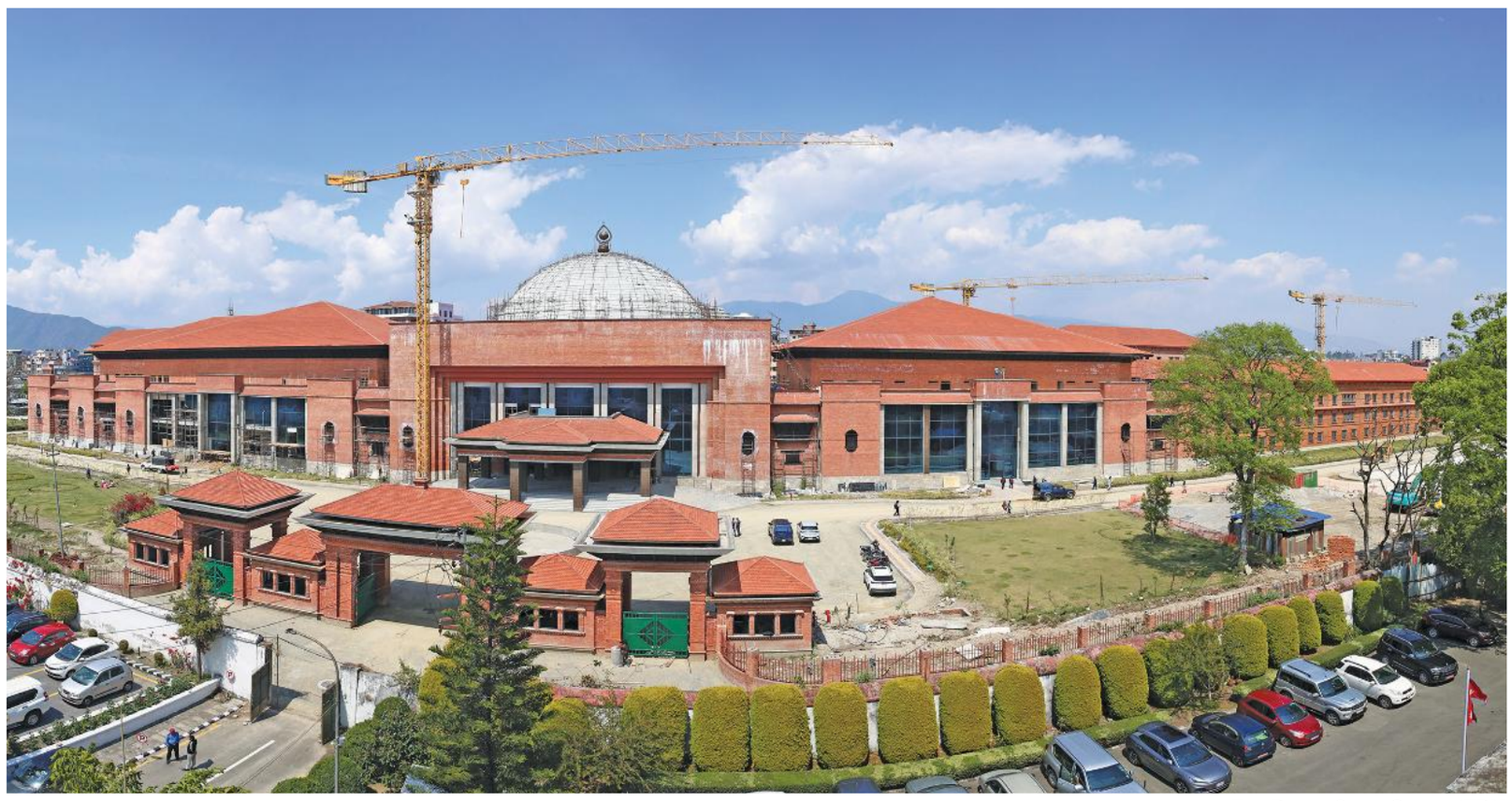
Wednesday, May 6, 2026
Baisakh 23, 2083 | Nepal Sambat 1146 | Bachhalathwa Chaturthi

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THE RISING NEPAL

ALL BE HAPPY, ALL BE WELL



FILE PHOTO: SUJAN GURUNG/TRN

The under-construction Federal Parliament building at Singha Durbar in Kathmandu, as work on the country's key legislative infrastructure progresses

Parliament session summoned for May 11

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

President Ramchandra Paudel has, on the recommendation of the government and in accordance with Article 93 (1) of the Constitution, summoned a session of both houses of the Federal Parliament on May 11.

The session of both houses is to be held at the Federal Parliament Building, Singha Darbar on coming Monday at 2:00 pm, according to Ritesh Kumar Shakya, spokesperson of the Office of the President.

A meeting of the Council of Ministers held earlier today at the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers had decided to recommend to the President to summon the next session of the Federal Parliament for 2:00 pm, May 11.

Speaking after the Cabinet meeting, Minister for Education, Science and Technology and government spokesperson Sasmit Pokharel said the meeting decided to recommend to President Paudel that the session be summoned at 2:00 pm on the proposed date.

"As there was no other agenda, today's Cabinet meeting ended with this single agenda of summoning both Houses of Federal Parliament," Minister Pokharel told the media.



President Paudel

Earlier, following a similar Cabinet recommendation, President Paudel had called a session of both Houses of the Federal Parliament for April 30 at 2:00 pm at the Federal Parliament Building in Singha Durbar.

However, the session called under Article 93(1) of the Constitution of Nepal was later postponed after the government sent a letter on April 23 requesting its deferral.

PRESIDENT ISSUES CONSTITUTIONAL COUNCIL ORDINANCE

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

President Ramchandra Paudel has issued an ordinance on the Constitutional Council (Work, Duties, Powers and Procedures) 2083.

The ordinance was issued on Tuesday after being recommended for the second time by a Cabinet meeting held on Monday. According to a statement from the President's Office, the ordinance was enacted in line with Article 114(1) of the Constitution of Nepal.

The ordinance had initially been sent to the President last week, but was returned with concerns relating to its consistency with the spirit of the majority system. Shortly after its return, the government resubmitted the ordinance without changes, prompting its eventual endorsement.

Prime Minister Balendra Shah reportedly addressed the President's concerns in a formal communication accompanying the resubmission. Despite the reservations previously raised, the Council of Ministers endorsed the ordinance as it is before forwarding it again for approval.

This marks the latest in a series of ordinances issued by President Paudel on the recommendation of the Shah-led government, bringing the total number to eight. The Constitutional Council ordinance had been among those earlier returned, both under the previous administration and previously during the tenure of a government led by KP Sharma Oli, with similar concerns.

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Govt to begin refunding depositors of troubled cooperatives

BY MODNATH DHAKAL
Kathmandu, May 5

The government has announced that it will begin returning the savings of depositors of troubled cooperatives from mid-May (the first week of Jestha in the Nepali calendar).

The Problematic Cooperative Management Committee, which started work on April 22, has collected the necessary details of cooperatives and depositors and is preparing to refund the savings, the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation informed.

According to the committee, around Rs. 46 billion must be returned to approximately 76,000 depositors of these troubled cooperatives.

Most of them are small depositors. Those with savings of less than Rs. 500,000 are classified as small depositors, while those with more than Rs. 500,000 are considered large depositors. Out of the total 76,000, only about 18,000 depositors have savings exceeding Rs. 500,000.

Minister for Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation, Pratibha Rawal, said that much of the preparatory work for the refunds has already been completed and the process will now begin.

"We have already completed a great deal of work. We will prioritise returning funds to small depositors first," she said. The committee has also stated that it will adopt a policy of initiating the refund process while giving priority to loan recovery.

As per the Procedures for the Establishment and Operation of the Revolving Fund for Refund of Savings to Members of Problematic Cooperatives 2083, the committee, by its own decision, may give priority to small depositors. Among depositors, priority will be given to single women, senior citizens over the age of sixty, Dalit and indigenous nationality communities, and persons with disabilities.

> According to the committee, around Rs. 46 billion must be returned to approximately 76,000 depositors of these troubled cooperatives.

The committee further announced that the refund process for claim-submitting depositors will begin from the first week of Jestha, while a second window for claims by those who missed the initial process will open in the third week of May.

It also stated that funds allocated by the government to the revolving fund will be used only as loans if the committee's own fund proves insufficient.

According to the Procedures, the revolving fund will be created with the fund received from the government, reimbursement sums returned by the relevant cooperative society, and sums received from other sources.

Money recovered from the auction of assets belonging to directors, audit committees, managers, loan sub-committees, and individuals with authority or responsibility who were involved in the embezzlement or misappropriation of the institution's assets, savings, loans, or shares, as well as any other sums recovered from such persons will also be deposited into the fund.

"If the sale of assets proves insufficient to refund the depositors, the Committee may also freeze and auction assets that have been transferred or invested in companies by family members of the individuals involved, whether such transfers occurred through property partition, divorce, or any other means," according to the Procedures.

Committee Member-Secretary Rabin Dhakal said that strict legal measures will be adopted for loan recovery.

Managers, directors are last to be refunded

The refunding of savings will be made on the basis of the records, details received from the cooperative, or the balance amounts shown in the computer system up to the day preceding the date on which the cooperative institution was declared problematic.

However, depositors who have taken loans from the cooperatives will get a refund after they have fully repaid the loans, reads the Procedures.

Similarly, the savings of directors and managers of the relevant institution, savings of members of their immediate family, and individuals involved in embezzlement or misappropriation shall not be refunded until the liabilities of depositors who have submitted claims have been settled.

If the claim for refund of savings is sub-judice in court, the process to refund the savings will not be started until the case is settled.

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Documents being delivered to homes through post

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

The government has begun delivering official documents directly to people's homes through the postal service, aiming to bring public services closer to citizens. The service has so far been delivered in 19 districts.

The initiative is part of the government's 100-day governance reform agenda, approved on March 27, which seeks to modernise the postal system and develop it into a government courier service.

Minister for Communications and Information Technology, Dr. Bikram Timilsina, has been coordinating with relevant agencies to review progress and address challenges.

The Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are also involved in the implementation.

According to Manmaya Bhattarai Pangeni, Director General of the Department of Postal Services, a total of 3,131 passports have been transported to the respective districts since the programme began. "Of these, 667 have already been delivered directly to recipients' homes. This has reduced the need for people to visit District Administration Offices to collect their passports," she said.

The service has been introduced in districts including Kathmandu, Gulmi, Dadeldhura, Jhapa, Sindhupalchok, Kalikot, Makwanpur, Bajhang, Kaski, Morang, Dhankuta and Baitadi, among others.

Preparations are under way to expand the service to additional districts. All District Administration Offices have also begun collecting applicants' addresses, which is expected to streamline future delivery.

In addition to passports, other official documents are also being delivered. So far, 260 educational certificates have been distributed. Under transport services, as of Tuesday afternoon, 296,545 driving licences have been dispatched to respective transport offices, with home delivery already launched in districts such as Morang and Kaski.

In the health sector, 14 laboratory samples have been transported in coordination with the National Public Health Laboratory. The service has been initiated from Surkhet, Banke and Kathmandu.

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Children from Ashram begin going to school

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

Fifty-two children currently staying at the Radhaswami Satsang Ashram began going to school from Tuesday, following efforts by the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) to ensure continued education of children displaced during recent evacuation drives.

Education Department of the KMC, after consultations with students and their guardians on Monday to assess their interests and needs, arranged for children to attend Jana Bikas Secondary School in Ward No. 14, located within walking distance from the shelter.

A total of 203 individuals from 66 families—relocated from areas including Thapathali, Gairigaun, and Sinamangal during the clearance of informal settlements along riverbanks—are currently housed at the ashram. Among them are 62 men (including one person with disability), 80 women (including three new mothers and two pregnant women), and 61 children (31 girls and 30 boys).

Of the children, 52 are of school-going age, while four have appeared this year's Secondary Education Examination (SEE). According to education officer Namaraj Dhakal, the metropolis is also planning to provide skill-based training such as computer studies and tailoring to interested youths.

Among the school-age children, guardians of 30 have expressed interest in hostel-based education. However, responses remain mixed, with some students unwilling to stay in hostels and others yet to confirm.

Senior Education Officer Sushil Subedi said 11 girls and 19 boys had expressed willingness for hostel accommodation, and requirements for uniforms and educational materials are being assessed.

Kathmandu Metropolitan City has requested support from private school networks, including Private and Boarding Schools' Organisation Nepal, National Private and Residential Schools Association Nepal, and Higher Institutions and Secondary Schools' Association, to provide free education with residential facilities.

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Growing calls to revive Bhrikuti Paper Mill

BY BOM LAL GIRI
Nawalpur, May 5

The Bhrikuti Paper Mill in Gaindakot, Nawalpur, once a source of national pride, used to meet nearly 60 per cent of the country's total demand for paper. Today, however, the factory is overgrown with bushes and resembles a deserted wasteland. All its structures are deteriorating; tin roofs have rusted and collapsed. From the outside, it looks like nothing more than a skeleton. Machines worth millions have rusted and become unusable. It has now been 15 years since the factory shut down.

When the factory closed, not only did hundreds of workers lose their livelihoods, but the country also became dependent on imported paper, resulting in millions of rupees flowing abroad. In recent times, the site has turned into a hub for drug abuse, which has deeply concerned residents. As a result, on Monday, locals submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Balendra Shah through Chief District Officer Bhawishwor Pandey, urging the government to immediately revive the factory with a new plan.



Established in 1983, the factory operated continuously until it was completely shut down on March 3, 2011, and has since remained dilapidated. Originally owned and operated by the government, the Bhrikuti Paper Mill was later handed over to the private sector (Golchha Organisation).

Local campaigner Ganesh Sapkota said, "The factory is not only closed but has become severely dilapidated and turned into ruins. On one hand, it is becoming a centre for substance abuse; on the other, there is a risk that strong winds could blow away rusted metal sheets and injure nearby residents or travellers on the highway."

According to Sapkota, leaders of all political parties, in their election agenda, have repeatedly promised to restore the factory, but they ignore it after winning the polls. Spread over 52 bighas in central Nepal, the deteriorating condition of the factory has negatively impacted not just Gaindakot Municipality but the overall beauty of the entire district.

Under Sapkota's leadership, a campaign called "Clean, Beautiful, Green Gaindakot, Continuous Saturday Campaign" has demanded that the federal government promptly manage the factory site and develop it into agriculture, industry, or a model organised market with a clear plan. They have given the government a five-day deadline.

