Thursday, April 23, 2026
Baisakh 10, 2083 | Nepal Sambat 1146 | Bachhalathwa Saptami

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THE RISING NEPAL

ALL BE HAPPY, ALL BE WELL



PHOTO: RSS

The captivating Mini Great Wall, built atop Mukundeswari Hill in Bandipur Rural Municipality-2, stands as one of the main tourist destinations in Tanahu district.

Minister Gurung resigns just after 26 days in office

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22



Minister for Home Affairs Sudan Gurung has resigned from his post just 26 days after assuming office. Minister Gurung announced his resignation on Wednesday through social media.

In his statement, he said he had stepped down to allow an impartial investigation into matters concerning him and to avoid any conflict of interest while remaining in office.

"I have resigned from the post of Home Minister with immediate effect so that a fair investigation can take place and there is no conflict of interest or any influence on the process," he wrote in his Facebook account.

Gurung said his decision was based on moral responsibility and accountability in public life.

"Public life must remain clean and leadership must be accountable. If anyone questions the government formed through the blood and sacrifice of my 46 brothers and sisters, the answer is morality," he said.

He added that ethics was more important to him than holding office.

"For me, morality is greater than any position, and there is no greater strength than public trust," he said, adding that the Gen Z movement demanding good governance, transparency and accountability had conveyed the same message.

Gurung said he had taken seriously the public concerns, comments and questions raised regarding his shareholdings and related matters.

"I have been serving honestly as Home Minister since March 27. In recent days, I have taken seriously the concerns, criticism and public interest regarding my shares and related issues," he stated.

He said he had fulfilled his moral duty and urged others to stand by truth, honesty and self-purification if genuine change was to be achieved.

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FEDERAL PARLIAMENT SESSION CALLED FOR APRIL 30

RSS
Kathmandu, April 22

President Ramchandra Paudel has, on the recommendation of the Government and in accordance with Article 93 (1) of the Constitution, summoned a session of the Federal Parliament for 2:00 pm on Thursday, April 30.

A session of both houses of the Federal Parliament to be held at the Federal Parliament Building, Singha Durbar, was summoned on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers meeting held on April 21, according to the Office of the President.

PM to hold Home Ministry

Meanwhile, President Ramchandra Paudel has designated Prime Minister Balendra Shah to also assume the Home Ministry portfolio.

Prime Minister Shah will look after the home ministry as well after Home Minister Sudhan Gurung resigned from his post earlier today, according to the President's Office.

Communists mark founding day amidst despair

BY RITU RAJ SUBEDI/RAMAN PAUDEL
Kathmandu, Apr. 22



COMMENTARY

Nepali communist parties, split into numerous factions, marked the 77th founding day of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) in different parts of the country on Wednesday.

Their commemoration events were not filled with joy and hope as the communist movement faced an existential threat in the aftermath of the March 5 general elections. The Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) routed all old forces, including the CPN-UML and Nepali Communist Party, in the elections.

The two communist parties jointly secured 45 seats in the 275-member House of Representatives (HoR). This disappointing outcome contrasted with their resounding victory in the three-tier elections held in 2017. They had bagged nearly two-thirds majority in the parliament.

For them, the establishment day has become a moment of reckoning. Frustrated and deflated, the functionaries in all left groups have shown their strong reservations over the leadership blamed for the unanticipated debacles in the historic elections conducted to give a logical outlet to the roaring Gen Z revolt last September.

In their memorial programmes, the UML and NCP leaders aired a sense of disappointment over their plight and expressed a faint hope to revive the communist movement. Some UML stalwarts who were defeated in the elections admitted past mistakes and pledged to correct them.

UML general secretary Shankar Pokharel said that their power-centric mentality led to their current predicament. "We must overcome our obsession with power if the party were to be revitalised."

Vice chair Bishnu Poudel said that the leadership should make a self-assessment of the situation. He hinted that the leadership must own up to the moral responsibility of the electoral loss.

Once a close confidante of party chair KP Sharma Oli, Poudel has now stood for leadership transfer in the party. The remarks of both leaders alluded to chair Oli, who has refused to step down from the party head despite the colossal drubbing.

In yet another function, NCP chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda called for unity with the UML. "In this complex time, we must carry out the transformation and reorganisation of the communist movement," he claimed.

Seventy-seven years ago, the NCP was inaugurated under the leadership of comrade Pushpa Lal to spearhead the struggle against the autocratic Rana rule. The NCP had envisioned an equal and egalitarian society free from all forms of inequalities, exploitations and injustice.

Nara Bahadur Karmacharya, Niranjan Govinda Baidya, Narayan Vilas Joshi and Moti Devi had supported Pushpa Lal to chart the destiny of Nepalis.

» SEE PAGE 6

Asset investigation body begins work formally

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

The government-formed Asset Investigation Commission, established with the objective of ending widespread corruption and impunity in the country, has formally commenced its work from Wednesday.

A Cabinet meeting on April 15 had constituted the five-member commission under the chairmanship of former Supreme Court Justice Rajendra Kumar Bhandari. The commission's office has been set up at Keshar Mahal.

Bhandari took the oath of office and secrecy on Wednesday before Acting Chief Justice Sapana Pradhan Malla. He subsequently administered the oath to other members - former Chief Judge of the Appellate Court Purushottam Parajuli, former High Court Judge Chandi Raj Dhakal, former Deputy Inspector General of Police Ganesh KC, and Chartered Accountant Prakash Lamsal.

The commission, mandated to operate in accordance with the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1969 (2026 BS), has already had its Terms of Reference approved. With a tenure of one year, it will collect and conduct detailed investigations into the assets held within Nepal and abroad in the names of current, retired, or former public office holders and their family members.

As per the provision, the commission must submit a report to the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers immediately upon completing an investigation of any individual, and the government is required to implement it within 45 days.

The commission has pledged to function in a fully independent, impartial, and professional manner, free from any external pressure or influence.

It will accept complaints through written, verbal, electronic means, social media, or any other medium.

While the commission may seek expert advice from various sectors as necessary during its work, strict provisions prohibit the engagement of experts with conflicts of interest, it said in a statement.

He said he had fulfilled his moral duty and urged others to stand by truth, honesty and self-purification if genuine change was to be achieved.

Call to curb misleading information

RSS
Kathmandu, April 22

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology has urged one and all not to disseminate misleading information.

The ministry has said that it's serious attention has been drawn to the publication and dissemination of baseless, false and misleading content through various online news media and social media platforms as of late.

According to a press release issued by the ministry today, such fabricated information is creating confusion among the general public and giving rise to a wrong psychology in society. The ministry has mentioned that this risks weakening trust in the information system and negatively affecting social balance.

Stating that it takes the act of disseminating misleading information very seriously, the ministry has clarified that strict steps would be taken to control such activities, while cautioning all media outlets, information providers and individuals not to publish or broadcast news and information that has not been confirmed by official bodies.

The ministry has warned that if baseless, false and misleading news is found to be published or broadcast, the person or organization publishing such content will be identified and strict action will be taken in accordance with the prevailing law.

Similarly, the ministry has also urged the general public not to engage in any activity that may help spread misleading information. Social media users have also been requested to check the authenticity and veracity of any content before sharing it through their personal accounts.

The CIT ministry has requested that if there is any information or complaint about such misleading information or news, the details should be provided through the Social Media Complaints Registration portal on the ministry's official website. If necessary, one can also contact the Ministry by phone or email.

Gokyo Declaration 2026 calls for urgent action in Himalayan region

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Gokyo, Solukhumbu, Apr. 22

A climate conference held in Gokyo, a high-altitude settlement in Solukhumbu, on the occasion of 'Earth Day 2026' has issued a call for urgent action to address the growing impacts of climate change in Nepal's Himalayan region.

The "Gokyo Climate Declaration 2026", adopted on Tuesday, highlighted the increasing vulnerability of high mountain areas and urged immediate steps for both climate adaptation and mitigation based on scientific research and local practices.

The declaration stressed the need to promote low-carbon and sustainable livelihoods, including eco-friendly tourism, climate-resilient agriculture, renewable energy and energy efficiency.



Participants in the conference committed to advancing a low-carbon development pathway to reduce environmental risks while supporting local economies.

The key focus of the declaration is strengthening local and indigenous knowledge systems. It also called for greater investment in climate education and awareness, while ensuring that women, youth and local communities play a central leadership role in climate action.

The declaration also stressed climate justice, urging that climate responses be inclusive, rights-based and equitable. It called for meaningful participation of women, indigenous groups, youth and marginalised communities at all levels of decision-making.

Participants urged governments, international agencies and development partners to ensure fair and timely access to climate finance, technology transfer and capacity-building support. The declaration highlights the need for equal access to resources for vulnerable countries like Nepal.

It also called on the government to take a leading role in climate diplomacy by uniting mountain nations and raising Himalayan issues in international forums.

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BULLION
(Rs. per tola)

Hallmark Gold	: Rs. 300,500/-
Worked Gold	: NA
Silver	: Rs. 5,130/-

STOCK

NEPSE	: 2,804.17
Total Amount	: 7,813,947,342.89
No. of Share	: 17,588,854

Power plant endangers Modi Khola

BY SAJAN PARIWAR
Parbat, Apr. 22

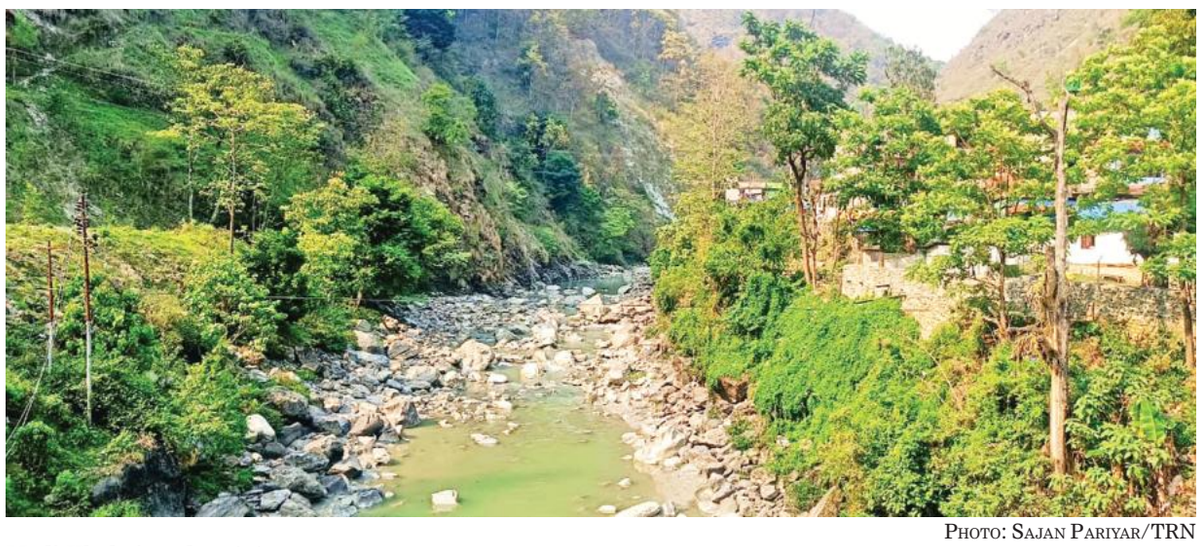


PHOTO: SAJAN PARIYAR/TRN

Modi Khola in a dry state.

Flowing from the foothills of the Annapurna range through Kaski to Parbat, the Modi Khola was once seen as a symbol of life, livelihoods and biodiversity. Known as an "energy river", it now appears to be struggling to survive.

As hydropower projects expand rapidly, the river's natural flow has declined, affecting both local lifestyles and the environment.

Until a few years ago, the Modi Khola flowed steadily in its natural rhythm. It was well known for its asala fish. Areas such as Birethanti, Nayapul and Ambot were famous for fish from the river.

Local people earned a living by fishing, while travellers and domestic tourists would stop there to enjoy the local catch. Vehicles travelling to Pokhara and Baglung often halted at Ambot for fish.

Today, however, these places are becoming quiet. As water levels drop, fish are disappearing, and the fishing business is in decline.

Locals said that hydropower projects have diverted water into dams, disrupting the river's natural flow. Although there is a legal requirement to release a minimum amount of water, they complain that it is not properly enforced.

Local rights activist Madhav Paudel said, "All the projects on the Modi Khola have diverted almost the entire river for use, leaving it nearly dry. According to the rules, at least 10 per cent of the water should be released, but monitoring is weak."

He added that this is affecting not only aquatic life but the entire ecosystem. "The river itself is under threat. Fish and other aquatic species are close to disappearing. Water sources are drying up, forests are being affected, and there is a growing shortage of irrigation for farming," he said.

The history of hydropower on the Modi Khola is long. The first project, the Modi Khola Hydropower Centre with a capacity of 14 megawatts, was completed by the Nepal Electricity Authority in 2000. It was followed by the Lower Modi-1 Hydropower Project, which has been operating for over a decade. More recently, the 20-megawatt Lower Modi project has come into operation.

In addition, the private sector-operated Middle Modi Hydropower Project, with a capacity of 15.1 megawatts and backed by the Chaudhary Group, is already running.

The Nepal Electricity Authority is also constructing the Upper Modi project (40 megawatts) and Upper Modi 'A' project (18 megawatts) in the Birethanti area. Altogether, completed and ongoing projects along the relatively short river now total around 117.1 megawatts.

