuary at Kartaniya has reported 20 rhinos, and it is suspected that these rhinos may have

reached there from Nepal.

In 2019, during a rhino census, 38 rhinos were counted in the BNP, but now only 18 are visible in the park. Despite multiple attempts by the border security personnel to turn the rhinos back,

the movement towards India has not stopped.

Bishwo Babu Shrestha, acting chief of the Bardiya National Park, stated that the change in the flow of the Karnali River has been causing a water shortage for wildlife. He mentioned that the water scarcity has led wildlife to start moving out of the forest.

In the past, tourists used to visit Bardiya district just to see the single-horned rhinos, and the animals could even be spotted in the community forest areas. However, recently it has become difficult to even spot a rhino.

As the rhinos from Nepal's forests have started to move towards India through the Khata Corridor, which lies along the Nepal-India border, there is growing concern among conservationists that rhinos might become endangered.

Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, president of the Bardiya Tourism Forum, said that if the rhinos continue moving towards India, there may come a time when searching for rhinos in the wild becomes necessary.

BULLION

(Rs. per tola)

Hallmark Gold : Rs. 258,800/-
Worked Gold : NA
Silver : 3,825/-

STOCK

NEPSE : 2,594.87
Total Amount : 4,007,455,077
No. of Share : 11,272,168

MOROCCO
BOOSTS LEGAL
CANNABIS TRADE

AP
Bah Berred, Dec. 14

Since he started growing cannabis at 14, Mohamed Makhlouf has lived in the shadows, losing sleep while bracing for a knock on his door from authorities that could mean prison or his entire harvest confiscated.

But after decades of operating in secret, Makhlouf finally has gained peace of mind as Morocco expands legal cultivation and works to integrate veteran growers like him into the formal economy.

On his farmland deep in the Rif Mountains, stalks of a government-approved cannabis strain rise from the earth in dense clusters. He notices when police pass on a nearby road.

Gold trading at record
Rs. 258,800 per tola

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

The price of gold set a new record again on Sunday. The trading price in the Nepali market reached Rs. 258,800 per tola on Sunday.

According to the Federation of Nepal Gold and Silver Dealers Association, the price of precious yellow metal has increased by Rs. 2,200 on Sunday as compared to Friday's price last week.

However, the price of silver has decreased by Rs. 80 per tola to Rs. 3,825 in the local market. Earlier, the price of silver had reached the high of Rs. 3,905 per tola on Friday last week.

Tej Ratna Shakya, a gold trader and market expert, said that the significant increment in the gold price in the international market has contributed to the increase in its price in the local market for the last couple of weeks and set new record today. Earlier, on October 17, gold had reached a record high of Rs. 258,000 per tola.

After that the gold price dropped to Rs. 236,300 per tola on October 29, 2026.

The price of gold has increased by USD 32 per ounce to USD 4,300 in the international market today, he said, adding that present fluctuation of gold price in the international market

Informal sector workers demand fair wage

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

Workers in the informal sector have reported being deprived even of basic service facilities.

Speaking at a press conference in Kathmandu, they highlighted that they face unfair treatment in the course of work and often do not receive even the minimum wage.

Representatives from 13 different districts jointly presented a seven-point memorandum, drawing the government's attention to the problems they face. According to Nepal's Labour Force Survey 2017/2018, 84.6 per cent of total employment is in the informal sector.

Although women constitute 90 per cent of this workforce, they face wage discrimination, violence, and unsafe working conditions, according to the workers.

Informal sector workers complained that, recently, in Bardiya alone, the wages of six hundred workers were defrauded. They demanded that the government ensure insurance for injuries sustained during work, effective monitoring by relevant authorities in cases of exploitation, and social security arrangements based on worker contributions.

They also demanded that the local governments must ensure mandatory registration of all types of

NEPSE slips below 2,600 points

NEPSE slumps double digits, life insurance index suffers steepest fall

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

The Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE) recorded a double-digit decline on Sunday, the first trading day of the week, extending its recent downward trend.

The benchmark NEPSE index dropped by 12.50 points to settle at 2,594.87 points, following a marginal fall of 1.66 points in the previous trading session on Thursday.

The sensitive index which measures the performance of group 'A' companies also decreased by 0.79 points to close at 445.50 points.

The sub-indices of all groups, except banking and mutual fund, decreased in today's transaction.

Sub-index of the life insurance group saw the highest fall of 115.65 points followed by the hotels and tourism and manufacturing and processing group whose indices decreased by 61.52 points and 59.22 points respectively.

Similarly, sub-index of non-life insurance group decreased by 36.45 points, hydropower by 31.38 points, trading by 22.58 points, development bank by 18.59 points, finance by 16.57 points, microfinance by 12.68 points, others by 10.67 points and investment by 0.63 points.

However, the sub-index of banking group posted a marginal growth of 0.64 points and mutual fund by 0.10 points.

A total of 11,272,168 shares worth Rs. 4 billion of 330 companies were



sold in 60,699 transactions today. The share price of 225 companies decreased while the share price of 87 companies increased in today's transaction.

On Sunday, share price of City Hotel decreased by 6.26 per cent,

Shreenagar Agritech Industries by 4.65 per cent, Laxmi Laghubitta Bitiya Sanstha by 4.55 per cent and Aarambha Chautari Laghubitta Bitiya Sanstha by 4.34 per cent.

However, share price of Swastik Laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha increased

by 10 per cent while the share price of SY Panel Nepal increased by 9.99 per cent.

Similarly, the share price of NMB Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha increased by 5.19 per cent and Upper Syange Hydropower by 4.7 per cent.

Vegetable prices surge as October rain hit production

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Sarlahi, Dec. 14

The heavy rainfall in early October has had a lasting effect on vegetable farming in Sarlahi, leaving farmers unable to achieve the harvest they had expected. The downpour caused waterlogging, which submerged many vegetable plants, damaging crops and making it difficult for farmers to grow vegetables as they usually do.

Farmers have expressed frustration, saying they couldn't produce enough vegetables this year due to the rain. However, those who managed to protect their crops are now reaping higher profits.

Vegetable prices have surged this year, with costs more than double that of last year. While farmers are benefiting from these higher prices, consumers are facing the impact of increased costs. The cauliflower, which was being sold at Rs. 30-40 per kilogram last year, is now being sold for Rs. 80 per kilogram at the Dumdume wholesale market in Lalbandi, Sarlahi.

The reduced production this year has resulted in consistently high prices, according to traders. "Last year,

a 25-kg crate of cauliflower sold at Rs. 700-800, but this year it costs over Rs. 2,000," said Shambhu Prasad Ghimire, manager of the Agricultural Wholesale Market Management Committee.

"We should have had a lot of cauliflower, but the October rain destroyed many of the plants," he added.

Farmers in northern Sarlahi, including Ishwarpur, Lalbandi, Hariwan and Bagmati, typically earn good income from cauliflower sales. Farmers from nearby Mahottari's Bardibas and Gausala areas also sell their produce in the Lalbandi market.

Despite the challenges, cabbage prices remain strong this year, with farmers selling cauliflower for Rs. 60-70 per kilogram and cabbage for Rs. 30-40 per kilogram.

Ram Dinesh Mahato, a farmer from Babar Ganj, Chandranagar Rural Municipality-2, shared his satisfaction with the income from cabbage this year, adding that it was being sold for over Rs. 100 per kilogram just a week ago.

However, prices are gradually starting to fall. In Lalbandi wholesale market, beans are selling for Rs. 110-115 per kilogram, while bitter gourd is priced at Rs. 100-120, and okra is being sold for Rs. 80 per kilogram.



Vegetable farmers of Sarlahi in local market.

PHOTO: TRN

Mohammad Usman, a trader in the Lalbandi market, said that after the heavy rains in September and October, vegetable supply has not kept up with the demand.

The reduced production has also led to a decline in the amount of vegetables being exported to other districts,

including Kathmandu, creating a shortage in both local markets and exports.

While some farmers are earning a good income from limited vegetable production, the effects of the rains continue to affect both the farmers and consumers.

Luxury car sales plunge in China

AP
Hong Kong, Dec. 14

Chinese demand for foreign luxury cars is waning as customers opt for more affordable Chinese brand models, often sold at big discounts, catering to their taste for fancy electronics and comfort.

That is bad news for European carmakers like Porsche, Aston Martin, Mercedes-Benz and BMW that have long dominated the upper reaches of the world's largest auto market.

A prolonged property downturn in China has left many consumers with little appetite for big purchases. Meanwhile, the well-to-do are becoming increasingly shy about publicly displaying their wealth, said Paul Gong, UBS head of China Automotive Industry Research.

Many car buyers have been swayed by a 20,000 yuan (\$2,830) trade-in subsidy offered by the Chinese government for purchasing electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. People tended to purchase cheaper, entry-level cars where the discount will count more and those cars are mostly Chinese made, Gong said.

"Slowing economic growth is one key driver behind weaker demand for premium cars," said Claire Yuan, director of corporate ratings for China autos at S&P Global Ratings, referring to a segment that typically counts car brands such as Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

The market share of premium car sales in China, usually priced above 300,000 yuan (\$42,400), more than doubled between 2017 and 2023 to about 15% of total sales, S&P said. That trend is now reversing. The share of premium cars sales fell to 14% in 2024 and to 13% in the first nine months of 2025, S&P said.

While luxury auto sales have slowed, Chinese manufacturers, including electric vehicle maker BYD, have become more aggressive than many Western brands in technological innovation, frequently rolling out new electric vehicles and hybrids at cheaper prices, including premium vehicles, analysts said.

"Their (Chinese carmakers') products are more competitive and more affordable even in the premium segment," Yuan said. "That's why these foreign brands are gradually losing momentum."

The Chinese brands' share of passenger car sales climbed to almost 70% in the first 11 months of this year, according to China Association of Automobile Manufacturers. It reported Thursday that German brands held a 12% share, Japanese brands around 10% and U.S. brands nearly 6%.

BYD already has overtaken Volkswagen as the biggest car seller in China in recent years. BYD is so far the best selling car brand this year in China for "new energy vehicles," which include electric vehicles and hybrids, according to the China Passenger Car Association.



Informal sector women workers during a discussion in Kathmandu.

PHOTO: TRN

informal sector workers, implement minimum and fair wages as per the Labour Act, 2074, and provide easy access to safe workplaces and insurance facilities.

Since women working in the informal sector are more vulnerable to sexual harassment, exploitation, and discrimination, they have urged relevant authorities to develop immediate and effective safety measures and monitoring

mechanisms.

To create a worker-friendly environment, they have also demanded the mandatory provision of basic facilities such as breastfeeding rooms, drinking water, toilets, and childcare centers.

"We want to work in a safe, respected, and exploitation-free environment," Sita Parki from Doti said. Additionally, the government has been urged to include informal

workers in social security schemes based on their contributions and guarantee sustainable employment.

With upcoming elections in mind, they demanded that political parties include informal sector workers' issues in their manifestos and prioritise them on their agendas.

They also stated that when local governments neglect their problems, it creates additional challenges for informal sector workers.

Ilam disaster victims await relief

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Ilam, Dec. 14

Mangali Bishwokarma’s family from Barbotey of Ilam Municipality-5 are without shelter and are still unable to rebuild their house destroyed by flood and landslide on October 4.

“We have received 30 sacks of cement and two tarpaulins as relief so far. We are still unable to rebuild our house,” said Mangali Bishwokarma.

