

THE RISING NEPAL

ALL BE HAPPY, ALL BE WELL



PHOTO: RSS

Pulu Bazar at Mugam Karmarong Municipality in Mugu district is at high risk due to a landslide from above and the swelling Mugu Karnali River below. The government should pay due attention to protecting humen settlement in time.

NRNA seeks simplified legal procedures, investment securirty in Nepal

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Representatives of the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) have said they remain keen to invest in Nepal but identified two major obstacles - cumbersome legal procedures and concerns over investment security.

Speaking at the 11th Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) that concluded in Guangzhou of China on Sunday, they said that Nepalis living across the Asia-Pacific region, as well as in the United States and Europe wanted to do something in Nepal but were primarily discouraged by the lengthy legal processes and security concerns they faced when investing in the country.

Former NRNA president Binod Kunwar, who is a successful businessman based in South Korea, said Nepal's tendency to engage in more talks than action was also a problem. He said investors were discouraged by cumbersome legal procedures and prolonged delays, the NRNA informed in a statement.

"I am investing equally in Nepal and South Korea. My experience is that there is too much talk and too little work in Nepal," Kunwar said while

adding that Nepal's laws sometimes prevented people from working for even four or five hours, making investment in the country unnecessarily difficult.

Former NRNA president Dr. Upendra Mahato said every Nepali living abroad was concerned about when their country would develop, while many also asked themselves, "If I don't do it, who will?" He urged the government to turn this sentiment into an opportunity.

According to him, Nepal will be built by Nepalis themselves. "If a country could be developed through good and sweet words alone, it would have been developed long ago. We Nepalis are good at talking," he said. "Now we need to develop the country while preserving our civilisation. This is the one commitment we all need to make."

Dr. Mahato said that the investment by the NRNs alone cannot make Nepal prosperous, but it cannot happen without them either. The government must now understand this reality and introduce investor-friendly laws. There should be no delay in the legal reforms required for restructuring, he said.

Arguing that there was no better place for investment than Nepal, Mahato said every country in the world faced problems, but the key was how those problems were addressed and how investment was protected.

NRNA Senior Vice-President Rabin

NRNA summit to boost unity, cooperation: FM Khanal

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal has expressed confidence that the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) that concluded in Guangzhou of China on Sunday will further strengthen unity and cooperation among Nepali citizens living in the Asia-Pacific region and make a significant contribution to Nepal's economic prosperity.

"It will provide an important opportunity to expand business-to-business (B2B) partnerships and increase investment in Nepal's priority sectors," he said.

Sherchan said there were many areas for investment in Nepal, while some new sectors also needed to be identified, adding that investment should now be increased.

Former NRNA China president

In his message from Kathmandu, he said that organisation of the two-day conference in Guangzhou, a major international centre for trade and industry, would help create an environment for new forms of cooperation among the Nepali diaspora, entrepreneurs, investors and policymakers.

FM Khanal expected the conference to facilitate meaningful discussions on important issues including investment promotion, tourism development, business partnerships, transfer of knowledge, skills and technology, protection of migrant workers, women and youth empowerment, and the expansion of cooperation between Nepal and the Asia-Pacific region.

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Nirmal Sharma Chaulagain said there was considerable scope for cooperation between Nepal and China but that inadequate infrastructure remained a major obstacle.

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Monsoon wreaks havoc, deaths climb as rains batter hills

BY PURUSHOTTAM P. KHATRI
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Relentless monsoon rains continued to batter country's hilly and mountainous regions, killing six people, leaving three others missing and injuring at least 34 people in fresh landslides and other rain-induced disasters, while authorities warned that the humanitarian situation could worsen as heavy rainfall is forecast to continue across much of the country.

Among the latest casualties, four people were killed and 11 others injured when a massive landslide buried houses in Risang of Bheri Municipality-2 in Jajarkot on Saturday evening. Three victims died after their homes were engulfed by debris, while another succumbed to injuries during treatment.

The injured were taken to hospitals in Jajarkot, Nepalgunj and Surkhet, with several already discharged after receiving medical care.

The landslide damaged around a dozen houses and placed nearly 300 homes in Risang and nearby settlements under immediate threat. Security personnel evacuated about 200 residents to safer locations, while landslides blocked the Gairikhal-Panchkatiya road and the Jajarkot-Dolpa section of the Bheri Corridor, disrupting rescue and relief Monsoon wreaks havoc, deaths climb as relentless rains batter hills, mountains operations.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) said that within the last 24 hours alone, two persons were killed, three went missing and 23 others were injured in 46 disaster incidents reported across the country.

Security agencies rescued 204 people by deploying 210 personnel.

Since mid-April, natural disasters have claimed 240 lives, left six people missing and injured 1,513 others in 4,782 incidents nationwide.

Meanwhile, at a meeting of the Monsoon Response Command Post held at the Office of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) in Singha Durbar on Sunday, officials called on the public to remain alert and strictly follow safety advisories throughout the remainder of the monsoon season.

The Command Post said that prolonged rainfall has left the country's fragile terrain dangerously saturated, significantly increasing the likelihood of further slope failures. It also cautioned that river basins, low-lying settlements and floodplains continue to face an elevated threat from overflowing rivers and water-induced disasters.

The meeting, chaired by Dr. Dharma Raj Upreti, Executive Chief of the NDRRMA and Chairperson of the Monsoon Response Command Post, resolved to dispatch a multidisciplinary technical team within the next



three days to conduct rapid geological assessments in some of the country's worst-affected districts.

The assessment, to be undertaken in coordination with relevant government agencies, will cover Thawang and Sunchahari Rural Municipalities in Rolpa, Triveni Municipality in Bajura and Ward No. 2 of Bheri Municipality in Jajarkot, along with surrounding settlements.

Officials said the findings would support immediate risk-reduction measures while providing scientific recommendations for longer-term mitigation and community protection.

Likewise, the Karnali Provincial Government has already dispatched emergency relief materials to Jajarkot, including rice, tarpaulins, blankets, beaten rice, vitamin biscuits and other essentials after receiving a request from the District Administration Office. Chief Minister Mangal Bahadur Shahi instructed all concerned agencies to expedite rescue, relief and rehabilitation efforts in coordination with federal, provincial and local authorities.

In Kalikot, a landslide and rockfall completely destroyed the homes of two families, although all residents escaped unharmed. However, four buffaloes, two oxen and seven goats were killed, while food stocks, clothing and household belongings were buried. Another landslide buried an under-construction school building in Mahabai Rural Municipality.

In Rukum West, landslides blocked both the Mid-Hill Highway and the Bheri Corridor, cutting off transport links to the district headquarters. Schools, shops and engineering workshops also sustained heavy damage, with property losses running into millions of rupees.

In Tanahun, a three-storey mud house collapsed after its occupants evacuated safely, preventing human casualties. Meanwhile, Pulu Bazaar, the administrative headquarters of Mugum Karmarong Rural Municipality in Mugu, remains under constant threat from landslides, rockfalls and erosion along the Karnali River.

Repeated disasters have rendered 19 houses uninhabitable and damaged government offices, police facilities, a bank and health institutions, prompting renewed calls from local representatives to relocate the municipal headquarters to a safer location.

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Indian Army Chief Seth arrives in Katmandu



BY STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Chief of the Indian Army, General Dhiraj Seth, arrived in Kathmandu on Sunday for a four-day official visit to Nepal at the invitation of Chief of the Army Staff of the Nepali Army, General Ashok Raj Sigdel.

Vice Chief of the Army Staff and Lieutenant General Pradeep Jung KC and senior officers of the Nepali Army welcomed General Seth upon his arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport on Sunday afternoon.

According to Nepali Army Spokesperson and Brigadier General Rajaram Basnet, President Ramchandra Paudel, the Supreme Commander of the Nepali Army, will confer the honorary rank of General of the Nepali Army on General Seth at a

special ceremony to be held at the President's Office on Monday.

The conferral follows the longstanding tradition under which the army chiefs of Nepal and India are awarded the honorary rank of General in each other's armies, symbolising the close military ties, mutual respect and longstanding friendship between the two countries.

The tradition dates back to 1950, when Nepal began conferring the honorary rank of General of the Nepali Army on the Chief of the Indian Army, while Nepal's Chief of the Army Staff has similarly been awarded the honorary rank of General in the Indian Army.

General Seth arrived in Kathmandu aboard an Air India flight at 4:15 p.m. on Sunday. He assumed office as Chief of the Indian Army on June 30 this year.

Red Panda Marathon 2026 in Salleri

BY SANTOSH RAUT
Solukhumbu, Aug. 16

The third edition of the Red Panda Marathon 2026 is set to be held in Salleri of Solukhumbu district.

The event will take place on September 5 with the aim of raising awareness about the long-term conservation of the endangered red panda and the restoration of its habitat, according to Ngima Tendup Sherpa, Chairperson of the local partner organisation, Himalayan Health and Environmental Services Solukhumbu.

It is being held to mark the International Red Panda Day.

Organised by the Red Panda Network with financial support from Play for Nature, the competition aims to help promote the Lower Everest region of the tourism district of Solukhumbu as an international adventure tourism destination.