Ironically, despite so many projects, electricity generation itself is now being affected due to water shortages. According to Upendra Gautam, director of Lower Modi-1, additional upstream projects have reduced water flow downstream.

"When we designed the project, we estimated a certain level of water, but that is no longer available. Now it is difficult to generate even more than three megawatts," he said.

While he claimed that their project releases more water than required, he acknowledged that the overall flow of the river has declined. This suggests that hydropower projects themselves could face long-term impacts.

Local businesses are also suffering. Gaurav Kshetri, who runs a hotel in Nayapul, said, "When we were young, we used to go fishing in the river with our brothers. The fish would be sold in our hotel. People travelled from far away to eat Modi Khola fish. Now, as the river is drying up, fish have disappeared and our business is declining."

Environmentalists warned that a reduction in a river's natural flow can cause serious long-term damage. A river is not just a channel of flowing water but the foundation of an entire ecosystem. While water use for hydropower is necessary, maintaining a minimum flow is essential.

Stakeholders have called for stricter enforcement of regulations, mandatory release of minimum water by every project, and regular monitoring. They warn that if timely action is not taken, the Modi Khola -- once known as an "energy river" -- could become part of history.

NABIL TO TRAIN AGRICULTURE ENTREPRENEURS

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

Nabil Bank Limited has launched skill-based financial literacy and entrepreneurship development training programmes targeting people engaged in agricultural businesses across 16 villages in Nepal.

The training began on Wednesday in Sinja Rural Municipality of Jumla and will be expanded to 15 additional locations within the current fiscal year 2025/26, the bank informed in a statement.

The programmes are being conducted in coordination with local governments across Koshi, Madhes, Gandaki, Lumbini, Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces.

The bank said around 500 individuals currently involved in, or planning to start, agriculture-based enterprises will benefit from the initiative.

CEO Manoj Kumar Gyawali said participants will receive practical knowledge on savings, budgeting, loan management, insurance and investment options. "The programme aims to strengthen financial literacy, reduce unemployment, encourage new business ventures and promote sustainable economic growth through entrepreneurship development," he said.

The training is part of the bank's corporate social responsibility efforts and aligns with its focus on sustainable banking. It is intended to support people in rural areas to become more self-reliant by equipping them with relevant skills and information.

"Participants will receive both technical and business-related training in areas such as goat farming, pig farming, buffalo rearing, mushroom cultivation and vegetable farming. The programme will also cover identifying business opportunities, marketing and financial management," read the statement.

The bank said the initiative also prioritises environmentally responsible and socially accountable investment practices, in line with long-term economic sustainability goals.

Govt urged to adopt agroecology

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22



The Alliance of Agriculture for Food has called on the government to revise its recently published national commitment document, advocating a transition to an environmentally friendly agricultural system based on agroecology.

Organising a press conference to make public its suggestions provided to the government on Wednesday, the alliance highlighted the need to move away from the current chemical-fertiliser dependent farming model and adopt a more sustainable, ecological approach.

It stated that existing agricultural strategies lack clarity and require significant restructuring.

Uddhav Adhikari, coordinator of Alliance of Agriculture for Food, said that recommendations related to agriculture have been submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers.

The proposals include a clear transitional action plan to gradually shift from chemical-based farming to agro-ecological practices.

The alliance also emphasised strengthening local production and developing circular supply systems, drawing lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and global geopolitical disruptions.

Among its structural reform proposals, the alliance suggested merging or eliminating inactive institutions and establishing effective mechanisms at federal, provincial, and local levels to promote ecological agriculture.

It outlined a phased development plan: boosting production in the short term, building sustainable infrastructure in the medium term, and promoting circular, agriculture-based industries in the long term.

It has further called for a national consensus on long-term agricultural policy and urged the enactment of a Federal Agriculture Act to ensure the constitutional right to food sovereignty.

Highlighting the broader role of agriculture, the alliance said it should be recognised not only as a livelihood but also as a respected social enterprise and a foundation of environmental balance.

The alliance recommended introducing policies to ensure farmers' social security and called for a clear classification of "real farmers" to better target support programmes.

Once farmers are properly identified, the state should roll out comprehensive support measures, including farmer pensions, access to farmer credit cards, crop and livestock insurance, and concessional loans.

Suggested measures include farmer pensions, access to credit cards, crop and livestock insurance, and concessional loans.

Special emphasis was placed on supporting small-scale farmers, landless agricultural workers, and women farmers through production-based subsidies and improved market access.

Additionally, the alliance urged the government to conduct comprehensive biological mapping of agricultural biodiversity, including indigenous seed varieties and soil conditions, to support sustainable farming practices.

It also recommended establishing community seed banks at the local level to preserve indigenous seeds and ensure farmers retain control over seed resources.

The alliance expressed confidence that these measures would enhance food security, strengthen climate resilience, and empower farming communities across Nepal.

According to Adhikari, the recommendations include utilising barren land through coordinated land management systems, preventing the conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural use, and promoting education and research in agriculture.

The alliance proposed integrating agricultural production into school curricula and focusing higher education on organic and indigenous farming practices.

NADA TO IMPLEMENT MRP PROVISIONS ON VEHICLES



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

NADA Automobiles Association of Nepal welcomed the provision requiring all imported goods sold in Nepal to clearly display the maximum retail price (MRP) and the mandatory issuance of invoice during sales.

A delegation from the Association met Director General Roshan Gyawali of the Department of Commerce, Supplies and Consumer Protection (DoCS) the other day to discuss a recently issued directives on affixing stickers indicating the MRP on automobile products.

During the meeting, the NADA delegation said the department's press statement issued last week had drawn its attention.

Following a discussion with the Nepal Foreign Trade Association (NFTA), the DoCS had issued a statement on April 13 directing all importers to mention the MRP on imported goods and issue bills while selling them.

It also directed them to implement the provision within a 15-day period, and after that if any goods were sold without MRP, punitive measures would be adopted.

NADA's discussion with the DoCS was focused on how to make the provisions workable and implementable. The delegation raised concerns about the treatment of existing stock and questioned the practicality of requiring stickers to be affixed at customs points, read a statement from NADA. It also stated that it has consistently supported fair trade and transparency in business practices.

In response, Gyawali said the provisions were based on the existing Consumer Protection Act 2035 and aligned with the government's 100-point governance reform plan, which prioritises their implementation. He said the department remains committed to enforcing the rules and described NADA's concerns as constructive.

Gyawali added that the department is prepared to address practical challenges in implementation but emphasised that cooperation and commitment from businesses would be necessary.

He also stated that the department would take a strict approach towards manufacturers and importers in enforcing MRP labelling requirements, and invited NADA to propose legal reforms if existing provisions require amendment.

Germany set to slash growth forecast

AFP
Frankfurt, Apr. 22



PHOTO: AFP

A Volkswagen electric car assembly line in Dresden, Germany. Higher fuel costs have hit the country's crucial manufacturing base hard.

The German government on Wednesday is expected to cut its growth forecast for this year as the energy shock triggered by the Middle East war hammers Europe's biggest economy.

Hopes had been high that the eurozone's traditional growth engine would sputter back to life in 2026 after a long decline, driven by Chancellor Friedrich Merz's public spending blitz.

But the jump in oil and gas prices since the start of the US-Israeli war on Iran have dealt the economy a heavy blow, pushing up overall inflation and raising costs for the country's crucial manufacturers.

At the start of April, leading economic institutes already slashed their growth predictions for this year to 0.6 percent from a September forecast of 1.3 percent. Economy Minister Katherina Reiche is also expected to announce a hefty cut when she unveils the government's new estimate at 1215 GMT.

The government's last official forecast in January predicted the economy would expand one percent this year. "The German economy will face a significant burden over an extended period," Merz warned last week as his government unveiled 1.6 billion euros ($1.8 billion) in fuel price relief for households and businesses.

Before the Iran war, the economy was just getting back on its feet after the energy shock triggered by the Ukraine war and last year's US tariff blitz. The renewed surge in energy prices is a particular burden for Germany's heavy industry, in sectors ranging from steel to chemicals.

Knock-on effects, like supply chain snarls that are delaying delivery of vital base products, are weighing on industry, while consumers are facing higher costs, especially at the petrol pump. Inflation jumped to 2.7 percent in March, its highest level in over two years.

Surveys highlight the darkening picture. A poll this week showed that German investor morale hit its lowest level in April since late 2022, when the country was battling the fallout from Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The government is scrambling to respond. As well as the relief on fuel prices, Merz has announced that businesses can pay workers a tax-free bonus of up to 1,000 euros. Still, many economists and business groups have criticised the measures as ill conceived, saying they are not well enough directed at needy groups.

They are calling on the government to instead focus on pushing through deep reforms to areas like healthcare, pensions and bureaucracy that they argue can help spur growth in the long term. "You cannot cushion a shock like this with tax money or bonus payments," Peter Leibinger, president of the Federation of German Industries (BDI), said this week.

"The state cannot insure citizens and companies against every external crisis," he said. "The only insurance is growth-oriented policies that enable investment." Businesses have meanwhile become increasingly frustrated with Merz's coalition.

The chancellor, who took power in May last year, promised to revive the economy through huge public outlays on defence and infrastructure and a barrage of reforms.

But the spending has moved slowly and structural overhauls have made little headway, bogged down by lengthy talks between his centre-right CDU party and its coalition partners, the centre-left SPD.

The coalition is promising to push through an ambitious programme before parliament's summer recess, though critics doubt what can realistically be achieved so quickly.

Online voters' list enrollment begins

BY KESHAV RAJ BHATTA
Baitadi, Apr. 22



PHOTO: TRN

District Election Office in Baitadi

In a move set to streamline civic participation, authorities in western Nepal have introduced an online system allowing eligible citizens to register for the electoral roll from the comfort of their homes, bringing an end to the long-standing requirement to visit district offices in person.

The District Election Office in Baitadi confirmed that individuals who have already obtained a national identity card can now complete voter registration through a digital platform.

The initiative is expected to ease access not only for residents within the district but also for those living elsewhere.

According to District Election Officer Khagendra Bharati, all eligible Nepali citizens who have submitted their national ID details can now enroll on the voter list quickly and efficiently via the online system. Officials believe the change will significantly reduce administrative burdens and improve inclusivity.

To ensure no one is left behind, alternative arrangements have also been put in place for those encountering difficulties with the digital process. Information Officer Naresh Dayal said applicants may submit a photograph of their national ID card or receipt slip, along with their personal mobile number and preferred polling station, via the office's official WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger channels. Registration can then be completed remotely.

Additionally, the office has introduced a QR code system through which citizens can submit feedback, complaints, or suggestions relating to voter registration and updates.

Officials say the initiative forms part of a broader push towards technology-driven public services, aimed at delivering faster, simpler, and more accessible administration. It is hoped that the shift will eliminate the need for long queues and repeated office visits.

The District Election Office has urged all eligible citizens to take full advantage of the new system.

Escapee from Central Jail during Gen Z movement arrested in Capital

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

Police have rearrested a prisoner who had escaped from Central Jail in Jagannath Dewal, detaining him in Kathmandu's Manamaiju area.

Kamal BK, alias Jhyaple of Dhading, who had fled prison by taking advantage of unrest during protests staged by the Gen Z group against the then government in September last year, was apprehended by a team from the Kathmandu Valley Crime Investigation Office.

The 38-year-old, also known by the alias 'Jhyaple Kamal Neupane', had been serving a 10-year prison sentence in a murder case. He escaped from the prison on September 9, 2025.

Following his escape, he had reportedly been hiding in various parts of Kathmandu.

Police, who had been searching for him for a long time, received specific intelligence that he was staying in Manamaiju of Tarakeshwar Municipality-9, Kathamandu. Acting on the tip-off, a team from the Crime Investigation Office arrested him on April 20.

BK, a permanent resident of Dhusa in Benighat Rorang Rural Municipality-7, Dhading, has been sent back to Central Jail Jagannath Dewal after completion of the necessary legal procedures to serve the remainder of his sentence, according to Superintendent of Police (SP) and Information Officer Rameshwar Karki.

Man goes missing while bathing in Seti River

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Baitadi, Apr. 22

A man has gone missing while bathing in the Seti River in Baitadi district.

The missing individual has been identified as approximately 22-year-old Deepak Bohara, a resident of Dasharathchand Municipality–2, Dehimandau.

Bohara reportedly disappeared while bathing in the Seti River at Gholtada in Dipayal Silgadhi Municipality–5.

Bohara had been working at the Cab Dunila Crusher Company located in the same area. According to the District Police Office, Doti, a search operation is under way, with a team of 21 personnel deployed, including eight officers from Nepal Police and 13 from the Armed Police Force.

Ayurveda Centre flouts Procurement Act

BY HARIKRISHNA AIDI
Mugu, Apr. 22

The Ayurveda Health Centre in Mugu has directly purchased medicines for its pharmacy without any competition, which violates the Public Procurement Act of 2063.

According to Section 8 (a) (2) of the Public Procurement Act, the Ayurveda Health Centre is required to publish information in the national level newspaper if it has to purchase any material. However, the Mugu Ayurveda Health Centre has not complied with it and has directly purchased medicines for its pharmacy from Bhaskar Herbaceutic Pvt. Ltd., Birgunj, last month, without any competition, thereby limiting competition.

According to Ayurveda Health Centre Mugu's Information Officer Laxmi Prasad Devkota, the Ayurveda Health Center's pharmacy was purchased from Bhaskar Herbaceutic Pvt. Ltd. Birgunj, as per Section 85 of the Public Procurement Act, and accordingly, the purchase was made in accordance with that provision.