“The government has promised relief for temporary housing, but despite submitting several documents at the bank, we still haven’t received any financial assistance,” she added.

Currently, her family is staying in a temporary shelter away from their destroyed home. Bishwokarma’s family is just one example of the many families displaced by the natural disaster in Ilam.

The flood and landslides on the night of October 4 completely damaged 338 houses, while 449 families were displaced.

Of those, 11 families are residing in community buildings, and the rest are living with relatives and neighbours, according to the District Administration Office of Ilam.

In total, 39 people lost their lives in the landslides and 828 houses sustained partial damage.

Recently, the federal government has provided financial relief of Rs. 50,000 per family for the construction of temporary shelters for flood and landslide victims.

However, the amount has not yet reached many affected families. The first instalment of Rs. 25,000 has been sent to the concerned municipalities by the District Administration Office.

According to Officer Tika Niroula



Remains of collapsed houses in Ilam after destructive floods and landslides of Oct. 4

PHOTO: TRN

of the District Administration, the second instalment of Rs. 25,000 can only be provided after the victims receive the first instalment.

“The relief amount for temporary housing has not been disbursed fully and without it, the permanent housing funds will not be provided,” said Niroula.

He explained that the local-level authorities identified the beneficiaries and submitted the list on

the disaster portal. From the nine affected municipalities, 400 households applied for assistance to build temporary shelters. Of these, funds have been disbursed for 380 families. For the remaining 20 families, other organisations have provided temporary shelters, so they did not receive double relief.

Once the temporary shelters are completed, the government is preparing to provide Rs. 400,000 for the construction of permanent houses,

with an additional Rs. 300,000 for land purchase for families whose land was also swept away by the landslide.

The damage caused by the disaster on October 4 is estimated to exceed Rs. 12 billion, affecting infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and irrigation systems.

Niroula stated that the federal government has been requested to allocate a budget for the reconstruction of these infrastructures, but so far, no funds have been received. “We have received assurances that the budget

will come, but as of now, we have not received any funds,” he said.

“The damage is significant, and a large budget is required for the reconstruction work,” he added.

While the government declared Ilam a disaster-hit district for three months, locals have expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of concrete progress in reconstruction efforts.

Thakur Shrestha, a local of Ilam Municipality-5, said that as the three-month period is almost over, no visible improvements have been made in physical structures or infrastructure. “We were hopeful that after Minister Kulman Ghising’s visit, reconstruction would begin, but we have seen no progress,” he added.

Niroj Khadgi, the district secretary of the Nepali Congress, also criticised the government for its failure to act after declaring the district a disaster zone.

“The declaration of the disaster zone will soon be over and still, the reconstruction of over 300 damaged infrastructures has not started. Who do we approach for accountability?” Khadgi asked.

“Once the rainy season starts, what will Ilam do? The government must answer,” he added.

The Chamber of Commerce of Ilam also reported significant impacts on the transportation and tourism sectors.

“Since October 4, tourism has drastically declined in Ilam, affecting our local businesses, transport, and tourism industry,” said Krishna Paudel, president of the chamber. He further mentioned that the construction of permanent houses for victims has not even started yet.

The situation remains dire for the victims, who have been waiting for the promised relief and a clear plan for rebuilding their lives.

823 PERSONS DROWN IN MADHES IN FOUR YEARS

BY BINAY KARNA
Kalyanpur (Saptari), Dec. 14

In the past four years, 823 people have lost their lives due to drowning in ponds, rivers, streams, and ditches across Madhes Province.

According to data published by the National Human Rights Commission, Madhes Province Office in Janakpur, the majority of these drownings occurred in ponds, rivers, and drainage systems.

Out of the total deaths, 362 were children. The highest number of drowning deaths occurred in Dhanusha district, where 187 people drowned, including 112 adults, 68 children, and 7 elderly people.

Similarly, in Saptari, 103 people lost their lives in drowning incidents, including 62 children, 35 adults, and six elderly people.

In Rautahat, 90 people died from drowning, with 59 being children and 31 adults. Similarly, in Siraha, 78 people drowned, including 56 children, 17 adults, and five elderly people.

In Mahottari, 77 people lost their lives, of whom 48 were children, 11 were adults, and 18 were elderly.

Sarlahi reported 66 deaths, including 34 children and 32 adults, while Parsa saw 42 deaths, with 22 children, 17 adults, and three elderly people.

Bara saw 13 child drowning cases in the reported period.

According to Buddha Narayan Sahani, the chief of the National Human Rights Commission’s Madhes Province office in Janakpur, the number of drowning deaths over the years has increased as follows: 157 in the fiscal year 2021/22, 167 in 2022/23, 204 in 2023/24, and 295 in 2024/25.

Rajesh Jha, the disaster management officer of Tilathi Koiladi Rural Municipality, explained that the large number of drowning deaths can be attributed to the negligence in child care, especially during the monsoon season.

Maternal health access transforms Mumbra

BY PREMRAJ SIMKHADA
Kalikot, Dec. 14

Mumbra village of Sanni-Triveni Rural Municipality has witnessed notable progress in infrastructure development and has become a model for accessible maternal health services.

Located within Ward Nos. 8 and 9 of Sanni-Triveni Rural Municipality, Mumbra village has set a commendable example by ensuring accessible maternal health services to all residents.

Women in this village no longer face difficulties in accessing maternal health services. Likewise, there have been no maternal or neonatal deaths in the past five years, and there has been no requirement for airlifts during emergencies in the last two years.

Despite being connected via a challenging, unpaved road from Sannighat, the village continues to prosper. The journey from Sannighat to Mumbra typically takes approximately two to three hours by vehicle. According to Dharendra KC, the head of Mumbra Health Post, eleven women have given birth in the first four months of this fiscal year alone, including an 18-year-old girl.

Last year, 44 deliveries were conducted at the health post. He emphasised that the number of home deliveries in the village has dropped to zero, and with the availability of essential equipment for the birthing centre, the situation has improved significantly.

The Nepal Red Cross Society’s Kalikot



The transformed school in Mumbra village of Sanni-Triveni Rural Municipality, Kalikot, after fencing off the open area.

PHOTO:TRN

district branch has been actively supporting local health institutions. With financial and technical assistance from the Swiss and British Red Cross, the ‘Integrated Initiative for Community Health’ programme has helped provide essential materials for the birthing centre and constructed toilets.

Bhojraj Ojha, the district coordinator for the programme, informed that the project also supported the construction of ‘green schools’ and ‘one-house-one-tap’ water systems in the municipality.

Durga Bahadur Budha, the principal of Dhampe Secondary School, expressed his happiness after the

school’s open courtyard was fenced off with support from the programme.

He explained that before the fencing, livestock would enter the classroom, creating chaos. It was a time-consuming task to keep the children’s belongings safe. “Now, we are at ease,” said Budha.

The programme also provided sanitary pads for female students, which has led to increased attendance of girls at school. However, the school is facing challenges in managing the proper disposal of sanitary pads.

The municipality has also implemented the ‘one-house-one-tap’ water system, benefiting approximately

17,000 locals. Over 200 water sources have been preserved, and the municipality claims that this has significantly improved the water supply system.

According to the chairman of Sanni-Triveni Rural Municipality, Mohan Bahadur KC, more than 2,000 taps have been installed so far.

Projects like the Mudpani Mumbra Bichgaun Khopani and the sanitation programme have been completed with the support of the ‘Integrated Initiative for Community Health’ programme. Preparations are now underway to declare the village as a ‘completely clean’ municipality.

Houses reconstructed for Barhabise Disaster Victims

BY CHITRA KUMAR MIJAR
Sindhupalchok, Dec. 14

New houses have been rebuilt for disaster victims in Barhabise who lost their homes due to floods, landslides, and other calamities. Balkrishna

Basnet, the Municipality Mayor, mentioned that 60 families who lost their homes in the disaster now have permanent housing.

In 2020 (2077 BS), a major flood and landslide along the Jambu Thado River in Ward No. 5 swept away homes and property. Mayor Basnet noted that 60 families affected in Nagpuje and Tangsar of Ward No. 7 received new homes in August/September 2021 (Bhadra, 2078 BS).

Mustang farmers losing livestock to leopards

BY HARIKRISHNA SHARMA
Muktinath (Mustang), Dec. 14

Santosh Pariyar, a farmer from Marpha in Gharpajhong Rural Municipality-2, Mustang, never imagined that a leopard would kill his sheep and goats kept in a shed close to the village.

The shed was located near human settlements, where there is regular human activity. A leopard attack on his shed near the Temperate Horticulture Development Centre killed 16 sheep and three goats. Some of the remaining animals among the 45 sheep and goats kept in the enclosure were injured.

According to Deepak Oli, a ranger at the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) Area Office in Jomsom, the estimated loss amounts to around Rs.

600,000 based on current market prices.

Oli said that camera traps have been installed to gather further information, as leopards are mostly active at night. “Leopards are occasionally sighted in this area,” he said. After locals reported seeing a leopard in nearby areas a few days before the incident, ACAP has been monitoring the surroundings and studying footprints and other evidence.

An ACAP team also visited the shed on Saturday morning for an on-site inspection. Due to extreme cold, livestock sheds that are usually kept in the high pastures (buki) have been shifted closer to settlements.

Farmers are worried as leopards, in search of food, have started attacking livestock kept in sheds located at an altitude of 2,683 metres above sea level.



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport
Department of Roads
Mechanical Training Center, Patandhoka
Notice of LoI
Date of publication: 2025/12/15

This is to inform to all concerned bidders who had submitted their bids, invited under tender notice IFB Number mentioned below published on 17 October 2025 in “The Rising Nepal”, that the “Letter of Intent” has been issued in favor of following bidders having substantially responsive and lowest evaluated bid price.

Sr. No.	Contract Identification No. and Detail	Bidder's Name & Address	Bid Price (Including VAT)
1	MTC/337310113/NCB/082-83/01 (Procurement of Supply, Delivery and Installation of Workshop Tools and Equipment)	M/S Mantra Incorporation Pvt. Ltd., Lalitpur, Nepal	NRs. 42,54,450.00
2	MTC/337310113/NCB/082-83/02 (Procurement of Supply, Delivery and Installation of Lifting, Alignment and Pneumatic Tools)	M/S Shrestha International Trading Concern Kantipath, Kathmandu	NRs. 58,28,540.00
3	MTC/337310113/NCB/082-83/03 (Procurement of Supply, Delivery and Installation of Workshop Stands and Shop Tools)	M/S Shrestha International Trading Concern Kantipath, Kathmandu	NRs. 54,27,729.00
4	MTC/337310113/NCB/082-83/04 (Procurement of Supply, Delivery and Installation of Special Maintenance Tools)	M/S Panchakanya Marketing Pvt. Ltd Kathmandu, Nepal	NRs. 43,00,215.00

Training Chief



Invitation for Prequalification (IFP)
Nepal Rastra Bank
Date: 15 December 2025

Name of Project: Prequalification of Bidders for the Procurement of Designing, Minting, Supply, and Delivery of Nepalese Coins and Related Services

IFP No: NRB/COIN/PQ/01/082/83
Deadlines for Application: 29 January 2026

- Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), the central bank of Nepal, has allocated funds from its own resources and intends to apply towards the cost of the Designing, Minting, Supply and Delivery of Nepalese Coins and Related Services, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this fund for payments under the contracts for Designing, Minting, Supply and Delivery of Nepalese Coins and Related Services.
- Nepal Rastra Bank intends to prequalify firms for two years or one complete cycle of Designing, Minting, Supply and Delivery of Nepalese Coins of each denomination in circulation. It is expected that invitations to bid will be made as indicated in ITA 29.1.
- Prequalification will be conducted following the criteria contained in the Prequalification documents and is open to applicants from all countries.
- Interested eligible applicants may obtain further information and inspect the Prequalification document at the office of Nepal Rastra Bank (address below) within office hours. A complete set of Prequalification document in English may be purchased from the office of Currency Management Department, Nepal Rastra Bank, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal and the office of Mint Division, Nepal Rastra Bank, Babarmahal, Kathmandu, Nepal upon the submission of a written application to purchase the Prequalification document or security encrypted Prequalification document may be purchased via email, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee with the following details on or before **28 January 2026** during office hours.
Name of the Bank: Nepal Rastra Bank
Name of the Office: Banking Department, Thapathali, Kathmandu
Account Name: Currency Management Department
Account Number: 1309901/011-000-524: for bid currency in NPR, or 1309901/011-000-840: for bid currency in USD, or 1309901/011-000-978: for bid currency in EUR, or 1309901/011-000-826: for bid currency in GBP.