According to the organisers, such a sporting event can play an important role in instilling a sense of responsibility among the younger generation towards the conservation of the Himalayan environment and its invaluable natural heritage.

The marathon will start at Thekchen Pema Chholing Monastery in Salleri, situated at an altitude of 2,360



FILE PHOTO: TRN

A rare red panda found by local residents in the forests of Pikey, Solukhumbu, last year.

metres, and proceed to Pike Peak, at an elevation of 4,054 metres, before returning to the starting point. The 48-km trail, with an elevation gain of more than 2,872 metres, has been awarded three points by the International Trail Running Association.

The course, considered challenging even for experienced trail runners, must be completed within a time limit of 7.30 hours.

The organisers informed that this year's event will also feature the 5-km 'Red Panda Fun Run' for the first time. Starting at Thekchen Pema Chholing Monastery and passing through Serga Khop in Salleri, the fun run will finish at Phaplu Monastery and will be open to participants of all ages and abilities. Sherpa said the fun run has been introduced particularly to encourage participation from local communities

and will also be attended by renowned actor and Red Panda Network conservation ambassador Dayahang Rai. Interested runners must register through the organisation's official website.

Cash prizes, medals and certificates will be awarded to the male and female winners of the marathon. In the 48-km marathon, the first, second, third and fourth-placed runners will receive Rs. 150,000, Rs. 100,000, Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 30,000, respectively.

Similarly, the top three runners in the Forest Guardian category will receive Rs. 25,000, Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 10,000, while the top four finishers in the 5-km Fun Run will receive Rs. 25,000, Rs. 20,000, Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 5,000, respectively. All runners who complete their respective races will receive a finisher's medal.

The first two editions of the marathon were held at Pathibhara in Taplejung in 2024 and in Ilam in 2025. A total of 140 runners from more than 16 districts of Nepal, as well as from India and Japan, participated in the two previous editions.

Sherpa said forests contain many invaluable natural treasures that remain unseen by humans, with the red panda being one of them. He said such events help people understand local natural heritage more closely and remind them that protecting it is a shared responsibility of both present and future generations.

BULLION
(Rs. per tola)

Hallmark Gold : Rs. 305,200/-
Worked Gold : NA
Silver : Rs. 4,710/-

STOCK

NEPSE : 2,643.83

Total Amount : 4,275,675,402.84

No. of Share : 9,754,403

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY BOOSTED STAKE IN ALPHABET

AP
New York, Aug. 16

Berkshire Hathaway is increasing the size of its stake in Google's parent company and beefing up its holdings in homebuilders, according to the conglomerate's latest snapshot of its investment portfolio.

The Omaha, Nebraska-based company also continued to pare its stake in financial companies and a number of other stocks in the April-June quarter, according to a regulatory filing filed late Friday.

CEO Greg Abel, who took over from Warren Buffett at the start of the year, agreed in June to make a \$10 billion stock investment in Alphabet, expanding on the stake that Berkshire started to build last fall.

In the second quarter, Berkshire picked up roughly 48.1 million shares in Alphabet, bringing its total shares in the tech giant to roughly 106 million. That stake was valued at about \$37.76 billion as of June 30, according to the filing. As recently as the end of December, Berkshire held only 17.8 million Alphabet shares worth \$5.6 billion.

Gene bank to preserve indigenous local seeds

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Hile, Aug. 16

Dhankuta is set to establish a gene bank as traditional, indigenous and local seed varieties face the threat of disappearing.

HUSADEC Nepal is preparing to establish the gene bank on the premises of Dhankuta Municipality in collaboration with Dhan-kuta Municipality and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The organisation has been collecting indigenous seeds of paddy, maize, wheat, millet, pulses, oilseeds and various vegetable crops that were traditionally cultivated locally but are gradually disappearing from farming practices since March.

According to the organisation, it has so far collected around 70 varieties of more than 25 crop species for the gene bank.

These include indigenous paddy varieties such as Belguti, Basmati and Tauli, as well as pumpkin, bean, cowpea, ghoremas (indigenous beans), horse gram, perilla, fennel, mustard, cress, wheat, maize, flax

FM Wagle pledges govt support to Nepal-made e-scooter

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Finance Minister Dr. Swarnim Wagle has assured government support for promoting Nepal-made electric scooters.

Minister Dr. Wagle made the assurance while visiting the factory and observing the manufacturing process of 'Yatri P2', the first electric scooter made in Nepal, manufactured by Sipradi Yatri at its factory in Budhanilkantha, Kathmandu.

"Your hard work is commendable. It is encouraging to see the Yatri P2 being designed and manufactured in Nepal," Minister Wagle said. "I hope you will excel in global competition in terms of quality. Go ahead, the government is with you."

Stating the domestic design and manufacture of electric two-wheelers a historic achievement, he urged the company to expand into international markets and become competitive globally. "Apple designs its products in California and manufactures them in China. As far as possible, you should do everything in Nepal. Tell us what support the government needs to provide, but also think about what else can be done to expand into the global market," he said. "I respect the hard work of Nepali engineers and designers."

He also wished that scooters made in Nepal would be able to compete with brands operating in the global market. Stating that scooters made in Nepal could even run on American mountains, the Finance Minister expressed his best wishes that Nepal's living abroad would like this brand and that Nepalis would be able to see them riding it.



Finance Minister Dr. Swarnim Wagle observes the company during a visit in Kathmandu on Sunday

During the visit, Yatri Electric Bike founder and CEO Ashim Pandey briefed Minister Wagle on the design of the newly developed scooter, its safety testing, the components used and the experience of successfully testing the vehicle.

Similarly, Chief Executive Officer of Sipradi Trading Rajan Babu Shrestha said the company had achieved a historic milestone by designing and manufacturing the electric scooter in Nepal. He said that designing and manufacturing a two-wheeler domestically, with certain features that are unique even by global standards, represented a new achievement for Nepal.

Shrestha said the scooter had been successfully tested in Nepal's difficult and challenging hilly and mountainous terrain and that preparations were underway to launch it for sale to the general public soon.

Company officials claimed that the scooter is the first in the world to be manufactured with a DC charger integrated into an electric two-wheeler. Shrestha urged the government to introduce some special policies on raw materials used to manufacture electric batteries and scooter components to help Nepali products compete in the market.

The scooter, which is expected to be unveiled within a few days, is

currently being kept confidential.

Pandey, who returned to Nepal after completing his engineering studies in the Netherlands, founded the startup company Yatri Motorcycles in 2017 with the aim of manufacturing electric motorcycles.

The company has since become Sipradi Yatri through a business partnership with Sipradi Trading, one of Nepal's leading automobile distributors.

The company has now manufactured the Yatri P2 electric two-wheeler with its own design and engineering, following quality testing by an Indian agency responsible for testing the quality of two-wheelers..

Skill in hand, employment at home

BY BABURAM KARKI
Barahakshetra, Aug. 16

Forty-five-year-old Jitan Chaudhary, who has continued his ancestral skills of making idols and carving decorative designs on concrete houses, is currently busy with work. With demand for idols surging ahead of the Bishwokarma Puja, he has little time to spare.

Chaudhary has been making idols and carving decorative designs for the past 28 years. He has been busy making idols for various festivals. Continuing the profession practised by his father, he has been earning his livelihood from the same work.

Chaudhary says that people with skills and dedication to their work can create employment for themselves while staying in their own communities. "As soon as I finish making idols for Bishwokarma Puja, I will start preparing idols for Dashain," he said.

He said he remains busy throughout the year as idols of Goddess Durga are made for Dashain, followed by idols for Tihar and Chhath, and then for Saraswati Puja. As soon as one festival ends, preparations begin for the next.

When he is free from idol-making, Chaudhary works on decorative carvings on concrete houses. He said there is also steady demand for various types of decorative designs used to beautify houses. "Our work is valued differently from other types of labour. While



An idol made using locally available resources.

the daily wage for other workers is Rs. 1,000, we can earn up to Rs. 1,500 a day," he said.

Chaudhary says idol-making does not require expensive materials because locally available resources are used. Idols are made using bamboo, straw and clay found in the surrounding villages. Although the use of local materials helps reduce costs, he says skill, hard work and experience are essential to make the idols attractive.

According to local Dilli Karki of Ramdhuni-4, people with skills do not have to depend on others for employment. However, he said the younger generation does not appear interested in learning such traditional skills.

"Young people today do not pursue this work. We, however, have no shortage of work; we are extremely busy at present," Jitan said.

He added that having a skill enables people to find work every day.

AVOCADO EXPORTS RESUME, FEARS LINGER

AP
Mexico, Aug. 16

It didn't take long for Mexican avocado picker Francisco Isidro to get back to work after authorities announced the lifting of a U.S. security alert that temporarily halted avocado exports.

Back on the job the morning after the alert was lifted, Isidro threw a rope over an avocado tree about 20 feet (6 meters) high and climbed up. Fifteen minutes later, he had filled a box with avocados bound for the United States. "Thank God ... and now we're getting paid," he shouted happily after several days without work.