Local civil society leader Rup Bahadur Malla has called for action against those who made purchases in violation of Section 41 of the Public Procurement Act and the Public Procurement Regulations of 2064, as stipulated by the prevailing laws of the Government of Nepal.

He said that the office had directly purchased medicines worth one million rupees in the name of the Ayurveda Office without following the method of competition, thus violating transparency and good governance.

Local civil society leader Rup Bahadur Malla has called for action against those who made purchases in violation of Section 41 of the Public Procurement Act and the Public Procurement Regulations of 2064, as stipulated by the prevailing laws of the Government of Nepal.

According to Rupesh Sonam, the head of the Ayurveda Health Centre Mugu, various medicines worth one million rupees were purchased at that rate, as informed by Bhaskar Herbaceutic Pvt. Ltd., Birgunj. According to Uddhav Bhattarai, an employee of Singha Durbar Vaidhyakhana, Section 8 (a) (2) of the Public Procurement Act 2063 stipulates that any public body must publish a notice of the rate in a national newspaper before making a purchase.

He stated that although the Singha Durbar Vaidhyakhana produces all types of Ayurvedic medicines, employees at the Ayurveda Health Centres in remote Himalayan regions often do not purchase medicines from the government Vaidhyakhana. Bhattarai added that these regions' authorities are prioritizing the purchase of medicines from private pharmacies instead.

39-foot stupa to commemorate landslide victims

BY CHITRAKUMAR MIJAR
Sindhupalchok, Apr. 22

A 39-foot stupa (chhyorten) is set to be constructed in memory of the 39 people who lost their lives in a devastating landslide that struck Lidi in Jugal Rural Municipality-2 at midnight on August 14, 2020.

According to Rural Municipality Chairperson Resham Syangbo, the stupa will commemorate those killed when a devastating landslide buried the entire settlement while residents were asleep. He said the structure is being built as a tribute to the victims, and its foundation stone has already been laid.

Syangbo added that the stupa is also intended to bring some emotional relief to survivors and help revive the devastated community. It is expected to contribute to religious and tourism development in Lidi, which was left in ruins by the disaster.

The landslide completely destroyed 37 houses, displacing 172 households. After the disaster, families were forced to relocate to places such as Banskhar in Selang (Jugal-1) and areas of Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality, among others.

Lidi had already been weakened by the devastating earthquake of April 25, 2015, and the landslide further caused massive loss of life and property.

In a separate disaster, floods in the Bhotekoshi River and Khagdol Khola in June 2021 killed 29 people in Jambu of Bahrabise Municipality-5. Dozens of houses were swept away, and several people remain missing. Families of the missing have now lost hope of their return.

Local Rajan Adhikari said the state has failed to provide adequate relief to families who lost their homes and loved ones, adding that even support for rebuilding houses has not been provided.

Similarly, in October 2021, a landslide in Ghumthang Nagpuje and Bhirkharka of Bahrabise Municipality-7 killed dozens of people and swept away hundreds of homes and land.

Local Pema Tamang alleged that the state has not extended any meaningful support to the victims. Survivors say the government has failed to act as a guardian for those who lost family members, homes and land in the disaster.

Humla DAO serves over 5,500 persons in one year

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Humla, Apr. 22

The District Administration Office in Humla has directly provided services to more than 5,500 service seekers over the past year. These services include issuing new citizenship certificates, duplicate copies of citizenship, passports, new border passes, and the renewal of border passes.

According to Assistant Chief District Officer Rajendra Chand, the office served a total of 5,739 service seekers in the one-year period from mid-April 2025 to mid-April 2026 (Baisakh 1 to the end of Chaitra, 2082 BS).

He stated that 2,388 individuals were issued new border passes to travel to Taklakot in China, while 1,135 border passes were renewed during the same period.

Similarly, 756 people received new citizenship certificates, and 1,011 individuals were provided with duplicate copies of Nepali citizenship. In addition, passports were issued to 449 residents of Humla.

माडी नगरपालिका
नगर कार्यपालिकाको कार्यालय
बसन्तपुर, चितवन
बागमती प्रदेश, नेपाल, २०७३

बोलपत्र स्वीकृत गर्ने आशयको सूचना

प्रकाशित मिति : २०८३/०१/१०

यस कार्यालयको तपसिलको मिति र पत्रिकामा प्रकाशित विद्युतीय बोलपत्र आह्वान सम्बन्धी सूचना अनुसार दर्ता हुन आएका विद्युतीय बोलपत्रहरु मूल्यांकन हुँदा निम्न बोलपत्रदाताको बोलपत्र न्यूनतम मूल्यांकित र सारभूत रुपमा प्रभावग्राही रहेकोले उक्त बोलपत्र स्वीकृतिका लागि छनौट भएको हुँदा सार्वजनिक खरिद ऐन, २०६३ (संशोधन सहित) को दफा २७(२) र दफा ४७ को प्रयोजनार्थ सम्बन्धित सबैको जानकारीको लागि यो सूचना प्रकाशित गरिएको छ ।

तपसिल:

क्र. सं.	बोलपत्र आह्वान सम्बन्धी सूचना प्रकाशित भएको मिति र पत्रिका	कामको विवरण	बोलपत्रदाताको नाम र ठेगाना	कबोल गरेको रकम (मूल्य अभिवृद्धि कर र P.S. सहित)
१	२०८२/१२/०६, नागरिक	NCB/ MMO/W/12/2082-83 को Suchana Prabhidhi ma Adharit Krishi Upaj Bajar Kendra Sthapna/ Sudhridikaran Madi-3	R.N. Safal Construction & Suppliers Pvt. Ltd., Madi-4, Chitwan	रु. १,०२,४७,९४७.७७-

प्रमुख प्रशासकीय अधिकृत

Classes being held for kids on positive thinking

BY BASUDEV SHARMA
Jajarkot, Apr. 22

Positive education classes have been launched for adolescents in two local levels of the district. The Social Development Office, Jajarkot, under the Ministry of Social Development of Karnali Province, has been conducting these classes in Bheri Municipality and Shivalaya Rural Municipality.

As per the policies and programmes of the current fiscal year, the initiative is being implemented in Kalegaun and Pipe of Ward No. 1, and Bhurunge of Ward No. 8 in Bheri Municipality, as well as Syapi (Ward No. 1) and Tata (Ward No. 4) in Shivalaya Rural Municipality. The programme aims to end child marriage and reduce social malpractices in communities through 'positive classes' for adolescents.

Hari Bahadur Wali from the Social Development Office said that the adolescent transformation programme had been conducted in two wards each of Bheri Municipality and Shivalaya Rural Municipality. A total of 150 adolescents and 165 parents have participated in the programme across the two local levels.

According to him, adolescents aged 11 to 19, both school-going and out-of-school, have been included in the classes. The objective is to empower them to speak out against social distortions and advocate for their economic and social rights. With rising cases of child marriage, domestic violence, and child abuse in rural areas, the programme seeks to raise awareness among children and promote the building of a more responsible and just society.

Since attending the classes, adolescents have become more aware that child marriage is unacceptable. They are now more confident in communicating with their parents and are able to speak out against negative practices in their communities.

Trainer Saraswati Sharma said that the classes were conducted for two hours daily. During the sessions, participants learn about reducing child marriage, ending caste-based discrimination, and improving communication with parents, among other topics. While classes were held regularly when schools were closed, they are now conducted for two hours on public holidays.

She added that ensuring regular attendance had been challenging due to the lack of snacks for participants. To address this, the snacks allocated for parents have been redirected to children when attendance began to decline.

According to Sharma, the programme has encouraged adolescents to raise their voices about their rights and become advocates against child marriage and caste-based discrimination. Participants have also begun to take a stand against harmful social practices such as domestic violence. Previously hesitant to speak openly with their parents, many adolescents are now able to communicate their concerns more confidently.

The programme emphasises that issues faced by adolescents, such as child marriage, caste discrimination, and violence, can contribute to broader social conflict if left unaddressed. Therefore, positive education is essential for social transformation.

Hatuwagadhi Rural Municipality
Office of the Rural Municipal Executive
Ghodetar, Bhojpur
Koshi Province, Nepal

Invitation For Electronic Bids

Date of publication: 2083/01/10

1. Hatuwagadhi Rural Municipality, Office of the Rural Municipal Executive, Ghodetar, Bhojpur, invites Electronic Bids from eligible bidders for the procurement of the following works.
2. All other information and BID document can be downloaded from PPMO's website www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp or may obtain at office during office time till the day before deadline date. All eligible bidders are requested to submit Bid/SQs as per instructions within the mentioned period.

S. N.	Name of Project	Contract ID	Bid Document Fee	Total Cost (With, Vat & PS)	Bid Security	Last Submission Date	Remarks
1	**Dewanchowk dekhi Amarchowk samma sadak staronnati.**	HRM/CW/ SQ/01/082-83	NRs. 1,000.00	NRs. 13,52,325.73	NRs. 35,000.00	2083/01/25 (12:00)	**Re- Bid Second Notice**
2	**Panchami Khola 3 No, Wada Karyalay -Chhokubhen Awatari Sadak marmat sambhar tatha staronnati**	HRM/CW/ SQ/02/082-83	NRs. 1,000.00	NRs. 11,83,391.47	NRs. 30,000.00	2083/01/25 (12:00)	

Information to deposit cost of bidding document

Name of Bank: Prabhu Bank Ltd, Branch Office Hatuwagadhi, Bhojpur.
Name of Office: Hatuwagadhi Rural Municipality, Office of the Rural Municipal Executive, Ghodetar, Bhojpur.
Office account no.: **1560113798600010 HATUWAGADHI GA.PA. GA 1.1 ANTARIK RAJASWO KHATA**

1. Electronic bids must be submitted to the office of **Hatuwagadhi Rural Municipality, Office of the Rural Municipal Executive, Ghodetar, Bhojpur** through PPMO website www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp 99
2. All other conditions of the bidding process will be as per the public procurement act 2063 and public procurement regulation 2064.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining.
- John F. Kennedy

EDITORIAL

Crush Middlemen

The Nepali word *'bichauliya'* (middleman) has gained currency in politics and economy. But the intermediaries have earned notoriety for their damaging role in society. In the past, *bichauliyas* reportedly accessed the prime minister's kitchen cabinet and influenced the government to bend the rules to their benefit. Recently, a powerful businessman was arrested for money laundering. In a video, he has claimed that he has the capacity to bribe and manipulate big political parties when it comes to making or breaking the government. This shows how influential bichauliyas are. In left political parlance, this sort of *bichauliya* represents the comprador class that makes money without investment and entrepreneurship. As the high-profile politicians collude with middlemen, the value-based politics takes a back seat and the nation is bound to suffer.

Other kinds of bichauliyas work as retailers, wholesalers and agents, and cause immense economic hardships to consumers through their profiteering behaviour. In a vast supply chain, they bridge between the producers and consumers by facilitating the transactions of goods. When they charge an exorbitant cost for supplying the products, their prices go through the roof, leading to high inflation that affects every aspect of economy. Middlemen squeeze both producers and consumers, and reap undue profits during the time of crisis – natural disaster, transportation strike, economic blockade, energy crisis and political instability. Currently, the country is feeling the heat of shortage of fuels due to the war in the Middle East. The government is compelled to raise the prices of fuels several times to adjust their prices in the international market.

However, the middlemen are now fleecing the people on the pretext of ongoing energy crisis. They have created artificial price hike of vegetables, fruits, foods and other consumer goods. One glaring example is the soaring retail costs of banana. One dozen of banana now cost around Rs. 350 to 400. While famers and consumers feel cheated, the middlemen are making a fast buck. On Tuesday, the Federation of Nepal Banana Producers' Ad Hoc Committee clarified that farmers had not increased the prices of banana. It has said farmers are getting significantly lower prices at the farm gate than the prices charged in the market, according to a news report of this daily. Local varieties such as Malbhog are being sold for just Rs. 70–85 per dozen, while hybrid varieties like William and G-9 bring only Rs. 50–60 per dozen. On the other hand, consumers have to pay up to five times more in the retail market, thanks to the interference and manipulation by brokers.

Banana farmers have raised only Rs. 6 per dozen compared to the last year. The significant price variation for bananas between the farm gate and retail shops indicates poor market monitoring. Though there is a short supply of bananas in the market, the local production still covers around 70 per cent of market demand. Around 50,000 to 60,000 tonnes of bananas are supplied monthly from various parts of the country, against a demand of 80,000 tonnes. The government has imposed a ban on the import of bananas to prevent the spread of the dangerous TR-4 (Panama) disease, which threatens banana crops. This has also encouraged the local producers. With the rapid expansion of domestic production of bananas, Nepal can attain self-reliance in it. The government must control the middlemen so that consumers do not feel bitter when they pay through the nose to get the sweet fruit.

Nepal Is hopeful

SUGAM GAUTAM

The air is filled with hope and excitement. Nepali people have never felt so optimistic about the country's future. The March 5 elections have ushered in a sense that change is possible. A party single-handedly formed the government, just two seats shy of reaching a supermajority. A young man aged 35 was elected as the prime minister. For the first time, the leading party in the election was neither NC nor CPN-UML. Top leaders, including the chairs of established parties, suffered humiliating losses.

Although these changes do not, by any means, guarantee a good future, this aberration has wiped out the notion that politics revolves only around certain figures and parties. A new party in the form of RSP has been tasked with serving the Nepali people, thanks to the resounding mandate entrusted to it. Though the sweeping victory RSP has achieved is a rarity in Nepali politics, people in the past have given opportunities to other parties as well.