Cost of Prequalification Document: NPR 15,000 or USD105 or Euro 91 or GBP 80.
SWIFT Code: NRBPNPKA (The SWIFT message is also required to specify the Account Number as mentioned above for respective currency)

- Interested eligible applicants shall submit the application to the office of Nepal Rastra Bank, Currency Management Department, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal by hand/courier on or before 12:00 Noon, Nepal Standard Time, on **29 January 2026**. Applications received after this deadline will be rejected.
- Applications shall be opened in the presence of applicants or applicant's authorized representative who choose to attend at 1:00 PM, Nepal Standard Time on **29 January 2026** at the office of Nepal Rastra Bank, Currency Management Department, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal. However, NRB reserves the right to open the applications in the absence of applicants or applicant's authorized representative.
- If the last date of purchasing, submission and opening falls on a Nepalese public holiday, the next consecutive working day shall be applicable for purchase, submission and opening.
- If the blacklisted (as per Public Procurement Act) firm, institution or company including its directors or any investors has opened or operated a new firm, company, or institution; such firm, institution, or company shall not be eligible to submit the application.
- Pre-application submission meeting shall be held at Nepal Rastra Bank, Currency Management Department, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal, at 11:00 AM, Nepal Standard Time on **8 January 2026**. If the aforementioned date is a Nepalese public holiday, it shall be held on the next consecutive working day.
- Application form shall be duly filled up and each page should be signed by the authorized person with the company's seal affixed.
- Information submitted by the applicants shall be treated as confidential and the application shall not be returned.
- The NRB reserves right to accept or reject any or all applications without assigning any reason whatsoever.
- Name of Prequalified Applicant shall be made public and informed.
- This IFP notice can be also viewed at NRB's website: <http://www.nrb.org.np>

Nepal Rastra Bank
Currency Management Department
Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal
Telephone: 977-1-5925562
Email: noteprocurement@nrb.org.np

Nepal Rastra Bank
Currency Management Department, Mint Division
Babarmahal, Kathmandu, Nepal
Telephone: 977-01-4102135
Email: mint@nrb.org.np

There is more to life than increas-
ing its speed.
-Mahatma Gandhi

EDITORIAL

NPL's Significance

With the successful conclusion of the second edition of the Nepal Premier League (NPL), Nepal's cricket sports have gained another level. The NPL matches have enhanced not only players' professional skills and talent but have also boosted the nation's confidence at a time when it is reeling from political tumult and security challenges. The spectators have taken a break from mundane routines and enjoyed the games that ran for a month. The Festival of Himalaya also holds social and economic importance for the country. The Lumbini Lions lifted their first-ever title by beating Sudurpaschim Royals by six wickets in the final match held at TU International Cricket Ground. Lumbini won in just nine overs, losing four wickets, as the Sudurpaschim could make only 85 runs.

While the Lumbini Lions roared in joy and excitement, the Sudurpaschim Royals were utterly disappointed for suffering defeats in two consecutive NPL finals. The Royals finished second in the first edition of NPL a year ago. They lost to Janakpur Bolts in a sensational match. The Royals were nurturing a dream to pick trophy this time. The defending Janakpur won only one game and fell to the bottom of the table. It was the same story with Lumbini in the inaugural edition last year. Their comeback was dramatic and thrilling this time but they had a nerve-racking beginning. They succeeded in the opener but suffered three losses consecutively before sealing six straight victories that made them the NPL champions.

The games are all about teamwork. The victory demands that all players work hard and bring their best on the field. This also applies in the Royals' win. Their bowlers shone and dazzlingly contributed to handing a defeat to their competitors. Lumbini's Ruben Trumppelmann, Rohit Kumar Paudel and Sher Malla shared nine wickets between them. Paudel made a hat-trick in the 11th over while Malla dismissed the in-form Ishan Pandey for 33, the top score of the innings. The Lumbini Royals were awarded with Rs. 11 million in prize money, while runners-up Sudurpaschim received Rs. 5.1 million. Biratnagar Kings received Rs. 2.5 million for finishing third, and Kathmandu bagged Rs. 1.5 million for fourth place. Trumppelmann of Namibia became Player of the Match and Player of the Series. On the other hand, Paudel was declared Best Player and Best Batter, earning him an electric car worth Rs. 6 million as well as a bike. Biratnagar Kings' captain Sandeep Lamichhane achieved the title of the best bowler, with 17 wickets that earned him a bike.

The sports have the potential to promote unity, solidarity and harmony among the people. They forget their differences and come together to enjoy the games. In sports lie the national sentiments that bind the citizens together for the common cause. The NPL is an illustrious instance of uniting the people from diverse social, economic and political backgrounds. Echoing this line of thought, Prime Minister Sushila Karki noted that the NPL has united the nation and allayed doubts regarding security. This has given a clear message that Nepal is peaceful and capable of organising major events like NPL. It is estimated that the NPL games have added over Rs. 1 billion to the national economy, which has been recently battered by the Gen Z revolt. What the nation needs is cricket stadiums, and considering the Nepalis' growing craze for cricket, the government should not hesitate to spend on building more stadiums.

War's Toll On Children

AAYUSHA GAUTAM

I recently came across a video from the European Parliament in Brussels where an interpreter broke down in tears while translating for an 11-year-old Ukrainian boy. She stopped mid-sentence, overwhelmed not by politics, but by the weight of a child's testimony. The boy, Roman Oleksiv, was injured in a Russian missile strike on a hospital in central Ukraine in 2022. His mother was killed in the attack, and he has since undergone multiple surgeries. What may have silenced the interpreter was not the violence itself, but the fact that it was being voiced by a child who had lived through it.

Children do not choose sides. They do not have the right to vote for leaders, draft policies, or declare wars. And still they are expected to absorb its consequences with a resilience we rarely demand of adults. They learn fear before they learn geography or, even further, geopolitics. They learn to identify the sound of sirens before they learn nursery rhymes. What is described as conflict on the news becomes, for them, a daily struggle with loss, uncertainty, and terror.

What struck me most about that video was not only the boy's pain, but the fact that even an adult trained to listen could not remain composed. If an interpreter could not emotionally translate his experience, how do we expect a child to live through it? We speak of children as resilient, celebrating their ability to endure, without asking why endurance is required of them at all. Resilience, in this context, becomes less a strength and more a necessity that hides enduring

wounds.

When I come across videos of Gaza, Sudan, Yemen, Myanmar, and beyond, I see children growing up in conditions that would be considered unlivable anywhere else. Their schools are destroyed or turned into shelters. Their families are broken by death or displacement. Their childhoods are defined not by play or routine, but by constant fear. Different wars, different languages, but the same years stolen from all their lives.

The most devastating impacts of war on children are also the least visible. Trauma shows up later as anxiety, difficulty trusting, disrupted learning, or an inability to imagine a future without violence. These issues will not end with a ceasefire. When children are left unprotected in war, the harm extends beyond the present, shaping a future marked by psychological and emotional scars.

It's shameful to see that children's suffering is often treated as collateral damage, an unfortunate but unavoidable consequence of adult decisions. Images circulate, outrage spikes, donations flow briefly, and then attention moves on. Remember the Gen-Z protests? Some children lose their lives. Some remain. They grow older carrying memories no child should have to hold. Our empathy is momentary; their suffering is incessant.

The inability to fully understand geopolitics does not free us from responsibility. If anything, it should demand more of us. Protecting children cannot be a secondary concern in times of conflict. How well we safeguard children defines the value of our actions and the cost of our inaction.

News, Views In Black & White

P Kharel



TIDE OF TIMES

Precious as they are, diamonds have an inherent quality retained forever. Public credibility is its acid test. On the enviable feat of having completed 60 years of circulation without any interruption, Nepal's first English broadsheet and second-oldest existing daily newspaper, The Rising Nepal, merits mention for its sheer staying power with the potential for greater strides ahead.

First things first. Having joined *The Rising Nepal* (TRN) as a sub-editor in the autumn of 1973, I took a deep interest in what other news publications within and outside Nepal carried. TRN used to be provided with most of the noted daily papers and weeklies, including *Samaj*, *Nepal Times*, *Naya Samaj*, *The Commoner*, *Motherland*, *Himali Bela*, *Naya Sandesh*, *Samikshya*, *Matribhumi*, *Nepal Post*, *Weekly Mirror* and a host of others. News-week, Times, Reader's Digest, several Indian English dailies, too, joined the pile.

Most of the editorial staff members' hands went through whatever was within their reach. Dozens of features agencies and institutional publications used to land at the news desk, which was a hive of free copies of foreign publications, including Britain's *The Guardian* and *The Economist*. Development feature agency services, such as Depthnews, were the staple when a teleprinter went out of order, or the electricity supply took a rude leave.

Memory lane

TRN's founder editor was Barun Shumsher Rana, who edited the country's

first English news publication, *Nepal Guardian*, in 1954 before the magazine folded up. Gokul Prasad Pokharel, Aditya Man Shrestha, Krishna Bhakta Shrestha, Manaranjan Josse, Bharat Dutt Koirala, Madan Regmi, Ram Binod Bhattarai, Bhawan Raj Joshi, Prakash A Raj, Narayan Basnet, and Lal Dhoj Deosa Rai were either in the founder team or joined the paper in its first three years.

Apart from Rana in TRN, there were only a few in the editorial department on its debut day, like Gokul Prasad Pokharel in the *National News Agency* (RSS), Aditya Man Shrestha in the *Gorkhapatra* and Krishna Bhakta Shrestha in the *Nepalese Perspective weekly*, with some experience in journalism. Stringer and correspondent of several international news outlets, the experienced Shyam Bahadur KC joined the paper as city editor (chief reporter) in 1972.

There was a high turnout in TRN, apparently because of demand for writing hands in English. Between 1973 and 1990, for instance, at least 20 individuals had migrated to pastures elsewhere. A few were left to run their own papers or join another media organisation. Such mobility speed slowed down in later years, whatever the reason.

At no time were there more than 20 editorial staff members, divided into three news shifts—morning. The pages were a mix of hand composition, monotyped and linotyped texts. After 1981, some pages, including the editorial section, or page 4, were photocomposed, thanks to the introduction of a number of computers that used expensive bromide papers; the front and editorial pages looked better.