Eight days after the alert affecting Michoacán state and the deployment of more Mexican troops in the region, U.S. authorities fully lifted the restrictions that spurred producers to shut down operations, and exports resumed. Michoacán is Mexico's main avocado-producing state and a region where four cartels designated by the Trump administration as terrorist organizations operate.

By the weekend, orchards were operating again, packing plants were running at full speed and U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors had returned to certify the fruit and ensure it was free of pests before entering the United States.

The workers were happy to get their daily wages back. Some producers hoped the increased security would reduce violence and extortion. Others feared the calm would not last long. "We'll be safe for a while, we'll see what happens next," said Valentín Rodríguez, a longtime avocado industry businessperson.

The U.S. alert caught Isidro high in a tree in an orchard in Santa Ana Zirosto, an area of green, low hills in western Michoacán where criminal groups are very active. There were no explanations, just the foreman's shout to stop cutting.

Isidro, 39 years old and with two decades of experience as a harvester, knew that this meant either starting to look for another job until the situation returned to normal — since they're paid by the day — or supporting his family solely on what his wife earned from a small store.

New cardamom crop fetches Rs. 95,000 per 40 kg

BY CHANDRA PANDAK
Taplejung, Aug. 16

The new crop of large cardamom has started fetching Rs. 95,000 per man (40 kg) in Taplejung. The new crop, which began arriving in the market two to three days ago, is being traded at the rate of Rs. 95,000 per man.

Local farmers and traders are encouraged after thae new harvest received an attractive price as soon as it entered the market. Cardamom traders say the opening price of Rs. 95,000 per man is highly encouraging.

Bhadra Bir Regmi, a local trader in Phunling, the district headquarters, said it was a very good sign that the new cardamom crop had fetched Rs. 95,000 per man at the beginning of the season.

Regmi, who is also chairman of the Cardamom Entrepreneurs Association, Taplejung, said the opening price this year was Rs. 13,000 higher than last year.

According to him, cardamom opened at Rs. 82,000 per man last year. Farmers and traders have described this year's opening



Cardamom ready for harvesting in a farmer's orchard.

price of Rs. 95,000 as better than expected. Regmi said transactions had increased over the past two to three days, with the new crop being traded at Rs. 95,000 per man.

The attractive opening price has raised hopes among local farmers and traders that the crop could fetch even better prices during the peak season.

Last year, the price initially stood at Rs. 82,000 per man but later rose to more than

Rs. 105,000. The year before last, the price reached as high as Rs. 110,000 per man during the peak season.

During the peak trading season, large-grained and high-quality cardamom generally fetches Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 7,000 more per man than ordinary produce. Traders said high-quality cardamom was sold for up to Rs. 112,000 per man last year. Regmi said high-quality, large-grained cardamom

fetches as much as Rs. 114,000 per man the previous year.

Taplejung is the district with the largest area under cardamom cultivation and the highest production of the spice in Nepal. Most farmers in the district grow cardamom, which is one of their major cash crops.

Cardamom is cultivated in all wards of the district's nine local levels except Ward No. 7 of Phaktanglung Rural Municipality, Olanchunggola.

Cardamom produced in the lower parts of the district has now started arriving in the market. The main cardamom harvesting season is October and November.

Meanwhile, around 445,000 cardamom seedlings have been distributed to farmers in Phaktanglung Rural Municipality of Taplejung. The rural municipality distributed the seedlings to farmers in six wards, excluding Ward No. 7, Olanchunggola.

The seedlings belonged to the Bharlang, Dambarsai and Ramsai varieties, according to rural municipality chairman Rajan Limbu (Mukti). Chairman Limbu said the seedlings were brought from Ilam and distributed under the 'One Ward, One Product' programme. Of the total seedlings distributed, 317,600 were of the Bharlang variety.

IPPAN delegation meets RSP President Lamichhane

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

A delegation from the Independent Power Producers' Association, Nepal (IPPAN), met Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) President Rabi Lamichhane and briefed him on the policy and legal reforms needed to develop the energy sector, expand investment and create an investment-friendly environment.

The delegation, led by its President Mohan Kumar Dangi, called for the formulation of a new Electricity Bill that would make the private sector a full-fledged partner in the energy sector.

The association said the existing Electricity Act, 2049, was formulated when private-sector participation in the electricity sector was still at an early stage. Over the past three decades, Nepal's energy sector has undergone significant changes in terms of its structure, investment volume, technology, regional electricity trade and private-sector capacity.

Therefore, it said, the existing legal framework could no longer address the current and future needs of the energy sector.

According to an IPPAN press statement, the association called for a new Electricity Bill that would provide the private sector with equal opportunities not only in power generation but also in transmission, distribution, electricity trading, energy storage, green hydrogen, carbon trading and emerging technologies.

The association also called for the immediate resumption of power purchase agreements (PPAs) for projects with a combined capacity of around 17,000 MW, which have been stalled for a long time.

With the government aiming to generate 30,000 MW of electricity within 10 years, timely PPAs for new projects are a key prerequisite, IPPAN said.

As electricity generation increases, Nepal will need to export surplus power after meeting domestic demand, and IPPAN said it would not be feasible for the Nepal Electricity Authority alone to trade and export electricity on such a large scale.

Tamsu settlement faces landslide risk

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Bajura, Aug. 16

Locals of Tamsu village in Triveni Municipality-9, Bajura, have begun leaving their homes and taking shelter in tents after a landslide put the entire settlement at risk.

The landslide, triggered by incessant rainfall on the night of Aug. 13, forced locals to leave their homes to save their lives.

The landslide has caused extensive cracks in the settlement, affecting the Saud and Sarki Mijar neighbourhoods of Bangapata as well as Tamsu village.

Locals are too afraid to stay in their homes, as even light rainfall can trigger further landslides from above. They have therefore begun living under tarpaulins instead.

Some locals believe that road construction carried out both above and below the village during the winter contributed to the landslides.

With the monsoon season underway, landslides occur in the village even after light rainfall, causing further damage and spreading fear among residents, said local Govindra Thapa.

Fearing that they could lose their lives at any moment, many locals have stopped staying in their houses and moved into temporary shelters.

"Tamsu village itself is located on steep, landslide-prone terrain. There are steep slopes below the village as well as above it, so even light rain can trigger landslides," Thapa said.

As the settlement has become increasingly vulnerable to landslides, locals have been leaving their homes and taking



PHOTO COURTESY: DIPAK SAUD

Residents of Tamsu in Triveni Municipality-9, Bajura, leave their homes and live under tarpaulins due to the looming risk of landslides.

shelter under tarpaulins in safer locations, he added.

Around 61 households live in Tamsu. Four houses have been completely damaged, while the remaining houses are also at high risk from landslides, according to Mekhraj Jaisi, chairman of the Bajura district chapter of the Nepal Red Cross Society.

"Tamsu village is at extremely high risk of landslides and is no longer safe for residents. We have therefore distributed 61 tarpaulins and two large tents to 62 households. They are currently living in

these temporary shelters," Jaisi said.

He said locals were living in a state of fear and required psychosocial counselling. Plans were being made to provide counselling services. The district chapter has also decided to provide Rs. 15,000 to each affected family and has written to the central office for approval, he added.

Meanwhile, Triveni Municipality has decided to provide Rs. 200,000 to the families of those who died and cover the medical expenses of the injured, according to information officer Naresh Panta.

"Landslides frequently occur in most villages and settlements in the municipality, putting many communities at risk. Preparations are also under way to distribute tarpaulins to families whose homes are in danger," Panta said.

He added that many settlements in the area needed to be relocated, but the municipality did not have sufficient funds for the purpose. The municipality has therefore recommended that the federal government provide the necessary support.

Floods, landslides block 10 major road networks

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Persistent monsoon rains have continued to trigger floods and landslides across the country, leaving several major highways and roads blocked.

According to a Nepal Police Headquarters bulletin on Sunday, traffic has been affected on road sections in Kavrepalanchok, Ilam, Sindhupalchok, Rasuwa, Rukum West, Sankhuwasabha, Lamjung, Mustang, Rolpa and Chitwan districts.

On the BP Highway, which links Kavrepalanchok and Sindhuli, vehicular movement along the Khurkot-Nepalthok-Katunjabeshi section has been suspended daily from 6:00 pm to 4:00 am due to the risk of flooding. The road remains open to traffic from 4:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Similarly, traffic has been restricted on the Kanti Lokpath in Makwanpur, where all types of vehicles are prohibited from operating between 5:00 pm and 5:00 am because of continuous rainfall.

In Ilam Municipality-9, Rajduwali, the Mechi Highway has been completely blocked after mud and debris covered the road. Police said an alternative route is available.

The Araniko Highway has also been fully obstructed after the road caved in at Char Kilo, Liping, in Bhotekoshi Rural Municipality-4 of Sindhupalchok.

In Rasuwa, the Trishuli-Mailung-Syafubesi earthen road has been completely blocked after floodwaters eroded the roadway at Khalte in Uttargaya Rural Municipality-5.