"We have drawn the Prime Minister's serious attention to this issue and set a five-day deadline," he said. "If no concrete action or response is taken within this period, we will be forced to launch protests."

333 workers unpaid wages

While 22 temporary workers, 44 contract workers, and 92 probationary permanent workers were paid and dismissed immediately after the factory's closure, 333 permanent workers claim they have yet to receive their due salaries and remaining payments. According to Damodar Tiwari, who worked at the factory since 1985, around Rs. 400 million is still owed to these workers.

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BULLION
(Rs. per tola)

Hallmark Gold	: Rs. 291,000/-
Worked Gold	: NA
Silver	: Rs. 4,880/-

STOCK

NEPSE	: 2,712.86
Total Amount	: 3,439,068,392.77
No. of Share	: 7,734,012

GOLD PRICE DOWN

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

Gold and silver prices in the local market have witnessed significant volatility over the past few couple of days. According to the Federation of Nepal Gold and Silver Dealers' Association, the price of gold dropped by Rs. 3,800 per tola on Tuesday and traded at Rs. 291,000 per tola.

Gold was traded at Rs. 294,800 per tola on Monday. Overall, the price of gold dropped by Rs. 5,100 per tola in the last three days. Gold was traded at Rs. 296,100 per tola on Friday.

Similarly, silver prices have also followed a similar trend. On Tuesday, the price of silver declined by Rs. 150 per tola to Rs. 4,880 per tola in the local market. Silver was sold at Rs. 5,030 per tola on Monday.

According to FENEGOSIDA, the price of gold declined in the local market in line with the decline in its price in the international market.

US-CHINA AI RACE HEATS UP

AP
New York, May 5

Chinese startup DeepSeek released a new artificial intelligence model with "drastically reduced" costs Friday, more than a year after it stunned the world with a low-cost reasoning model that matched the capabilities of US rivals.

The AI race has intensified the rivalry between China and the United States, and the White House on Thursday accused Chinese entities of a massive effort to steal artificial intelligence technology.

Hangzhou-based DeepSeek burst onto the scene in January last year with a generative AI chatbot, powered by its R1 reasoning model, that upended assumptions of US dominance in the strategic sector.

The new version, DeepSeek-V4, "features an ultra-long context of one million words", the company said in a statement on social media platform WeChat, hailing it as "world-leading ... with drastically reduced compute (and) memory costs" in a separate announcement on X.

The model's context length, which determines how much input a model is able to absorb to help it complete tasks, "(achieves) leadership in both domestic and open-source fields across agent capabilities, world knowledge, and reasoning performance", the WeChat statement said.

'IBN's role vital for investment'

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5



Outgoing Chief Executive Officer of the Investment Board Nepal (IBN), Sushil Gyewali, has said that the Investment Board Nepal (IBN) has established its role in facilitating investment in large, long-term projects in Nepal.

Speaking at a farewell programme at the Office of the IBN on Monday, he said that the Board has so far approved projects worth approximately Rs. 1,700 billion.

Additionally, investment proposals worth around Rs. 2,000 trillion have been received from investors, reinforcing the necessity of the Board in advancing large-scale investment projects, he said.

On the occasion, he further said that the Investment Board, in collaboration with the Confederation of Nepalese Industries, has recently prepared a pipeline of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects worth USD 100 billion.

These projects are being presented to investors with a target of implementation within next ten years.

He expressed the view that this initiative could significantly contribute to expanding Nepal's economy to USD 100 billion within next five to seven years.

According to the IBN, out of the 53 projects approved so far through the Board, two projects with an investment of Rs. 58.81 billion have been completed and are currently in the production phase.

Similarly, a total of 28 projects with an estimated investment of around Rs. 598 billion are under construction, while two projects with an investment of Rs. 255 billion have entered the implementation phase with financial closure.

In addition, 11 projects with an investment of Rs. 555 billion are in the Project Development Agreement (PDA) stage. Likewise, five projects with an estimated investment of around Rs. 84 billion are undergoing detailed study by the respective investors.

Gyewali said that during his tenure, projects worth around Rs. 500 billion reached the implementation stage, and added that necessary groundwork has been prepared for the Board to achieve its investment targets.

Similarly, the Board has prepared drafts of procedures related to the One-Stop Service Centre, Swiss Challenge method, Fund Operation, Land Acquisition, and Expert Mobilisation.

Likewise, it has also drafted a framework for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for provincial and local levels, as well as procedures related to the Hybrid Annuity Model.

In addition, the Board has prepared a draft amendment to the Act to implement a single-window approval system.

Highlighting that the foundation has been set to make the Investment Board financially, administratively, and legally autonomous, Gyewali expressed his commitment to continue contributing to creating an enabling investment environment in the future.

MINI TILLERS PROVIDED FOR AGRICULTURE

RSS
Jumla, May 5

The National Agriculture Modernization Programme's Implementation Unit in Jumla has distributed mini tillers to 20 farmers at discount in a bid to ease farming activities.

The mini tillers were provided to the agricultural entrepreneurs along with training in repair of agricultural tools on Monday. The scheme is enforced to free farmers from the traditional toil, according to Khemraj Shahi, Chief of the National Agriculture Modernization Programme Implementation Office, Jumla.

Farmers are connected to modern technology with the use of mini tillers, he said, adding that five women and 15 men were provided the plowing machines at 50 percent discount in the first phase of the current fiscal year, 2082/83. Those already engaged in commercial agriculture and even those eager to foster agriculture commercially were prioritized for the assistance. Easing farming practice and increasing production is expected from the scheme.

The skills provided during training will help farmers use the agro tools safely. They were also made able to repair the plowing machines through the training.

Lately, farmers in Jumla district have shown keen interest to apply modern tools, to liberate themselves from traditional excessive hardship in agriculture and ensure better production.

Demand for electric stoves goes up

BY RABINDRA UPRETI
Bardibas, May 5



Due to the ongoing war in West Asia and uncertainty in the Gulf region affecting the supply of petroleum, including cooking gas, consumers in Bardibas have begun turning towards electric cookers. Traders reported that, alongside the gas shortage, rising prices have significantly increased the demand for electric stoves.

Although the use of electric cookers as an alternative to gas is growing rapidly, consumers point out that their sustainable use depends on a reliable electricity supply.

According to local traders, before the escalation of the Iran-Israel war, only around seven to eight electric cookers were sold per month. But now sales have risen to over 200 units monthly. With homemakers also increasingly adopting them, market transactions have surged.

More than half a dozen businesses in Bardibas, including Rohan Enterprises, Prince Kitchenware Store, Shrestha Electronics and Balster Electronics, are selling electric cookers.

Roshan Shrestha, proprietor of Rohan Enterprises, said that following gas shortage, he sold 60 units last month. "Earlier, we used to sell only two to three units a month. Now, we are unable to meet the rising demand," he said.

Similarly, Santosh Subedi, manager of Prince Kitchenware Store, said that supply has remained below the demand. He reported that more than 42 units (seven cartons) were sold from his shop in Chaitra (mid-March to mid-April) alone.

He added that now dealers are also unable to supply enough stock. "I ordered five cartons (30 units) from a dealer in Kathmandu a week ago, but they have not yet been delivered. If supply matched demand, my shop alone could sell more than 200 units a month," he said.

Currently, two types of electric cookers—induction and infrared—are available in the market. Sellers say that around 70 per cent of consumers prefer infrared cookers, as they can be used with any type of cookware. However, due to insufficient supply, some customers have had to return empty-handed.

Samiksha Paudel of Bardibas–1 said she had started using an electric cooker as it is easier, safer and eliminates the hassle of transporting gas cylinders. "Since bringing home an electric (infrared) cooker, I have stopped using my gas stove. As the money spent on gas goes abroad, I have made my kitchen gas-free," she said.

Meanwhile, Saroj Shrestha, president of the Bardibas Gas Association, said that gas supply has declined significantly in recent times. Previously, around 300 cylinders were consumed daily in Bardibas, but that number has now dropped to about 80.

"If we exclude hotels, ordinary consumers are reluctant to purchase half a cylinder. This could be another reason why the use of electric cookers is increasing," he said.

However, despite the rising use of electric cookers, irregular electricity supply remains a major concern for consumers.

Sumitra Devi of Bardibas–3 said, "Electric stoves are convenient and cheaper, but frequent power cuts are frustrating. If electricity was reliable, there would be no need for gas at all."

Nepal's tourism rebounds strongly

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

Nepal's tourism sector continues its steady recovery, recording 107,934 international visitor arrivals (IVAs) in April 2026, signaling a significant milestone in the country's post-pandemic comeback.

According to the report of Nepal Tourism Board, this performance represents a 101.3 per cent recovery compared to April 2019, effectively surpassing pre-pandemic levels.

A total of 109,399 tourists visited Nepal in the month of April 2019.

However, foreign tourist arrivals saw a 7.3 per cent decline in the month of May this year compared to April 2025, indicating some short-term fluctuations despite the overall upward trend.

The ongoing war in the Middle East was a contributing factor to the decline in international tourist arrivals over the past few months.

A total of 116,490 tourists visited the country in the month of April 2025.

A total of 426,464 tourists have visited Nepal so far in 2026.

Of these, 92,573 tourists visited in January, while 105,441 visited in February. Similarly, a total of 120,516 international visitors entered Nepal in March 2026.

India emerged as the top source market during the month, contributing 25,196 tourists, which accounts for 23.3 per cent of total arrivals.

Similarly, China followed as the second-largest contributor with 11,722 visitors (10.9 per cent), while the United States ranked third with 8,724 tourists, making up 8.1 per cent of arrivals.

Australia and Bangladesh secured the fourth and fifth positions among the leading source markets, with 5,327 (4.9 per cent) and 5,231 (4.8 per cent) visitors, respectively.

Likewise, a total of 4,886 tourists from United Kingdom, 3,143 tourists from Germany, 3,085 tourists from Malaysia, 2,637 tourists from Russia and 2,626 tourists from Myanmar visited Nepal.

Regionally, South Asia (SAARC countries) accounted for the largest share of tourist arrivals at 31 per cent (33,432 tourists), reflecting Nepal's strong regional connectivity and accessibility.

Visitors from other parts of Asia contributed 24.8 per cent (26,726 tourists), while Europe made up 20.4 per cent (21988 tourists) of the total arrivals.

Tourists from the Americas accounted for 10.2 per cent (11,032 tourists), and Oceania contributed 5.5 per cent (5898 tourists), indicating a steady inflow from long-haul markets as well.

Tourism entrepreneurs said the diversified visitor base underscores Nepal's growing reputation as a global travel destination, with both regional and international markets playing a key role in driving the sector's recovery and growth in 2026.

Electrification in villages brings happiness

BY RAJU LAMICHHANE
Western Rukum, May 5

Central power lines have been extended to various settlements in Aathbiskot Municipality–11 in Western Rukum.

The Nepal Electricity Distribution Centre, Rukum West, stated that it has completed the installation of a new transformer, the expansion of transmission lines, and the activation of electricity lines in Aathbiskot Municipality–11.

According to Paras Subedi, Technical Chief of the Western Rukum Distribution Center, an 11 kV transmission line has been installed from Chisapani to Dandagaun in Ward No. 11 of the municipality. These are entirely new distribution lines.

Previously, there was no electricity facility in this area. New transformers have also been installed in the Dandagaun and Pharula settlements of the same ward.

According to Subedi, a 50 kVA transformer has been installed in Dandagaun and a 15 kVA transformer in Pharula. In addition, distribution lines have been installed in both settlements, and electricity supply began after the transformers were activated.

Around 140 households have directly benefited from this project. As part of efforts to electrify all villages and settlements in the district, the Electricity Distribution Centre is prioritising areas that lack access to central power lines.

Local residents are happy after the electricity lines were connected to their village.

Prem Pun, Ward Chairman of Ward No. 11, said that extending the central electricity line to remote villages will make life easier for local residents. He added that light has reached villages that were previously in darkness.

He also said that electricity was provided to the villages due to the continuous efforts of the local government and the electricity office.

Farmers in Tanahun receive technical knowledge

BY AMAR RAJ NAHARKI
Tanahun, May 5



PHOTO: TRN

An official of Agriculture Development Office delivering technical knowledge to farmers.

In an effort to increase agricultural production and productivity, farmers in Tanahun are being provided practical training directly in their fields, focusing on modern farming techniques.

The initiative has been taken by the Agriculture Development Office, Tanahun, in coordination with local municipalities to enhance farmers' skills and improve crop output through hands-on learning.

Under this programme, farmers in Shuklagandaki Municipality–12, Dhor, Talbesi were provided on-site training on food crop production techniques in their own fields.

Farmers expressed happiness after receiving the training. During the training, participants were given practical information on modern food crop production techniques, soil management, and integrated pest and disease control methods.

The training was conducted on Sunday. The session was facilitated by Crop Protection Officer and Information Officer of the Agriculture Development Office Kiran Pariyar, technical assistant Sanjita Khadka, and local agricultural branch chiefs.

According to Pariyar, lack of proper knowledge among farmers regarding correct fertiliser use and timely weeding often leads to reduced production.

He said, "Instead of teaching farmers theoretical lessons in classrooms, it is much easier for them to understand when we go to their fields and show them soil, plants, and pests. This also helps them immediately apply what they learn in practice."

The office has been conducting such trainings in farmers' fields based on the season and crop cycle. As it is currently maize cultivation season and rice planting season is approaching, farmers have been trained on improved rice production techniques directly in the field.

Previously, similar field-based trainings on vegetable farming were conducted in Ghiring Rural Municipality, and maize-related training was conducted in Rishing Rural Municipality.

Farmers who participated expressed satisfaction with the field-based learning approach. Farmer Mekh Bahadur Gurung from Talbesi said that the training has greatly helped in reducing crop damage caused by pests and diseases and in properly using improved techniques.

The Agriculture Development Office, Tanahun, said that it will continue such effective field-based trainings in the future based on farmers' needs and demand.

According to the office, trainings are conducted for one to two days directly in the fields as required.

Passport home delivery brings relief to Parbat locals

BY SAJAN PARIYAR
Parbat (Phalewas), May 5



PHOTO: TRN

District Administration Office, Parbat.

For Amisha Pariyar, 22, of Khanigaun of Phalewas Municipality-5, preparing to study in Japan, obtaining and collecting a passport from the District Administration Office in Parbat was far from convenient.