As its chief editor in the mid-1990s, I can testify that TRN's average daily circulation figure stood at 10,500, when literacy was less than 50 per cent of a population of about 20 million. Advertising revenue averaged 25 per cent of the print space. The debut of the private sector broadsheet dailies was only after 1990, while the tabloid-sized dailies

An honest, comprehensive self-review for a practical follow-up should bear sweeter fruits and assured readership.

were in their dozens in Kathmandu long before TRN's launch. In less than two weeks of its inauguration, TRN's circulation soared high, next only to its sister daily, *Gorkhapatra*.

Things are much different today. The reading class is shrinking in size and intensity in the 2020s. The trend is expected to accelerate in the ensuing decades. Within the next two decades, the situation will be far worse than many might imagine. Risks of a steeper fall in newspaper circulation figures and the consequent shrinkage in revenue collection stare at the printed world.

Only quality content can stem the landslide. The optimum utilisation of available space catering to prospective readers is a criterion inherently tied to the readership's interests. The ultimate target of news outlets is catering to the collective interests of reading, listening, and viewing audiences, and not to the exclusive attention of powerful personalities or a celebrity type. The tastes of an audience, rather than the wishes of public figures, should guide the value of news. Inconsistency and discrepancies are glaring. Demises of district-level political activists, former parliamentarians, NGO activists and family members of noted individuals find their way to the news space. For one such item, however, numerous others are ignored, in a stark display of rank inconsistencies.

Out of step

Award events make news for one year

but get ignored in their next editions. Presentations of ambassadorial credentials to foreign heads of state are covered, only to be ignored the next time in the same country. The story of a Nepali ambassador calling on a Nepali minister in Kathmandu is the height of a professional absurdity.

Direct quotes from award winners and others displaying brilliant performances or committing serious errors are extremely rare in the news items reported by the staff. A critical outlook of the entertainment world would do a whale of good to the concerned sector as well as audiences. No sector is endowed with an everlasting bright side. Lapping up everything information sources say without cross-verification or, at least, a follow-up, is what erodes content credibility and drives readers away.

Fast-developing and running stories, such as voting and scheduled programmes for the day, should not be enforced on readers unless there is deadline pressure on a news reporter. Fillers are expected to offer nuggets of information and items of human interest. Photo opportunity should not be focused on wearing a permanent smile and contrived bonhomie that might impress content sources but not necessarily content receivers.

An honest, comprehensive self-review for a practical follow-up should bear sweeter fruits and assured readership. As in other news organisations, TRN has its limitations. Mobilising a large network of provincial bureaus, district correspondents and stringers, the oldest existing English daily, now turning 61, can call for more endurance for greater strides. Competition is stiff in an increasingly shrinking market and vast options for advertisers to obtain the best for their money.

(Professor Kharel specialises in political communication.)

Launching Decisive Fight Against Graft



Ballav Dahal

Tackling corruption in Nepal has been one of the major challenges facing anti-corruption bodies like the Commission for Investigation of the Abuse of Authority (CIAA) and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG). Their reports show that bribery and misappropriation of public funds have been widespread, with a significant surge in corruption cases annually. Legal gaps, a lack of proper implementation of the prevailing laws, and political patronage given to corrupt individuals are some of the key factors leading to the worsening corruption scenario in the country. The level of prestige that the corrupt gain in society is another reason for the thriving of this social anomaly. The menace of corruption has not only emerged as an obstacle to the country's socio-economic development process but also hindered service delivery.

Corruption is the abuse of power and authority for private gain. Apart from obstructing economic growth, corruption erodes public trust in public institutions, increases inequality, weakens democracy and disrupts essential services such as health and education. In a corrupt society, political parties and their leaders can buy votes. This makes them unaccountable to the people. When leaders start serving their own interests alone, it results in utter frustration among citizens. Ultimately, this gives rise to protests and even violence.

Election gimmick

However, containing corruption appears to have been high on the agenda of all the political parties. They often come up with an election gimmick of 'zero tolerance on corruption' to woo voters. But they are mostly found failing to keep their promises. Instead, they are seen making all possible effort to protect their supporters and aides by any means. Corruption thrives in public offices mainly due to collusion among employees, middlemen and politicians. That some ministers and lawmakers, representing different political parties, and bureaucrats have been indicted in corruption and other criminal charges indicates that the country is in dire need of much tougher measures to root out corruption.

In the Corruption Perception Index 2024, Nepal ranked 107th out of 180 countries and territories. The country got a score of 34 out of 100. The document highlighted a rising level of corruption and irregularities in import and export, public services, tax payments and contracts. With corruption rampant in all three tiers of government, citizens are bound to go through numerous hurdles while receiving services. It is, however, notable that the country was able to make minor progress in areas of government accountability and resource management. But the report showed that bribery in business and contracts worsened further. Offices concerning taxation, land revenue, and transport are considered the most corrupt ones. Despite concerns raised by citizens frequently, no significant reforms have so far been made in such offices.

Being a party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), Nepal is obliged to take more effective anti-corruption measures and

Anti-corruption efforts being made in the country have been weakened because of lapses seen at political, administrative and judicial levels.

introduce tougher laws to cope with emerging challenges. In 2003, the United Nations (UN) established International Anti-Corruption Day to be observed annually on December 9th. The event aims to raise awareness about corruption, its devastating effects, and how to fight it, promoting integrity and accountability with the UNCAC as its framework. The day calls for joint action from governments, civil society, youth, and the private sector to build transparent, corruption-free societies. The day was observed this year with the theme of '*Uniting with Youth Against Corruption: Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity*'. The theme is relevant in Nepal's context, too. Fighting corruption was one of the main agendas raised by the September 8-9 Gen Z movement in the country.

The day is an opportunity for the country to reiterate its commitment to advancing the anti-corruption campaign and review the measures taken so far in this connection. As per the global body's call, it is essential for countries like Nepal to mobilise youths and utilise new technologies for the fight against the scourge of corruption. The country has signed the UNCAC unconditionally and vowed to expedite efforts to combat corruption. A policy-level corruption

can be more harmful than bribery. There is a conflict of interest in policy-level corruption. So, the country must have stronger laws to deal with such types of corruption.

Institutional development

Nepal appears to have come a long way when it comes to institutional development in the fight against corruption. Besides CIAA and OAG, there are several other institutions involved in the anti-graft drive. They include the National Vigilance Centre, Revenue Investigation Department, Public Procurement Monitoring Office, and Department of Money Laundering Investigation. The Special Court has been assigned to deal with only corruption cases. But, as mentioned above, the implementation of laws and policies is not so effective. All the anti-corruption bodies, law enforcement agencies, civil society, youth, and other stakeholders must join forces to contain corruption.

There is no doubt that the anti-corruption efforts being made in the country have been weakened because of lapses seen at political, administrative and judicial levels. As the political parties are now in the process of nominating their candidates for the impending March 5 elections to the House of Representatives, they must select only those who have good track records. Visionary, honest and dedicated lawmakers alone may help formulate better laws to fight corruption and help create a better society. There are also rising concerns over political financing and electoral spending. As they are likely to fuel corruption, the Election Commission (EC) must remain vigilant against such practices.

(The author is a former deputy executive editor of this daily.)

50 YEARS AGO

THE RISING NEPAL

December 15, 1975

Thai-Cambodia Border Clash, Five Killedd

Bangkok, Dec. 14: Cambodian and Thai soldiers battled through the third consecutive night on the Thai-Cambodian border, claiming five lives on both sides, reports AFP.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

TRN welcomes articles, letters and comments from our valued readers and contributors.

Please email your contributions to: trnfeatures@gmail.com

trnfeatures@hotmail.com

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

READER'S MAIL

Take Urgent Action For Road Safety

Through this letter, I wish to draw the attention of the concerned authorities and the general public to the rapidly increasing number of road accidents in different parts of the country. This worrying trend has put the lives of daily commuters, pedestrians, students and workers at great risk.

Over speeding, careless driving, violation of traffic rules, poor road conditions and weak traffic management are the major reasons behind this rise. This growing situation has created fear among people who depend on the roads for their daily activities.

Several factors contribute to these frequent accidents. Over speeding, careless driving, violation of traffic rules, and the lack of proper traffic discipline are among the major causes. In addition, poor road conditions, delayed maintenance, and weak traffic management systems make the situation even worse.



These issues show that immediate attention is necessary.

To reduce accidents and make roads safer, authorities must take strong and effective measures. Stricter enforcement of traffic rules, regular road repairs, awareness campaigns, and proper training for drivers can help improve the situation. If timely actions are taken, many lives can be saved and road safety can be significantly improved.

Bibhisha Khanal
Kathmandu, Nepal

TAILPIECE

His request approved, the news photographer quickly used a cell phone to call the local airport to charter a flight. He was told a twin-engine plane would be waiting for him at the airport. Arriving at the airfield, he spotted a plane warming up outside a hanger. He jumped in with his bag, slammed the door shut, and shouted, 'Let's go'. The pilot taxied out, swung the plane into the wind and took off.

Once in the air, the photographer instructed the pilot, 'Fly over the valley and make low passes so I can take pictures of the fires on the hillsides.'

'Why?' asked the pilot. 'Because I'm a photographer for cable news,' he responded. 'And I need to get some close up shots.'

The pilot was strangely silent for a moment, finally he stammered, 'So, what you're telling me, is... you're

Gunmen kill 11 at Bondi Beach



Emergency workers transport a person on a stretcher after a reported shooting at Bondi Beach, in Sydney, Sunday, Dec. 14, 2025.

AP
SYDNEY, Dec 14

Two gunmen shot dead at least 11 people on Sunday during a Jewish holiday celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach, Australian authorities said, declaring it a terrorist attack. One gunman was fatally shot by police and the second arrested.

The suspect was in critical condition, authorities said. At least 29 people were confirmed wounded, including two police officers, said Mal Lanyon, the police commissioner for New South Wales state, where Sydney is located.

HONG KONG'S OLDEST PARTY ANNOUNCES DISSOLUTION

AGENCY
Hong Kong, Dec. 14

Hong Kong's oldest pro-democracy party has formally decided to disband, its leader announced Sunday, following its annual meeting.

The Democratic Party was founded in 1994, near the end of British colonial rule, when Hong Kong's leading liberal groups merged. "We have officially announced the disbandment and dismissal," the Democratic Party's leader Lo Kin-hei told a news conference.

"This process has been completed at the time of the special committee meeting just now." "As a group, I believe we can conclude that the Democratic Party's operation will end today," said Lo, chair of the party that was once the city's stalwart opposition force.

"We are deeply grateful to all the citizens who have walked with the Democratic Party for the past 30 years," he added. The party's main focus had been determining how the city would eventually elect its own leader and lawmakers through universal suffrage. "I don't understand why the Democratic Party would end up like this," former party leader Emily Lau said to reporters when leaving the meeting on Sunday.

AFP
Miami, Dec. 14

One recent day at Miami's international airport, Andy, age 6, was getting ready to fly to Guatemala.

He was anxious, this was no year-end vacation to visit his relatives.

Andy was moving to his ancestral country to reunite with his father, recently deported as part of President Donald Trump's aggressive policy to expel undocumented migrants.

"They took my brother and I've had to take care of the little one," said Osvaldo, Andy's uncle who brought him to the airport but was not getting on the plane with him.