The old parties did not live up to the expectations of the general public, and thus alternative forces entered the scene, with RSP being the top choice among them. The birth and rise of a new party in a democracy should be viewed as the beauty of democracy, especially by the parties that have claimed to have championed it through different crises. Still, RSP is looked upon with contempt by leaders of traditional parties, much to their distaste after its clinical performance in the recent election.

However, with an overwhelming mandate and the presence of fresh faces in Parliament, the chances of RSP achieving its goals are significantly higher. The new government looks poised to bring tangible results in every sector. It is as if people have started feeling that the state truly exists and cares for them.

Right after the formation of the new government, it issued a formal apology to Dalit groups who have long been on the receiving end of caste-based discrimination. Though this move was met with criticism and even deemed a gimmick, it reflects RSP's perspective, which regards everyone with equal concern and dignity. Additionally, women's participation in Parliament has increased compared to before.

Young people, who were previously kept away from this domain, have taken up the responsibility of serving the public with zeal and positivity. If we look at their credentials, we can be assured that these leaders are capable in the sectors they have been assigned to. Swarnim Wagle, a veteran economist, has been given the responsibility of lifting the economy to greater heights.

The 100-point agenda of the incumbent government looks promising, and if it is properly implemented, we may witness a significant transformation. The investigation of assets belonging to high-profile individuals could help bring an end to impunity and corruption. Every single agenda is measured and realistic, and even if half of them are implemented, Nepali citizens may feel at ease in their daily lives.

However, now that there is high hope surrounding the Shah government, the public must remain vigilant and continue to question RSP so that it does not lose its track. With a diverse group of MPs bringing unique expertise to the table, people believe this could be the best team yet—but for that belief to hold, the results must be tangible.

What Nepal Wants From India



LB Thapa

According to media reports, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has invited Nepali Prime Minister Balendra Shah. However, it is understood that Prime Minister Balendra Shah has made it clear that he does not wish to visit India merely as a formality. He wants his visit to be both meaningful and fruitful. Many political experts believe that PM Balendra Shah's trip to India could prove crucial for both nations. Soon after taking oath as the 43rd Prime Minister of Nepal, he set out to transform the country.

He has cracked down on corruption, jailed corrupt officials, and even put powerful leaders like KP Sharma Oli and Ramesh Lekhak behind bars. The anti-corruption campaign continues, with many more dishonest leaders facing imprisonment. Balendra Shah's firm stance against corruption has earned him admiration, even from former opponents. Since he became Prime Minister, Nepalis living abroad have begun to feel hopeful that things will finally improve. In this context, many people in both Nepal and India are optimistic that bilateral relations will reach new heights.

Strategic opportunity

Recently, PM Shah made a striking comment: "I will not come to India just to get my photo taken." Political analysts are now busy interpreting the meaning behind this statement.

So, what exactly does PM Shah want from India? And what is India prepared to offer?

Traditionally, every new Prime Minister of Nepal has visited India first. This is seen as a signal of a fresh start in bilateral ties. However, Balendra Shah wants to use this tradition not as a mere formality, but as a strategic opportunity for his country. He seeks tangible outcomes from the visit that directly benefit the Nepali people. And this is where the real story begins.

The biggest issue is aviation. Nepal has long been demanding a western air entry point from India. International airports in Bhairahawa and Pokhara are ready, but without proper air routes, they remain underutilised. This time, PM Balendra Shah wants more than promises—he wants written assurances, visible progress, and ground-level implementation. He wants Nepal's international connectivity to strengthen as part of its development. This demand could become the biggest test for India.

On the other hand, India is also stepping up. It has accelerated plans to strengthen its infrastructure up to the Nepal border. The upcoming four-lane highway from Bara Banki to Behrahi is not just a road—it is a project to accelerate India-Nepal relations and facilitate trade with Nepal. Most importantly, connectivity between the two countries will become far stronger than before. So, while PM Shah is setting his terms, India is also strengthening ties in its own way, and Nepal stands to benefit from these stronger relationships.

> This time, PM Balendra Shah wants more than promises—he wants written assurances, visible progress, and ground-level implementation.

Until now, Nepali politics has followed a pattern—tilting sometimes toward India, sometimes balancing with China. But PM Shah appears to be rising above this old game. He has already met with ambassadors from 17 countries simultaneously, sending a clear signal that Nepal no longer wants to be boxed into a camp to its own detriment. He wants a balanced, neutral approach —improving relations with neighbours and friendly nations.

PM Shah does not want to limit Nepal's foreign policy to just India and China. He has already made plans to give equal importance to Gulf countries, Japan, and the United States. The reason is clear: a large population of Nepalis works in these nations, and their contributions to the economy help strengthen Nepal. Thus, Balendra's focus is not just diplomacy but also economic growth and diaspora connections.

Foreign policy

The biggest question now is: will India be his first stop? Or will he turn to another country, making his priorities clear? This decision will not be just a visit—it will set the agenda for Balendra Shah's new Nepal and define his foreign policy. India is watching closely. If PM Shah returns with meaningful bilateral agreements, it will not only strengthen ties between the two nations but also fill them with new energy. If talks do not go as hoped, countries like China will not hesitate to seize the opportunity. That is where the situation becomes even more complicated. Because this is not merely a trip — it is a strategic move on a global level, where every step must be carefully considered. Behind every statement is a larger message, and every decision will have an impact in the days to come.

Now, all eyes are on whether PM Shah, with his tough stance, will succeed in achieving what he wants from India, and what new message of diplomacy he will give to his new Nepal. For now, one thing is certain: a new chapter is about to be added to Nepal-India relations. And the one writing this chapter is Balendra Shah, whose every move is being watched carefully by the world.

(Thapa is a Pokhara-based writer and a regular contributor to The Rising Nepal. writerlbthapa@gmail.com)

The Global AI Threat Has Arrived



S. Alex Yang



Angela Huyue Zhang

Anthropic's new AI model, Claude Mythos Preview, has alarmed business leaders and policymakers around the world because of its extraordinary ability to find and exploit vulnerabilities in major operating systems and web browsers. Even the Trump administration, which has feuded with Anthropic in recent months over certain military uses of its models, now seems keen to work with the company to protect critical government infrastructure from cyberattacks.

Some in the Trump administration have welcomed this development, with Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent reportedly hailing Mythos as a breakthrough that could help the United States maintain its lead over China in the AI race. But Americans should not confuse being first with being safe. AI tools like Mythos will make the entire world more vulnerable to disruption, and even the country that builds the most advanced model will not be immune to the risks it creates.

Upper hand

The reason is simple: there is a stark asymmetry between attack and defense, as America's war with Iran over the past month and a half has demonstrated. While the US remains unrivalled in terms of conventional military power, Iran has shown that even a badly outmatched adversary can inflict severe pain and gain the upper hand.

For starters, there is asymmetry in scope. In the Gulf, the US and its allies must protect a huge swath of infrastructure, from military bases and ports to oil and gas fields, data centres, and communication networks. But Iran, instead of launching a full-scale attack on all these targets, needs only to identify one key vulnerability: in this case, the Strait of Hormuz. By taking control of the Strait and restricting the flow of fossil fuels, fertilizer, and aluminum, Iran has disrupted the entire global economy.

The costs of these actions are also asymmetric. Iran can launch attacks using cheap, mass-produced drones, whereas America and the Gulf states have been intercepting them with multi-million-dollar missiles, draining their inventories. Moreover, with occasional and unpredictable strikes, Iran can generate enough fear and uncertainty for insurers to decline coverage for shipping through the Strait.

Last but not least, there is the issue of asymmetric effects. In today's highly interconnected world, harming an adversary no longer requires directly attacking it. By striking its Gulf neighbours, closing shipping lanes, and reducing energy flows, Iran has disrupted supply chains and rattled financial markets, pushing US President Donald Trump toward a ceasefire.

The same dynamics are now playing out in cybersecurity. A hacker needs to identify only a single flaw, and Mythos, as powerful as it may be, most likely cannot identify every bug in every system. Given the recent pace of AI progress, it is reasonable to expect Mythos-like capabilities to proliferate widely and rapidly. Although models from adversary countries will be inferior, they may still identify some flaws that Mythos misses, leaving targeted systems vulnerable.

> If a cyberattack strikes financial markets or critical infrastructure in a major country, the damage will not remain confined there.

Another asymmetry may be the most decisive one: the human factor. An AI-enabled attack can be launched instantly, opportunistically, and at scale. An effective institutional response cannot.

Finding a vulnerability is only the first step. Fixing it requires not only tremendous time and resources, but also human oversight and approval. Corporate budgets are allocated quarterly or annually. Security teams have limited capacity. Decades of corporate efforts at digital transformation have shown that systematically updating enterprise software, much of it built on legacy systems, can take months or even years. The effort is not only technical but also organisational.

So far, access to Mythos has been limited to a small group of trusted US companies and organizations that build or maintain critical software infrastructure. But it would be naive to think that America can fully safeguard its national-security interests by securing only its own firms—the Iran war has exposed the folly of ignoring the reality of a global economy. A disruption in one region can quickly wreak havoc across the world. If a cyberattack strikes financial markets or critical infrastructure in a major country, the damage will not remain confined there.

Cyberattack

Imagine a major cyberattack that paralyses China's energy system and causes large-scale manufacturing shutdowns. The impact would be similar to that of COVID-19 lockdowns, which shut down Chinese factories for weeks. The rest of the world would feel the shock almost immediately: shortages of medicines and key industrial inputs, much like the early days of the pandemic. Prices would skyrocket, and the fear of inflation would weigh heavily on political leaders.

We don't need to wait for the "singularity"—a science-fiction scenario in which AI surpasses human intelligence—to worry about AI's threat to global economic security. That threat is already here, which is why the right response to Mythos is not triumphalism but diplomacy. The possibility of mutual assured economic disruption should create a strong incentive for both the US and China to come to the negotiating table. When Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping meet in May, this issue should be at the top of their agenda.

(Yang is Professor of Management Science and Operations at London Business School, and Zhang is Professor of Law at the University of Southern California.)
-Project Syndicate

50 YEARS AGO

THE RISING NEPAL

April 23, 1976

Wheat Price Fixed At Rs. 50 Per Maund

Kathmandu, April 22: His Majesty's Government has fixed the price of wheat at Rs. 50 per maund, reports RSS.

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READER'S MAIL

Safeguard Consumers From Overpricing



Through the column of your esteemed newspaper, I would like to draw the attention of the concerned authorities and readers to the growing issue of overpricing in online businesses.

In today's digitalised society, online shopping has made life considerably more convenient. With just a few messages, we receive our purchases at our doorsteps. However, this convenience should not be misused by business owners to impose unnecessarily high price margins.

It is observed that almost every online business today works on the "fixed rate" principle, leaving little to no room for price flexibility. In some cases, the same products are much more expensive online than in physical stores. Additionally, delivery charges are charged separately, which adds more to the overall cost.

Hence, although convenient, online shopping is becoming less affordable. Consumers are often left with limited options and are compelled to accept these inflated prices, while these business owners continue to benefit from this lack of flexibility.

Thus, I request the concerned authorities to pay attention to the issue and take necessary action. Overpricing and a lack of price flexibility should not become a standard practice. Relevant government agencies should monitor these online businesses and regulate their pricing policies to ensure fairness and protect consumer interests.

Rihana Bhattarai
Purano Thimi, Bhaktapur

TAILPIECE

The teacher noticed that Johnny had been daydreaming for a long time. She decided to get his attention." Johnny," she said, "If the world is 25,000 miles around and eggs are sixty cents a dozen, how old am I? "Thirty-four," Johnny answered unhesitatingly.

The teacher replied, "Well, that's not far from my actual age. Tell me... how did you guess?"

Oh, there's nothing to it," Johnny said. "My big sister is seventeen, and she's only half-crazy."

Uncertainty shrouds US-Iran talks

AP
Islamabad, Apr. 22



PHOTO: AP

A man rides his motorbike that is adorned with an Iranian national flag, in southern Tehran, Iran.

The next steps to resume U.S.-Iran talks remained unclear Wednesday after U.S. President Donald Trump announced the U.S. was extending its ceasefire in the war at Pakistan's request while awaiting a "unified proposal" from Tehran.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei acknowledged the ceasefire extension in comments reported Wednesday by Iranian state television, though did not specifically say Tehran was ready to attend a new round of talks with the United States in Islamabad.

Both countries have warned they were prepared to resume fighting if a deal isn't reached.

Trump said Tuesday night in a social media post that "Iran doesn't want the Strait of Hormuz closed, they want it open" so they can sell their crude oil, after earlier saying that the U.S. military would maintain its blockade of Iranian ports.

Meanwhile, Israel and the Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah in Lebanon traded some fire Tuesday, despite expected talks in Washington this week after a 10-day ceasefire went into effect last Friday.

Since the war started, fighting has killed at least 3,375 people in Iran and more than 2,290 in Lebanon. Additionally, 23 people have died in Israel and more than a dozen in Gulf Arab states. Fifteen Israeli soldiers in Lebanon and 13 U.S. service members throughout the region have been killed.

The European Union's top energy official is warning that the massive energy crisis sparked by the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran is set to hit prices for months, even years, to come.

EU Energy Commissioner Dan Jørgensen said Wednesday that "this is not a short-term, small increase in prices. This is a crisis that is probably as serious as the 1973 and the 2022 crises combined."