Likewise, a landslide near Rijegard Khola in Aathbiskot Municipality-6, Rukum West, has completely blocked the Jajarkot-Dolpa section of the Bheri Corridor.

In Sankhuwasabha, the Khandbari-Kimathanka section of the Koshi Highway has been fully closed after the road subsided at Sirek Danda in Bhotkhola Rural Municipality-3.

A landslide at Rambazar in Marsyangdi Rural Municipality-4, Lamjung, has blocked the Besisahar-Manang road. In Mustang, a landslide at Kaikukhola in Thasang Rural Municipality-4 has also obstructed the Beni-Jomsom road, police said.

Similarly, a landslide at Kagdanda in Sunil Smriti Rural Municipality-4, Rolpa, has blocked the Bhalubang-Liwang road, while the Prithvi Highway, which remained obstructed to two-way traffic for more than eight hours, resumed from Sunday afternoon after clearing the debris and fallen trees in Simaldhara in Ichchhakamana Rural Municipality-5, Chitwan.

The Police Headquarters has urged the public to check the latest road conditions before travelling and exercise caution, as continuous rainfall continues to trigger landslides, road erosion and subsidence in various parts of the country.

Saptapatal Pokhari restored after 15-year legal battle

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

After a 15-year legal struggle and a long-awaited restoration, historic Saptapatal Pokhari in Lalitpur has been revived and opened to the public. The pond was formally inaugurated on Saturday by Lalitpur Metropolitan City Mayor Chiri Babu Maharjan.

Anyone travelling from Lagankhel Bus Park toward Batuk Bhairav Temple can now see a beautiful pond where there was once a little more than a neglected, garbage-filled space.

Closely associated with the Rato Machhindranath festival, Saptapatal Pokhari had nearly lost its identity following encroachment by the local Namuna Machhindra Secondary School. Years of efforts by local residents and legal intervention have now brought the historic pond back to life.

Lalitpur Metropolitan City, in collaboration with the Lagankhel Environment Conservation Committee, inaugurated the restored Saptapatal Pokhari along with the surrounding park.

Addressing the inauguration programme, Chief Administrative Officer Rekha Das Shrestha said approximately Rs. 47.2 million had been invested in the project. The project covers an area of 13 ropanis, 6 annas, 2 paisas and 3 dams.

According to Shrestha, the pond has a capacity of 1.9 million litres. The restored site includes grassy areas, flower gardens and resting platforms. A pedestrian bridge has also been constructed to connect Saptapatal Pokhari with the adjacent Paleswan Pokhari.

An old tree within the pond area has also been preserved. The historic Rajkulo, or traditional royal canal system, is being revived to ensure a regular water supply to Saptapatal Pokhari.

Believed to have existed since the Lichhavi era, Saptapatal Pokhari was once an important component of Patan's traditional water-management system. Its restoration therefore represents not only the revival of a pond but also the preservation of Lalitpur's traditional water heritage.

The Saptapatal Pokhari Consumer Committee, operating under Lalitpur Metropolitan City, led the restoration efforts.

Closely associated with the Rato Machhindranath festival, Saptapatal Pokhari had nearly lost its identity following encroachment by the local Namuna Machhindra Secondary School. Years of efforts by local residents and legal intervention have now brought the historic pond back to life.

Located in Ward No. 15, the pond had faced a serious threat from development activities. The school had constructed a commercial complex on the northern side of the pond and opened an alternative road along its western side.

The legal battle over the pond dates back to 2004, when the late Purna Shapit filed a case seeking to stop the encroachment. The Supreme Court, in its verdict on June 18, 2019, determined that the land occupied by the pond did not belong to the school. The court ordered the removal of illegal structures and directed that the land be returned to its original purpose, paving the way for the pond's restoration.

The revival officially began in the fiscal year 2023/24 with a budget of Rs. 9.9 million. An additional Rs. 9.9 million was allocated for the second phase in the fiscal year 2024/25.

The pond's base has been constructed using traditional methods, with four inches of sand, 10 inches of black soil and a layer of bricks.

The Lalitpur Metropolitan City also plans to plant lotus flowers in Paleswan Pokhari after its restoration, further enhancing the area's natural beauty.

As part of its future development plans, the Metropolitan City aims to develop gardens, a traditional rest house and walkways around the pond while preserving its natural beauty and religious, historical and cultural significance.

Call to revise ‘Two children are God’s blessing’ policy

BY AMAR RAJ NAHARKI
Tanahun, Aug. 16

Calls have been made in Tanahun to revise the 'Two children are God's blessing' policy, which was introduced in the past to control population growth, and replace it with a policy that encourages families to have more than two children in line with current circumstances.

Stakeholders have stressed the need to review the population policy, warning that the country could face a shortage of productive human resources in the future as the birth rate continues to decline and a large number of young people leave the country for employment and education.

Participants at the annual review programme for the fiscal year 2025/26 organised by the District Coordination Committee, Tanahun, said family planning policies should focus on families' needs and the country's demographic

situation rather than simply trying to reduce the birth rate.

Baikuntha Neupane, Mayor of Byas Municipality, said the government needed policies to encourage young people to stay in the country and provide families wishing to have children with support and incentives in areas such as education and health.

He said policies needed to change as the circumstances of the past and the international environment had changed.

"Young people are leaving the country in search of opportunities, while families are having fewer children. This could affect the balance of the workforce in the future. Therefore, the state should now encourage couples who wish to have children," Neupane said.

He said population growth should not be viewed simply as a matter of increasing the birth rate but should be linked to policies aimed at creating jobs and opportunities for young people in the country.

13 years on, family still waits for missing son

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Saptari, Aug. 16

A man from Saptari district who travelled to New Delhi, India, for employment at the age of 18 has been missing for the past 13 years, leaving his family in prolonged uncertainty and distress.

Amrisha Mishra of Tilathi Koiladi Rural Municipality-1 in Saptari lost contact with his family shortly after returning to New Delhi for work. His elderly parents, Amol Mishra and Rekha Mishra, along with his younger brother Nikunj, have been searching for him ever since.

Amrisha had previously worked for nearly two years at the same factory in Delhi before returning home. When he left for Delhi for the second time, he told his family that the factory owner still owed him between Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 40,000 in unpaid wages and that he would collect the money before returning home within a few days.

However, he never returned,



and all communication with the family ceased. Days turned into months, and months into years, but there has been no trace of him.

"My brother told us that the factory owner still owed him Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 40,000 and that he would stay there for a few days to collect the money before coming home," said his younger brother, Nikunj Mishra. "Thirteen years have now passed, yet he has neither returned home nor have we received any information about him."

Seeking answers, Nikunj contacted the owner of the factory in Delhi, who reportedly told him that Amrisha had left his job and that he did not know his

whereabouts thereafter.

The family has continued searching for Amrisha through relatives and friends in places where he was believed to have travelled. They say the prolonged uncertainty has taken a heavy emotional toll on his ageing parents.

The family also expressed disappointment over what they describe as a lack of adequate assistance from the Nepali Embassy in India in tracing Amrisha, who disappeared after travelling there for work.

They have appealed to Nepal Police as well as the relevant authorities in India to help locate him.

"We only want to know what has happened to him," a family member said. "Whether he is safe or facing some difficulty, any information about his condition would bring us great relief."

The family has urged anyone who may have seen Amrisha in Nepal or India, or who has any information regarding his whereabouts, to inform the nearest police office or contact the family.

Section- Abhiyan-6, Case- Froud. Case no.- 079-C1-01093
35 days summon notice issued by Kathmandu District Court
1. 35 days summon notice issued in the name of, DilKhush (Pakistani Citizen), (absconded),.....1
2. 35 days summon notice issued in the name of, Dharmendra Singh (Indian Citizen) (absconded),.....2
In the present case filed in this court on 2078/10/17 B.S., as Government of Nepal on the complaint of Arjun Mahato (Plaintiff) against Dilkhush et al. (Defendant), the arrest warrant issued in your name has returned unserved due to the whereabouts being unknown. Hence, a 35 days summon notice has been published. You are hereby required to appear within 35 days from the date of publication of this summon, excluding travel time. In case of non-appearance or absentees after the expiration of summon period, the case shall proceed in accordance with the law. Thereafter you shall have no further rights to raise an objection.
Date 2083 Bhadra 1st.