Andy was making the trip with six other children aged 3 to 15 -- three of them US citizens, the others Guatemalans who grew up in Florida. They were all moving to a country where they either had never been, or one which they barely remembered.

The sprawling city of Miami on

The massacre followed a wave of antisemitic attacks that have roiled Australia over the past year, although the authorities didn't suggest those episodes and Sunday's mass shooting were connected. They said one of the gunmen was known to the security services.

The shooting targeted a Jewish celebration

"This attack was designed to target Sydney's Jewish community," the state's Premier Chris Minns said. The massacre was declared a terrorist attack due to the event targeted and weapons used, Lanyon said.

Hundreds had gathered for the gathering at Bondi Beach called Chanukah by the Sea, which was celebrating the start of the Hanukkah Jewish festival.

Chabad identified one of the dead as Rabbi Eli Schlanger, assistant rabbi at Chabad of Bondi and a key organizer of the event, who has worked in the Bondi area for more than 18 years.

Chabad is an Orthodox Jewish movement that is known for its outreach to non-religious Jews. It runs scores of centers around the world that are popular with Jewish travelers and often sponsors large public events during major Jewish holidays.

Dramatic footage apparently filmed

US envoys in Berlin for Ukraine talks

AP
Berlin, Dec. 14

U.S. envoys arrived in Berlin Sunday morning for another round of talks intended to secure a deal to end the war in Ukraine.

U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner were spotted in downtown Berlin by a photographer for German news agency dpa.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Ukrainian, U.S. and European officials will hold a series of meetings in Berlin in the coming days.

"Most importantly, I will be meeting with envoys of President Trump, and there will also be meetings with our European partners, with many leaders, concerning the foundation of peace—a political agreement to end the war," Zelenskyy said in an address to the nation late Saturday.

Washington has tried for months to navigate the demands of each side as Trump presses for a swift end to Russia's war and grows increasingly exasperated by delays. The search for possible compromises has run into major obstacles, including control of Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, which is mostly occupied by Russian forces, and security guarantees for Ukraine.

"The chance is considerable at this moment, and it matters for our every city, for our every Ukrainian community," Zelenskyy said. "We are working



Ukraine's Secretary of National Security Rustem Umerov, right, and Günter Sautter, Foreign and Security Policy Advisor to Chancellor Merz meet in Berlin, Germany, Sunday, Dec. 14, 2025.

to ensure that peace for Ukraine is dignified, and to secure a guarantee—a guarantee, above all—that Russia will not return to Ukraine for a third invasion."

Russian President Vladimir Putin has demanded that Ukraine withdraw its forces from the part of the Donetsk region still under its control and

by a member of the public and broadcast on Australian television channels showed someone appearing to tackle and disarm one of the gunmen, before pointing the man's weapon at him.

Lanyon said the death toll was "fluid" and that wounded people were still arriving at hospitals.

Lachlan Moran, 32, from Melbourne, was waiting for his family nearby when he heard shots, he told The Associated Press. He dropped the beer he was carrying for his brother and ran.

"You heard a few pops, and I freaked out and ran away. ... I started sprinting. I just had that intuition. I sprinted as quickly as I could," Moran said. He said he heard shooting off and on for about five minutes.

"Everyone just dropped all their possessions and everything and were running and people were crying and it was just horrible," Moran said.

Grace, 30, from Melbourne, who declined to give her last name, and her partner Joel Sargent, 30, told the AP they were in their hotel room when they heard a banging sound and looked out of their window to see people running down the street, hiding behind trees and cars.

"People were screaming, and the gun sounded so loud," Grace said. "It was constant; it would have been over 50 (shots), easily."

Police said their operation was "ongoing" and that a "number of suspicious items located in the vicinity" were being examined by specialist officers, including an improvised explosive device found in one of the suspect's cars. Emergency services were called to Campbell Parade about 6.45 p.m. responding to reports of shots being fired.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told reporters in Canberra that he was "devastated" by the massacre.

"This is a targeted attack on Jewish Australians on the first day of Hanukkah, which should be a day of joy, a celebration of faith, an act of evil, antisemitism, terrorism that has struck the heart of our nation," Albanese said. "There is no place for this hate, violence and terrorism in our nation."

Cambodian rocket fire causes civilian death



Thai rescue team members move a body into a vehicle after a Cambodian artillery strike in Sisaket province, Sunday, Dec. 14, 2025.

AP
Kantharalak, Dec. 14

Thailand's government said a rocket attack from Cambodia on Sunday killed a 63-year-old villager, its first civilian death reported as a direct result of combat over the past week along the border of the two Southeast Asian nations.

Both countries confirmed that large-scale fighting, which was set off by a skirmish on Dec. 7 that wounded two Thai soldiers, continued Sunday. The two sides are battling over longstanding competing claims to patches of frontier land, some of which contain centuries-old temple ruins.

More than two dozen people on both sides of the border have officially been reported killed in the past week's fighting, while more than half a million have been displaced.

Reporters from The Associated Press arrived at the scene of Sunday's rocket impact in Sisaket province's Kantharalak District about 10 minutes after it hit. They witnessed the body of a man totally wrapped in bandages

being put on a stretcher that was taken to an ambulance.

A house a couple of hundred meters (yards) away was in flames, with village volunteers attempting to put out the fire with buckets of water. A piece of shrapnel believed to be from the same rocket was embedded nearby in the road.

The victim, identified as Don Patchapan, was killed in the heart of a residential area near a school, according to a Thai Army statement. Thai Government spokesperson Siripong Angkasakulkat condemned Cambodia for deliberately firing into civilian areas, saying that such an action was "cruel and inhumane."

Thailand earlier reported civilian deaths during the renewed conflict, but most of them already had underlying health issues and died during an evacuation.

Cambodia has deployed truck-mounted BM-21 rocket launchers with a range of 30-40 kilometers (19-25 miles). Each can fire up to 40 rockets at a time but cannot be precisely targeted. They have landed largely in areas from where most people have already been evacuated.

PRISM Golden retrievers gather in Buenos Aires

Argentina: Nearly 2,400 golden retrievers and their owners gathered this week in Buenos Aires in what organizers and local media described as the largest meeting of the breed ever recorded.

A total of 2,397 golden retrievers assembled in the Bosques de Palermo, turning one of Argentina's most iconic parks into an unusual scene and surpassing the previous unofficial record of 1,685 dogs set in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Although the figure is pending certification by Guinness World Records, organizers described the gathering as a milestone for Argentina's dog-loving community.

Drunk raccoon exposed as offender

Hanover: An animal protection officer in Virginia's Hanover County said the infamous drunk raccoon that broke into a liquor store is actually a serial offender. Hanover County Animal Protection and Shelter previously revealed a raccoon had broken into the Ashland ABC store on Black Friday, broke several liquor bottles and was found passed out drunk in the bathroom.

nimal Protection Officer Samantha Martin has now disclosed on an episode of Hear In Hanover, Hanover County's official podcast, that this wasn't the trashed panda's first crime.

"This is not the first time he's been in one of the buildings," Martin said, referencing the block of shops that includes the ABC store. "Supposedly, this is the third break-in he's had. He was in the karate studio -- I think he got into the DMV [and] ate some of their snacks one time."

-Agencies

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1167 – Sicilian Chancellor Stephen du Perche moves the royal court to Messina to prevent a rebellion.
- 1546 – The town of Ekenäs (Finnish: Tammissaari) is founded by King Gustav Vasa of Sweden.
- 1791 – The United States Bill of Rights becomes law when ratified by the Virginia General Assembly.
- 1906 – The London Underground's Great Northern, Piccadilly and Brompton Railway opens.
- 1914 – A gas explosion at Mitsubishi Hōjō coal mine, in Kyushu, Japan, kills 687.
- 1917 – World War I: An armistice between Russia and the Central Powers is signed.
- 1933 – Anarchist insurrection suppressed in Zaragoza, Spain.
- 1943 – World War II: The Battle of Arawe begins during the New Britain campaign.



Osvaldo (R) caregiver of six-year-old US citizen Andy (L) hugs him as the boy prepares to fly to Guatemala to reunite with his recently deported father.

Florida's east coast is about 70 percent Hispanic, and often called the Gateway to Latin America.

Across the United States, cities with large immigrant communities are primary targets of Trump's virulent anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric.

Trump's administration has deployed heavily armed and masked enforcement agents and onlookers have filmed them in various cities tackling people in the street or dragging them from cars.

Born in the United States, Andy is a US citizen. Until November, he lived with his father Adiner, who had been in Florida for a decade. His mother hasn't been in his life since the parents separated.

One day, when Andy's father came to pick him up from school, a police officer stopped him. He had neither a visa nor a residency permit.

Andy -- who wore a backpack and a little cross necklace for the flight to Guatemala City -- was happy about being reunited with his father but also "a little nervous" about the trip, said Osvaldo, who did not want his full name

published for fear of arrest.

"I keep thinking about my brother, about why they nabbed him. And I also worry about the child," he said.

The trip was organized by the Guatemalan-Maya Center, a nonprofit group serving "uprooted children and families" in the Miami area.

Mariana Blanco, its director of operations, circulated among the children, checking they had everything needed for the trip.

She pointed out Franklin, 3, and his 6-year-old brother Garibaldi, both US citizens. The younger boy wore a Spider Man hoodie, a dinosaur backpack, and an anxious expression.

Like Andy, they were travelling to reunite with their deported father, because their mother works long hours in Miami and fears she too will be arrested.

Two volunteers with the Guatemalan-Maya Center were accompanying the children on the trip.

One of them, Diego Serrato, accused the Trump administration of racism and "trampling on children's rights."



Local workers carry oranges from orchards to the roadside at Silthok of Bandipur Rural Municipality in Tanahun district, on Sunday. Each worker earns between Rs 1,500 and Rs 2,000 per day during the orange marketing season.

PHOTO: RSS

NC LEADER UPADHYAY PASSES AWAY

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

Former Minister and Nepali Congress leader Amod Prasad Upadhyay passed away on Saturday. He was 90.

A cancer patient, Upadhyaya breathed his last while undergoing treatment at Hams Hospital, Kathmandu. He was elected to the erstwhile House of Representatives in 1999 and to the Constituent Assembly in 2008 from Morang Constituency-1. He served as Education and Sports Minister from 1999 to 2001.

According to NC central member Min Bishwakarma, Upadhyay's last



rites will be performed at Pashupati Aryaghat on Monday. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

Meanwhile, Nepali Congress has called an emergency meeting of its Central Working Committee for Monday.

According to a statement issued on Sunday by NC's chief secretary Krishna Prasad Paudel, the meeting will be held at 9:00.

Individuals affected by leprosy honoured



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

Elderly individuals affected by leprosy at the Khokana Arogya Ashram were honoured with a cash prize of Rs. 5,000 each.

They were honoured during the 53rd Central Assembly of the Nepal Leprosy Eradication Association held on Saturday.

Dr. Gauri Shankar Lal Das said that timely treatment of leprosy can prevent disability. He noted that the problem of hiding the disease and not seeking timely treatment still persists in society, emphasizing the need to raise awareness on the issue.

Bishnu Lal Shrestha, General Secretary of the Association, who presented the progress report for the fiscal year 2024/25.

According to the report, the Association operates the Nepal Karl Gerold

Children's Hostel in Pharping, providing accommodation, education, and other facilities to 58 children (28 boys and 30 girls) affected by leprosy.