Currently residing with her family in Butwal, Pariyar had submitted her passport application as part of her plans to go abroad for further studies. However, she faced considerable difficulty when she had to travel again to the district headquarters to collect the completed document, incurring additional time, expense and hassle.

"It was very difficult to come and collect the passport after it was ready, especially travelling from such a distance," she said. "Now, with arrangements in place to receive passports, citizenship copies, driving licences and other government documents at home through the postal service, it will be much easier for people like me who live far away, especially students."

Pariyar's experience reflects that of many others. Citizens living outside their home districts for study, employment or other reasons have long been required to appear in person at District Administration Offices to apply for passports, citizenship copies and driving licences, and then come again to collect them. This has resulted not only in additional financial burden but also in a significant loss of time.

To address this issue, the government of Nepal has launched a home delivery service for official documents via the postal service under its 100-point governance reform action plan. As part of this initiative, the District Administration Office in Parbat has begun delivering passports, citizenship copies and driving licences directly to citizens' homes.

Under the new system, service recipients no longer need to be physically present to collect their documents. Once processed, passports, citizenship copies and licences can be delivered to their doorstep through postal services. The move is expected to particularly benefit those living far from district headquarters, students, individuals preparing for foreign employment, and busy citizens.

According to Chief District Officer Laxmi Prasad Paudel, the new arrangement will also help manage crowds at the administration office. It is expected to reduce queues, congestion and disorder at the office. Applicants for passports can now choose between home delivery by post and in-person collection. They are required to state their preference at the time of application clearly.

The initiative has also been welcomed at the local level. Sanjay Kshetri of Ward-8, Naglibang, Jaljala Rural Municipality, said the need to travel to the district headquarters for minor tasks would gradually be eliminated. "This is a very useful service for people like us who live away from home," he said. "It saves both time and money."

With the introduction of home delivery of official documents through postal services, the reform is being seen as a significant step towards improving public service delivery.

Post-death feasts become extravagant

BY DHIRENDRA PRASAD SAH
Rajbiraj, May 5

In many communities of the Tarai-Madhes, the traditional practice of hosting feasts after a death has recently become increasingly extravagant and competitive in Saptari District.

In municipalities such as Rupani, Bishnupur, and Chhinnamasta, post-death gatherings and feasts are increasingly being compared in terms of social prestige, with residents noting that this has led to unnecessary expenditure.

According to Bhola Yadav of Rupani Rural Municipality, there is now a trend among prominent members of society to organise one or even two large feasts following the death of a relative.

"Our community usually forms a group comprising five to seven villages. Invitations are sent to everyone in that area, and a feast is hosted," he said. He added that a single such gathering typically costs at least five to seven hundred thousand rupees.

Local resident Birendra Yadav said that women's participation in these feasts remains limited. He said that women from outside the deceased families host village are generally not invited.

"Neighbours, men, women, and children are invited, but when it comes to dining, men and women are seated separately, and in some places women are not allowed to participate at all," he added.

Social worker Shyamsundar Yadav said that such feasts are widespread in Rupani, Bishnupur, and Chhinnamasta rural municipalities, particularly within the Yadav community, where the practice has recently become more competitive. "The scale of the feast has become a matter of prestige," he said.

Another local social worker, Ramchandra Yadav, expressed concern about the trend. According to him, spending excessively during a sensitive time such as bereavement can push low- and middle-income families into financial hardship. "The practice of death feasts should be reduced otherwise, debt and social pressure will continue to increase," he added.

Professor Devnarayan Yadav remarked that while the tradition originally served as a means of expressing social solidarity and sympathy, its increasing display of extravagance is overshadowing its core purpose.

He emphasised the need for community-level discussions and awareness to strike a balance between tradition and modern thinking and to control excessive spending.

In Saptari, the growing trend of death feasts has evolved beyond a cultural practice into an issue intertwined with social prestige, economic status, and gender equality.

Caption: Food being served at a feast organised following a death.

Former Smart Telecom MD Joshi arrested



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

Former Managing Director of Smart Telecom, Sarvesh Joshi, has been arrested on charges of fraud and criminal breach of trust.

A team from the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) apprehended Joshi on Monday from Khursanitar in Kathmandu Metropolitan City–2, according to SSP Shiva Kumar Shrestha of the CIB.

Smart Telecom is currently defunct. Its licence was automatically revoked on April 16, 2023, after it failed to renew.

The company's assets had been taken under control by the Nepal Telecommunications Authority. However, Joshi has been accused of misappropriating those assets, thereby undermining the government's lawful claim.

5 % children in Karnali remain out of school

BY LALIT BASEL
Surkhet, May 5

Free education has become difficult to implement in the country due to a shortage and poor management of teachers in proportion to student numbers.

Although the standard provision requires one teacher for every 45 students, community schools have struggled to meet this ratio, making it hard to provide free education in practice.

At a time when school enrolment campaigns are under way, many community schools have been collecting money from parents in the name of managing teachers.

Authorities, however, have acknowledged that the lack of proper teacher management has added to the challenges of delivering free education.

Speaking at a programme on the status of compulsory and free education in Karnali Province, organised in Surkhet on Monday by the Environment, Agriculture and Development Centre (KED), stakeholders said negligence by all three tiers of government has made it difficult to ensure free education.

Dhirendra Prasad Sharma, Education Chief at Birendranagar Municipality, said that although the Constitution guarantees compulsory and free education, its implementation has been challenging in practice.

He said that some community schools have been forced to charge fees due to an inadequate number of teachers, adding that proper teacher management would make free education possible.

Sharma urged local, provincial and federal governments to prioritise teacher management and to be sensitive in adjusting teacher quotas. He stressed that free education would remain difficult to implement unless the issue is addressed. While he claimed that most school-age children are enrolled, he identified the main problem as the implementation of free education.

He also pointed out that Birendranagar, being the provincial capital, attracts around 50 per cent of its students from other districts, increasing pressure on local schools. He suggested that teacher allocation should be based on student density.

Acting Secretary at the Ministry of Social Development, Devi Prasad Paudel, said the provincial government can only advocate and cannot formulate policy alone, stressing the need for coordination among all three levels of government in managing teachers. He added that teacher deployment should be based on need, particularly in schools facing high enrolment.

Khadka BK, Chairperson of Chaukune Rural Municipality said local governments have been discouraged from spending on teacher management as such expenditures are often flagged as irregularities by the Office of the Auditor General. However, he claimed that community schools in Chaukune have not been charging fees.

Deepa Hamal, Director at the Education Development Directorate, said development partners should also support the government in implementing compulsory and free education. She informed that about five per cent of children in Karnali are still out of school, though the number is gradually decreasing.

She added that children of migrant workers, particularly those whose parents have gone to India for employment, are more likely to be out of school. However, she claimed that most children of school-going age are enrolled.

Hamal added that increasing the education budget and improving teacher management would ease the implementation of free and compulsory education.

According to Balbir Sunar, Education Officer at the Ministry of Social Development, seven per cent of Karnali Province's total budget of Rs. 32.99 billion -- equivalent to Rs 2.35 billion -- has been allocated to education.

He also said that Rs. 8.4 million has been set aside in the current fiscal year specifically for compulsory and free education.

Anup Nepali, Programme Coordinator at KED, said there is a contradiction between the policy of free education and the ongoing practice of charging fees. He suggested that all three levels of government should increase the budget to address the existing challenges in the education sector.

Storm hammers Baitadi, Dadeldhura schools hit

BY GOKARNA DAYAL
Baitadi, May 5



As in previous years, strong winds have once again caused damage to the district, blowing off corrugated metal roofs from about half a dozen schools.

According to local knowledge, the name Baitadi is derived from the words 'bayu' (wind) and 'tad' (hilltop), reflecting its identity as a wind-prone district. Despite this, government structures are often built with corrugated sheet roofing without due consideration of the terrain.

Strong winds on Sunday afternoon blew off the roofs of two school buildings at Shitalpur Secondary School in Ward No. 1 of Melouli Municipality and Dharmaghar Secondary School in Salena, Ward No. 2, causing heavy loss.

Lok Raj Joshi, Principal of Dharmaghar Secondary School, said teaching had been disrupted after the roof was blown away. He added that the damage came just as classes were about to begin following the student enrolment campaign.

The District Police Office, Baitadi, reported that the storm also caused damage in other areas. Information officer Police Inspector Baldev Badu said schools, ward offices, private houses and shops in Sigas, Dogadakedar, Shivanath and Pancheshwar rural municipalities were affected.

He said the storm blew off the roof of Jasaling Basic School in Kapada, Ward No. 3 of Dogadakedar Rural Municipality. Similarly, the roof of the ward office building in Kalagaun, Ward 8 of the same municipality, was also damaged.

The storm also affected the Armed Police Force's Border Outpost building at Kusmautghat of Shivanath Rural Municipality-1. Police said data on the total damage is still being collected.

Schools face recurring damage

Every year, storms cause significant damage to schools and government structures. According to the Education Development and Coordination Unit, Baitadi, the roofs of more than 15 to 20 schools are blown away annually.

Pushkar Raj Sharma, information officer at the unit, said the problem has worsened as schools have shifted from locally available slate roofing to corrugated metal sheets. Although slate is stronger and better suited to the local terrain, the use of metal sheets has increased in recent years.

Narendra Prasad Awasthi, chief of the unit, said concerns about the unsuitability of tin roofs had been raised with the ministry, but technical teams have not revised the designs. He added that buildings with slate roofs have not been affected by storms.

Shankar Datta Joshi, Chief of the Social Development Office, Baitadi, said reinforced concrete roofing has now been introduced in permanent structures due to the district's windy conditions.

"In the current fiscal year, 21 school buildings are under construction with funding from the provincial government, all of them having permanent structures with concrete roofs," he said.

He added that the use of corrugated sheets has been discontinued in technical specifications. All new school buildings constructed by the Social Development Office under the Sudurpashchim Provincial Government are being built with reinforced concrete roofs.

Meanwhile, Dadeldhura correspondent Pushkar Bhandari reported that a powerful windstorm on Sunday afternoon caused significant damage to schools, a ward office and private homes in the district.

The storm blew off the roofs of educational institutions, government offices and houses, resulting in widespread losses.

Mahendra Secondary School in Khalanga of Amargadhi Municipality-5 was among the worst affected. The principal's office was completely destroyed, while the staff room also sustained damage. Equipment, including CCTV cameras, computers, furniture and printers, was damaged, said teacher Ashok Balme.

According to him, the destruction was severe after a prefabricated structure built on top of a concrete building collapsed, with both the roof and walls giving way.

Similarly, the storm blew off the roof of the ward office in Amargadhi Municipality-3, said Deputy Superintendent of Police Barun Bahadur Singh at the District Police Office, Dadeldhura.

In the same incident, the roof of a house belonging to local resident Ganga Palpali in Khalanga-5 was blown away, and the electricity meter box was also damaged.

At Bhuvaneshwari Secondary School in Jaisera of Ganyapdhura Rural Municipality-4, the assembly hall and girls' toilet were completely damaged.

Ward chairperson Naresh Kumar Bhatta said the assembly hall, equivalent to about two rooms in size, had a corrugated sheet roof supported by iron rods, which was entirely blown away. The girls' toilet, also roofed with metal sheets, suffered similar damage.

The storm also uprooted roofs of other houses in various parts of the district and knocked down electricity poles, disrupting power supply in several areas. Electricity supply across the district was cut off for several hours following the storm.

Kapil Joshi, chief of the Nepal Electricity Authority Distribution Centre in Dadeldhura, said fallen trees and branches onto power lines caused the outage. Power supply was restored from around 9:00 pm in most areas, except for some rural settlements.

Gulmi bans sale, distribution of alcohol after 9:00 pm



BY RAMESH BK
Gulmi, May 5

The District Administration Office in Gulmi has imposed a ban on the sale and distribution of alcohol after 9:00pm.

The decision follows an analysis of criminal incidents in the district over the past few years, which found that most cases were linked to alcohol consumption. In response, authorities have introduced a complete restriction on the sale, distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages after the fixed time.

A meeting of the District Security Committee held on Monday decided to enforce the ban across the district, citing the need to maintain law and order and control crime. Chief District Officer Badri Nath Gaire said that the majority of criminal activities recorded in recent years were associated with alcohol use.

According to him, the decision was also taken in response to requests from local bodies and other stakeholders seeking stricter control over alcohol.

"This step has been taken to curb the rising crime in society caused by alcohol and to maintain peace and order," Gaire said. "Anyone violating the rule will face action in accordance with the law."

Authorities have also urged local businesses not to import or sell low-quality alcohol. It has been made clear that both the sale and consumption of alcohol after the stipulated time will be subject to legal action under prevailing laws.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

When you fish for love, bait with your heart, not your brain.
- Mark Twain

EDITORIAL

Saving Public Property

The recent decision made by the Patan High Court that upheld the claim of possession of Pashupati Gaushala Dharmashala (PGD) can be seen as an example of good governance of public trust property. According to the ruling, the property belongs entirely to the Pashupati Area Development Trust (PADT). The management issue involving PGD started in 2003 due to a lack of clarity about the tenure rights during the time of agreement. While the site developed into a commercial hub with minimal payments annually, it was a matter of great concern regarding the improper use, mismanagement, lack of control over the facility, and deviation from its original purpose as a religious centre.

The conclusion of the agreement in 2023 resulted in certain alterations, as many decisions were rendered against tenancy. The purpose of the place originally was pilgrimages and charitable purposes. But later on, the place turned into a site for business activities owing to a contract which lacked clarity and accountability. However, it became an area of commercial operations by virtue of a contract that was vague and non-accountable. Despite the advice given by the overseeing authorities and even the court that there is a need to correct the prevailing situation, the order was not taken seriously.

This is reflective of another issue that exists within the management system. The lands allocated by the government and those belonging to Guthi in the nation bear similar attributes such as the mismanagement of the land through contracts. Poorly crafted and seldom examined contracts become tools for exploitation, not service delivery. The lack of any time duration specified in the contract signed in 2003 is another huge problem that led to exploitation for years.

Similarly, the judgement also casts a clear responsibility on the authorities. Taking control of the property legally may only be the beginning. What happens next could either lead to a reformation or another cycle. The Dharamshala must be operated in such a way that it considers the interests of the pilgrims and the welfare of the public. Otherwise, its significance would be undermined if there is just a transition from one form of mismanagement to another. The operation of public and private institutions should be defined by the legal frameworks.