35-day Warrant for Arrest Issued by the Lalitpur District Court, Nepal in the name of absconding defendant, viz, Yuvraj Mahadev Vibhute, Resident of Madgule, Sangli District, Maharashtra State of India.(Adhar Card no.832487700129)
Whereas, in the Case of Money Laundering related Offence (Case No. 082-C1-0966) in which Government of Nepal is plaintiff on the information report of Nepal Police and you are defendant, a warrant for arrest has been issued for arresting you but you have not been arrested.
Now, therefore, this 35-day warrant for arrest has also been posted. If you voluntarily appear or are arrested and produced before this court within thirty-five days excluding the time required for journey, you shall be heard in accordance with law. If you remain absconding thereby expiring the time-limit, the case shall be proceed in accordance with law, and you shall not be entitled to make a complaint subsequently.
Date: 2026 August 17

35-day Warrant for Arrest Issued by the Lalitpur District Court, Nepal in the name of absconding defendant, viz, Saif Ali, Resident of S/O Tufail Ahamad, Gram Shripur Bazar, Post Sugauli, Sugauli, Sugauli, East Champaran, Bihar- 845456. (Adhar Card no.609202534289)
As the charge sheet has been filed before this court on 23 July, 2026 against you, in the Case of Narcotic Drugs Offence (Case No. 083-C1-0030) wherein Government of Nepal is plaintiff on the information report of Nepal Police and you are defendant, a warrant for arrest has been duly issued in your name and is hereby sent accordingly. Therefore, you are hereby required to appear before this court. If you voluntarily appear or are arrested and produced before this court within thirty-five days excluding the time required for journey, you shall be heard in accordance with law. If you remain absconding thereby expiring the time-limit, the case shall be proceed in accordance with law, and you shall not be entitled to make a complaint subsequently.
Date: 2026 August 17

BMC infrastructure construction demanded

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Mahottari, Aug. 16

Local representatives, political parties, entrepreneurs, and civil society of Bardibas have submitted a memorandum to the chief district officer, demanding the prompt construction of Bardibas Medical College's infrastructure.

The locals have united against the government's decision to cancel the

Bardibas Medical College Infrastructure Construction and Development Project.

They have demanded that the government immediately stop the project's cancellation process and proceed with the construction work.

Various political parties and stakeholders, led by Bardibas Municipality Mayor Prahlad Kumar Chhetri, submitted a memorandum to the Chief District Officer on Friday, demanding that the project continue to operate.

EDITORIAL

Originality Of Heritage

As one of the world's oldest nations, Nepal boasts of ancient monuments, heritage, culture and traditions. Temples, palaces and stupas dating back millennia are steeped in myths, mysteries and religious sagas. They reflect our ancestors' perennial desire to express their innermost feelings and communicate with some unseen forces they believed through generations. The beautiful wooden structures display magnificent artwork, craftsmanship and architectural qualities. They undoubtedly stand as the sources of identity and prestige, carrying the soul of the nation and people for ages. They inspire both old and young generations of people to love and honour the history and culture that provide distinct recognition to them. Despite our immense faith in and respect for the heritage structures and sites, preserving them have been an uphill task. They are always vulnerable to natural disasters such as fires, quakes, storms and rain-induced subsidence.

During the 2015 earthquake, hundreds of heritage sites were knocked down. The Post Disaster Need Assessment (PDNA) conducted by the National Planning Commission Nepal revealed that the earthquake affected 2,900 structures. It caused massive damage to around 920 cultural monuments. Of them, 133 were razed to the ground, 233 were heavily damaged and 554 suffered partial damage. Officials of the World Heritage Conservation Section of the Department of Archaeology (DoA) inform that 825 of the 920 damaged monuments have been reconstructed so far. A news report of this daily states that in the last fiscal year, 10 heritage sites were restored as part of ongoing reconstruction of 215 centuries-old monasteries. The government has earmarked Rs. 627 million for the regular preservation of earthquake-damaged heritage sites in the current fiscal year.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that many temples and structures have been restored to their original shape. The DoA has used new raw materials such as bricks and timber to rebuild them. However, heritage experts have raised questions regarding the quality of restored structures. Some of them even argue that the principles and norms of heritage reconstruction were not duly followed. Even the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) has pointed out that the old materials were not used in the reconstruction. Its 62nd annual report states that the DoA paid for the demolition of the old structures and new construction work as separate items in the Bill of Quantities. It failed to properly verify the reuse of materials such as wood, doors, stones and bricks recovered from demolished sites.

Experts are of the view that old materials, skills and construction methods must be applied to rebuild the heritage structures. They say that 90 per cent of old materials from the ruins of heritage sites can be reused. If modern materials are used heavily, the historic monuments risk losing their original character and authenticity. The DoA has embraced norms of heritage reconstructions while rebuilding the Kasthamandap but this was not the case in the reconstruction of the Rato Machhindranath temple in Bungamati. It is not just raw materials but craftsmanship, technology and cultural value that also matter most. This is a reason why there was a prolonged stand-off between the conservationists and the authorities during the reconstruction of Rani Pokhari. The initially designed concrete columns of cement were removed and new materials used to reconstruct the ancient pond. The growing public awareness of heritage reconstruction in the aftermath of the quake has helped not only maintain the originality of the damaged monuments but also preserves our traditional skills, knowledge and practices.

Business Partnerships

PRATIK AWALE

Why should two people start a business together? There must be a good and logical answer to this question. If two people are able to generate an equal amount of value and profit independently, then why should they form a partnership and work together for the same return? This is where the concept of additional value comes in.

A good partnership should follow the format of 1 + 1 = 3. Yes, not 2 but 3. By combining their specialties and strengths, partners should complement each other and create more value. In other words, two people should complement each other's skills in a partnership. One example is a person specialising in coding and a person specialising in finance working together to create a finance app.

Another example is a person interested in cars and a person specialising in videography working together to create attention-grabbing car videos. The major objective should be to create more value than what could have been created by working independently.

There are various combinations for starting a partnership business. The most common format we see is an equal partnership, with equal investment and equal effort in daily operations. Another format is 0-100, where one partner invests 100 per cent of the money but isn't involved in daily operations, while the other partner has 0 per cent financial investment but is actively involved in daily operations. This can happen when one partner has the capital but lacks the time or skills, while the other partner has the time

or skills but lacks the capital. The personal relationship between the partners matters too. While raising additional funds from external investors, investors generally look at the relationship between the partners. Whether they have known each other for a long time, whether they have been through ups and downs together, and whether they have synergy all of these things matter. Investors may therefore be more cautious about investing in firms where the partners have only recently met and decided to start a business together. This could indicate that they do not know each other well, and over the long term, there could be various conflicts of interest.

One of the most important things when starting a partnership business is to select a partner who believes in the mission of the company and is hardworking, rather than someone who is only interested in earning money. One of the most common patterns is that both partners are equally energetic during the starting phase of the business, but over time, one of the partners starts to get busy or loses interest in the work. Then, only one of the partners is actively working, bringing in clients and handling the daily operations, while still sharing an equal return with the other partner who is no longer contributing equally.

This is why choosing the right partner is just as important as choosing the right business idea. A partnership should not simply bring two people together; it should bring together two people who can create more value together than they could have created independently.

Rough Ride In Tough Climes

P Kharel



TIDE OF TIMES

When precepts pursue preceptors who pose as lords of what they desire, a tussle begins between dubious dreams and facts of life. Navigating the beginning of a new world order raises many risks and challenges. Conditions toss up opportunities for the dynamic and calculating with a panache for deftly dwelling upon issues and brokering deals.

That means conviction on the foundation of courage. Both qualities go hand in hand for success, inherently intertwined as they are. Someone with military might wants natural resources belonging to someone else. The craving is so immense that threats and things worse are applied to decamp with vital local resources on exploitative terms. This is not the world order most of humanity would pray for.

Trump's language of overlordship proved unbearable to Europe only when the former continental centre of aggression, imperialism and hegemony got the taste of what the rest of the world was having in multiple ways for eight decades after World War II.

Cultivating proactive strategic interests and defining them in accordance with the expediency of given contexts and conditions is the height of hypocrisy. The validity of strategic interest should not be based on proactive expansion of its scope and interpretation based on expediency. Some middle-level powers are thinking aloud about

nuclear weapons in their fightback against "unacceptable" foreign demands that strike hard on their legitimate interests.

Far from easy

Occasionally, adjustments and compromises are called for not to dominate or exploit a target country's resources and cultural heritage but to address concerns over which there is a broad consensus perceived as genuine. Compromise should serve well. Not a pragmatic approach? Whatever the answers, the outcome should be peace and harmony against predatory tactics. Regional powers accuse bigger powers of activities they themselves inflict on weaker neighbours or distant nations.

Unity and connectivity are required, not losing sight of the collective self as a nation or grouping. Hegemony is not a term for exclusive use of superpowers but also other powers. For an individual country, the hegemons, whether regional or global, are bullies flexing muscles or brandishing economic sanctions, if not both.

Duplicity in diplomacy sets off a dangerous bell. The International Criminal Court issued a warrant against Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The good old, powerful mainstream media are generally silent over it, as he travels from home to Washington. In fact, they conspicuously skip the ICC warrant. Neither is the ICC action rejected as wrongful nor is its writ supported.

Chances are that Trump's successors might conclude that there is a need to continue that part of US President Donald Trump's move, completely or partially. It might come in handy, ignoring its obvious odious side.

The dynamics of the big power game have undergone marked changes, with complex twists and complications just around

Cultivating proactive strategic interests and defining them in accordance with the expediency of given contexts and conditions is the height of hypocrisy.

the bend. Russia's superpower military strength and China's superpower economic might combine to pose a formidable counterweight to the US-led West and a few other allies like Australia, Japan and South Korea.