In last year's SEE examinations, out of six students, four secured B grades and two secured C grades. So far, 755 students have completed school-level education with the Association's support.

In addition, higher education scholarships are being provided. Scholarships have been awarded to 26 individuals in fields such as nursing, IT, medical laboratory studies, computer engineering, and others. A total of 189 people have benefited from these scholarships so far. Scholarships are currently being provided to 58 children affected by leprosy and conflict victims in community schools.

The Khokana Arogya Ashram, operated by the Association, houses 133 individuals affected by leprosy, while the Pokhara Ashram accommodates 13

individuals, providing them with food, clothing, and other facilities.

A total of 67 individuals are receiving livelihood allowances. Under its social rehabilitation programme for people affected by leprosy, the Association has constructed 180 houses, rehabilitating 700 people from 258 families.

Citing government statistics, the report noted that the prevalence of leprosy is higher in 18 districts in the Terai and hilly regions, with approximately 3,000 new cases detected annually.

The Association expressed gratitude to the government, various ministries, donor agencies, and municipalities for their support. Although leprosy is a fully curable disease, discussions at the assembly highlighted the persistent issues of discrimination and the tendency to hide the condition in society.

The Association continues to contribute to leprosy eradication through education, rehabilitation, and public awareness efforts.

UML's closed...

As per the decision of the central committee meeting, the closed session will form a 301-member Central Committee, comprising one chairperson, five vice-chairpersons, one general secretary, three deputy general secretaries and nine secretaries.

The party will also establish a 99-member Politburo, while a Standing Committee will be formed with one-third of the Politburo members.

Once statute amendment is endorsed by the session, the leadership selection process will proceed in line with the newly approved organisational structure.

Meanwhile, UML vice-chairs Yubaraj Gyawali and Astalakshmi Shakya have announced that they will not contest for any position at the party's 11th National Convention.

Presenting their views at the Central Committee meeting held on Sunday, both leaders made it clear that they would not participate in the upcoming leadership selection process.

They said the decision was taken in the interest of leadership renewal, generational transition, and strengthening organisational unity within the party.

During the Central Committee meeting, party leaders expressed the expectation that the decision by the two senior leaders would help ease the process of leadership transfer and make the national convention more consensus-oriented.

Govt plans to...

Reflecting on the recent Gen Z movement, where youth demanded an end to nepotism, favouritism, and biasness, she stated that the call for good governance and social justice aligns with the foundation's mission of inclusive development.

"Development that ensures equal access and participation of all classes and communities is the key to sustainability and strengthening the nation," she added. She also expressed

Ministers Ghising...

Built under the same road expansion project along the Prithvi Highway, the 315-metre-long bridge has achieved about 74 per cent physical progress and is targeted for completion within the current fiscal year. Engineer Pandey said that this is Nepal's first four-lane bridge with an arch design, adding both engineering and tourism value to Gandaki Province.

Meanwhile, Minister Ghising took a firm stance on the long-delayed motorable bridge over the Trishuli River, connecting Tanahun and Chitwan. Stalled for 11 years, the project has completed only about 50 per cent of its work. During a site inspection, the minister warned that if construction did not resume within one month, the contractor's agreement would be terminated. He directed concerned authorities to immediately clear procedural hurdles and approve revised designs.

confidence that the decisions taken at meeting would guide Nepal's inclusive development journey and contribute to national prosperity, unity, and a sense of belonging for all communities.

The meeting reviewed the programmes completed during the last fiscal year, discussed the upcoming budget and made decisions regarding revisions to relevant rules and regulations.

Tanahun Hydro...

The third package involves the construction of a 220 kV double-circuit transmission line from Damauli to Bharatpur in Chitwan, which has been undertaken by KEC of India.

The 140-MW project is targeted for completion by mid-July 2026.

The US\$ 505 million project is being implemented through joint financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the European Investment Bank, and the Government of Nepal through the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

Minister Ghising noted that timely completion of the Tanahun Hydropower would contribute positively to increased energy production, strengthened electricity supply, and the national economy. He emphasised that coordination and commitment from all stakeholders are essential.

Belarus frees Nobel Prize laureate Bialiatski

AP
Vilnius, Lithuania, Dec. 14

Belarus freed Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialiatski, key opposition figure Maria Kolesnikova and dozens of other political prisoners on Saturday, capping two days of talks with Washington aimed at improving ties and getting crippling U.S. sanctions lifted on a key Belarusian agricultural export.

President Alexander Lukashenko pardoned 123 prisoners, Belarus' state news agency, Belta, reported. In exchange, the U.S. said it was lifting sanctions on the Eastern European country's potash sector.

Goodweave Foundation elects new team

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

The 30th annual general meeting and 15th convention of the Nepal Goodweave Foundation, an organisation that has been active in the campaign to make the Nepali carpet industry free from child labour for three decades, has elected a new working committee under the leadership of Ubaraj Bhandari.

The new working committee includes Balram Gurung as vice-chairman, Kiran Thapa as general secretary, and Kalpana Timilsina as treasurer. Similarly, the members include Atmaram Chapagain, Shirjana G.C., Chitra Bahadur Basnet, Anju Shrestha and Amir Bhattarai.

Chairman Ubaraj Bhandari said that the organisation will continue to work for the protection and promotion of child rights by continuing its campaign

to make the carpet industry child labour-free.

Similarly, General Secretary Kiran Thapa said that the organisation has been carrying out programmes for the rescue, education, training and rehabilitation of children working as labourers in the carpet industry since its inception and will continue to carry out innovative activities to ensure child rights in the future.

The organisation's annual social audit was also conducted at a programme held in the capital on Friday. At the programme, the Chief guest, National Human Rights Commission Secretary Murari Prasad Kharel said that Goodweave has worked to ensure child rights and boost the national economy, promoting child labour-free carpet production, so the Human Rights Commission is always ready to coordinate and cooperate with the organisation. Social audit expert Santosh Maharjan presented the organisation's social audit report.

Girls, women fleeing Mali describe sexual violence by Russian forces

AP
Douankara, Mauritania, Dec. 14

The girl lay in a makeshift health clinic, her eyes glazed over and her mouth open, flies resting on her lips. Her chest barely moved. Drops of fevered sweat trickled down her forehead as medical workers hurried around her, attaching an IV drip.

It was the last moment to save her life, said Bethsabée Djoman Elidje, the women's health manager, who led the clinic's effort as the heart monitor beeped rapidly. The girl had an infection after a sexual assault, Elidje said, and had been in shock, untreated, for days.

Her family said the 14-year-old had been raped by Russian fighters who burst into their tent in Mali two weeks earlier. The Russians were members of Africa Corps, a new military unit under Russia's defense ministry that replaced the Wagner mercenary group six months ago.

Men, women and children have been sexually assaulted by all sides during Mali's decade-long conflict, the U.N. and aid workers say, with reports of gang rape and sexual slavery. But the real toll is hidden by a veil of shame that makes it difficult for women from conservative, patriarchal societies to seek help.

The silence that nearly killed the 14-year-old also hurts efforts to hold perpetrators accountable.

The AP learned of the alleged rape and four other alleged cases of sexual violence blamed on Africa Corps fighters, commonly described by Malians as the "white men," while interviewing

dozens of refugees at the border about other abuses such as beheadings and abductions.

Other combatants in Mali have been blamed for sexual assaults. The head of a women's health clinic in the Mopti area told the AP it had treated 28 women in the last six months who said they had been assaulted by militants with the al-Qaida affiliated JNIM, the most powerful armed group in Mali.

The silence among Malian refugees has been striking.

In eastern Congo, which for decades has faced violence from dozens of armed groups, "we didn't have to look for people," said Mirjam Molenaar, the medical team leader in the border area for Doctors Without Borders, or MSF, who was stationed there last year. The women "came in huge numbers."

It's different here, she said: "People undergo these things and they live with it, and it shows in post-traumatic stress."

The aunt of the 14-year-old girl said the Africa Corps fighters marched everyone outside at gunpoint. The family couldn't understand what they wanted. The men made them watch as they tied up the girl's uncle and cut off his head.

Then two of the men took the 14-year-old into the tent as she tried to defend herself, and raped her. The family waited outside, unable to move.

"We were so scared that we were not even able to scream anymore," the aunt recalled, as her mother sobbed quietly next to her. She, like other women, spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation, and the AP does not name victims of rape unless they agree to be named.

A notice of the judgment issued in the name of the following accused by the Foreign Employment Tribunal Nepal, Kathmandu			
A notice of judgment has been published in your name pursuant to the section 132 of the Country Criminal Procedure Code, 2017 since you were not present in the proceedings of the following offence, regarding the foreign employment having on the charge sheet. Government of Nepal as plaintiff and defendant you et al., from the very beginning and the case has been decided on 25th of March, 2025 based on the claim demanded			
Date of publication of notice of judgement: 14th December, 2025			
S.No.	Case No.	Complainant	Name, Surname and address of the accused to whom the notice of judgment has been issued
1.	079-FT-0084	Laxman Parajuli et al.	Asad Khan, son of Istiyak Khan, aged 43 years, residing in Chinaarpark, Western Bengal, Kolkota, India and currently operating a travel company Faizan Tours and Travels 6 Riponiane Kolkota 9339119036.

Himalayan Rim Regional Film Exhibition begins

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

The Himalayan Rim Regional Film Exhibition began at Tribhuvan University on Sunday.

Held under the slogan ‘Civilizational Mutual Learning, Technological Innovation,’ the festival showcases animated film screenings, craft workshops, cultural creative displays, and cinematic dialogues.

The exhibition opened with an AI-produced promotional short film, followed by the screening of *The Spirit of the Mountains*, an AIGC (AI-Generated Content) full-process animated short film.

Drawing inspiration from the Chinese intangible cultural heritage technique of ‘Quanxing Tu’ (full-form rubbing), the film demonstrated the unique synergy between artificial intelligence and traditional culture.

Following the screening, the film’s director, Pang Jia, joined via video link to demonstrate the AI scene-generation process in real time, while producer Junyan Huang engaged in an interactive session with the audience.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Head of the Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Tribhuvan University, Dr Kundan Aryal, said the department is transitioning toward digital media in recent years and is planning to introduce a film studies course soon.

He added that such exhibitions are important for bridging the gap between the people of the two countries.

On the occasion, Nepali film actor Pradeep Khadka said Nepal seeks cooperation with the Chinese film industry. “The Himalayas are an open studio, and we have stories and emotions. Nepali films can be exported worldwide



as digital products,” he said. Another actor, Buddhiman Tamang, remarked that Nepali cinema can take inspiration from the Chinese film industry.

In the afternoon, the animated film *The Legend of Hei 2* continued to attract a large number of students. Using its unique dynamic storyboard pre-visualisation technology, the film vividly narrated a heart-warming story of harmonious coexistence between humans and “demons.”

The subsequent ‘Blind Box Interaction’ session brought the

atmosphere to a climax, with students eagerly participating in quizzes and activities to win limited-edition film merchandise.

Organised by the 1905 Movie Network, the exhibition aims to boost China–Nepal cultural exchange and build a strong “digital bridge” for youth.

After Tribhuvan University, the exhibition will move to Kathmandu University and Lumbini Buddhist University. According to the organisers, the exhibition will conclude on December 21.