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei acknowledged the ceasefire extension in comments reported Wednesday by Iranian state television.

Baghaei did not specifically say Tehran was ready to attend a new round of talks with the United States in Islamabad.

"Diplomacy is a tool for securing national interests and security, and whenever we reach the conclusion that the necessary and reasonable conditions exist to use this tool to achieve national interests and to consolidate the achievements of the Iranian nation in thwarting the enemies' malicious objectives, we will take action," he reportedly said.

2 of 8 Iranian women whose release Donald Trump called for are already out on bail, rights center says

The Oslo-based Iran Human Rights said an emergency doctor, Golnar Naraqi, and an Iranian citizen of the Bahai faith, Venus Hossein Nejad, have been out on bail since late March.

The two women were arrested separately during the January anti-government protests. The protests across Iran were met with a bloody crackdown that left thousands killed and arrested.

In a social media post Tuesday, U.S. President Donald Trump reposted a photo of six women and two teen girls that a conservative activist said are facing prosecution by the Iranian government.

Iran's judiciary swiftly responded, saying some of the women have already been released without naming them. It said none of them face the death sentence. Internet restrictions have limited the flow of information out of Iran.

Rights groups say at least two of the other women still in detention are facing charges that carry the death sentence. There have been multiple executions during the war against alleged spies and protesters, mostly accused of links to Israel. Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard has attacked a third ship Wednesday in the Strait of Hormuz, semiofficial Iranian news agencies reported.

Maoist landmine haunts India

AFP
Lankāpalli (India), Apr. 22

India's blood-soaked six-decade Maoist insurgency may be over, but a lethal legacy remains: hundreds of crude landmines planted by the rebels along forest tracks.

For decades, Maoist fighters seeded vast stretches of central India's forests with pressure-operated improvised explosive devices (IEDs), often buried just beneath dirt roads or hidden along jungle footpaths.

Rudimentary in design -- gelatin, ball bearings and metal fragments packed into a steel lunch box -- they were nonetheless devastatingly effective, say those who fought the insurgency. The Maoists controlled nearly a third of the country at the rebellion's peak in the mid-2000s, saying they were fighting for the rights of marginalised indigenous people in forest regions.

But India stepped up its campaign against the last remnants of the rebellion in recent years, and declared last month that the country was free of the Maoist insurgency. "You ask a soldier what he is afraid of the most -- it is not bullets, but these pressure IEDs, because you never knew when you step on one," said 23-year-old Kishan Hapka of the District Reserve Guards, the police's main strike force against the Maoists.

"Every step you take in the jungle, you have to be mindful." Hapka's left leg was torn off in 2024 when he stepped on a mine. "I would still say I was lucky," he said. "Three other soldiers were killed in that same operation." Hapka now walks with a prosthetic leg, restricted to administrative work.

IEDs have killed nearly 500 soldiers in the last 25 years in the former Maoist stronghold of Bastar in Chhattisgarh state, according to police data. They have injured a thousand more. The pressure mines were designed to target security forces.

But they also killed and maimed the local tribal residents whom the Maoists claimed to have been fighting for, killing more than 150 of them and hurting more than 250 others. Tama Jogi is one of them. The 65-year-old was foraging in the forest last summer, when she stepped on one. Her right leg was shattered.

"My ears went numb and I lost consciousness," she told AFP. "The next thing I remember is I was in the hospital and they were cleaning my wounds." Doctors had to amputate her other leg too to save her life, leaving her entirely immobile. The government only pays for medical care for soldiers who are hurt in the line of duty.

Police arrested her son days later, saying he was a Maoist insurgent -- a charge she denies. He is still in prison. "I don't know who to blame anymore," said Jogi, who must now crawl to the bathroom.

Officials in Chhattisgarh state say stray landmines are everywhere -- and continue to be a "big problem". "The IED can be buried beside a pond, beside a road, beside a river – anywhere it could be," said Vijay Sharma, deputy chief minister of the state.

"Every day, dozens are being recovered." In the remote forest village of Lankapalli, where a waterfall cascaded even in the dry heat of Bastar, 35-year-old Raju Modiyam found out the hard way.

Crew member's body found after typhoon

AP
Hagatna, Apr. 22

Authorities have found the body of one of the six missing crew members from a cargo ship that overturned near the Northern Mariana Islands during a typhoon.

U.S. Air Force divers "used an underwater remotely operated drone to search the interior of the vessel" and recovered the body Tuesday, the U.S. Coast Guard said in a news release.

Additional divers from the Japan Coast Guard further examined the ship. They did not find any additional crew members, the U.S. Coast Guard said.

"Coast Guard aircrews continue to search for the five missing crewmen and an orange 12-person life raft in the vicinity of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," the news release said.

The crew of the ship, called the Mariana, notified the U.S. Coast Guard on April 15 that the 145-foot (44-meter) U.S.-registered vessel lost its starboard engine during Super Typhoon Sinlaku and needed assistance. The guard said it lost contact with the ship the next day.

"Our hearts are with the families of the Mariana crew members and the communities impacted by this tragic incident," Cmdr. Preston Hieb, search and rescue mission coordinator, Coast Guard Oceania District, said in a statement.

"We continue to search in close coordination with our partners, using all available resources to support the ongoing response."

Heavy wind hindered initial search efforts, but the overturned ship was eventually spotted Saturday about 40 miles (64 kilometers) northeast of Pagan, one of the islands that make up the Northern Marianas, which is a U.S. territory.

The U.S. Coast Guard said Monday that boats and divers had been deployed and would try to use an underwater drone to search the overturned ship.

Debris including a partially submerged inflatable life raft was spotted about 110 miles (177 kilometers) from the ship. Super Typhoon Sinlaku battered the Northern Mariana Islands, causing wind damage and flooding.

US monks bring peace to Sri Lanka

AFP
Colombo, Apr. 22



Saffron-robed Buddhist monks began a week-long peace walk across Sri Lanka on Wednesday, accompanied by a rescued stray dog that has become a celebrity in its own right.

Led by Vietnamese monk Pannakara, the group of 13 launched their march at dawn from a historic Buddhist temple in Dambulla, about 160 kilometres (100 miles) north of the capital Colombo. The monks shot to international fame during a longer 108-day walk of 3,700 kilometres (2,300 miles) from Texas to Washington, DC, travelling through freezing temperatures and along ice-covered roads.

In sharp contrast, they are now walking barefoot on Sri Lanka's roads at the hottest time of the year, when temperatures can reach 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit). Devotees poured water on the streets, while some laid green banana leaves and flowers for the monks to walk on to escape the scorching heat. Others were seen sprinkling water to cool them.

The group, promoting "peace for all beings, including animals", was expected to reach the capital on April 28, where they will be received by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, organisers told AFP. Guarded by elite army commandos, their mascot Aloka -- a stray dog rescued in India -- walked on a leash, drawing bows and clasped hands from devotees lining the route.

Aloka had accompanied the monks in their peace walk in the United States. The dog followed the monks in India and remained with them even after being hit by a car. Aloka later accompanied the monks on their US journey, drawing global attention and donations that helped fund its travels.

"The cost of flying Aloka to Colombo from Texas was ten times that of an ordinary passenger taking the same route," a Sri Lankan monk handling local arrangements said. Two army commandos were seen walking on either side of Aloka at the head of the quick-paced procession. Sri Lanka's police kennels department was mobilised to ensure that local street dogs did not attack Aloka, who was led on a leash held by an army commando. The peace walk's Facebook page has more than three million followers. A live stream of their Sri Lanka walk drew over 51,000 views in the first five hours.

PRISM

A bear in a tree halts traffic

New York: Multiple roads were closed Tuesday in Albany, N.Y., when a black bear climbed a tree and spent hours lounging on a branch.

The Albany Police Department said Second Avenue was closed between Hoffman Avenue and Frisbie Avenue, while Garden Street was closed at Raymo Street due to the bruin's presence in the area.

The beat spent several hours on the branch until being shot with a tranquilizer dart and caught in a net held below the tree. The roads were reopened and the bear was turned over to the New York Department of Environmental Conservation.

Electric wheelchair explosion caught on camera

Florida: A Florida woman's home security camera was recording when an electric wheelchair she bought from a thrift store exploded in her driveway.

Hollywood Fire Rescue shared a video on social media showing homeowner Alexandra Anaya rushing away from the chair seconds before it detonated in her driveway.

Anaya said she had bought the Zinger power wheelchair from a thrift store for a family member and had been charging its lithium battery in her hallway with a non-manufactuer charger when she heard it starting to click.

She said the clicking sound and the hot temperature of the battery raised her concern, so she did a quick Google search that advised her to move the chair outside. "It said, 'Imminent danger, put it on cement or somewhere where other things won't catch on fire,'" Anaya told WTVJ-TV.

The video shows Anaya place the chair on her driveway and rush away just before it exploded. She said pieces of the chair hit her in the back as she ran away. "I heard it hiss first before it exploded and that's why I turned to run," Anaya said.

Agencies

TODAY IN HISTORY

1909 – In Portugal, a magnitude 6.0 earthquake strikes near Lisbon, killing at least 60 people and injuring 75.
1918 – World War I: The British Royal Navy makes a raid in an attempt to neutralise the Belgian port of Bruges-Zeebrugge.
1919 – The Estonian Constituent Assembly is held in Estonia, which marks the birth of the Estonian Parliament, the Riigikogu.[8]
1927 – Cardiff City defeat Arsenal in the FA Cup Final, the only time it has been won by a team not based in England.
1935 – The Polish Constitution of 1935 is adopted.
1940 – The Rhythm Club fire at a dance hall in Natchez, Mississippi, kills 198 people.
1941 – World War II: The Greek government and King George II evacuate Athens before the invading Wehrmacht.
1942 – World War II: Baedeker Blitz: German bombers hit Exeter, Bath and York in retaliation for the British raid on Lübeck.

Defiant Nile island in Sudan's war

AFP
Khartoum, Apr. 22



PHOTO: AFP

Local residents on Tuti Island, where the Blue and White Niles meet in the Sudanese capital, enjoy fishing in the evening.

For nearly two years, Al-Shubbak watched through ancient grey eyes as Tuti, the crescent-shaped island in the heart of the Sudanese capital she calls home, emptied of its inhabitants under a punishing paramilitary siege.

She refused to leave. "I didn't even move for the English when they colonised us," she told AFP through a toothless smile, a year after the army broke the siege, and 70 after the British occupation of Khartoum ended.

She recited an old battle cry that her daughter, who doesn't know exactly how old her mother is, repeated: "Our fathers resisted the occupiers with stones. Though they met them with gunfire, they still could not take Tuti the green."

Located where the White Nile, flowing from Uganda, meets the Blue Nile from Ethiopia, Tuti is across the river from where war first broke out in April 2023, between Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

In recent months, many residents have returned home to the island, besieged from June 2023 until March 2025, when the army recaptured the capital. Shops have reopened and farmers have come back to their land, which historically supplied much of Khartoum's fresh produce from its fruit orchards and vegetable fields.

On a Friday afternoon, villagers flocked to the old red-brick mosque, where a rusted sign reads "established 1480". In times past, crowds would gather in plastic chairs at the edge of the island, sipping tea with their feet in the Nile, the very first spot where it becomes one river flowing north to Egypt.

Now, authorities say that same spot is a minefield, and the islanders are scarred by their days living in an open-air prison. "Nothing could get in or out without the RSF saying so," said 34-year old day labourer Salaheldin Abdelqader, who escaped seven months into the siege and returned last year.

To get anything in -- food, medicine, fuel to power water pumps -- islanders had to pay off RSF fighters who controlled the only bridge. And they could only leave after forking out a toll for safe passage. For Abdelqader, that was 350,000 Sudanese pounds (now around $90), more than double a doctor's monthly salary.

Sheikh Mohamed Eid, a local elder who sounded the alarm over Tuti's plight on social media, said that during the war residents were "forced to leave at gunpoint" and pay to do so "with our own money".

In accordance with government media regulations, AFP was accompanied by an army officer, who stepped out of earshot during interviews. A stout man with a head wrap piled high on his brow, Eid spoke at length of the people's connection to their island, from which former president Omar al-Bashir's government repeatedly tried to relocate them to build luxury investments.

"We're like fish in the water, we can't survive outside Tuti," he told AFP in his home, the sky visible through a hole in the roof where an artillery shell tore through. After two months using donations to pay the RSF double or triple to get goods onto the island so people wouldn't starve, Eid was detained by the paramilitaries.

Thrown into one notorious jail after another, he watched other incarcerated islanders die, one by one, before his release nine months later. The RSF's siege slowly choked the life out of Tuti. Eventually, of an estimated 30,000 people, only Shubbak's family remained, caring for the bedridden matriarch.

"We stayed to guard our soil," her daughter Najat al-Nour, a Quran professor in her fifties who lifted her chin high to admonish those who left. "A mistake," she snapped.

But Nosayba Saad had no choice. She and her family endured a year and a half of RSF rule, during which fighters repeatedly entered people's homes, demanding gold and phones and accusing them of spying for the army.

When she tried to talk to the fighters, "they told me to keep quiet or they'd empty their guns at me," she said. At night, she would hear them in her neighbours' empty homes, firing seemingly at nothing. "A lot of people died from stray bullets," she said.

By the time her family paid to leave in October 2024, the RSF had taken to stealing food and cash as well. She didn't think she would see her home again. "Now our street is almost full, and more people are on their way," she said with an incredulous laugh, a bashful smile lighting up her face.