Who will take the gambit? The Asian arc formed from Russia, North Korea and China to Pakistan, Iran and much of West Asia constitutes a match the mainstream West did not expect as late as the 2010s. Hence the bewilderment in the latter's reaction and panic in haphazard action.

Trump's actions and Europe's response expose how the West defines and covers sovereignty and the United Nations Charter. Taiwan will go the Hong Kong way instead of getting bogged down in uncertainty and having to be under constant reassurances and promised security from the West. West Asian rulers or those in Latin America and Africa are not questioned about their democratic credentials as long as they do the West's bidding.

The parade of colour revolutions at times devours its own. The West's policy seems to be aimed at deterring Russia, containing China, controlling world resources, intimidating some, threatening others and attacking a few as the final blow.

At the Ankara NATO Summit in July,

Trump whined about allies not appreciating his initiatives. He repeated his stance that the US needs and deserves Greenland, even if the issue had "hurt my relationship" with Europe. If the audaciously impudent slight on the supposedly closest allies can be issued in such manner, how would the others be treated?

Pre-emptive pursuit

Trump has sealed the lips of academics, NGO experts, DV seekers, and the like, who are scared of airing critical views, lest they be rejected or reviled as "young and liberal" enthusiasts. In the midst of talks with Iran, he coordinated with Israel for a surprise attack on it, though he now regrets it to his international humiliation and American embarrassment.

Mark these words: He will outscore his predecessor at the White House Joe Biden and even the first elected President of Russia after the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991. Russian President Boris Yeltsin, neck deep in corruption, extracted a pledge from Vice-President Vladimir Putin, the former KGB chief, to grant him and his family immunity from investigation in their post-retirement life. With a year to consolidate his position as a nationalist leader bent on restoring the lost development tempo and international prestige, Putin nodded to compromise.

Biden pre-reprieved his family members but not himself. Trump will go a step forward by giving a preemptive reprieve for all his family members and close ones, including himself. The list could be a record long. The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal might miss this; rather, they might prefer to overlook the strong probability.

(Kharel writes on int'l affairs & media.)

Rethinking Nepal's Belt And Road Strategy

Dr. Nirajan Dhungana



As Nepal prepares for a closely watched political visit to Beijing in recent years, a question more important than diplomatic protocol deserves attention: can the visit help place Nepal on a path toward sustained double-digit economic growth? As Nepal and China enter a new phase of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation, the challenge is no longer whether Nepal needs more infrastructure. It is whether the BRI can become a platform for industrialisation, structural transformation and long-term prosperity.

Against this backdrop, Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) chair Rabi Lamichhane's forthcoming Beijing visit offers a timely opportunity to deepen Nepal-China economic cooperation and shape a new generation of BRI engagement focused on productive investment, industrialisation, export competitiveness and job creation. Its significance should be judged not merely by political engagement, but by whether it advances a credible agenda for Nepal's long-term structural transformation. Nepal's economy remains structurally vulnerable despite decades of integration into global and regional trade frameworks through the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). A widening trade imbalance, heavy dependence on remittances, and the persistent exodus of young workers underscore the country's weak productive base and chronic shortage of quality employment. Unless remittance-driven consumption is matched by a sustained expansion in domestic production and exports, it risks deepening import dependence and reinforcing Dutch-disease-type pressures.

Industrial transition

At the same time, China is undergoing an industrial transition. Rising wages, technological upgrading, and a shift toward higher-value production are encouraging parts of labour-intensive manufacturing to relocate to lower-cost economies. Nepal should view this transition as a major opportunity to bring back some of the 6.5 million Nepali migrant workers. Nepal should move beyond infrastructure financing and position itself as a hub for export-oriented industries, leveraging its labour, hydropower and strategic location between China and India. From a New Structural Economics perspective, Nepal's fundamental problem is not its trade deficit with China per se, but the structural weakness of its domestic productive base and its limited capacity to produce internationally competitive tradable goods and services. The crucial question, therefore, is whether the RSP chair's reach in Beijing comes with such a clear economic blueprint.

This sector-led approach should fundamentally reshape Nepal's BRI strategy. Projects such as the cross-border railway, major road corridors and power transmission links should serve not as ends in themselves, but as foundations for integrated economic corridors connecting transport infrastructure with industrial parks, Special Economic Zones, agro-processing, logistics and export-oriented manufacturing. The deeper lesson from China is institutional rather than infrastructural. Its transformation was driven not by infrastructure alone, but by the strategic coordination of transport networks, industrial clusters, Special Economic Zones, export promotion, technology transfer, investment attraction and pragmatic industrial policy. Nepal need not replicate China's model mechanically; it should adapt these principles to its own endowments, institutional capacity and evolving comparative advantages.

The financing principle should be equally clear: Nepal should distinguish between borrowing that merely expands liabilities and investment that expands future

Nepal should diversify exports, strengthen competitiveness, integrate into regional value chains and create productive opportunities for its young population.

productive capacity. BRI projects should therefore be assessed by their ability to generate income, foreign exchange, and economy-wide productivity gains sufficient to justify their financial and fiscal costs. A Nepal-China Economic Transformation Partnership under the BRI could provide the overarching framework. Rather than negotiating isolated projects, the two countries could develop coordinated programmes linking investment, technology transfer, skills development, trade facilitation, industrial upgrading and access to Chinese and regional markets. Such a framework would give bilateral cooperation a clearer economic logic and measurable development objectives.

Within this framework, priority sectors could include large-scale hydropower and cross-border transmission, agro-processing, green manufacturing, tourism, ICT-enabled services, and export-oriented industries developed through commercially viable domestic and joint-venture enterprises. This strategy must build market access from the outset. Investors are unlikely to scale production unless Nepal can offer credible pathways to domestic, Chinese, Indian, and wider regional markets. To improve implementation, the two countries should consider establishing a High-Level Nepal-China Economic Transformation Commission that brings together economists, industrial experts, business leaders, financial institutions, and policymakers. It should assess projects based on comparative advantage, productivity, export potential, employment

generation, technology transfer, debt sustainability, and long-term economic returns rather than political symbolism.

Economic diplomacy

This would also require a shift in Nepal's BRI project portfolio from predominantly stand-alone infrastructure toward investments that create clusters of complementary economic activity. Transport corridors should attract firms; power projects should stimulate energy-intensive industries; border infrastructure should support logistics and exports; and urban investments should crowd in tourism, services and private capital. Economic diplomacy must therefore move beyond discussions of roads, tunnels and financing. The next phase of the BRI should build factories before monuments, exports before deficits, products before ports, and industries before dependency. Such a shift would help Nepal diversify exports, strengthen competitiveness, integrate into regional value chains and create productive opportunities for its young population.

The BRI may offer Nepal one of its most consequential development opportunities in a generation, but its value will ultimately depend on what Nepal chooses to build around connectivity. Success should be measured not by kilometres of railway or highway alone, but by whether new connectivity raises productivity, attracts investment, expands exports, transfers technology and creates competitive industries. If Nepal approaches Beijing with a clear economic vision rather than another shopping list of projects, Lamichhane's forthcoming visit could mark a historic shift from infrastructure-centred cooperation toward a genuine Nepal-China partnership for structural transformation and sustained double-digit growth.

(The author is the chair of the Nepal Centre for Economics. nirajandhungana@gmail.com)

50 YEARS AGO

THE RISING NEPAL

August 17, 1976

New Passport Regulation Issued

Kathmandu, Aug. 16: His Majesty's Government has published a set of new rules and regulations concerning passports, reports RSS.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

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Please email your contributions to: trnfeatures@gmail.com

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Or send them to

P.O. Box 23, Kathmandu, Nepal

READER'S MAIL

Relocate Landslide-prone Villagers

This is about the news report, "Bajura villagers await relocation," carried by this daily on August 16. According to the report, nearly 93 villages and settlements across all nine local levels of Bajura district are at high risk of floods and landslides. Of these, 49 settlements are currently awaiting relocation to safer areas.

Being a district defined by steep terrain, fragile geological structure, river erosion, unplanned road construction, and the growing impact of climate change, Bajura is among the most vulnerable to natural hazards. The fact that a total of 62 people have lost their lives in disasters shows this. Only a few days ago, 13 people died in two



landslides in Rolpa district. And Bajura is more vulnerable to landslides compared to Rolpa. We cannot afford to lose our people in preventable calamities. The way to do this is to relocate these vulnerable population to safe areas. The sooner it can be done, the better the outcome will be.

Yamraj Adhikari Syangja

TAILPIECE

Jennifer watched as the cashier rang up her purchases. "Cash, check or charge?" she asked, after folding the items Jennifer had bought. As Jennifer fumbled for her wallet, the cashier noticed a remote control for a television set in her purse.

"Do you always carry your TV remote with you?" the cashier inquired.

"No," she replied. "But my husband, Jeff, refused to come shopping with me, so I figured this was the most evil thing I could do to him."

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Young Son: "Is it true, Dad? I heard that in some parts of the world, a man doesn't know his wife until he marries her." Dad: That happens in every country, son.