SHASHWAT SMRITI SAMMAN CONFERRED ON THREE INDIVIDUALS

BY SIRAJ KHAN
Nepalgunj, Dec. 14

This year’s Shashwat Smriti Samman has been presented to three individuals, including renowned folk singer Kamal BK ‘Nirmohi,’ who is suffering from kidney disease, along with two senior literary figures.

The award was conferred on the occasion of the 21st memorial day of the late Shashwat Acharya during a formal ceremony.

The recipients were the ailing popular folk singer Nirmohi, senior Urdu ghazal writer Abdul Latif Shauck of Nepalgunj, and critic Kamal Mani Devkota from Dang.

The chief guest of the programme, Professor Dr. Krishna Prasad Ghimire, along with the foundation’s president, Professor Dr. Janardan Acharya and the late Shashwat Acharya’s loving mother, senior litterateur Kiran Acharya, presented the awardees with a cash prize of Rs. 10,000 and certificates of appreciation.

As Nirmohi was unwell, his son Shailendra received the award and certificate on his behalf.

On the same occasion, several distinguished personalities from different fields were also honoured with the Shashwat Smriti Samman this year.

The recipients included singer and folk culture scholar Dr. Govinda Acharya, paediatrician Dr. Bijay Pradhan, plastic surgeon and social activist Dr. Binod Karn, environmental activist Hemant Raj Kafle, journalist Jhalak Gaire, and TS Thakuri, founder of the Dhara Nepalgunj Marathon, for his motivational role in sports. They were presented with the Shashwat Smriti Samman 2082.

“The award and honours are presented to encourage individuals who have been contributing selflessly to society,” said the foundation’s president, Prof. Dr. Acharya.

According to foundation president Prof. Dr. Janardan Acharya, the 21st birth anniversary of Shashwat Acharya was successfully celebrated as a literary gathering, with various literary figures presenting songs, ghazals, stories, and poems.

Parajuli’s novel Bakhan discussed



PHOTO: RAMMANI DAHAL.
A discussion programme on the historical novel *Bakhan*, written by Gorkhapatra Daily journalist Basanta Parajuli in Hetauda.

BY RAMMANI DAHAL
Makawanpur, Dec. 14

A discussion was held in Hetauda on the historical novel *Bakhan*, written by Gorkhapatra daily journalist Basanta Parajuli.

The Federation of Nepali Journalists, Makawanpur, organised the discussion on Friday, focusing on the subject matter and various aspects of Parajuli’s third work, *Bakhan*.

Senior writer and journalist Dr. Nimesh Nikhil, while reviewing different aspects of the book, said that it is a historical novel written in simple yet vivid language, based on the biography of the historical figure Bakhan Singh Gurung.

Bakhan Singh was the person who established Nepal’s first cooperative, the Bakhan Credit Cooperative Society, in Chitwan, and also played a key role in the settlement and development of the area.

Bakhan, who was also a warrior in the 1950 (2007 BS) People’s Revolution, left his

position as a captain in the Nepali Army to join the anti-Rana movement and lost two of his sons during the revolution.

Nikhil said the novel comes alive through its engaging portrayal of the many struggles in Gurung’s life.

According to him, the novel covers stories related to Chitrasen Baba’s temple, Sameswor Fort, Upperdang Gadi Fort, the antiquity of Devghat, the establishment of Chitwan National Park, and hunting activities carried out by the royal family and foreigners in the name of sport.

Similarly, Nikhil noted that the events of the 1950 anti-Rana People’s Revolution, the subsequent rebellion led by the Nepali Congress, the historical context from Pulimrang to Bandipur, and the early phase of settlement development in Chitwan have been artistically woven into the novel.

At the programme, Chief District Officer of Makawanpur, Basanta Adhikari, said that novelist Parajuli has attempted to introduce significant places and historical contexts of his homeland and the Chitwan district through the novel.

Amy Schumer announces split from husband

AP
New York, Dec. 14

Comedian Amy Schumer says she and her husband, chef Chris Fischer, have decided to end their marriage.

Schumer, an actress, author and writer, announced the planned split in a social media post on Friday.

“Blah blah blah Chris and I have made the difficult decision to end our marriage after 7 years,” Schumer wrote. “We love each other very much and will continue to focus on raising our son. We would appreciate people respecting our privacy at this time.”

“Amicable and all love and respect! Family forever.”

Schumer and Fischer were married in February 2018 in Malibu, California. Their son was born in May 2019.

The two starred together in the Food Network show “Amy Schumer Learns to Cook” and the HBO mini-series “Expecting Amy” that documented her



difficult pregnancy.

Schumer has also said her Hulu dramedy “Life & Beth” is semi-autobiographical and inspired by her marriage with Fischer.

Schumer was essentially launched as a movie star in the 2015 Judd Apatow-directed “Trainwreck.” She has showcased her stand-up comedy prowess on tour and in streaming TV specials.

Acting legend Dick Van Dyke turns 100

AP
Los Angeles, Dec. 14

Comedy icon Dick Van Dyke celebrated his 100th birthday on Saturday, hitting the century mark some six decades after he sang and danced with Julie Andrews in “Mary Poppins” and starred in his self-titled sitcom.

“The funniest thing is, it’s not enough,” Van Dyke said in an interview with ABC News at his Malibu, California home. “A hundred years is not enough. You want to live more, which I plan to.”

As part of the celebration of Van Dyke’s birthday this weekend, theaters around the country are showing a new documentary about his life, “Dick Van Dyke: 100th Celebration.”

Van Dyke became one of the biggest actors of his era with “The Dick Van Dyke Show,” which ran from 1961-66 on CBS; appeared with Andrews as a chimney sweep with a Cockney accent in the 1964 Disney classic “Mary Poppins” and, in his 70s, played a physician-sleuth on “Diagnosis: Murder.”

Also a Broadway star, Van Dyke won a Tony Award for “Bye Bye Birdie” to go with a Grammy and four Primetime Emmys. In 1963, he starred in the film



version of “Bye Bye Birdie.”

Just last year, he became the oldest winner of a Daytime Emmy, for a guest role on the soap “Days of Our Lives.”

In the 1970s, he found sobriety after battling alcoholism, and spoke out

about it at a time when that was uncommon to do.

Now that he has hit triple digits, Van Dyke said he’s gotten some perspective on how he used to play older characters.

“You know, I played old men a lot,

and I always played them as angry and cantankerous,” he told ABC News. “It’s not really that way. I don’t know any other 100-year-olds, but I can speak for myself.”

He recently imparted wisdom about reaching the century mark in his book, “100 Rules for Living to 100: An Optimist’s Guide to a Happy Life.” He credited his wife, 54-year-old makeup artist and producer Arlene Silver, with keeping him young.

“She gives me energy. She gives me humor, and all kinds of support,” he told ABC News.

Van Dyke was born in West Plains, Missouri, in 1925, and grew up “the class clown” in Danville, Illinois, while admiring and imitating the silent film comedians.

He told ABC News he started acting when he was about 4 or 5 years old in a Christmas pageant. He said he was the baby Jesus.

“I made some kind of crack, I don’t know what I said, but it broke the congregation up,” he said. “And I liked the sound of that laughter.”

And what’s hard about being 100?

“I miss movement,” he told ABC News. “I’ve got one game leg from I don’t know what.”

“I still try to dance,” he said with a laugh.

HOROSCOPE

tarot.com

ARIES: Making a bold first move is possible now. Fiery Mars charges into your 10th House of Career and Status, urging leadership on a stalled project that needs your clear direction.

CANCER: Quiet focus can guide you through a busy day. With Mercury energizing your 6th House of Work and Wellness and connecting to powerful Pluto, you’re well-positioned to introduce a new system that keeps your attention steady and organized.

LIBRA: You may glow effortlessly. With the intuitive Moon lighting your 1st House of Self and forming a gentle sextile to sensual Venus, your natural charm shines through, allowing your presence to calm, attract, and inspire others with ease.

CAPRICORN: Being goal-oriented doesn’t have to make you intimidating, Capricorn. As the emotional Moon lights your 10th House of Career and Status and sextiles compassionate Venus in your selfless 12th house, your reputation softens beautifully today.

TAURUS: An outside perspective currently has the potential to cut through the muck. Your 9th House of Travel and Higher Learning take the spotlight as adventurous Mars arrives there.

LEO: Leo, your warm voice can uplift hearts today. With the nurturing Moon in your 3rd House of Communication harmonizing with romantic Venus, your words carry extra charm. You may feel inspired to write a sincere thank-you to someone supportive.

SCORPIO: Scorpio, your resolve could find the right target today. Combative Mars, stirring your 2nd House of Money and Self-Worth, provokes reactive Uranus, turning your attention toward pricing, payments, or possessions.

AQUARIUS: Your quiet leadership can guide a group effort today. With intellectual Mercury in your 11th House sextiling intense Pluto in your sign, you may find yourself surrounded by friends who share meaningful ideas and insights.

GEMINI: Identifying what’s necessary to move forward in a significant relationship or negotiation is possible. Chatty Mercury, energizing your 7th House of Partnerships, sextiles intense Pluto in your philosophical 9th house, empowering you to dig deep.

VIRGO: Knowing your limits can help you now. Your 4th House of Home and Family takes center stage as information-gathering Mercury there sextiles cosmic detective Pluto, inviting honest talks that finally clear the air.

SAGITTARIUS: Fresh confidence grows as you refine your message. With Mercury in your sign sextiling transformative Pluto, your identity strengthens. Updating your bio to align your inner truth with your public image can attract new opportunities.

PISCES: Stepping into a bigger role is possible now. With cerebral Mercury in your 10th House of Career activating transformative Pluto in your private 12th house, the growth you’ve been doing behind the scenes may finally be ready to emerge.

CARTOON

gocomics.com



Boxer Thapa receives heroes welcome



Boxer Chandra Bahadur Thapa greets to the home fans after returning home in Kathmandu on Sunday.

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

Nepalese boxer Chandra Bahadur Thapa, who made history by winning a bronze medal at the AIBA Men’s World Boxing Championship in the United Arab Emirates, received a grand welcome at Tribhuvan International Airport on Sunday.

The reception was led by Minister for Youth and Sports Bablu Gupta, National Sports Council (NSC) Member–Secretary Ramcharitra Mehta, NSC Executive Committee member Kamla Bahadur Bhattarai, senior officials from Nepal Police, and representatives of the Nepal Boxing Federation and sports associations, athletes and coaches.

Thapa, competing in the 54 kg category, defeated opponents from Armenia, Indonesia and Iran to secure the bronze medal. Alongside the medal, he earned a prize of USD 75,000. His campaign ended in the semi-final against a Kazakh boxer ranked seventh in the world. Thapa is the first and only Nepali pugilist to win a medal at the World Boxing Championship.

Nepal had fielded five athletes in the tournament. Lal Prasad Upreti (48 kg) reached the quarter-finals and won USD 10,000, while Phunglang Kambang (51 kg), Khagendra Roka Magar (60 kg) and Dipak Shrestha (80 kg) exited in the opening round. The team was coached by Prakash Thapa Magar, Dipak Maharjan and Sujit Pun Magar.

Speaking at the ceremony, Member Secretary Mehta congratulated Thapa, saying his achievement had brought joy to the entire nation.

Boxer Thapa credited collective support for his success and pledged to strive for even greater accomplishments.

Boxing Federation Vice-President Shyam Kaji Awale remarked that the medal had not only elevated boxing but also honoured the nation.