But her joy was bittersweet. Two of her uncles are missing and presumed dead, while every family on the island has lost someone. "Still, being together with our people again, coming home is such a blessing," she said, as the smell of incense wafted through her house, out towards jasmine trees in bloom.

In the fields beyond, a squash farmer trudged home, a sack slung over his shoulder heavy with his harvest. To the south loomed the ruins of Khartoum, bombed out skyscrapers a constant reminder of the terror now past. But to the west, where the setting sun made the Nile glow orange, the island seemed as it once was.



PHOTO: RSS

A pair of firewood-stacks preserved by local people at Khandbari Municipality-4 in Sankhuwasabha district. Firewood is still one of the main sources of energy for cooking in the district.

'Ensure dignified use of diplomatic passports'

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22



Speaker Dol Prasad Aryal held a meeting with chief whips, whips and representatives from all parties to reach a consensus that adherence to current legal provisions is essential to ensure the dignified and systematic use of diplomatic passports.

The meeting, which was held at Singha Durbar on Wednesday, agreed to strictly enforce existing laws governing the recommendation and use of diplomatic passports, amid growing concern over past misuse.

According to Federal Parliament Secretariat spokesperson Ekram Giri, Speaker Aryal stressed that any decisions related to passports must remain within the boundaries of existing law. He noted that amendments could be pursued in consultation with stakeholders and experts, if necessary, with the aim of promoting more responsible usage.

During the meeting, lawmakers acknowledged that the previous misuse of diplomatic passports had damaged the country's international reputation, prompting calls for tighter regulation. There was broad agreement on the need for stricter oversight, particularly concerning individuals travelling as part of official delegations.

Lawmakers also highlighted full compliance with the current legal framework and the importance of capacity building for lawmakers alongside the provision of facilities.

They also called for a review of existing policies, arguing that passport misuse had brought disrepute to the nation. MPs urged stricter controls, particularly to prevent misuse by those accompanying high-level delegations.

Giri also informed that the participants agreed that further study is required to refine the scope of diplomatic passport use and the nomination process, including examining international practices. While immediate action will focus on enforcing existing laws, the meeting concluded that long-term reforms and possible legislative amendments will be pursued after broader consultation.

The parties collectively committed to making the use of diplomatic passports more transparent, responsible and consistent with national interests.

Minister Pokharel monitors BPKIHS

BY NISHA RAI
Dharan, Apr. 22

Minister for Education, Science and Technology Sasmit Pokharel has monitored B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Dharan on Wednesday.

During the monitoring, the officials of the institute informed about the educational policy, research activities and current challenges in a discussion programme organized at the institute.

Minister Pokharel received an update from the Vice-Chancellor of the institute, Prof. Dr. Bikam Prasad Shrestha.

He highlighted the challenges facing the institute due to a decline in student enrollment, which is a consequence of the Medical Education Commission Act. Additionally, he pointed out the financial difficulties caused by delayed insurance payments from the government.

During the programme, the Vice-Chancellor of the institute, Prof. Dr. Shrestha, handed over the annual report for the fiscal year 2081/082 to Education Minister Pokharel.

Expressing interest in the issues presented during the discussion, Minister Pokharel said that the government is serious about solving the problems of the institute.

He expressed his commitment to take necessary initiatives to resolve the policy and financial complications.

Rastriya Swatantra Party MP Shrijana Shrestha, Education Secretary Chudamani Poudel, and other local representatives also attended the monitoring programme.

Similarly, the institute's Rector Prof. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Sharma, Registrar Prof. Dr. Surya Prasad Sangraula, Hospital Director Dr. Jagat Narayan Prasad, Academic Dean Prof. Dr. Anup Ghimire, Assistant Examination Dean Dr. Dhankeshar Badka, Metron Kala Thapa, and Deputy Metron Bishnumaya Tamang also attended the discussion programme.

Meanwhile, Minister Pokharel also monitored the Eastern Engineering Campus in Dharan. During the monitoring, Campus Chief Kajiman Karki urged Minister Pokharel to manage the physical infrastructure of the campus, modern equipment in the lab, and other problems of the campus, including the need for a budget for the expansion of student facilities.

Minister Gurung resigns just after...

Following his resignation, Gurung also questioned sections of the media, saying details of where some journalists held "sweet shares" would emerge gradually, and that those seeking an ideal state must also demonstrate sacrifice and moral courage.

Questions had been raised after it emerged that Gurung had a business partnership with controversial businessman Dipak Bhatta, who was arrested over money laundering charges. Reports also showed that Gurung had purchased shares worth Rs. 5 million following the Gen Z movement.

The revelations had led to mounting pressure on him from within and outside the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), while opposition parties had also demanded his resignation.

Before resignation, Minister Gurung visited Prime Minister Balendra Shah at the Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers on Wednesday afternoon. On Tuesday, Minister Gurung also held separate meeting with his party President Rabi Lamichhane.

Gokyo Declaration 2026 calls...

On environmental protection, the declaration urges a review of existing laws and the formulation of new policies to prioritise environmental justice and strengthen legal responses to climate challenges.

The conference drew attention to the increasing risks in the Khumbu region, particularly around Gokyo Lake and the Ngozumpa Glacier. Participants called for detailed risk mapping to address the threat of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) and stressed the importance of early warning systems, disaster preparedness and resilient infrastructure.

The declaration also highlighted the role of climate journalism in Nepal. Based on community dialogues, expert consultations and household surveys conducted in Khumjung, participants urged all levels of government to address the ongoing energy crisis with immediate plans.

They stressed the need for gender-sensitive and environmentally friendly energy solutions, noting that women, children, persons with disabilities and marginalised communities are disproportionately affected.

The declaration was endorsed by participants including Balkrishna Basnet, founder member of SathSathai, who said the conference helped bring forward firsthand understanding of climate impacts in the region. Experts at the event warned that many glaciers in the Gokyo area are at risk, calling for urgent government attention.

According to Basnet, the Gokyo Declaration reflected growing concern among stakeholders and experts over the fragile state of the Himalayan environment and the need for coordinated, inclusive and immediate action.

Loudspeakers cause noise pollution

BY SUDHA DEV
Bardaha (Saptari), Apr. 22

The loudspeakers that are played during the religious and wedding functions have caused noise pollution at Rajbiraj Municipality in Saptari district. Locals say that the health of the general public is beginning to suffer due to rising noise levels.

The Municipality witnessed various religious programmes, including Bhagwat Purana and Ashtayam.

Although the settlement is located some distance from Dihbar Than, locals have complained that they didn't have a sound sleep for the entire 15-day period.

While no major incidents have been reported due to the continuous noise, residents say it has affected their health. Durgi Devi Ram, a local, said that women and senior citizens have been experiencing an increase in heart beat and difficulty in breathing.

She said, "When the sound box stops playing song and music, then only the people go to the besd. But there is no sign that it noise will recede."



PHOTO: SUDHA DEV

A sound system being used at a wedding programme.

Local resident Ramesh Yadav said that loudspeakers and sound boxes have become a major attraction at the wedding ceremonies in Madhesh, forcing residents to endure noise pollution almost everywhere.

Pramod Yadav, a local health worker, said that the trend of playing loud music through large sound systems during weddings, cultural programmes, Bhagwat Mahapuran, Ramayana recitations, Ashtayam, and other events is directly affecting the health of children, senior citizens, and people with chronic illnesses.

He said that the acceptable sound level for the general public ranges between 45 and 60 decibels (dB). Exposure to noise above 85 dB for four continuous hours can increase mental stress, raise heart rate, cause physical discomfort, and pose serious risks, especially for people with high blood pressure.

Tubraj Pokharel, Chief District Officer of Saptari, said that although stakeholders and political parties in the district have agreed to limit such activities, the decisions have not been effectively implemented.

He added that the growing trend of using large sound systems and DJs at religious events, pujas, weddings, and social functions while simultaneously complaining about others' noise highlights a lack of personal responsibility. He stressed the need to raise social awareness against noise pollution.

Local govts refuse decision regarding academic session

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

Many local governments have decided not to accept the federal government's decision to operate two-day holidays and the academic session from April 28. Citing the right to operate schools lies with the local government according to the constitution, they have decided not to accept the central government's decision. The constitution has given the local government the right to make all decisions related to education up to grade 12.

According to Schedule-8 of the constitution, basic and secondary education falls under the sole authority of the local government.

Based on this, some local governments have decided to operate schools from April 25, Friday. Issuing a notice, Thuliveri Municipality and Mudkechula Rural Municipality in Dolpa have decided to operate new classes on Sunday. Thuliveri Municipality has decided to conduct an enrollment campaign from April 21 to 14 and start classes from April 25.

Kanaksundari Rural Municipality of Jumla has also stated that teaching and learning will be conducted in schools on Sundays. Similarly, Dhangadhi Sub-metropolitan City has conducted a student enrollment campaign since April 17.

Communists mark founding...

Altogether, six prime ministers came from communist parties but they failed to act in the spirit of their original missions. Factional feud, personality cult, arrogance, rent-seeking attitude and suppression of inner-party democracy have eventually led to their downfall.

Once the representatives of peasants and workers, the communist leaders themselves evolved into a new class, betraying their own commitment to the masses. They frittered away the huge mandate the people handed to them following the promulgation of the new constitution. In fact, the people trusted them to execute the statute that envisaged a socialism-oriented economy.

Today, the left movement is at a crossroads. The correction is the only way to breathe new life into it. This is a time for sober reflection. The RSP victory demonstrated that the youths must be in the driving seat of parties as well as the government. Will the communists take their cue from the message of the election and change themselves accordingly?

Invitation for Bids

Nepal Re-insurance Company Limited (Nepal Re)
Thapathali, Kathmandu
(A Government of Nepal Undertaking)
Date of publication : 23rd April, 2026
Invitation for Bids No. : NRIC/ICB/Goods/2082/83-01

1. ***Nepal Re-insurance Company Limited*** intends to procure a modern Reinsurance Management System (RMS) to automate and streamline its treaty, facultative, claims, accounting, and regulatory reporting processes for both non-life and life reinsurance business and Bidding is open to all eligible Bidders from all countries.
2. The ***Nepal Re-insurance Company Limited*** invites ***electronic*** bids from eligible bidders for the procurement of ***Supply, Delivery, Installation, Customization, Testing and Commissioning of Reinsurance Management System*** under **International Competitive Bidding – Single Stage Two Envelope.**
3. Under the Single Stage, Two Envelope Procedure, Bidders are required to submit the bids electronically from **www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp** following the procedural guidelines of PPMO.
4. Eligible Bidders may obtain the bidding documents from the office of Nepal Re-insurance Company Limited, Thapathali, Kathmandu or download them from **www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp** or ***Website; https://nepalre.com.np/en*** . The cost of the bidding document is NPR 5,000.00 (non-refundable) and shall be deposited in the following account number;
   Name of the Bank : **Rastriya Banijya Bank Ltd.**
   Name of Office : **Nepal Re-insurance Company Limited**
   Office Account no. : **1430100002535001**
5. Pre-bid meeting shall be held at ***Nepal Re-insurance Company Limited, Thapathali, Kathmandu on 22 May, 2026 at 13:00 AM.***
6. Electronic bids must be submitted through PPMO's e-GP system **www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp** on or before ***12:00*** on ***8th June, 2026***. Bids received after this deadline will be rejected.
7. The bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at ***13:00*** on **8th June,** ***2026*** at the office of ***Nepal Re-insurance Company Limited***. Bids must be valid for a period of ***120 days*** from the date of bid opening and must be accompanied by a bid security or scanned copy of the bid security in pdf format in case of e-bid, amounting to a minimum of US$. ***6,300.00 or equivalent NPR*** which shall be valid for 30 days beyond the validity period of the bid. If due to certain reasons, bid submission date is extended, the validity of the bid and bid security shall be extended accordingly without which bid shall be rejected.
8. If the last date of purchasing and/or submission falls on a government holiday, then the next working day shall be considered as the last date. In such case the validity period of the bid and bid security shall remain the same as specified for the original last date of bid submission.
9. The Purchaser reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to Contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the Bidders.

Chinese artistes enthrall audience



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

Chinese artistes have enthralled Nepali audience with melodious songs and dazzling dances. They performed under the theme of 'voices of spring – travelling across Inner Mongolia with songs' at a function in Kathmandu Tuesday.

Clad in traditional attires, the artistes from Inner Mongolia introduced audience to culture, beauty and nature of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region through enchanting moves, colours and sounds.

They presented a variety of native dances. Some of them included 'song of praise', 'ode to the nomads', 'the handsome young man', 'fragrance across thousands of miles', 'racing horses', 'jasmine flower' and 'horse of wind'.

'Song of praise' presents a captivating fusion of Mongolian long-tune Khoomei and Mongolian dance, reflecting the spirit of new generation. In 'Ode to the nomads,' they employed rich and resonant technique of multi-phonic throat, capturing the heroic feelings of the nomadic people.

In their final performance, they crooned popular Nepali folk song – Resham Firiri (when the silk cotton tree blooms). Both Chinese and Nepali audience enjoyed the Nepali song and music.

Senior officials from the Department of Culture and Tourism of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region said that the cultural programme acted as a bridge between the two peoples and nations as they were connected by geography, culture and tourism.

ASHIRWAD CHHETRI IN 'CHIRANJIBI BHAWA'

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

The popular comedy duo Kumar Kattel 'Jigri Bro' and Deepak Prasad Acharya 'Kaku' have signed actor Ashirwad Chhetri for their new film 'Chiranjibi Bhawa.'