Indonesia quake death toll reaches 51

AP
Ruteng (Indonesia), Aug. 16

Rescue teams in eastern Indonesia recovered four more bodies Sunday after a magnitude-7.7 earthquake struck the day before, bringing the death toll to 51, authorities said. Thousands have been displaced.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the powerful earthquake hit eastern Indonesia's Flores region at a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles) at 5:58 a.m. local time. Residents fled in panic as tsunami warnings were issued and later lifted. At least 235 aftershocks followed, according to Indonesia's meteorological agency.

Rescuers on Sunday dug through debris looking for people feared buried beneath landslides triggered by the quake across six regencies on Flores, a predominantly Catholic island in Muslim-majority Indonesia. They focused on three regencies that remained inaccessible after the earthquake: the hardest-hit Manggarai, East Manggarai and Nagekeo.

"We have cleared most landslides and reopened roads to previously isolated villages, although communication disruptions and power outages continue to hamper search efforts," said Fathur Rahman, head of the Search and Rescue Office in Maumere, the capital of Sikka regency.

The National Search and Rescue Agency said 101 people were injured. More than 900 homes were destroyed and 450 more damaged, forcing about 5,000 people into temporary shelters.

Thousands at Labuan Bajo, the gateway to Komodo National Park, one of Indonesia's best-known tourist destinations, spent the night outdoors, fearing strong aftershocks.

"The shaking was terrifying, so intense that my house nearly collapsed," said Anastasia Imad, a farmer, speaking from a makeshift green tent beside her damaged home. "We feared the aftershocks would bring it down on



Patients receive treatment inside a makeshift tent outside a hospital following an earthquake in Labuan Bajo, East Nusa Tenggara province, Indonesia.

us while we slept."

Landslides blocked sections of the Trans-Flores Highway, a roughly 700-kilometer (435-mile) road linking communities across the mountainous island.

Meanwhile, relief workers distributed rice, ready-to-eat meals, drinking water, blankets and medicine, while emergency shelters were being set up for displaced residents. Authorities

said restoring electricity and communications, as well as delivering aid to remote villages isolated by landslides, remained among the biggest challenges.

Indonesia, an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, is prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions because of its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," a horseshoe-shaped arc of seismic faults and volcanoes.

Flores has experienced some of the country's deadliest disasters. A powerful earthquake and tsunami in 1992 killed about 2,500 people on the island.

In 2018, a magnitude 7.5 earthquake triggered a tsunami on Sulawesi that killed more than 4,400 people. In 2004, a magnitude 9.1 quake off Sumatra unleashed a tsunami that killed about 230,000 people in a dozen countries.

Strikes kill 12 in Russia, Ukraine

AFP
Kyiv, Aug. 16

Overnight strikes killed 12 people in Russia and Ukraine, authorities said Sunday, as waves of drones and missiles pummelled civilian infrastructure on both sides. With fighting at the front at a near standstill and talks frozen, the warring countries have significantly stepped up long-range attacks deep behind each other's lines, pushing the civilian death toll to its highest levels since the war's first months in 2022.

In Russia, swarms of Ukrainian drones killed five people in a residential area of the southern Rostov region, regional governor Yuri Slusar said. Two more people were killed in the Belgorod and Moscow regions.

Moscow regional governor Andrey Vorobyov described the assault as "one of the most massive drone attacks in recent memory". Russia's defence ministry said it had intercepted 822 drones across the country overnight.

In Ukraine, a barrage of Russian drones and missiles killed two people and wounded 14 at ArcelorMittal's steel plant in Kryvyi Rih, President Volodymyr Zelensky's hometown. The plant, one of Ukraine's biggest steel producers, said it partially halted operations after the strike damaged its core production facilities. Strikes also hit other regions, killing two people in the south-eastern Zaporizhzhia region and one in the border region of Sumy.

In Kyiv, a popular outdoor book market at Pochaina, long the place to find rare and antiquarian volumes, was struck. Bookseller Dmytro Semenukha saw all four of his stalls burn to the ground. "There used to be a store. And books, and flags of all the countries, all the countries. Tons of everything. And that's it," the 45-year-old told AFP.

In a social media post on the overnight raid, Zelensky said "wherever the Russians can reach with their ballistic missiles, they strike civilian infrastructure." Over the past week, he said, Ukrainian cities had

been pummelled by "more than 1,550 attack drones, nearly 1,560 guided aerial bombs, and 62 missiles", as he renewed his appeal to allies for more air defence.

Russia has carried out near-daily missile and drone strikes across Ukraine since launching its full-scale invasion in early 2022. It has recently intensified attacks using hard-to-intercept ballistic missiles, exploiting Ukraine's air-defence shortages after the US-Israeli war against Iran diverted supplies. "When North Korean ballistic missiles destroy infrastructure and claim lives here in Europe, European interceptors cannot simply be allowed to sit in storage," Zelensky said. Kyiv has recently renewed claims that Moscow is receiving more missiles and troops from its ally North Korea.

Countries bordering the conflict have meanwhile faced increasing spillover from the drone war. After the overnight raid, Romania's defence ministry said a Spanish F-18 fighter jet shot down a drone that breached its airspace near the borders with Ukraine and Moldova. NATO said Friday its fighter jets shot down a drone that entered Latvian airspace -- the second such incident there in a week, according to Latvia's defence ministry.

For its part, Ukraine has increasingly targeted warehouses belonging to Russia's biggest online retailer Wildberries, saying the company supplies components for Russian drones. Near Moscow, another Wildberries warehouse was set ablaze by Ukrainian drones overnight. Since mid-July, Ukraine has struck around 20 warehouses and buildings linked to the company.

Zelensky says those strikes, along with attacks on oil refineries, are aimed at undermining Russia's war economy. In July alone, 437 civilians were killed in Ukraine, the highest monthly toll since May 2022, according to a United Nations tally. Russian authorities separately reported 79 civilians killed on their side in July, up from the previous month.

Chinese ship sets off for Europe through Arctic

AFP
Beijing, Aug. 16

A Chinese container vessel has set sail for Europe through the Arctic, part of new weekly service on a route that cuts shipment times in half but which environmental groups warn could speed up the melting of polar ice.

The "Dubai Tower" left the eastern port city of Ningbo on Saturday evening heading north, where it will pass through the Bering Strait, then turn west through the frigid waters along Russia's northern coast.

It is expected to reach Felixstowe in the United Kingdom on September 7, followed by stops in Hamburg, Germany and Gdynia, Poland later that week, according to a timetable published by Sea Legend.

The Northern Sea Route (NSR) from China to Europe is significantly faster than that through the Suez Canal and allows vessels to avoid the Red Sea, where shipping has been targeted by Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen. But the route is only accessible during the time of the year when the ice is melted enough to allow transits without icebreakers.

Global shipping is heavily disrupted by war in the Middle East, sparked by US-Israeli strikes on Iran in late February. Other shipping companies have transited



The "Dubai Tower" left the eastern port city of Ningbo on Saturday evening bound for the so-called Northern Sea Route (NSR).

the Arctic passage before, with Denmark's Maersk the first to do so in 2018.

Last year, 23 container ships transited through, up from 15 in 2024, according to shipping analysis from business insurer Allianz Commercial. Environmental groups warn that increasing numbers of ships transiting the shorter NSR could accelerate loss of Arctic sea ice -- already made vulnerable by rising global temperatures.

Major shipping companies including France's CMA CGM, Switzerland-headquartered MSC and Germany-based Hapag-Lloyd have pledged to "avoid Arctic trans-shipment routes". But analysts say the Arctic could serve as an important future trade route, particularly for China, which has outlined plans for greater access to the region through a "Polar Silk Road".

Indiana storm claim five

AP
Indiana, Aug. 16

Indiana authorities said at least five people have died as a result of severe storms and flooding across the state this week, as first responders used boats to rescue more people Saturday from rising waters in neighbourhoods along the White River in Indianapolis.

The state has been hammered over the past week by heavy rains, resulting in rivers reaching record levels and sending residents in search of higher ground. More than a dozen counties have declared local disasters, with much of the latest damage concentrated along river corridors from Hamilton County heading into the northern Indianapolis suburbs.

President Donald Trump approved an emergency declaration for Indiana, and federal disaster assistance is available to the state, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said Saturday.

Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett said the city was experiencing its most severe flooding in more than 30 years, noting that conditions were shifting rapidly. Hundreds of homes in neighbourhoods that were located between the river and parallel canals were evacuated Saturday, as first responders used boats to rescue people who were already stranded.

Rita Reith, a spokesperson with the Indianapolis Fire Department, put the number of rescues at 95 people and 45

pets as of late afternoon. Dispatchers had received hundreds of calls for service throughout the day.

The governor's office reported more than 350 evacuations have occurred in Delaware County and that a senior mobile home community in Tipton County was being evacuated. Rescues and welfare checks also were happening in Fayette County.

Indiana authorities said Saturday at least five people have died as a result of the severe weather over the past week. That includes a boy killed when a tree fell on his home, a woman who was swept away after driving into floodwaters and a teen who was reported missing after jumping in to a river on Wednesday.