Furthermore, there should also be a wider introspection. How many other public properties have been put into private interests without even being considered as such by the court? In how many instances has the directive of the court been overlooked until a case arises and becomes lengthy? Unless the government conducts thorough audits, there will always be other cases that may arise like this.

In conclusion, the court made it clear that the weak documentation and historical ambiguity will not sustain long-term control over valuable public property. It has to be managed in a way that would benefit the entire public. The concerned authorities should understand that heritage and public assets are not commodities to be negotiated indefinitely. All the public property belongs to ordinary people, and their stewardship needs integrity, transparency, and adherence to the law.

Buddhist Preaching

DIXYA POUDEL

Centuries ago, a young prince slipped out in the darkness of the night, leaving behind a young wife, a son and an inheritance that would have made him a king. He renounced the material world in search of peace and liberation after the four sightings. For years, he meditated, fasted and sought out spiritual leaders who could impart lessons to him. Ultimately, his dedication led to Nirvana and liberation. The rest, as they say, is history. He became the Awakened One and devoted the rest of his life to teaching the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path to achieve them. Today, his teachings are highly venerated. They are the foundations of Buddhism, a religion revered for its preaching of peace, harmony and the end of suffering.

The world celebrated Buddha Purnima last week, which falls each year in the months of Baisakh or Jeshtha (around April or May). It is the convergence of three major events, Buddha's birth, Bodhi (enlightenment) and Parinirvana (death) all in a single day, marking a deeply auspicious Buddhist tradition. The fact that Buddha was born in Lumbini is a source of pride for Nepalis. Even as the world continues to rage in war, conflict, and hostility, Buddhism remains steadfast in its teachings of karma and dharma. Further, Buddhism also teaches non-violence (ahimsa) as a path to lasting peace and compassion towards all beings. Political leaders throughout the world could gain quite a lot through this religion that emphasises love, mindfulness and wisdom for a better world.

The world can be a harsh place to live in, particularly now when it feels like everything is falling apart. Peace of mind is a rarity in the current world. It slyly slips out of our minds when we want it the most. The mind chatters as it fills the vacuum with negativity, doom and despair. Every time we breathe, we breathe in endless cynicism. And the cycle continues. We settle down to meditate for a few minutes but are alerted to a new notification on the phone that cuts short our meditation session. We carve out time for a peaceful reprieve but are interrupted by the news and current events.

Doomscrolling is one of the worst trends that has ever been invented. News of violence, crime, wars and humanitarian crises circulate night and day and there is no peace of mind in the little gadget that fits in our pockets. As such, there is no world peace without individual peace. And there is no hope without collective hope. Without a doubt, we are all here in this world for a short time. How then do we choose to live? Do we live with peaceful and rightful karma and dharma or with indifference or even ignorance of our own actions?

It is up to us to make the lives we want and yet we falter greatly due to petty matters that will be rendered inconsequential once the last breath has been taken. At the end of the day, peace is indeed a rarity. It is no surprise that a young prince sought to find it. Centuries later, people are still searching for it, either vainly or successfully. Either way, the lesson remains: seek peace, not hatred, and seek harmony, not discord.

Consensus Key To Peace, Development



Prof. Bhupa P. Dhamala

In an uncivilised culture, decision-makers may attempt to settle an issue autocratically, but in a civilised state, we expect a shared understanding among political parties, concerned authorities, and stakeholders on issues with potential repercussions. In this sense, national consensus is a matter of grave importance. Such an important matter, though it is considered, we cannot say exactly what the national consensus is. We often talk about national consensus without properly understanding what it means.

National consensus cannot be defined in an absolute sense. Nothing is absolute because everything is subject to change, and even change is not absolute. Any issue can be debated from multiple perspectives. An obvious example can be cited from modern American history. We often say Columbus discovered America. But this statement is made by European migrants. On the contrary, Native Americans argue that Columbus encroached upon America. We cannot easily say for sure whether America was discovered or was encroached upon. It depends on our angle of vision. Perspectives thus matter a great deal when looking at something. In this sense, national consensus is often a relative concept that we assume we agree upon.

Shared attitudes

The next reason for the impossibility of absolute consensus is the heterogeneity of ideas. When there are different voices, a unanimous decision is unlikely. There might be discordant voices among the opposing groups in a heterogeneous society. There might as well be some people who are non-conformist by nature and express different opinions and behave differently. In this sense also, national consensus remains an unsettled debate. Therefore, things done amid the debates and controversies may yield undesirable consequences. In the absence of a common understanding and shared attitudes among the concerned people, we say there is no national consensus.

But it is essential that there be a national consensus, albeit relative, for the country's peace and development. How, then, can we build national consensus? Is it something that the opposing forces unconditionally agree upon policies and plans forwarded by the ruling party, or does the leader of the ruling party have to work rigorously to build consensus? Ours is a country that has been demanding national consensus on areas such as political ideology, international relations, and national development, yet no consensus has ever been reached.

Despite some efforts, our country has not reached a consensus on the political ideology that guides its politics and governance. Ten years after the democracy was established in 1951, it was forcibly confiscated by King Mahendra, which caused serious political conflict for three decades. Soon after democracy was restored in 1990, political turmoil resumed, culminating in the establishment of the republican system of governance and the country's federal restructuring. Even after that, political forces are disputing over the political ideology in Nepal. Some communist political forces are still talking about scientific socialism, albeit to a fainter degree.

Another issue is the foreign policy of neutrality toward the warring countries and non-alignment in other countries' internal affairs, while maintaining balanced diplomacy in international affairs. Despite official declarations, political groups respond differently based on their contextual interests. Moreover, there are hushed-up accusations that no party can form and sustain the government without getting support from a particular international power. Let this not happen at all if that is true. National consensus in foreign relations is essential, irrespective of whether one party wins or another. Only when a national consensus is built among the political and other forces can the grounds for national development be guaranteed.

> Only when a national consensus is built among the political and other forces can the grounds for national development be guaranteed.

The next issue is the system of governance. Almost all parties that formed governments in the past allowed various employee organisations representing different political ideologies, even particular political parties, to operate under the guise of trade unions. Employees from different sectors claim the right to organise and form trade unions, as guaranteed by the Constitution. Those sectors range from industry to academia to the civil service, let alone students' organisations, which claim they have every right to be organised into unions because they are not appointed as employees and do not receive payment from the government or non-government agencies.

During the autocracies of the Rana and Shah regimes, student organisations were organised around political ideologies. To the democratic fighters, it was beneficial because the political parties were banned. Revolutionary political activities were manifest through those student organisations. But even after the restoration of democracy, the students' organisations and employees' associations continued to operate their unions on a political basis without modifying their roles. Although voices against this issue were sporadically raised by some political forces, they were differently reinterpreted when they were in power. Policies and attitudes towards organiations were intermittently raised without a clear vision. This was an example of the double standard regarding the employees' organisations and students' unions.

Pyramidal structure

Many state activities were affected by such ad hoc policies and practices. In many cases, the employees were loyal to the political parties they represented and were more active in political activities than in assigned tasks. In some cases, the order of the pyramidal structure was also disrupted because a lower-ranking employee was reluctant to follow the senior officer's command, as the senior officer belonged to the minor political party while the junior employee belonged to the major political force, even the ruling party. Not only were that, but the wrongdoers in official actions also exempt from punishment. As a consequence, impunity reigned, pushing the system of reward and punishment to the background.

An unfailing policy to correct this situation was essential through national consensus, but to no avail. Recently, the incumbent Prime Minister has introduced a policy on this issue, but again without a national consensus. While employees are disgruntled about the ban on their organisations, students are agitated to launch their protests against the government's move. Angry reactions are emerging, which may lead to disasters if the issue is not carefully resolved. The government's rhetoric may become a mere fallacy if no national consensus is built on this debatable issue. A national consensus can be built at both open and tacit levels. If the major political forces are unwilling to openly accept others' views, policies, and actions, they can at least develop a tacit understanding on the common issues they also have to settle in their turns.

(The author is the chairman of Molung Foundation. bhupadhamala@gmail.com)

Institutional Change Ends Structural Violence



Tara Dahal

Poor people often struggle to acquire essential needs for their freedoms. This struggle aims to shun the pain of structural injustice. Its abolition requires modification in cognitive, rules and organisational behaviour. The easing of pain lies in dealing with unjust norms and institutions that start from the life's full span from childhood to adulthood. For example, for long, Nepali girls are trained in tolerance, discipline and silence while boys in freedom, adventure and initiatives. Nepali constitution aims to rectify historical discrimination based on caste, race and gender through the creation of an equal society. It has endorsed many UN legal rules and human rights conventions, aiming to abolish injustice. Nepali state is a party to 24 international human rights conventions, including the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and race. These templates orient Nepali state to policy change, allocation of budget and improve the standards of living. The state, NGOs, civil society, communities and social movements are fostering social and gender justice. Nepal has set up inclusive national commissions for women, labour and social groups to monitor the state of their rights and adopt institutional measures for their advancement. The government has openly apologised to Dalits and marginalised groups for the discrimination they faced and pledged to alleviate their anguish.

Fair inclusion

Fair inclusion of social groups in the state and public institutions through proportional representation, social enclosure, quota and positive discriminations can rectify the latent violence through institutional innovation and change and mainstream their life-possibilities. Patriarchy makes socialisation, differentiation and occupation in society, economy and political system for male and female unequal. Institutional change is a positive incentive which can bring society to an egalitarian path. In many conservative families, girl child suffer discrimination from the beginning of their birth in opportunities and roles in the public and private spheres. This happens in a latent way, in a sad silence and as a part of social prejudice. But this silence speaks to deep-seated woes and dissimilar conditions for life-prospect.

Structural violence is systemic in nature and its endurance turns society uncompetitive. It paralyses the social mobility of the weak by powerlessness, thus allowing social control of powerful though unfair social, economic and political practices. It creates an unequal society which is prone to conflict as the victims often defy order. Violence embedded in social, political and economic institutions sub-consciously marginalise weaker segments of Nepalis and flag their potential to realize self-worth. The vertical domination of classes, castes and gender in no way can be morally justified under democratic system. But the adoption of modernity has made the social control mechanism of power elites outdated. Nepali constitution provides equal rights and equal opportunities.

Still, the educational, economic and psychological preconditions to realise them are muddled thus creating a gap between legal equality and factual inequality in income, social status and an access to political agencies. In Nepal, this demands governance reforms to mainstream the poor, weak, women, Dalits and other groups in the structures. Maltreatment within families, nursing homes, hospitals and public spaces has exposed them to wounded dignity. The life of street children, older people, disabled, widows, beggars, low-skilled job-holders is awaiting humane treatment, not putting them under the carpet. Persons who complain face fear prosecution from authorities. Micro minorities complain about institutional discrimination in opportunities. They cannot compete with the already privileged on equal terms when their initial endowment is dismal. Nepali society is too diverse.

> Nepali leaders have to frame inclusive policies and laws to trim down the structure of injustice and unequal distribution of human capital

In many areas people are not effectively mobilised with the culture of democracy, human rights and modernity, enabling them to exercise their rights. Political mobilisation has provided a certain consciousness about the role of leaders, entrepreneurs and various authorities and thus demanding their accountability to break the spiral of silence. But poverty hits them hard while selective offering of opportunities to the articulate section of society makes the constitutional rights to work, health, education, social justice, social security, social protection etc. non-actionable. Reforms in the old practices of Chaupadi, Jhuma, Badi, witchcraft, widowhood, etc. in the rural society in the name of fatalism are demanding policy attention. Caste discrimination too amounts to unwritten transcripts of society entrenched in structural violence.

Now reforms of the patriarchal system, enforcement of law and abolition of the culture of impunity are underway. Many cases of violence have gone unnoticed in the past, some of them ending up in informal mediation deemed in Nepali "milapatra" are opening up. The lingering transitional justice is another area requiring policy intervention to address direct, structural and ideological violence. Oppression of Generation Z revolt against media freedom, anti-corruption and a demand for good governance witnessed direct violence consuming the lives of 76 youths and ruins of private and public property worth billions of rupees. It has, however, brought change in the political landscape and inclusion of a new generation of social and political leaders in the governance.

Economic efficiency

Children and youth are often placed in the forefront of any political stirs. Politics as an area of privilege, profit, position, impunity and "othering" of rivals impede social modernisation. It is vital to slice latent and manifest violence. Many steps are needed: the first step is the transformation of the public sphere to remove the structural condition of discrimination. Second step is social justice with economic efficiency. Nepali leaders have to frame inclusive policies and laws to trim down the structure of injustice and unequal distribution of human capital that has left about 20 per cent of people in the bottom of progress. Third step is the diffusion of education, information and skills to ease social mobility. Nepal has adopted rights-based democracy and development. Political will to implement them and international obligations can be expected to spark positive change.

Fourth step is fair income, property ownership, jobs, health, freedom and participation in productive resources. It can lay the edifice of positive peace. Material, institutional and capital support to the less privileged groups can uproot the structural causes of gender, class and caste inequality and nullify the future source of violence. And finally, inclusive politics infused with social justice can promote a process of nonviolent social change in the pattern of human rights, reconcile and heal the wounds, nurture social cohesion and promote fair accessibility to common good.

(Dahal holds an MA in Peace and Conflict from Otto-Von Guericke University, Germany.)

50 YEARS AGO

THE RISING NEPAL

May 6, 1976

Evacuation Aroune Asoka Pillar To Be Conducted

Kathmandu, May 5 : The Department of Archaeology is to conduct an excavation around Asoka Pillar in connection with the programme to excavate selected assets in Lumbini region, reports RSS.

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READER'S MAIL

Gorkhapatra's Role In Professional Journalism

I am writing in reference to a news report titled 'Gorkhapatra Corporation holds marathon on 126th anniversary' which was published in the digital edition of this daily on May 4, 2026. Gorkhapatra Corporation is one of the oldest founded corporations in Nepal. It has been providing valuable news services through various publications one of which is The Rising Nepal.

The fact that it has held marathon on 126th anniversary is laudable as marathons are considered one of the best events. Not only does it contribute to a sense of community, but it also adds to the health and wellbeing of the participants. Exercise is known to be highly beneficial for both the mind and the body.