On the same day, the team including Swikrit Neupane, who won a silver medal in the U-23 Men’s Singles (Class 7) table tennis event at the 5th Asian Youth Para Games in Dubai, was also welcomed at the airport.

Officials from the NSC, the National Paralympic Committee and the All Nepal Table Tennis Association joined in celebrating the achievement.

SNIPPETS

NVA Volleyball Championship in Ktm

Kathmandu (TRN): The Nepal Volleyball Association (NVA) will organise the 9th NVA Men’s and Women’s Volleyball Championship in Kathmandu from 26 December to 4 January. Organising a press meet on Sunday, the association informed that the league will be held at the Covered Hall of the Dasharath Stadium in Tripureshwor. Teams from provinces, districts and clubs will be competing in the tourney. According to the Association, the top eight men’s teams and top six women’s teams from this league will qualify for the 10th PM Cup NVA Men’s and Women’s National League. In the championship, winners in both the men’s and women’s categories will receive Rs. 500,000. The runners-up will get Rs. 250,000, and the third-placed teams will be awarded Rs. 125,000. The best player will receive Rs. 25,000, while outstanding performers in individual categories will each be awarded with Rs. 15,000.

BPL signs Sandeep Lamichhane

Kathmandu (TRN): Nepal’s leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane is set to play in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL). The Rajshahi Warriors announced that they had signed him for the tournament on Sunday. Sandeep had previously featured in the 2018/19 season of the BPL, representing the Sylhet Sixers, where he played six matches and claimed four wickets. A key player for the Nepal national team, Sandeep has represented the country in 68 T20 internationals, taking 129 wickets. He captained Biratnagar Kings in the Nepal Premier League (NPL). He took 17 wickets in the NPL, earning the award for the highest wicket-taker, while his team finished third.

ICC Chair commends CAN for successful NPL

Kathmandu (TRN): International Cricket Council (ICC) Chairman Jay Shah has congratulated the Cricket Association of Nepal (CAN) for the successful hosting of the Nepal Premier League (NPL). According to CAN, the association received a formal letter of appreciation from the ICC Chair on Sunday, lauding the successful planning and execution of the tournament. In his letter addressed to CAN President Chatur Bahadur Chand, Shah praised the league for setting a remarkable benchmark in terms of organisation and the quality of cricket showcased. He further noted that the event reflected strong leadership, clear vision and effective execution by CAN. In a press release, CAN expressed its sincere gratitude to the ICC and Chairman Shah for the encouraging words and continued support. The association reaffirmed its commitment to the growth and professional development of cricket at all levels in Nepal.

England's Ashes hopes hang by a thread as 'Bazball' backfires

AFP
London, Dec. 14

England arrived in Australia with genuine hopes of a first Ashes series win "Down Under" since 2010/11 and seeking their first series triumph home or away against their oldest rivals in a decade.

But after just six days of cricket they are 2-0 down with three matches to play, with their "Bazball" style of ultra-attacking cricket under fire following crushing eight-wicket defeats in Perth and Brisbane. AFP Sport looks at what has gone wrong for England so far.

Approach
Former England opening batsman turned pundit Geoffrey Boycott has

been one of the most outspoken critics of England’s approach in Australia.

Coach Brendon McCullum and captain Ben Stokes injected fresh energy into an England side that had won just one of 17 Tests when they joined forces in 2022, urging players to play fearless cricket.

Yet Bazball has at times morphed from a guiding ethos into something nearing a dogma, with a self-defeating inflexibility at times.

Early success has been replaced by more modest results -- England have won 13 and lost 14 of their 29 matches in the World Test Championship (WTC) since June 2023.

A bristling Stokes last month labelled former players critical of England’s approach as "has-beens", drawing a sharp rebuke.

"They are up their own backsides convinced that Test cricket has

changed so much that only they know anything about the modern game," England multiple Ashes winner Geoffrey Boycott wrote in the Daily Telegraph.

Strategy
England managing director Rob Key has long believed in the need for sheer pace on typically hard Australian pitches.

"I don't care how many wickets you take," he said last year. "I want to know how hard you are running in, how hard you are hitting the pitch and are you able to sustain pace at 85 to 88 miles per hour?"

Veteran Australia fast bowler Mitchell Starc has shone for the home side, taking 18 wickets in the series so far.

But the surfaces in the opening two Tests have also rewarded traditional English-style seam bowling, with

Australia’s Michael Nesar, averaging just above 80 mph, taking 5-42 in the second innings at Brisbane.

Preparation
McCullum was ridiculed following defeat in the pink-ball clash in Brisbane after saying England had trained too much and were over-prepared.

The tourists played only one pre-series warm-up fixture and wicketkeeper Jamie Smith, along with others, had never appeared in a pink-ball Test before the match in Brisbane.

England’s lack of match practice came back to haunt them as they dropped five catches in the first innings.

Stokes’ men also opted against having a tour game between Brisbane and next week’s third Test in Adelaide.

"Nowhere in a million years has preparation been right," said former

England captain and Ashes winner Michael Vaughan.

Discipline
England have been found wanting in basic disciplines, with batsmen taking unnecessary risks and bowlers unable to maintain an accurate line and length.

Stokes’ team have also ignored repeated warnings about the dangers of trying to clear the bigger boundaries of Australian grounds and the need to minimise risk when facing Starc.

After their defeat in the second Test, Stokes demanded his players toughen up, insisting his England team is "not a place for weak men".

But it may be too late to turn the tide after Australia triumphed in Brisbane despite being without three senior bowlers -- skipper Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and

Nathan Lyon -- who have more than 1,100 Test wickets between them.

Selection
England have indulged certain players to an extent previously unthinkable.

Opener Zak Crawley has been retained despite averaging a modest 33.7 in WTC matches since June 2023 in the belief he would come good in Australia, reflecting a unhealthy obsession with the Ashes to the exclusion of all else.

Fellow top-order batsman Ollie Pope averages a mere 31.8 over the same period, yet Jacob Bethell, the man next in line, has yet to make a first-class hundred.

"This lot aren't even afraid of getting dropped, which is why we see the same old failings, particularly in the batting," said an exasperated Boycott.

SAFF Women's Club Championship

East Bengal, APF FC enter finals

Ugandan striker Ikwaput Fazila fires five past Nasrin as East Bengal and APF secure spots in historic final.

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Dec. 14

East Bengal FC and APF Club will battle for the maiden title of the SAFF Women’s Club Championship after finishing in the top two of the league standings.

Ugandan striker Ikwaput Fazila stole the show on Sunday, becoming the first player to score five goals in a single match in this tournament.

Her heroics powered India’s East Bengal to a resounding 7-0 victory over Bangladesh’s Nasrin FC in the day’s second fixture. Jyoti Chauhan and Sulanjana Raul added one apiece for the Indian league champions.

Earlier, Nepal’s APF FC edged past Pakistan’s Karachi City FC 1-0 to secure their second win from three matches.

Rashmi Kumari Ghising struck in the 52nd minute, heading home Renuka Nagarkoti’s lofted cross from the right flank.

Ghising, who now has three goals in the competition, was named Player of the Match.

The back-to-back wins lifted East Bengal to the top of the table with nine points, while APF sit second with seven points from two wins and a draw.

East Bengal’s victory also confirmed APF’s place in the final.

The two sides will meet in a dress rehearsal on 17 December, before clashing again in the title decider on 20 December.

Karachi, having completed all four matches, finished with two points from two draws and two defeats.

Bhutan’s Transport United FC, with one match in hand, also have two points from two draws and one loss.

Nasrin remain bottom with a solitary point from two defeats and a draw.

APF coach Jibesh Pandey admitted his side squandered several chances against Karachi but vowed to adopt an attacking approach against East Bengal.



APF FC's Rashmi Kumari Ghising celebrates after scoring the only goal against Karachi FC during the SAFF Women's Club Championship at Dasarath Stadium, Kathmandu, Sunday.

Raphinha extends Barca's Liga lead

AFP
Madrid, Dec. 14

Raphinha hit a brace to give Barcelona a narrow 2-0 win over Osasuna on Saturday and take them seven points clear at the top of La Liga.

Atletico Madrid, fourth, returned to winning ways with a 2-1 victory over Valencia sealed by a fine Antoine Griezmann strike, while Espanyol, fifth, continued their strong start with a 1-0 win at Getafe.

Barcelona’s Brazilian winger Raphinha broke the deadlock after 70 minutes with a fizzing strike from the edge of the box, and added a second late on to earn Barca their seventh-straight top flight win.

Barca lacked their usual sparkle but ground out their victory, keeping a first clean sheet in six matches across all competitions. They also recorded a fifth victory in five games at their partially reopened Camp Nou home.

"Raphinha is very important. He scored two goals and is a key player. He defends and attacks -- he's very important for us," said Flick.

"Maybe we didn't have many chances, but we scored two goals and got the three points."

"We've got a lot of good players and Rapha, or whoever else plays inside, in the end they give us a lot of solutions in that position," said Barca defender Gerard Martin. Goals by captain Koke and Griezmann brought Diego Sim-eone’s fourth-placed Atletico Madrid some respite, although they trail Barca by nine points.

Atletico had muscled their way back into the Spanish title race after a slow start to the season, before suffering damaging consecutive Liga defeats by Barca and Athletic Bilbao at the start of December.

They followed up a Champions League victory at PSV in midweek with a solid display at their Metropolitano stadium against Los Che.

interview raised questions over his future at the club as Arsenal avoided a major embarrassment against Wolves.

The Egypt forward, the subject of intense scrutiny in the build-up to the game at Anfield, came off the substitutes’ bench to huge cheers in the first half, replacing injured defender Joe Gomez.

The home team, whose Premier League title defence has collapsed after a shocking run of results, were leading 1-0 at the time, with France forward Hugo Ekitike on the scoresheet after just 46 seconds.

Brighton squandered a number of opportunities to level and Ekitike scored his second with half an hour to go, heading home Salah’s corner.

The Egyptian superstar now has 277 goal involvements for Liverpool in the Premier League -- 188 goals and 89 assists -- a new record by a player for a single club in the competition, overtaking Wayne Rooney’s mark for Manchester United.

After Saturday’s win Slot said there was "no issue to resolve" with Salah, though uncertainty remains over his long-term future at the club.

"For me he's now the same as any



Barcelona's Raphinha celebrates after scoring during a La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Osasuna in Spain.

other player," said the Dutchman.

The 2-0 win -- Liverpool’s first at Anfield since November 4 -- lifts Slot’s men to sixth in the table.

But their title defence is in ruins after a terrible run of just two wins in 10 league matches before the visit of Brighton.

The Reds are 10 points behind leaders Arsenal, who narrowly avoided dropping vital points against bottom side Wolves in Saturday’s late kick-off, courtesy of two own goals in a 2-1 win.

Arsenal had huffed and puffed for 70 minutes before the ball rebounded off Wolves goalkeeper Sam Johnstone and into his own net.

Astonishingly, Wolves pulled level in the 90th minute but just as the home fans contemplated a damaging draw, the Gunners benefited from a second own goal when Bukayo Saka’s cross was diverted into his own net by Wolves defender Yerson Mosquera in the 94th minute.

Earlier, Cole Palmer, whose season has been badly disrupted by a groin injury, scored his first goal since September, as Chelsea beat Everton 2-0 to move back into the top four.