The production team announced on Wednesday that Aashirwad has been brought on board for a leading role in the film.

Earlier, it had already been confirmed that model and well-known influencer Prashansa Rayamajhi will make her debut in Nepali cinema through this film.

Last Sunday, the production team welcomed her to the project through a poster release.

However, the team has not disclosed whether Ashirwad will appear opposite Prashansa in the film.

The film was officially announced last Tuesday on the occasion of the Nepali New Year 2083.

It will be directed by Deepak Prasad Acharya, with the story written by Kumar Kattel. The screenplay is by Sabin Adhikari and Basanta Neupane.

The film to be made in the social drama genre, centres on the ideological differences and relationships between two generations.

According to writer Kumar Kattel, the story is based on the contemporary social context.

The film is produced by Umesh Kumar Baral, with Kumar Kattel and Shailesh Khatri serving as executive producers.

This will be Deepak Prasad Acharya's second directorial venture. His previous film Paran became the highest-grossing film of the year 2082BS.

Likewise, Kumar Kattel's 'Laj Sharanam,' which he directed and acted in, also achieved notable commercial success.

Vijay knew 'Jana Nayagan' will face trouble: SA Chandrasekhar

AGENCIES
New Dekhi, Apr. 22

The release of Vijay's Jana Nayagan was meant to be a celebratory send-off before his transition from cinema to politics. It was intended to give fans one final big-screen experience and mark his departure on a high note. Instead, the film has spent months in uncertainty, entangled in certification disputes, delayed by legal challenges, and ultimately leaked online before a single ticket could be sold.

Veteran Tamil filmmaker and Vijay's father, S. A. Chandrasekhar, who has been closely observing the situation, remarked, "If the film had been released without any hurdles, we would have been surprised."

He revealed that during the film's audio launch in Kuala Lumpur on 27 December 2025, Vijay had taken the producer aside—before a crowd of over one lakh people—and candidly addressed the risks. He reportedly pointed out that the project was being made at a time when he was stepping into politics, and questioned whether the producer fully understood the potential challenges and was prepared for them.

In an interview with Behindwoods, Chandrasekhar recalled: "Don't say you didn't expect problems. When Vijay signed the film, he told the producer during the audio launch in Malaysia, 'You are making a film at a time when I am entering politics. I hope you are aware of the hurdles the film may face. Are you alright with that?' He anticipated difficulties, which is why he said it. It was entirely expected—we are not shocked."

Addressing the issue of piracy, Chandrasekhar was forthright: "Criminal minds first attack the heart and then disrupt the financial channels."

The leak prompted strong reactions across the industry. Prominent actors including Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan, Suriya, Vijay Deverakonda, and Chiranjeevi publicly condemned the piracy and urged audiences not to engage with the illegal copies. When asked whether opposition parties might have played a role, Chandrasekhar neither dismissed nor endorsed the idea, describing such speculation as natural while refraining from fuelling it further.



Jana Nayagan is directed by H. Vinoth and produced by Venkat K. Narayana under KVN Productions. The film stars Pooja Hegde, Bobby Deol, and Mamitha Baiju, with music composed by Anirudh Ravichander. It marks Vijay's 69th film and is set to be his final project as an actor before he fully commits to his political career.

Harvey's rape retrial opens for third time

AP
New York, Apr. 22

Prosecutors once again portrayed Harvey Weinstein as a former Hollywood power broker who used his influence as a tool of sexual assault, repainting a familiar but contentious picture on Tuesday at a rape retrial nearly eight years after the former film mogul's arrest.

"This case will come down to power, to control and to manipulation," Manhattan Assistant District Attorney Candace White told jurors as opening statements began in the bellwether #MeToo case, with DA Alvin Bragg watching from the public gallery.

Weinstein's lawyer, Jacob Kaplan, countered that the case actually "is about consent, about choice and about regret," echoing Weinstein's longstanding defence that his accuser has reframed a consensual encounter as a crime.

Since Weinstein became a central figure in the #MeToo movement against sexual misconduct nearly a decade ago, he has been convicted of some sexual assault charges and acquitted of others in trials on both US coasts. A couple of



charges were ultimately dismissed.

However, the rape charge involving a 2013 encounter in a Manhattan hotel has persisted, following an overturned conviction and a subsequent jury deadlock.

The allegation is, by now, well known. But the contours of the case have shifted.

Previous trials included other accusers and charges. This trial has been narrowed to the single question of what happened between Weinstein and hairstylist and actor Jessica Mann in a hotel room one morning, although the predominantly male jury will also hear extensive details about their relationship before and after that day.

Weinstein has also changed his legal team, bringing with it a different rhetorical style and possibly new strategic decisions in his defence. For instance, his new lawyers have indicated they will limit questioning about a compensation fund for women who alleged Weinstein sexually mistreated them.

Prosecutors have also revisited the case file and are asking the judge to allow the addition of at least one new witness: a close friend of Mann's from the time of the alleged rape. If Weinstein himself testifies — which he has not done in previous trials — prosecutors may also seek to call a court officer who recently disclosed a remark he claims Weinstein made in 2020. The defence opposes both potential witnesses.

Judge Curtis Farber is also reconsidering certain aspects of the case. On Tuesday, he restricted questioning about a list of "friends of Harvey" maintained by the producer's assistants for event guest lists.

Jurors were told that Mann and another expected witness were on the list. However, unlike at last year's trial, the panel was not informed that the list consisted entirely of women.

Sangam Sahitya festival to be held

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Hetauda, Apr. 22

The Sangam Sahitya Festival 2083 is set to be held in Hetauda, organised by Sahitya Sangam Makwanpur.

The two-day festival taking place on April 24 and 25, will feature creator honours, discussions, and literary readings.

According to Sahitya Sangam Makwanpur President DB Bartaula, a multilingual poetry gathering will be held for the first time in Makwanpur under the Sangam Sahitya Festival, where 17 poets will recite poems in 17 different languages.

Under the creator honours, the Bhairav Aryal Memorial Award will be presented to Prollas Sindhuliy. Established by Dr. Dipak Aryal, the award carries a cash prize of Rs. 21,111.

Likewise, the Makwanpur Shree Award will be given to Shyam Kumar Baniya, the Bhesnath Adhikari Memorial Award to Narendra Parasara, and the Parijat Memorial Award to Sneha Sayami.

Each of these three awards carries a prize of Rs. 15,555.

Shyam Shrestha will be honoured with the Binod Sunita Subedi Literary Award, Dinesh Sharma with the Mukti Tara Literary Award, and Kalpana Poudel with the Mangala Devi Shrestha Memorial Women's Award.

The festival, which also marks the 366th regular literary evening, will include events such as the Muktak Festival, 'Man Ka Kura, Jeevan Ka Kura,' and discussions on contemporary narratives.

In the Muktak Festival, Rajbabu Pahadi, Meenu Timilsina, Nabin Darlami, Birkhe Anjan, Dipak Gautam, Hemanta Dhungel, and Amrita Lamichhane, among others, will recite their works.

Additionally, book publication honours, a ghazal gathering, and readings of works by senior writers will also take place during the festival, as informed by President Bartaula.

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ARIES: Your confidence sharpens when your choices actually reflect your worth. With Venus and Uranus meeting in your 2nd House of Resources, something around money, pricing, or self-value is ready to shift.

TAURUS: Something about you is shifting, and people can see it. With Venus and Uranus meeting in your sign, your identity, style, and presence are updating in real time. You may feel pulled to change how you look, speak, or carry yourself.

GEMINI: You are quietly shifting something that matters more than it seems. As Venus meets Uranus in your twelfth house, an old pattern is ready to release. Let the realization come and move on gently now.

CANCER: Your social world is shifting, and it's asking for something more real. With Venus and Uranus meeting in your 11th House of Friendship, plans, group dynamics, or even who you want to spend time with can change quickly.

LEO: Recognition lands when you dare to innovate. Beauty-loving Venus is in your 10th House of Career, where she conjoins breakthrough Uranus, merging grace with daring so work invites attention through a new pitch.

VIRGO: Something expands your perspective without overthinking. As Venus meets Uranus in the ninth house, a belief, plan, or direction shifts quickly. You may feel drawn toward a new place, idea, or unexpected opportunity ahead.

LIBRA: Something shifts in how you relate, and you can't ignore it. With Venus and Uranus meeting in your 8th House, a conversation around trust, money, or emotional exchange comes into focus.

SCORPIO: Something changes in your relationships, and it's immediate. With Venus and Uranus meeting in your 7th House of Partnership, a partner, dynamic, or expectation can shift without warning.

SAGITTARIUS: Your routines, workflow, and daily habits are ready for an update with Venus and Uranus meeting in your 6th house. A small shift can make things noticeably easier or more efficient.

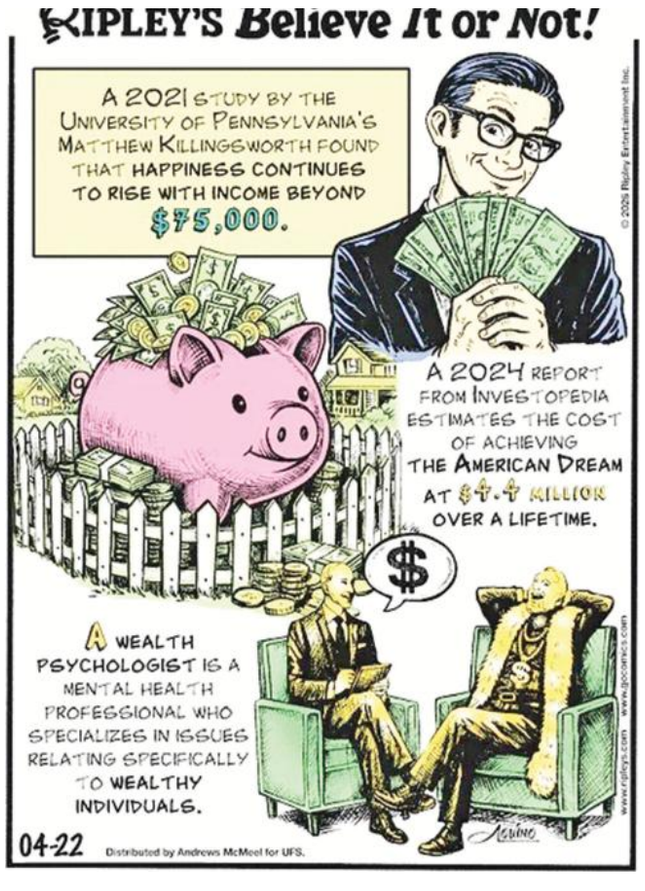
CAPRICORN: Something wants to come out of you, and it's better than you think. With Venus and Uranus meeting in your 5th House, your creativity, confidence, and self-expression get a jolt.

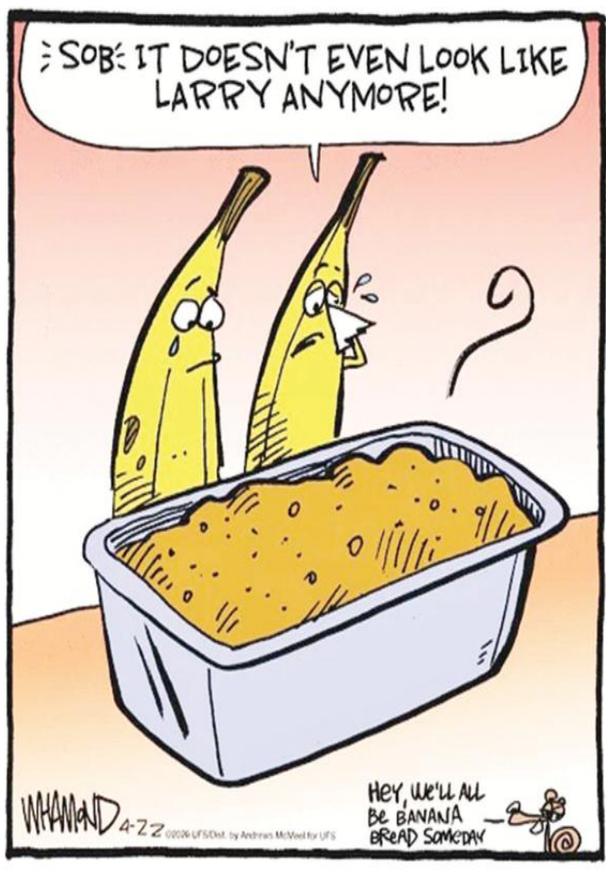
AQUARIUS: Something at home is ready to shift, and it doesn't need to be dramatic to matter. With Venus and Uranus meeting in your 4th House, your space, routines, or emotional baseline are asking for an update.

PISCES: Your communication style is ready for an upgrade, making things flow more easily. As Venus meets Uranus in your third house, how you text, speak, and coordinate shifts quickly, clearing confusion and improving understanding with others.

CARTOON

gocomics.com





ICC Women's Challenge Trophy

Nepal edge Rwanda for second win

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

Nepal secured their second victory in the ICC Women's Challenge Trophy, defeating hosts Rwanda by two wickets in Kigali on Wednesday.

After losing their opener to the USA, Nepal bounced back with a win over Italy before overcoming Rwanda at Gahanga Cricket Stadium Oval B.

Rwanda, electing to bat first, were dismissed for 88 in 19.4 overs. Nepal chased down the target in the same number of overs, finishing on 89 for eight. Openers Samjhana Khadka and Bindu Rawal laid the platform with a 51-run stand. Rawal fell lbw for 10, while Khadka top-scored with 48 off 42 balls, striking seven boundaries before departing in the 13th over with Nepal on 74.