More than 150 athletes from Nepal Army, Nepal Police and so on participated in the marathon bringing a communal vibe to the event. Let's hope the 126th anniversary of the corporation will give its publications new direction, enabling them to further contribute to the development of professional journalism sector.

Rasmi Thapa Jhapa

TAILPIECE

Bob was sitting at the table one morning, reading the paper after breakfast. He came across an article about a beautiful actress who was about to marry a football player known for his lack of IQ.

He turned to his wife and said, "I'll never understand why the biggest jerks get the most attractive wives."

She replied, "Why, thank you, Dear!"

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A man walks into a bar with his pet alligator. He asks the bartender, "Do you serve lawyers here?" "Yes, we do!"

"Good. Give me a beer, and I'll have a lawyer for my alligator.

Zelenskyy slams Russia as strikes kill 5

AP
Kyiv, May 5



PHOTO: AP

Emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire a vehicle following a Russian drone attack in Kyiv, Ukraine, Tuesday, May 5, 2026.

Russian drone and missile strikes targeting Ukraine's power grid during the night killed at least five people and wounded 39 others, Ukrainian authorities said Tuesday, less than a day before Kyiv said it would enact a ceasefire and three days before Moscow promised its own truce.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy rebuked Moscow for what he said was its "utter cynicism" in launching the attacks after Russia announced a unilateral truce over two days later this week while it marks the 81st anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

"Russia could cease fire at any moment, and this would stop the war and our responses," Zelenskyy said in a post on X. "Peace is needed, and real steps are needed to achieve it. Ukraine will act in kind."

The truce proposal follows a familiar pattern of Russia declaring short unilateral ceasefires during the war timed to various holidays — most recently Orthodox Easter — that don't produce any tangible results amid deep mistrust between Moscow and Kyiv more than four years after Russia launched an all-out invasion of its neighbor. U.S.-led diplomatic efforts to stop the war have come to nothing.

The Russian Defense Ministry declared a unilateral ceasefire in Ukraine for Friday and Saturday, but said that it would strike back at the country if it tries to disrupt the festivities on Victory Day, which Russia marks annually on May 9.

Zelenskyy replied that Ukraine would observe a truce beginning at the end of Tuesday and would respond in kind to Russia's actions from that moment on. He didn't put an end date on the truce.

Russian forces fired 11 Iskander-M ballistic missiles and 164 strike drones at Ukraine overnight from Monday to Tuesday, including a jet-powered Shahed drone variant, the Ukrainian Air Force said.

Air defense units stopped 149 drones and one missile, but others got through, it said. Two ballistic missiles failed to reach their targets, the air force said without elaborating.

Russia has repeatedly hammered Ukraine's energy infrastructure during the war, which began on Feb. 24, 2022. It hit natural gas production facilities in Ukraine's central Poltava and northeastern Kharkiv regions, state energy company Naftogaz Group said.

Since the start of the year, Naftogaz facilities have come under attack 107 times, the company said.

Zelenskyy said that the Poltava attack was "especially vile," because Russia launched a second missile at the same target when emergency rescuers were working at the scene.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko said that Russia's main targets were energy facilities, oil and gas infrastructure, railways and industrial sites, although the attacks also damaged homes, businesses and the transportation network.

Russia's ceasefire proposals "remain only statements," Svyrydenko said.

Ukraine also kept up the pace of its long-range attacks on Russian rear areas, apparently aiming at more oil facilities in an effort to further disrupt Moscow's war economy.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that its forces destroyed 289 Ukrainian drones overnight in 18 Russian regions. Drones were also intercepted over the occupied Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014, and over the Azov Sea, it said.

Ukraine during the night launched its F-5 Flamingo cruise missiles at targets including military-industrial complex facilities in Cheboksary, located more than 1,500 kilometers (900 miles) away, Zelenskyy said.

The plant supplied navigation components for the Russian Navy, the missile industry, aviation and armored vehicles, he said.

The regional health ministry said a Ukrainian drone attack wounded three people in the city of Cheboksary.

Ukrainian drones also attacked the Kirishi oil refinery in the Leningrad region close to St. Petersburg, sparking a blaze in the town's industrial zone, local Gov. Alexander Drozdenko said.

EU hails leap in Armenia ties

AFP
Yerevan, May 5

The EU and Armenia laid the groundwork for closer ties at a summit in Yerevan Tuesday, marking another step in the former Soviet nation's cautious pivot away from Russia and towards Brussels.

European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen and European Council president Antonio Costa held talks with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in the capital, resulting in several deals and pledges.

"With this summit, we take a leap forward in a new level of cooperation," von der Leyen said at the gathering -- the first of its kind. Relations between Yerevan and its traditional ally Moscow have become strained in recent years, in part because Russian peacekeepers failed to intervene during military conflicts with neighbouring Azerbaijan.

Under Pashinyan, Armenia has formally pursued a strategy of what he calls "diversification", in which the landlocked country pursues ties with both Russia and the West.

But analysts argue that really amounts to a tilt towards Brussels, given the country is currently a member of the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union and the Moscow-led CSTO security alliance, although it froze its membership of the latter in 2024.

"If we are accepted into the EU, we will be happy and satisfied," Pashinyan said Tuesday, adding that Yerevan was working towards meeting the bloc's strict membership standards.

In another sign of its westward turn, the Armenian capital on Monday hosted more than 40 European leaders, including Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky and NATO chief Mark Rutte, for a meeting of the European Political Community (EPC).

The EU summit coincided with a state visit by French President Emmanuel Macron, whose country is home to Europe's largest Armenian community and who received a hearty welcome in Yerevan.

"I believe deeply that Armenia's calling lies in Europe," Macron told a forum in Yerevan Tuesday. "Europe is the most natural partner for Armenia and the South Caucasus at this period in time," he said.

The nation of three million people between Europe and Asia signed a comprehensive partnership agreement with the European Union in 2017, deepening its cooperation in trade and other areas.

Last year, it adopted a law formally declaring its intention to apply for EU membership and is seeking to secure better visa access to the 27-nation bloc for its people.

On Tuesday it signed a "connectivity partnership" to strengthen transport, energy, and digital links with Brussels. The EU also urged European firms to invest in the country, underscoring the fresh opportunities created by a peace process with neighbouring Azerbaijan.

"We have never before heard such a call, such a message," Pashinyan said, noting Armenia was previously seen as "a high-risk destination for investment".

The arch-foes have fought two wars over the Karabakh region in recent years. Azerbaijan finally seized the mountainous territory in a lightning offensive in 2023, ending three decades of rule by Armenian separatists.

A reset in ties was fostered last year by a deal brokered by the United States, which has been playing a larger role in the region, with Vice President JD Vance visiting Armenia earlier this year.

"Armenia sits on the shortest route between Central Asia, the Caspian Sea and Europe and in the past, because of war and geopolitics, this route was closed, but now you are changing this," von der Leyen told Pashinyan.

Police probe arson at London synagogue

AP
London, May 5

Counterterror police were investigating an arson attack at a former London synagogue Tuesday as Prime Minister Keir Starmer hosted a meeting to respond to a recent wave of antisemitic attacks that have caused outrage and fear in the Jewish community.

Gates and a lock on the front of the former temple in the Whitechapel area of east London had minor damage, but no one was injured, Metropolitan Police said.

The incident is the latest attack since four ambulances owned by a Jewish charity were torched in March. Since then, a synagogue was firebombed and other Jewish sites have been targeted in attempted arsons.

Last week, two Jewish men were stabbed in what police have called an act of terror. "It is part of a pattern of rising antisemitism that has left our Jewish communities feeling frightened, angry, and asking whether this country, their home, is safe for them," Starmer told community leaders.

"These disgusting attacks are being made against British Jews. But, make no mistake, this crisis — it is a crisis for all of us."

The number of antisemitic incidents reported across the U.K. has soared since the attack by Hamas-led militants on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and the subsequent war in Gaza, according to the Community Security Trust charity. The group recorded 3,700 incidents in 2025, up from 1,662 in 2022.

The wave of recent attacks have come since the Feb. 28 start of the Iran war and police are looking into whether they are the work of Iranian proxies.

A pro-Iran group calling itself Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia — or Islamic Movement of the Companions of the Right — has claimed responsibility for several of the attacks.

It has also admitted being behind incidents in recent months at places of worship, business and financial institutions across Europe, all of which appear to be linked to Jewish or Israeli interests.

"One of the lines of inquiry is whether a foreign state has been behind some of these incidents," Starmer said. "Our message to Iran, or to any other country that might seek to foment violence, hatred or division in society, is that it will not be tolerated."

Starmer promised to take action to tackle antisemitism, including requiring universities to publish the scale of the problem and take steps to stop it. Arts funding will be withdrawn from anyone promoting antisemitism.

Israel extends Gaza activists' detention

AFP
Israel, May 5



PHOTO: AFP

Brazil's activist Thiago Avila being escorted into court in Israel.

An Israeli court has extended the detention of two foreign activists from a Gaza-bound flotilla until Sunday, a rights group representing them said, as authorities continue to question the pair.

Spanish national Saif Abu Keshek and Brazilian national Thiago Avila appeared before a court in the city of Ashkelon for their second hearing on Tuesday, after they were brought to Israel for questioning last week.

The two, held in a prison in the southern Israeli city, were among dozens of activists aboard a Gaza-bound flotilla intercepted by Israeli forces off the coast of Greece early on Thursday.

At their first hearing on Sunday, the court extended their detention by two days. A second hearing was held on Tuesday, where both appeared with their legs shackled.

"The court approved their detention until Sunday morning" at Tuesday's hearing, Miriam Azem, international advocacy coordinator at the Israeli rights group Adalah told AFP. An AFP journalist saw the two activists brought to the courtroom.

Adalah said the two activists were on hunger strike, with Tuesday their sixth day of protest. On Monday, the rights group alleged the pair had been subjected to physical and psychological abuse in detention.

Both Abu Keshek and Avila are being held in isolation, with "high-intensity lighting" on at all times in their cells, Adalah said, adding that Avila was being held in "extremely cold temperatures"."They are kept blindfolded at all times whenever they are moved outside their cells, including during medical examinations," it said. Israeli authorities have rejected the abuse claims.

At Sunday's hearing, Adalah said the state attorney had presented a list of offences the pair were accused of, including "assisting the enemy during wartime" and "membership in and providing services to a terrorist organisation".

But Adalah's lawyers challenged the state's jurisdiction, arguing there had been an "unlawful abduction" of the two activists in international waters.

Israel's foreign ministry said both individuals were affiliated with the Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad (PCPA), a group accused by Washington of "clandestinely acting on behalf of" Palestinian militant group Hamas.

The ministry said Abu Keshek was a leading PCPA member, and that Avila was also linked to the group and "suspected of illegal activity". The flotilla's vessels had set sail from France, Spain and Italy with the aim of breaking Israel's blockade of Gaza and bringing humanitarian supplies to the devastated Palestinian territory.

PRISM

Skydiving Rubik's cube record broken

New York: A 23-year-old German YouTuber jumped out of a plane to break the Guinness World Record for the fastest time to solve a rotating puzzle cube while in freefall.

Tom Kopke, aka Tooleko on YouTube, solved his Rubik's cube in 23.333 seconds before opening his parachute over Mossel Bay, South Africa, in February. He broke the previous record of 28.25 seconds, which was set by Australian Sam Sieracki in 2023.

"I first solved the Rubik's cube when I was 18 and practiced a lot back then. I even made a video attempting some crazy Rubik's cube challenges, where I also said that one day I would solve it while skydiving," Kopke told Guinness World Records.

He said the goal was put off for a while because he didn't have a skydiving license yet.

Dashboard lights reveal baby squirrel

Virginia: A Virginia man opened the hood of his car to find out what was causing his dashboard warning lights to come on and discovered a nest of baby squirrels.Thomas Ingle, chief field services officer and deputy director of Fairfax County Animal Services, said the Fairfax man turned on his car and discovered every warning light was illuminated.

He checked under the hood and found baby squirrels curled up in a nest that had been built by their mother in the engine bay. An animal services officer arrived on the scene and moved the baby squirrels into a basket to keep them warm.

Agencies

TODAY IN HISTORY

1659 – English Restoration: A faction of the British Army removes Richard Cromwell as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth and reinstalls the Rump Parliament.
1682 – Louis XIV of France moves his court to the Palace of Versailles.
1757 – Battle of Prague: A Prussian army fights an Austrian army in Prague during the Seven Years' War.
1757 – The end of Konbaung–Hanthawaddy War, and the end of Burmese Civil War (1740–1757).
1782– Construction begins on the Grand Palace, the royal residence of the King of Siam in Bangkok, at the command of King Buddha Yodfa Chulaloke.
1801 – Captain Thomas Cochrane in the 14-gun HMS Speedy captures the 32-gun Spanish frigate El Gamo.
1835 – James Gordon Bennett, Sr. publishes the first issue of the New York Herald.

G7 ministers to meet, skip US tariff

AFP
Paris, May 5



FILE PHOTO: AFP

G7 leaders during an informal session.

G7 trade ministers are set to meet in Paris on Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss issues such as critical minerals and small packages but will not directly address the latest US threat to impose additional tariffs on European vehicles.

The second meeting of trade ministers under the French G7 presidency is taking place as the global economy has been upended by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's oil normally flows. Discussion of the repercussions of the Middle East war is expected to dominate an informal session on Tuesday, according to the office of France's junior trade minister Nicolas Forissier.

Meanwhile President Donald Trump's threat last Friday that he will hike US tariffs on cars and trucks from the European Union will likely addressed separately. US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer is expected to meet with EU Trade Commission Maros Sefcovic in the French capital.

They also have a meeting scheduled with Forissier and French Economy Minister Roland Lescure. The US and EU struck a deal last summer to cap US tariffs on EU autos and parts at 15 percent, which is lower than the 25-percent duty that Trump imposed on many other trading partners.

In late March, EU lawmakers gave their green light to the bloc's tariff deal with Trump, but with conditions. It must still be approved by member countries. "Our position for the moment is not to overreact," said Forissier's office. "We will discuss it among Europeans when the time comes, but in any case not within the framework of the G7," it added.

"This agreement is useful and we must continue to implement it." On Wednesday the trade ministers of the G7 nations (Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States) are expected to discuss the four priorities set by the group's French presidency.

The first is find a collective and effective response to industrial overcapacity that undermines free trade. Even if the discussion doesn't formally target China, the country's subsidising of certain sectors has created trade tensions for years.

A second priority is economic security, in particular securing and diversifying supplies of critical minerals that are indispensable in producing strategic products such as computer chips, electric vehicle batteries and super magnets. France favours creating a system of groups of producing, processing and consuming nations that share a commitment to implementing good practices.

The ministers will also touch on the failure in March of the latest round of World Trade Organization negotiations, with the body's role as a trade referee having been paralyzed by the United States for years.



PHOTO: RSS

Foreign tourists exploring the scenic hill town of Bandipur in Tanahun district.

'Politics banned in civil service, universities to restore public trust'

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

Prime Minister Balendra Shah has defended the government's decision to remove party-based politics from educational institutions and the civil service, stating that the move is essential to restore public trust and strengthen professionalism.

In a status posted on his social media (Facebook) on Tuesday, Prime Minister Shah said political interference had long undermined professionalism, with party loyalty often prioritised over competence. He wrote, "For years, many organisations became sleeper cells of political parties rather than serving the genuine interests of students and employees."

He further stated the new policy, implemented through an ordinance, bans party activities in universities and the bureaucracy and ensures that appointments, transfers, and promotions are based on rules and capability rather than political connections.

The Prime Minister clarified that the decision to prohibit political activities in universities and the bureaucracy was not due to an inability to form



Prime Minister Shah

party-affiliated organisations. "If we (Rastriya Swatantra Party) wanted, we could build large student and employee organizations even today," he said. "But past experience shows that adding more political organisations does not improve education quality or protect the dignity of civil servants."

Shah also rejected the framing that the measures curtail rights. "This does not take away rights, it strengthens professional freedom," he wrote. "When students learn politics, let them learn it from teachers, not from crowds of party leaders. When civil servants seek guidance, let them look to the law, not to the shadow of a party."

"This is not a fight against any party, but an effort to protect the system and secure the future," he said, urging public support.

Directive to close trade union offices

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration has issued a directive to close all trade union offices operating within government bodies.

In a press statement issued on Tuesday, the ministry said that provisions related to trade unions under Section 53 of the Civil Service Act, 2049 had been scrapped through the Ordinance to Amend Some Nepal Acts, 2083. Following this, all ministries, departments, commissions, secretariats, and related agencies have been instructed to shut down offices of trade unions, including official unions, operating within their premises.

The ministry also directed that any government property, such as office space, rooms, vehicles, and other facilities, being used by trade unions be reclaimed by the respective offices. Employees affiliated with trade union committees at various levels are to be reassigned to their designated duties as per approved staffing positions.

Construction sector hit hard by price rise: FCAN

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

The Federation of Contractors' Associations of Nepal (FCAN) has said that the construction industry is currently facing one of the most difficult periods in its history owing to the abrupt price rise of fuels and construction materials.

Speaking at a press meet in Kathmandu on Tuesday, FCAN President Nicholas Pandey said that the ongoing conflict in West Asia has caused abnormal increases in the prices of fuel, including diesel and kerosene, as well as construction materials such as bitumen, cement and steel rods.

"The price of diesel has risen from Rs. 139 per litre to Rs. 225 in just a couple of months, while bitumen has increased from Rs. 75 to Rs. 155 per kilogram. As a result, construction costs have surged, forcing contractors into a 'force majeure' situation," he said.

The FCAN expressed dissatisfaction over the government's inability to take effective decisions on price adjustment. It noted that weak capital expenditure by the state, sharp increases in the prices of construction materials, and policy uncertainty have brought most projects across the country to a near standstill. Only about 27 per cent of the capital budget allocated for the current fiscal year 2025/26 has been spent so far, directly affecting infrastructure development.

Pandey said that the sector—comprising around 32,000 contractors affiliated through seven provincial bodies, 77 district associations and other members—is under severe financial pressure.

Likewise, stating that rising costs and shortages of materials have halted most projects, including those of national pride, the FCAN urged the government to extend deadlines for all projects, including provisions for bank guarantees, insurance and compensation.

"While recent amendments to the Public Procurement Act, 2007 have introduced some positive provisions, key issues such as low bidding remain unresolved. Issues like price adjustment, consumer committees and monthly payments are still unclear," it said.

Similarly, the Federation warned that ongoing crackdowns on contractors and entrepreneurs have created fear within the private sector, negatively affecting investment, employment and supply systems.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MoPIT) issued a set of directives to accelerate construction works and enhance project accountability across the country.

Secretary of the Ministry Gopal Prasad Sigdel directed the director generals and project chiefs to immediately fast-track ongoing contracts.

He also directed for the urgent reporting of hurdles related to local material extraction and supply chain disruptions, particularly regarding shortages of bitumen and fuel.

Likewise, the MoPIT warned the project chiefs that they will be held personally responsible for any stalled activities or lack of progress on-site. To ensure real-time oversight, the Ministry has mandated regular updates via virtual platforms, such as WhatsApp groups.

It also asked the contractors to mandatorily provide detailed Resource Mobilisation Plans. The Ministry is set to conduct 'strict monitoring', and issued a warning that contractual action will be taken against those failing to meet deadlines.

Night-time traffic barred on BP Highway

BY KEDAR TIMALSIMA
Banepa, May 5

Night-time vehicular movement has been halted on the BP Highway, which connects the federal capital Kathmandu with eastern hills and Tarai districts.

A meeting of the District Security Committee on Tuesday decided to enforce the restriction from the same day, banning both private and public vehicles from operating between 5pm and 5am until further notice.

Chief District Officer of Kavrepalanchowk, Gopal Kumar Adhikari, said the decision applies to the Bhakundebesi-Khurkot section of the highway. He said the move aims to prevent potential accidents caused by rising water levels in the Roshi River following rainfall.

"Rain in the upper catchment area of the Roshi River can rapidly increase the water flow, which may wash away temporary diversion roads built along the highway and pose serious risks to vehicles and passengers," Adhikari said.

He added that, even outside the restricted hours, traffic could be halted for short periods depending on rainfall, possible flooding in the Roshi River and overall weather conditions.

Adhikari said Monday's incident, in which 89 passengers were stranded in floodwaters, highlighted the risks. "Rescuing passengers trapped in five Hiace vans and electric vehicles at Ghumaune in Roshi Rural Municipality-7 during the night was extremely difficult, putting lives at risk. To minimise such dangers, night-time traffic has been suspended," he said.

He said the decision was also based on directives from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority and coordination between the chief district officers of



PHOTO: DISTRICT POLICE OFFICE, KAVRE

Security personnel rescuing passengers stranded in the Roshi River flood.

Kavrepalanchowk and Sindhuli.

According to Adhikari, drivers of five vehicles who ignored police instructions and attempted to proceed have been taken into custody and legal action has been initiated. The vehicles have been kept in a safe location.

The under-construction highway has been disrupted dozens of times over the past nine and a half months due to rainfall. The District Security Committee has previously imposed similar closures on four occasions.

Floods in the second week of October last year damaged a 29-kilometre stretch of the highway from Bhakunde to Nepalthok. Since then, traffic has been operating via temporary diversions along the Roshi River, which are frequently affected even by moderate rainfall.

Reconstruction work is currently under way in four sections in Kavrepalanchowk and one section in Sindhuli.

Passengers rescued

A total of 89 passengers stranded in the Roshi River flood since Monday evening were rescued safely after around nine and a half hours.

The passengers, travelling in five Hiace vans and electric vehicles heading towards Kathmandu, were trapped from around 5 pm following heavy rainfall in Banepa, Panauti, Bethanchok, Dhulikhel and Namobuddha areas.

Rescue teams from the Nepali Army's Shree Meher Battalion in Dhulikhel, Nepal Police and the Armed Police Force carried out the operation at around 1:30am using a rafting boat. The rescued passengers were transported to their destinations the same night by two buses and an Armed Police Force vehicle.

Police said more than 170 vehicles that had been held at Charsebesi and Lhaskot due to the flood were safely allowed to proceed to their destinations on Tuesday morning.

President issues...

Prior to this, the President has also issued several other ordinances. On April 30, the Public Procurement (Second Amendment) Ordinance and the Cooperatives (First Amendment) Ordinance were issued. This was followed on May 1 by the enactment of the Prevention of Money Laundering (Third Amendment) Ordinance.

On May 2, a set of ordinances was introduced addressing matters related to the Academy of Health Sciences, provisions concerning the dismissal of public officials, and amendments to laws governing universities.

Subsequently, on May 3, an ordinance amending various Nepal Acts was issued. All these measures had been recommended by a Cabinet meeting held on April 27.

Govt to begin refunding depositors...

However, if a depositor has savings in multiple federal-level problematic cooperative organisations, he/she will get a refund only from one such institution.

If funds are insufficient, the Committee is likely to distribute the remaining funds in the account on a pro-rata basis.

In the event of a depositor's death or if they cannot be located, the savings will be refunded to their legal heir based on evidence provided.

Sick pillar of economy

Although cooperative is mentioned in the constitution as one of the pillars of the national economy, it remained unregulated and unsupervised sector for the last seven decades. Mismanagement and fund embezzlement in large and high-profile cooperatives were exposed in the last one decade.

The government began to declare cooperatives as 'problematic' since 2018. In 2024, a parliamentary probe found that about Rs. 87.89 billion was misappropriated in at least 40 cooperatives.

They also had faked their audit reports and fabricated property divisions.

In January this year, the Supreme Court ordered the government to return funds to small depositors – those with less than Rs. 500,000.

On April 22, the government issued the Procedures to operate the revolving fund. With President Ramchandra Paudel ratifying the Cooperative (First Amendment Ordinance) last week, the government can now use public funds for immediate repayment to victims.

Growing calls to revive Bhrikuti...

"We worked here for 25 years, but after the factory shut down, we were left with neither jobs nor pay. We are the most affected," said Tiwari. "We hope the state will understand our problem." Despite multiple written agreements between workers, employees, and management promising payment, Tiwari says the management has yet to take any action.

Tiwari also suggested that the government form an expert task force to study the best possible use of the site and implement its recommendations, which would benefit both locals and the state. He stressed that it is urgent to address the unsightly condition of the site along the highway.

The Bhrikuti Paper Mill was built in 1982 with assistance from the Chinese government and handed over to Nepal to make the country self-reliant in paper production. Its decline began after privatisation in 1992.

Under the policy of transferring state responsibilities to the private sector, the government, led by Girija Prasad Koirala, sold the factory in 1992 to Golchha Organisation, Kavra Group, and Konkraft, including all its land and structures.

Children from...

Director Basanta Acharya said arrangements were being made in line with recommendations that hostel facilities are most suitable for children above 10 years of age.

Earlier, Acting Mayor Sunita Dangol had urged private school associations to support the education of children in holding centre. Following her appeal, major private education organisations jointly expressed their commitment to facilitate continued education for children from genuinely landless families.

Documents being delivered to...

Institutional improvements are also under way alongside the service expansion. In collaboration with Nepal Telecom, preparations are being made to start home delivery of SIM cards soon, according to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.

Logistics support for transporting examination papers, answer sheets and certificates has already begun with Mid-West University, while discussions are ongoing with Nepal Open University for similar services.

On the systems side, a study committee has been formed to integrate systems with the Department of Passports and efforts are under way to link systems with the Financial Comptroller General Office.

The department has also started reviewing postal routes and upgrading postal codes under the Postal Internal Tracking System (PITS) in coordination with provincial directorates and district offices.

Jumla women move towards self-reliance

BY NAURATE NEPALI
Sinja, Jumla, May 5

Women in Jumla have recently shown remarkable progress in entrepreneurship. This marks a shift from their traditional roles, which were largely confined to household work and subsistence farming. They are increasingly becoming active participants in economic activities.

Despite challenges such as limited resources, difficult terrain, poor transport facilities and restricted access to markets, women in the district are making significant strides towards self-reliance. By using their skills, hard work and locally available resources, they are building sustainable livelihoods.

Many women in Jumla are focusing on turning local agricultural products into business opportunities. This has not only increased their income but also helped promote and preserve local produce.

Amrita Rawal, 67, of Tatopani Rural Municipality-2, Dagibada, is one such inspiring example. She produces sattu from organic Jumli barley.

When her own farm could not meet the demand for raw materials, she began purchasing barley from neighbouring villages for processing. This has expanded her production capacity while also creating market opportunities for other farmers.

Rawal's entrepreneurial journey has shown steady growth. In the first year of her business, she earned Rs. 80,000, which increased to Rs. 130,000 in the second year. She now earns between Rs. 250,000 and Rs. 300,000 annually.

Similarly, Sakhi Kathayat, 47, of Chandannath Municipality-5, has established herself as a successful local entrepreneur by running the 'Lucky Aalu Chips and Pickle Industry'. Starting with a small investment four years ago, her business has steadily expanded.

She produces pickles, savoury snacks and potato chips for the local market. Last year alone, she sold pickle worth around Rs. 300,000, snacks worth Rs. 60,000 and potato chips worth Rs. 30,000. In the current fiscal year, she has already recorded transactions of Rs. 180,000.

Likewise, Laxmi Thapa, 28, from Chhina village in Chandannath Municipality-6, has started her own enterprise based on her skills and hard work. She produces potato chips and various types of pickles, earning around Rs. 20,000 per month, with an annual income of around Rs. 290,000.

'Agyat' digs lives of common people

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5



Fiction writer Keshav Raj Gyawali's latest novel, 'Agyat', was launched in the capital on Monday.

The book was jointly unveiled by senior journalist Mohan Mainali and the author himself during an event organised by Fine Print amid the presence of a distinguished literary figure.

The novel delves into the lives of the common people who bled for the expansion of the Gorkha state but remained unrecognised by the very nation they helped build. These anonymous soldiers and civilians have historically been sidelined, existing only in the shadows of mainstream history.

The story follows Manya, a slave who escapes to find his long-lost father. His journey leads him to Haridwar, India, where a reunion with his father provides him with clues about his mother's whereabouts. As Manya continues his search, he witnesses the harrowing realities of war, rampant looting, death, and the profound agony of war-affected people.

His path eventually leads him to the historic battleground of Nalapani, where Nepali forces led by Balabhadra Kunwar stood alert against British aggression.

Despite Manya's deep-seated rejection of the war, he finds himself involved in it. In a pivotal moment, he fires the shot that kills the British General Gillespie, forcing the enemy troops to go back. The novel poignantly explores whether Manya finds his destination amidst the surrounding chaos.