The chase faltered as Nepal lost five wickets cheaply in pursuit of the remaining 15 runs.

Vice-captain Puja Mahato steadied the innings with 13 before being dismissed with the score on 85.

Captain Indu Barma, Kabita Joshi and Rubi Poddar managed just one apiece, Rubina Chhetri added two, and Kabita Kunwar departed without scoring. Rachana Chaudhary remained unbeaten on three.

For Rwanda, Geovanis Uwase claimed three wickets, while Giselle Ishimwe and Henriette Ishimwe took two each.Earlier, Rwanda's batting faltered despite contributions from Alice Ikuzwe (17), Merveille Uwase (15), Clarisse Uwase (13) and Rosine Irera (12).

Extras from Nepal's bowlers added 18 runs, with the only notable partnership being a 28-run stand for the third wicket between Ikuzwe and Merveille.

Chaudhary was Nepal's standout bowler, taking three wickets for 12.

Kunwar and Mahato picked up two apiece, while Manisha Upadhayay and Riya Sharma chipped in with one each.

Nepal next face Vanuatu on 24 April, followed by fixtures against the USA, Rwanda, Vanuatu and Italy on 26, 28, 30 April and 1 May respectively.



PHOTO: CAN

Nepali women cricket team celebrating the win over host Rwanda during the ICC Women's Challegne Trophy match in Kigali, Wednesday.

Mbappe on the mark as Madrid sink Alaves



PHOTO: AP

Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe, left, and Alaves' Nahuel Tenaglia fight for the ball during a La Liga soccer match against Alaves in Madrid.

AFP
Madrid, Apr. 22

Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Junior scored as Real Madrid beat Alaves 2-1 on Tuesday to cling on to their slim hopes of catching Barcelona in La Liga.

Mbappe struck his league-leading 24th goal, but first since early February, with a deflected shot on the half hour at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Vinicius lashed in a second from distance early in the second half, which proved crucial as Alaves pulled a goal back in stoppage time through Toni Martinez.

The victory ended a two-match winless run in La Liga for Madrid and moved them back to within six points of leaders Barcelona, who host Celta Vigo on Wednesday.

"We have six matches coming up, the next one in three days. The aim is to win those matches – that's the goal we've set ourselves as a team," said Madrid coach Alvaro Arbeloa, whose position is under increasing scrutiny.

"I don't care much about what's at stake for me personally. What matters to me is what's at stake for Real Madrid."

Madrid are staring down the barrel of a second consecutive season without a major trophy following last week's Champions League quarter-final exit at the hands of Bayern Munich.

Mbappe scored in both legs of that 6-4 aggregate defeat but a barren patch in La Liga, in part because of a knee injury, coincided with arch-rivals Barcelona streaking clear at the top.

Madrid faced early pressure from relegation-threatened Alaves, who were unbeaten in four matches.

Angel Perez broke in behind the home defence before strangely opting to pass instead of shooting with just Andriy Lunin blocking his path to goal. Martinez then tested the Real 'keeper after finding a pocket of space.

Mbappe put Madrid ahead when his effort from just outside the box clipped a defender and wrong-footed Antonio Sivera.

The France captain then had an attempt beaten away by Sivera and Eder Militao clipped the crossbar, injuring himself in the process and having to go off before the break.

Martinez nearly levelled for Alaves when he poked a cross against the post, with his follow-up strike clawed out by Lunin.

Vinicius hammered in from 25 yards to give Madrid breathing space, and Brahim Diaz was denied by a brilliant headed clearance off the goalline.

Alaves continued to toil away as Victor Parada's diving header hit the upright. Martinez netted a consolation with an inventive flick in stoppage time before loud jeers greeted the final whistle in Madrid.

Elsewhere, Real Betis came from behind to triumph 3-2 at Girona as Rodrigo Riquelme bagged the winner 10 minutes from time.

Gorka Guruzeta's first-half goal lifted Athletic Bilbao to a 1-0 home win over Osasuna, while Mallorca and Valencia drew 1-1.

Nepal A fall to Oman in opening practice match

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Apr. 22

Nepal A suffered a 70-run defeat to Oman in the first match of the one-day practice series at Upper Mulpani Cricket Ground on Wednesday.

Opting to bat first, Oman posted 280 for nine in their 50 overs. Nepal, in reply, were dismissed for 210 in 44.4 overs despite fifties from captain Anil Sah and Ishan Pandey.

Sah struck 50 off 64 balls with five boundaries, sharing an 84-run opening stand with Tirtha Raj Das, who made 31.

Dev Khanal and Pandey added 86 for the third wicket, with Dev scoring 43 off 43 and Pandey 52 off 62. But Nepal A faltered thereafter, losing wickets in clusters and failing to bat out the full quota. Sandeep Jora contributed 11.

For Oman, Shakeel Ahmad impressed with three wickets for just eight runs in four overs. Nadeem Khan and Mujibur Ali claimed two apiece.

Earlier, the visitors, in Nepal for the ICC Cricket World Cup League 2 series, were powered by half-centuries from captain Jatinder Singh and Mujibur Ali.



PHOTO: BIKASH DWARE/TRN

Singh hit 58 off 48 balls, including nine fours and a six, while Mujibur top-scored with 72 off 85. Singh and Aqib Ilyas put on 79 for the first wicket before Santosh Yadav removed both openers. Mujibur then added 91 with Aamir Kaleem, who struck 46 off 41 with three fours and three sixes.

Aakash Chand was Nepal's most effective bowler, taking four for 31 in nine overs. Yadav picked up two wickets, while Shahab Alam, Sher Malla and Rashid Khan claimed one each.

The second practice match will be played on Friday. The League 2 series, involving Nepal, Oman and the UAE, begins on Saturday, with Oman facing the UAE in their opener on Monday.

POLICE REACH GOLD CUP SEMIS

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Birtamod, Apr. 22

Nepal Police Club cruised into the semi-finals of the 1st Chandragadhi Women's Gold Cup with a 5-1 victory over India's Rani Laxmibai Football Academy on Wednesday.

Police will now face Tribhuvan Army Football Club in the last four.

The visitors struck first in the 14th minute after Police goalkeeper Usha Nath was sent off for handling outside the box. Substitute keeper Sapana Rai parried Bini Kumari's free-kick, but Hemanti Kumari converted the rebound to give Laxmibai the lead.

Police regrouped and equalised in the 38th minute when Rekha Poudel headed in Mina Deuwa's cross. Captain Amrita Jaisi then put Police ahead in the 46th minute, capitalising on a fumble by Laxmibai keeper Rupali Kumari.

Samjhana Lawati extended the advantage in the 53rd minute, before Deuwa added a fourth in the 67th, finishing off Poudel's pass from a Pooja Rana free-kick. Rana herself sealed the win in injury time with a long-range strike that slipped through the goalkeeper's hands.

INTER REACH ITALIAN CUP FINAL



AFP
Milan, Apr. 22

Inter Milan reached the Italian Cup final on Tuesday after coming back from two goals down to win 3-2 and go through by the same scoreline on aggregate.

Trailing early in the second half at the San Siro to brilliant goals from Martin Baturina and Lucas Da Cunha, Inter looked as good as out, but Hakan Calhanoglu dragged the hosts level with a brace and then set up Petar Sucic for a last-gasp winner.

Cristian Chivu's team will face one of Atalanta or Lazio in next month's showpiece in Rome, with the other semi-final delicately poised at 2-2 ahead of Wednesday's second leg.

Sucic's calm finish denied Como, who were in Italy's third tier as recently as 2019 when they were acquired by tobacco giant Djarum, a first appearance in the cup final.

But Inter can still claim a league and cup double as they are almost certain to win Serie A due to a 12-point lead over AC Milan and Napoli with five matches remaining in the league season.

"I had a bit of luck but I'm pleased we managed to turn it around. Como make it difficult because they know how to play," Calhanoglu told Mediaset, in an interview which was interrupted several times by a jubilant Marcus Thuram dancing along to fans chanting his name. "The league and cup are our two goals, we need to make sure we close out the Scudetto as soon as possible."

Chelsea lose to Brighton as CL hopes hang by thread

AP
London, Apr. 22

Chelsea's season slumped deeper into crisis after a 3-0 defeat to Brighton on Tuesday left its hopes of Champions League qualification hanging by a thread.

The result leaves Chelsea seventh in the Premier League and seven points adrift of fifth place Liverpool having played a game more.

The top five qualify for the Champions League, but with just four more rounds of the season to go, Chelsea is on the verge of being cut adrift.

Goals from Ferdi Kadioglu, Jack Hinshelwood and Danny Welbeck at the AMEX Stadium did not reflect Brighton's dominance on the night. Victory saw it leapfrog Chelsea and move up to sixth in the standings and boosted its own pursuit of European soccer next season.

"That was unacceptable in every aspect of the game. Unacceptable in attitudes. I keep coming out and defending the players, that's indefensible that performance tonight," Chelsea coach Liam Rosenior told Sky Sports. "Something needs to change drastically."

It was a seventh loss in Chelsea's last eight games in all competitions. The team that was crowned Club World Cup champion less than a year ago has only won one of its last nine in the league. It has lost its last five without scoring, which, according the league's official stats provider Opta, is its worst run since 1912 — the same year the Titanic sank.

Rosenior said it was the most difficult night of his career. "Some of the things I was witnessing today I never want to see again," he said.Chelsea — a team that cost in excess of $1 billion to assemble — is now left facing up to the likelihood of missing out on the lucrative Champions League.

While it has an FA Cup semifinal against Leeds on Sunday, its campaign has unraveled in recent weeks, including elimination from the Champions League at the hands of Paris Saint-Germain.

The decision to let go of Club World Cup-winning coach Enzo Marcesca in January now looks like a costly one, with his replacement Liam Rosenior overseeing the team's slide. "I've discussed in depth about how this club, regardless of who's the manager, what needs to happen at this football club for this club to be where it needs to be," said Rosenior. "It's not about me. It's about this football club.

"Chelsea represents fight and spirit, determination, and that was lacking in every department this evening."

Liverpool plays Crystal Palace on Saturday and could move 10 points clear of Chelsea with a win.

Leicester relegated

Former Premier League champion Leicester will be playing in English soccer's third division next season after being relegated from the Championship.

The club that won the title at odds of 5000-1 in 2016 needed to beat Hull to keep alive its hopes of survival, but drew 2-2.

Leicester, which was playing in England's top flight last season, also won the FA Cup in 2021.

Wrexham took advantage of Hull's draw to move into the playoff spots on goal difference.

A 1-0 win against Oxford lifted Wrexham above Hull and into sixth in the standings with two rounds to go in the Championship. Josh Windass' goal in the 40th minute was enough to seal victory.

A 5-1 win for Coventry against Portsmouth confirmed the Championship title for Frank Lampard's team.



PHOTO: AP

Brighton and Hove Albion's Danny Welbeck, center, celebrates scoring their third goal during the Premier League against Chelsea.

SNIPPETS

Nepal drawn with Sri Lanka and Bhutan

Kathmandu (TRN): Nepal have been placed in a favourable group for the SAFF Women's Championship 2026, which runs from 25 May to 6 June at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Goa, India. The Nepali women's side will compete in Group A alongside Sri Lanka and Bhutan. Group B features hosts India, Bangladesh and the Maldives. Nepal open their campaign against Bhutan in the tournament's first fixture on the opening day, followed by India facing the Maldives in the evening. Nepal's second match, against Sri Lanka, is scheduled for 31 May. The top two teams from each group will progress to the semi-finals. Despite reaching the final six times since the competition began in 2010, Nepal are yet to lift the SAFF title. They fell at the semi-final stage in 2016. On 25 April, Nabin Neupae has named preliminary 35-player squad for the initial closed camp. Sri Lanka have not reached the last four since 2019, while Bhutan advanced to the semi-finals in the 2022 edition held at Dasharath Stadium in Tripureshwor. India remain the most successful side with five titles, while Bangladesh are chasing a third consecutive crown after triumphs in 2022 and 2024. The Maldives last reached the semi-finals in 2016.

KMC honours boxer Chandra Bahadur Thapa

Kathmandu (TRN): Kathmandu Metropolitan City has honoured Chandra Bahadur Thapa Magar, Nepal's first medallist at the IBA Men's World Boxing Championship, with a cash prize and a letter of appreciation. Thapa, who claimed bronze in the men's 54kg category at the tournament in Dubai, received Rs 100,000 at a ceremony on Wednesday. His coach, Deepak Maharjan, was also recognised at the event. Acting Mayor Sunita Dangol, city spokesperson Nabin Manandhar and other officials presented the honours during the programme.

Pasang Lhamu Memorial Run

Kathmandu (TRN): Pasang Lhamu Memorial Run is orgainsed on 25 April to mark the 33rd memorial day of Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, the first Nepali woman to climb Mount Everest. The event is being hosted by the Pasang Lhamu Mountaineering Foundation in collaboration with the Meltdown Run Club. According to the organisers, the race will start from Narayan Chaur in Naxal and will feature two categories- three kilometres and five kilometres. Pasang Memorial Day is observed annually to honour the historic achievement of Sherpa, who became the first Nepali woman to summit the world's highest peak. Foundation vice-president Lakpa Phuti Sherpa said a series of programmes, including the race, have been scheduled to commemorate the day. She added that funds raised from the competition will be used by the Foundation for social service activities.

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