"The novel weaves a love story and signals the meaninglessness of war," states the publisher's blurb. "Written from the perspective of a 'war pawn,' it is a work that balances aesthetic beauty with a firm ideological stance."

Gyawali said that he picked the historical facts and tried to find the truth. "I left no stone unturned to lead the way of truth based on the historical facts," he said in an answer to a query by moderator Mohan Mainali.

According to Gyawali, he wanted to tell the story of laymen who fought for the expansion of Gorkha state. However, no one remembered nor mentioned them. "I wanted to tell their story through my novel," he disclosed, mentioning that he wanted readers to realise and feel the general people's fight during Gorkha state's expansion. Gyawali has devoted the novel to the very persons.

Published by Fine Print, the 440-page novel provides even reference and indexes. The book is priced at Rs. 898.

The America-based writer's debut book Arko Bhor, a collection of short stories published by Shikha Books, was a receipent of the prestigious Padma Shree Literature Award in 2078 BS.

Nepal Day celebrated in Germany

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5



The 11th edition of Nepal Day celebrated in Germany Nepal Day was organised in Frankfurt, Germany, on May 2, showcasing Nepal's rich cultural diversity, social initiatives, and global engagement under the theme "Let's do it together."

Organised by the Nepali Samaj Germany, the event brought together over 200 participants, including members of the Nepali community, local residents, and international guests. Through a blend of music, dance, cuisine, and dialogue, the function sought to present Nepal beyond traditional stereotypes, emphasising that the country is not only defined by its mountains but also by its vibrant and evolving society.

Chairman of Nepali Samaj, Shiva Adhikari, highlighted the organisation's ongoing contributions to education, healthcare, and community development in Nepal. He noted that the association has facilitated 22 sponsorships for children, with a special focus on supporting the education of deaf students to help them build independent futures.Speaking on the occasion, Adhikari reiterated the organisation's vision to build cultural bridges, raise awareness, and promote sustainable development. "Nepal is not just a land of natural beauty, but a country of resilience, innovation, and hope," he said.

In partnership with various organisations, the Nepali Samaj has also trained 36 mobile maternity assistants equipped with portable ultrasound devices.

Poets honour labour's role



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

Poets in the capital raised their voices in honour of labour and its profound role in human development, marking the 137th International Labour Day recently.

The programme, organised by the Bartaman Kabita Samuha in association with Jagaran Academy and Ratoghar Foundation in Kalanki, Kathmandu, echoed with a shared conviction: it is labour that has carried human civilisation to its present height.

"There is nothing more beautiful than labour," the poets affirmed. "Without labour, the civilisation we witness today would not exist."

Noted poet Shyamal recited his powerful poem 'Pharak Pharak Loktantra', drawing a sharp contrast between the democracy of labourers and that of the privileged elite. One of his striking lines read, "They win without voting; we lose everything by voting." He also recited a poem centred on labour by American poet Langston Hughes, further deepening the global resonance of the theme.

Laxmi Mali presented 'Hali Ra Maisap', poignantly expressing that without labour, one cannot truly experience the beauty of life. Sneh Sayami's 'Sujikar' painted a moving anecdote of a poor tailor who promises to sew not only clothes but even the poverty of others.

In 'Swad', Amar Aakash offered a touching portrayal of a mother's labour, which sustains her family with something as simple yet meaningful as bread and jam.

Representing Bartaman Kabita Samuha, Rami Priya recited 'Malik Ra Parkhal', capturing the enduring conflict between labourers and owners. Similarly, Bishwa Sigdel's 'Juice Pasalma' revealed the quiet, often overlooked labour of a young boy working in a juice shop.

Chandra Bahadur Lama, through his poem 'Thorle', unfolded a swirling narrative of suppressed Indigenous voices. In 'Bhokko Ramayan', Ram Gopal Ashutosh reflected that integrity alone cannot conquer hunger, while Chachu's poem sang a tender lullaby of labour woven into his own life. Kanchan Gajmer's 'Pasinako Mulya' portrayed the silent agony of landless squatters.

Babu Tripathi's 'Yo Desh Kasko Ho' delivered a deeply moving account of the downtrodden, eventually raising the haunting question, "Whose country is this?"

Likewise, Shakuntala Joshi narrated the backstory of a poet who tore up his citizenship certificate in front of Singha Durbar, a symbolic act of anguish and protest. Anita Lama, also deputy mayor of Budhanilkantha Municipality, used her poem 'Sannata' to cast sharp satire on the silence of intellectual circles regarding the demolition of squatter settlements.

Kishan Paudel, Lumanti Chitrakar, and Pramod Snehi sang in unison of tireless, resilient hands that never cease to build the world, while Jayanti Spandan expressed a hopeful wish for labourers to one day rise as rulers.

Met Gala dress code bent

AP
New York, May 5



Met Gala guests from Beyoncé and Naomi Osaka to Emma Chamberlain did not play it safe this year, delivering custom works of art in honour of the dress code "Fashion is art." Beyoncé left the cowboy hat at home and dazzled in a custom Olivier Rousteing sculptural skeleton dress with a cream and dust-blue feathered train, fitted with a diamond crown for "Queen Bey." The Grammy winner, along with her husband Jay-Z and daughter Blue Ivy, stopped to pose together on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Osaka stunned in an edgy Robert Wun white sculptural fitted dress featuring exaggerated shoulders and adorned with red feathers and a matching headpiece. To complete her show-stopping look, Osaka wore two-toned red gloves. A similar look by Wun sits inside the Met's Costume Institute exhibit, "Costume Art." On the carpet, Osaka opened her dress and removed her headpiece for a grand reveal underneath. She wowed in a sleek red beaded gown embellished with the human anatomy.

Chamberlain arrived in a breathtaking Mugler by Miguel Castro Freitas hand-painted dress. The star was dipped in a rainbow of colours from her décolletage down to the spiral train of her body-hugging dress, with fringe falling from the cuffs of the long-sleeved gown.

With all the fanfare around "The Devil Wears Prada 2," Met Gala co-chair Anna Wintour opted for a cool mint ensemble — not the trendy cerulean blue from the first film. Wintour's look featured a feathered cape and a beaded dress by Matthieu Blazy for Chanel, which she classically paired with her signature bob and oversized sunglasses.

Other co-chairs of the evening, Nicole Kidman and Venus Williams, chose more subdued, glamorous looks. Williams wore a sparkling black off-the-shoulder gown with a dazzling Swarovski neckpiece in homage to a painting of herself by Robert Pruitt for the National Portrait Gallery.

Event sponsor Lauren Sánchez Bezos arrived in a form-fitting Schiaparelli gown, which she told Vogue was influenced by John Singer Sargent's 1884 painting "Madame X."

When guests were not wearing art, they were making references to it. Head of Editorial Content for US Vogue, Chloe Malle, wore an apricot-orange Colleen Allen dress inspired by Sir Frederic Leighton's "Flaming June." Actor and author Lena Dunham collaborated with Valentino designer Alessandro Michele on her red feathered dress to depict his interpretation of "Judith Slaying Holofernes."

As a child, Dunham told Vogue, she would visit the Met museum on Sundays and admire the paintings in the Renaissance section. "One of my favourite painters from that era is Artemisia Gentileschi, who was one of the only women painting professionally at that time," she said. "So I sent some of the images to Alessandro, and because he's a genius, instead of dressing me like her, he said, 'You are actually the blood spatter as … Judith cuts the neck off a man.'"

Stars also celebrated the dress code with their accessories. Actor and fashion muse Gwendoline Christie playfully covered her face on the carpet with a mask of her own face, while pop star Katy Perry opened and closed her fencing-like mask to smile at the cameras.

Venus Williams was not the only guest to break the fourth wall with an artistic reference to herself. It was a trend of the night, with gala host committee member Amy Sherald in a Thom Browne look inspired by her own work, and singer Sabrina Carpenter wearing a Dior dress designed with film strips from the 1954 film "Sabrina."

Some guests brought out their artistic side as they transformed their dresses into works of art. TikTok followers watched as Jessica Kayll, who designs colourful silk robes, finished painting her dress in the days leading up to the gala. Kayll painted her own take on the famous Monet water lily scene directly onto her dress.

While her "The Devil Wears Prada 2" castmates kept it classic in black, Anne Hathaway made a statement in her custom Michael Kors Grecian-inspired strapless dress, which was hand-painted with a dove of peace. "She is the goddess of peace," Kors told Vogue.

HOROSCOPE

tarot.com

ARIES: Something shifts in how you relate to people and long-term goals. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 11th House of Friends, you start to see which connections, group dynamics, or future plans actually hold value.

CANCER: A deeper awareness forms around trust, boundaries, and shared dynamics. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 8th House of Intimacy, something beneath the surface starts to shift, especially around what you give and what you expect in return.

LIBRA: Something creative or personal begins to shift beneath the surface. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 5th House of Creativity, you may start to see what you truly want to express and what no longer feels aligned.

CAPRICORN: A deeper awareness emerges around your priorities and what you value. As Pluto turns retrograde in your 2nd House of Resources, you may question how you spend time, money, and energy more intentionally.

TAURUS: A deeper shift begins around your direction and long-term goals. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 10th House of Career, you may start to question what success actually means and whether your current path reflects it.

LEO: Something in a relationship dynamic begins to shift in a meaningful way. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 7th House of Partnership, you may start to see patterns in how you connect, compromise, or share control.

SCORPIO: A deeper shift begins at your foundation, and you can feel it. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 4th House of Home, something about your space, family dynamics, or emotional base starts to evolve in a noticeable way.

AQUARIUS: Something within you begins to shift, and it's more important than it looks. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 1st House of Self, you may start to see yourself differently or question roles that no longer fit.

GEMINI: Something about your perspective begins to shift in a meaningful way. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 9th House of Perspective, beliefs, plans, or long-term ideas start to evolve.

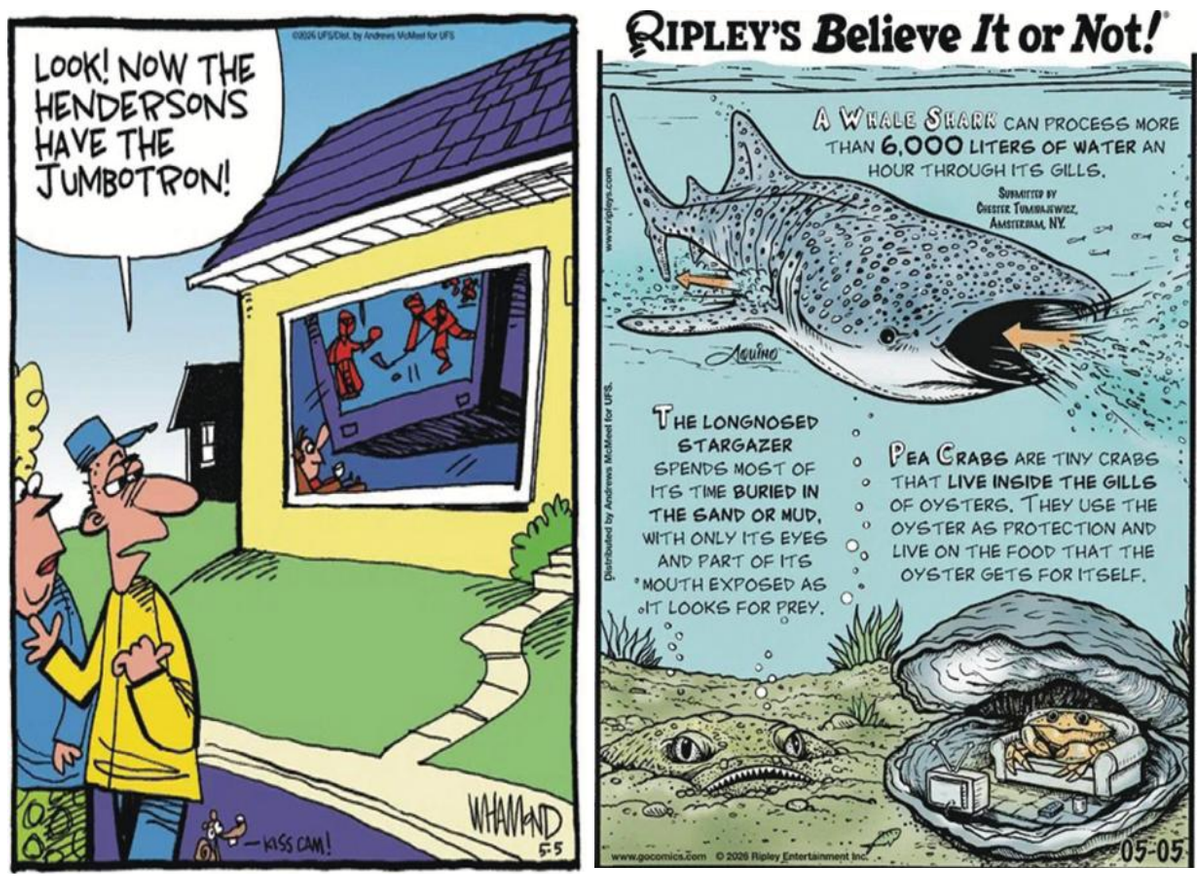
VIRGO: A deeper shift begins in how you manage your time, energy, and daily systems. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 6th House of Work, you may start to notice patterns in your habits that either support or drain your progress.

SAGITTARIUS: Something about how you communicate and process information begins to shift. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 3rd House of Communication, you may start to notice patterns in how you speak, think, or respond in everyday situations.

PISCES: A quieter shift begins beneath the surface, shaping how you process everything. With Pluto turning retrograde in your 12th House of Reflection, patterns, habits, or emotional cycles may come into focus in subtle but meaningful ways.

CARTOON

gocomics.com



Nepal finish League-2 home series on a high

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, May 5

Nepal ended their ICC Cricket World Cup League 2 home series against the UAE and Oman on a high, registering a commanding 81-run victory over Oman at TU Cricket Ground on Tuesday. The fixture was the final match of the double-header triangular series.

The Rhinos collected six points from four matches, moving their tally to 18 points from eight wins in 24 outings.

Seventh-placed Nepal are now just three wins away from overtaking sixth-placed Canada, who have 21 points from nine wins in 24 matches. Securing a top-six finish is crucial to retain ODI status, while a top-four berth guarantees direct entry into the World Cup Qualifiers.

The UAE remain rooted to the bottom with 14 points from 24 matches, having picked up four points by defeating Oman twice. Oman, who managed only two points from their solitary win over Nepal in the series, sit third with 31 points from 28 matches.



PHOTO: CAN

Nepali cricketer celebrates the wicket of Oman during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup League-2 Series at TU Cricket Ground, Kirtipur, Tuesday.

First home win over Oman

Having beaten the UAE twice and defeated Oman for the first time on home soil, Nepal head into their next League 2 tri-series against table-toppers USA and second-placed Scotland, starting on 12 May, with renewed confidence.

Aasif Sheikh starred with the bat while Gulshan Jha shone with the ball in Tuesday's triumph. Opting to bat first, Nepal posted a competitive 256 all out in 49.5 overs, built around Aasif's fluent 94. In reply, Oman were bundled out for 175 in 39.5 overs, Jha claiming a five-for.

Previously, Oman had beaten Nepal three times on home turf.

This time, Nandan Yadav sparked the collapse by removing skipper Jatinder Singh for 12 in the seventh over. Yadav then ran out Siddarth Bukkapatnam for a duck with a direct hit.

Opener Hasnain Ul Wahab made 29 off 43 balls, Hamad Mirza chipped in with 34 from 51, Vinayak Shukla struck 36 off 41 with three fours and two sixes, while Hasnain Shah managed 14 off 10.

Jha returned figures of 5 for 38 from nine overs, his best ODI performance and his second five-wicket haul in the format, having also taken five against Oman in Canada two years ago. Sandeep Lamichhane, Karan KC, Dipendra Singh Airee and Yadav chipped in with one wicket apiece.

Aasif misses ton

Dropped for the previous game due to poor form, Aasif responded with a sparkling 94 off 97 balls, laced with seven fours and five sixes, his second-highest ODI score. He fell short of a maiden century after being caught on the boundary.

Named Player of the Match, Aasif said: "We will take one match at a time and focus on winning. Every game in League 2 is very important."

Oman opened with spin, Shakeel Ahmed sending down a maiden first over before Ramanandi removed Binod Bhandari for a duck in the second over.

Aasif then combined with Arjun Kumal for a 123-run stand for the second wicket. Kumal, in only his second ODI, made 48 off 87 balls.

Skipper Rohit Paudel managed nine, Jha added 17, and vice-captain Airee contributed 33. Karan KC fell first ball, while Nandan and Sandeep scored two and one respectively. Aarif Sheikh provided late fireworks with 43 off 23 balls, smashing three consecutive sixes in the final over off Hasnain Shah.

Nadeem Khan was the pick of the bowlers with 3 for 41 from 10 overs. Shah and Shakeel Ahmed claimed two wickets apiece.Reflecting on the series, Jha expressed satisfaction with three wins from four matches. "We planned not to miss any matches in the home series. We will be looking for all four wins in the coming series," he said.

Advantage Arsenal as City held in six-goal Everton thriller



PHOTO: AP

Manchester City players stand dejected during the Premier League soccer match against Everton in Liverpool, England.

AFP
Liverpool, May 5

Jeremy Doku's stoppage-time strike salvaged Manchester City a 3-3 draw at Everton, but a second half collapse handed the destiny of the Premier League title back to Arsenal on Monday.

The Gunners now just need to win their final three games to end a 22-year wait to become the champions of England.

City remain five points adrift of Mikel Arteta's team, with a game in hand, and will struggle to recover from the manner of their implosion at the Hill Dickinson Stadi-um.

Pep Guardiola's side appeared to be cruising to victory when Doku opened the scoring at the end of a dominant first half.

However, an error-strewn second period was punished as Thierno Barry scored twice for the Toffees, either side of Jake O'Brien's header.

Erling Haaland and then a sensational effort from Doku in the 97th minute did however rescue a point which could ultimately keep City in the race.

"It's better than losing, It shows what type of team they are," said Guardiola on City's fightback.

"It's not in our hands. Before it was, now it's not. We have games left. We will see what happens."

Arsenal visit relegation-threatened West Ham on Sunday before hosting Burnley and visiting Crystal Palace on the final day of the campaign.

Keane escapes red

Two Arsenal victories since City last played in the league had ramped up the pres-sure on Guardiola's side.

City's first team had gone the best part of two weeks without a proper outing after Guardiola heavily rotated for last weekend's FA Cup semi-final win over South-ampton.

The visitors looked fresh rather than rusty as Everton were penned back inside their own box for practically the entire first half.

City's pressure finally found its reward two minutes before half-time when Rayan Cherki found Doku, who curled a shot into Jordan Pickford's top right-hand corner.

Things could have been even worse for the Toffees before the break as Michael Keane escaped with just a yellow card for a wild lunge on Doku.

That decision proved to be vital as City paid a heavy price for a serious of basic defensive errors.

Twice Guardiola's men did not heed a warning that an Everton equaliser was coming.

Gianluigi Donnarumma parried Iliman Ndiaye's effort back into the danger area but Merlin Rohl was not alive to the rebound.

Ndiaye then had a glorious chance after an error from Matheus Nunes but again could not beat the giant Italian in the City goal.

When the equaliser finally arrived, City were again architects of their own downfall.

Marc Guehi's underhit passback handed Barry the simple task of slotting past the stranded Donnarumma.

Another casual City mistake moments later led to Everton's second.

This time Abdukodir Khusanov was caught in possession by Ndiaye and bailed out by a last-ditch challenge from Guehi.

But from the resulting corner, O'Brien rose highest to power home a header.

Barry prodded home a third for Everton from Rohl's deflected cross with City all at sea from a rapid counter-attack.

Within seconds they had a lifeline, though, as straight from kick-off Mateo Kovacic played in Haaland to halve the arrears.

Doku delivered a dagger to Everton's hopes of European football next season right at the death.

But it may have come too little, too late to rescue City's chances of a seventh title in nine years.

SNIPPETS

Nepal take India in CAVA Women's Volleyball opener

Kathmandu (TRN): Nepal will begin their CAVA Women's Volleyball Championship campaign by facing India. The tournament will be held in Kathmandu from 22 May. According to the fixture published by the Central Asian Volleyball Association (CAVA), hosts Nepal are drawn in Group A alongside Kyrgyzstan, India and the Maldives. Group B consists of Iran, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Nepal will play Kyrgyzstan on 23 May and the Maldives on 24 May. The top two teams from each group will progress to the semi-finals, with the final scheduled for 29 May. In preparation for the competition, the Nepal Volleyball Association has already placed 20 players in a closed training camp to sharpen their skills ahead of the tournament.

Mumbai in IPL playoff hunt

Mumbai (AFP): Openers Rohit Sharma and Ryan Rickelton took apart the Lucknow Super Giants attack as Mumbai Indians powered to a six-wicket win to keep their slim playoff hopes alive in the IPL on Monday. Rohit, who hit 84, and Rickelton (83) put on 143 runs to lay the foundations for Mumbai's chase of 229 with eight balls to spare at the Wankhede Stadium. Five-time champions Mumbai, who were without unwell captain Hardik Pandya, stay ninth in the 10-team table with three wins in 10 matches. Lucknow, led by Rishabh Pant, languish at the bottom and are nearly out of the race for the playoffs.

Nepal crowned champions at Asian Savate

Kathmandu (TRN): Nepal emerged as overall winners at the 7th Asian Savate Championship, held in Dhulikhel, Kavrepalanchowk, on Tuesday. The hosts se-cured 31 gold, 20 silver and 30 bronze medals to finish as team champions. Organ-ised by the Nepal Savate Association (NSA) with technical support from the Inter-national Savate Federation and the Asian Savate Confederation, the champion-ship ran from 29 April to 3 May. According to NSA president Laxman Basnet, India finished second with 18 gold, 27 silver and 22 bronze medals, while Indonesia came third with three gold, four silver and one bronze. Nepal's Amrita Tamang received the Fair Play Award. Uzbekistan's Masrpob Omidillol was named best male player, while India's Vatanpai was declared best female player. In the Himalayan Interna-tional Open Savate Championship, New Zealand veterans Barney Bhacky (58) and Francis Vhesetulu (54) were honoured with the Veterans' Excellence Award.

Wu Yize: China's 'priest' who conquered the snooker world

AFP
Hong Kong, May 5

China's Wu Yize is said to have shared a single bed with his father in a windowless flat as he sacrificed his home life to follow his snooker dreams.

Now, just a few years later, Wu is world champion after defeating Shaun Murphy 18-17 in the final at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre on Monday.

Wu, who is 22 but looks younger, follows in the footsteps of Zhao Xintong, who last year became the first Chinese player to win snooker's most cherished prize. "(Zhao's success) definitely made me believe in myself more because he made history," Wu has said.

Those in the know have long tipped Wu for the top.

In February, seven-time world champion Ronnie O'Sullivan said the Chinese ace would be world number one within three years. O'Sullivan called him a "phenomenal player".

In China Wu has earned the nicknames "Little Wu" and "Priest Wu", the latter mainly because of a previous hairstyle which people said made him look like a priest.

Others still use it because it also reflects his composure and calm demeanour around the table.

Far from home

Wu was born on October 14, 2003, in the city of Lanzhou, in Gansu province, in China's rugged northwest.



Wu, whose idol is O'Sullivan, was taken by his father to a snooker hall for the first time when he was seven.

His talent was obvious and four years later his father, who ran an antique business, took him to train in Yushan on the other side of the country.

The International Billiards Academy is a talent factory for Chinese stars of the fu-ture and there is also the 4,000-seater Yushan Sports Center and a World Billiards Museum.

Then aged 16 came the move to Sheffield, the northern English city regarded as the home of snooker.

It was not easy, far away from home and having to master a language, culture and food that was totally new to him. His father was with him, but money was tight.

"His dad gave up his job, I don't think either of them could speak any English when they came over," Rob Walker, broadcaster and master of ceremonies for World Snooker, told Chinese state broadcaster CGTN.

"They famously shared a single bed in a one-bedroom flat with no window for three years because they were determined that he would pursue this dream."

Even now Wu's mother remains in China and visits only occasionally.

Wu's talent, diligence and commitment soon began to pay off, but he missed home and Chinese food, especially Lanzhou's famous beef noodles.

In 2021 he turned professional and reached the last 32 of the UK Championship.In 2022 he was named Rookie of the Year and in 2024 he reached his first ranking event final. Last year came his big breakthrough when he beat the likes of Zhao, Judd Trump and John Higgins in the final to win his first ranking title, at the International Championship.

Feeling the pressure

Even as he joins Zhao as world champions from China, Wu has not forgotten his roots.

He has set up a snooker hall under his own name in his hometown of Lanzhou and occasionally gives advice to budding young players.

Speaking previously to reporters in Sheffield, Wu said he would buy a house if he won the world title.

"In the beginning there was not a lot of prize money," Wu said, according to the BBC. "So there was definitely a lot of pressure and also there was a lot for myself to im-prove in terms of my game, so I was definitely feeling the pressure at the time."

Premier League losses soar for clubs locked in 'arms race'

AFP
London, May 5

The Premier League is the envy of the world for its revenue-generating power, yet clubs lost nearly $1 billion last season as the pursuit of on-field success trumped financial security.

Despite amassing a record £6.8 billion ($9.2 billion) in combined revenue in 2024/25, outgoings continued to outstrip income due to rampant inflation in the transfer market, player wages and agent fees.

Chelsea set an unwanted record by posting a Premier League record pre-tax loss of £262 million for the year ending June 30, 2025.

The Blues' scattergun approach to hoovering up global young talent makes them an extreme case, but they are part of a broader trend.

Relegation-threatened Tottenham, the ninth-richest club in the world, were £121 million in the red last season despite booming revenues from their mul-ti-functional, state-of-the-art stadium, and winning the Europa League.

The overall numbers would be even bleaker were it not for some smart accounting, with several clubs selling off assets to their own ownership groups.

Saudi-backed Newcastle sold their St James' Park stadium to another company owned by the club's shareholders to turn a profit, while Everton and Aston Villa cashed in on their women's teams.

Transfer fees

"The problem with the Premier League is that clubs are so incentivised to over-spend," football finance expert Kieran Maguire told AFP.

"It's an arms race at the end of the day in terms of competing for players on trans-fer fees and wages."

The figures for the 2024/25 campaign do not even fully account for a record £3 bil-lion spent on transfer fees by Premier League clubs in last year's summer transfer window, smashing the previous high by £650 million.

Liverpool's £125-million signing of Alexander Isak set a new record for an English club and was part of a £450-million window for the English champions, which has so far failed to reap tangible reward.

Wages continue to spiral, reaching £4.4 billion last season, a nine percent increase on the previous year, outstripping the seven percent rise in revenue.

Spending on agents also reached new highs, fuelling fans' anger at the money flowing out the game while they are asked to pay higher ticket prices.

In the frenzied world of the Premier League, success in an increasingly competitive league is no longer measured solely by trophies.

For the second consecutive year at least five English sides will qualify for the Champions League, which guarantees a huge financial windfall.

Losses 'affordable'

New financial rules will be introduced next season focused on limiting squad cost in line with revenue.

Spending on wages, transfer fees and agents must not exceed 85 percent of reve-nue, with a stricter 70 percent limit placed on teams in UEFA competitions.

However, those changes are unlikely to make a significant impact on losses, with operating costs, which jumped to £1.9 billion for Premier League clubs last season, excluded.

Despite clubs' tendencies to haemorrhage money, they remain an attractive asset due to their scarcity value and role in the Premier League's global soap opera.

British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe's 27.7 percent stake in Manchester United, bought for £1.25 billion in 2024, valued the 20-time English champions at £4.5 billion.

Chelsea were sold in 2022 for a total package worth £4.25 billion to a consortium led by American investor Todd Boehly and private equity firm Clearlake Capital.

Manchester City have become the dominant force in the English game since a takeover backed by the Abu Dhabi royal family, while the Saudi sovereign wealth fund took control of Newcastle in 2021.

Former Manchester United captain Gary Neville believes the scale of Chelsea's fi-nancial problems could signal a slowdown in the bull market for English clubs.

But Maguire argues that losses are deemed affordable by super-rich owners.

"With billionaire owners and sovereign wealth funds in charge of clubs, whilst the losses seem high, for those people they are deemed to be affordable," he said.

"Unless there's a mindset change from club owners in terms of controlling your core costs, which are player-related in transfer fees and wages, we're going to continue in this vein for some time."

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