"My heart is with the families and loved ones of the five Hoosiers we have lost and every family whose life has been changed by these storms," Braun said in a statement issued Saturday. "Please continue to take flooding seriously and stay away from floodwaters."

Jacob Spence, director of Marion County Emergency Management, called it a once-in-a-lifetime type flood. "This is an unprecedented event, and unfortunately we're setting some new records," he told The Associated Press.

The National Weather Service reported that more than 11 inches (28 centimeters) of rain fell over a two-day period in some areas. The White River crested at more than 24 feet (7.32 meters) in the communities of Anderson and Noblesville, surpassing records set in 1913.

PRISM

Escaped tortoise found after 2 weeks

Oak Hammock Marsh: A 15-year-old African spurred tortoise who escaped from her owner's Manitoba home was found two weeks later at a nature preserve more than 12 miles from home.

The Oak Hammock Marsh nature preserve in Manitoba said on social media that officials received multiple reports of tortoise sightings on the property, which struck them as strange, as tortoises are not native to Canada. "We thought maybe people were mistaking a snapping turtle because we do get those," Gillian Malchuk, a nature interpreter at Oak Hammock Marsh, told CTV News. "So snapping turtles, painted turtles, any number of things that we were maybe thinking it could be. Maybe just a big rock in some circumstances."

Bomb squad identifies suspicious device

Washington DC: A suspicious object left outside a Washington, D.C., firehouse shut down rush hour traffic and prompted a bomb squad response before being identified as an adult toy.

Police were called to the station of D.C. Fire and EMS Engine 20 on Wisconsin Avenue in the Tenleytown neighborhood about 7 a.m. Wednesday on a report of a suspicious electronic device with exposed wires outside the building.

-Agencies

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1488 – Konrad Bitz, the Bishop of Turku, marks the date of his preface to Missale Aboense, the oldest known book of Finland.
- 1549 – Battle of Sampford Courtenay: The Prayer Book Rebellion is quashed in England.
- 1560 – The Catholic Church is overthrown and Protestantism is established as the national religion in Scotland.
- 1648 – The Parliamentarians defeat a English Royalist and Scottish army in the battle of Preston.
- 1668 – The magnitude 8.0 North Anatolia earthquake causes 8,000 deaths in northern Anatolia, Ottoman Empire.
- 1717 – Austro-Turkish War of 1716-18: The month-long Siege of Belgrade ends with Prince Eugene of Savoy's Austrian troops capturing the city from the Ottoman Empire.

AFP
Spay (Germany). Aug. 16

As Europe bakes in yet another heat-wave, German winegrower Florian Weingart has scattered straw on the ground to keep moisture trapped in the earth and protect his prized vines from extreme temperatures.

It is one of several measures that he is taking in a bid to ensure his small vineyard produces a decent crop despite a historically hot summer and low rainfall. "The harvest is hanging by a thread," he told AFP from his vineyard in the village of Spay, looking out over the Rhine and hills scorched a deep brown by the heat. The river has fallen to record lows.

Climate change has had some advantages for Germany's winegrowers over



German winegrower Florian Weingart uses drip irrigation at his vineyard.

the years, allowing them to experiment with grape varieties better suited to warmer climes and making cultivation possible in new areas.

But lengthier and more frequent periods of hot and dry weather are increasingly a challenge. They have left vineyards struggling to sufficiently irrigate their plants, and caused crop yields to dwindle. "We are at a tipping point," said Weingart. He now feels that the dangers of climate change "are starting to outweigh the advantages".

The 53-year-old, who took over the vineyard from his parents three decades ago, has covered around a third of the six-hectare site with straw, which helps to create a protective layer that prevents water from evaporating. But "it really is a lot of work", he said. "Over the last four weeks, I have transported 1,000 small straw bales from the fields and scattered it around".

Scattering straw between vines, known as mulching, is not new, but what has changed is its purpose: from improving general soil health to helping vineyards withstand a warming climate. "This whole aspect of evaporation protection and the fact that (straw) actually offers advantages in dealing with these climate challenges is something we only realised later on," said Weingart.

Irrigation is another key measure at the vineyard, which makes mostly white Riesling -- Germany's signature wine variety -- as well as some red Spätburgunder, and sells its produce locally. The vineyard has a system of piping spread across 1.85 hectares of the vines, which steadily drips water onto the ground around the plants' roots, and is turned on every few days.

The system, which was installed in 2013, is especially important for young vines, whose roots are not as deep.



A breathtaking view of the repaired public shelter houses in the Pathibhara Temple area, with the beauty of white clouds and lush greenery around.

Education Dialogue in progress

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

The Ministry of Education and Sports has launched its 'Education Dialogue' campaign from Biratnagar in Koshi Province, seeking suggestions from education stakeholders on issues to be incorporated into the proposed School Education Act.

The discussion was part of the ministry's campaign to engage stakeholders in all seven provinces before drafting the Act. The programme, organised at Adarsha Secondary School in Biratnagar, was attended by principals, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders from the education sector.

Educationist Dr. Bidyanath Koirala, education activist Abhishek Ghimire, President of the Principals' Association Nepal (PAN) Sudam Gautam, and Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Education and head of the School Education Division Shiva Sapkota, among others, participated in the programme.

At the event, Education Minister's Advisor Shailendra Jha said education policy has a long-term impact and should therefore be formulated with a forward-looking vision so that it remains effective for at least 25 to 30 years.

He said it was necessary to listen to the voices of education stakeholders across the country before enacting the law, which was why dialogue with local stakeholders had begun in all seven provinces.

The second day of the 'Education Dialogue' campaign, which began in Biratnagar, was held in Janakpur of



Madhes Province on Sunday.

Various stakeholders working in the education sector in Madhes Province participated in the event.

The programme, organised at Shree Yagyavalkya Sanskrit Secondary School in Gyanakunda, Janakpurdham-6, Dhanusha, with facilitation by the PAN, was attended by various stakeholders working in the education sector in Madhes Province.

During the event, education sector leaders offered suggestions on issues to be incorporated into the forthcoming education legislation, ways to strengthen and improve the quality of school education, and measures to increase community ownership and participation in the development of school education.

The stakeholders stressed that the Education Act should prioritise practical problems faced at the school level, the needs of teachers and schools, and the role of local communities.

A total of 211 education stakeholders from all eight districts of Madhes Province participated in the programme.

Teachers, principals, parents and other education sector leaders shared their views and suggestions on various aspects of education reform.

DHARMA GAUTAM'S BOOK LAUNCHED

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Nepali Congress president Gagan Kumar Thapa has said that BP (Bishweshwor Prasad Koirala) and Ganeshman Singh should not be confined to a particular family or group, and that their ideologies must not be interpreted to serve specific ends.

Speaking at the launch of 'BP Ra Bidrohaka Ti Din', a book written by Dharma Gautam in Kathmandu on Sunday, Thapa emphasised the importance of exploring the works and thoughts of the late BP. He said that new generation leaders, who never saw BP in their lifetime, should have the opportunity to learn about his legacy.

"Those campaigners who worked with BP should tell us the truth about his life and works, so that no one will be misguided," he added.

Gautam, who spent five years in exile with BP Koirala, has recalled his experiences with BP as well as his involvement in political, social and academic activities in Ilam, his home district. The book has been published by Kitab Publishers. Gautam said he would spend the earnings from the book to upgrade a health post in Nindakhu, his birthplace in Ilam.

Senior journalist Harihari Birhai highlighted the days Gautam and he spent in exile. Likewise, Sucheta Pyakurel reviewed the book.

Gautam went into exile in 1972, and returned to Nepal in 1977 under BP Koirala's policy of National Reconciliation. But immediately after he landed in Kathmandu from Patna, he was arrested and jailed. He was freed only after the announcement of 1979 national referendum. Since the restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990, Gautam has remained active in journalism and social service in Ilam.

NC anti-establishment faction decides to hold 15th general convention

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

The national conference of the anti-establishment faction of the Nepali Congress concluded on Sunday, deciding to hold the party's 15th general convention under the leadership of its former president Sher Bahadur Deuba.

Issuing 20-point decisions focusing on internal party unity, strengthening democracy and contemporary political issues, the national conference has given Deuba, also a former prime minister, full authority to announce a new schedule for the general convention.

The conference has also decided to promote Sanatan Dharma as a national identity while ensuring religious freedom for other communities.

Held in Kathmandu from August 14 to 16, it concluded that the party's internal disputes should be resolved and its 15th general convention held as soon as possible. It also welcomed the Supreme Court's decision to allow a review of the dispute over the party's legitimacy, citing it as a renewed opportunity to seek justice.

The conference also expressed confidence that the party's legitimate leadership would secure recognition through the judicial process after the Supreme Court (SC) on August 6 allowed the case to be heard afresh from the beginning. The conference also reviewed why the NC's 15th general convention could not be held within the scheduled timeframe.

It concluded that the convention was affected by several factors, including then general secretary Gagan Kumar

Home Minister urged to relocate Budhigandaki project victims

BY GUNA BAHADUR ROKA
Sulikot, Aug. 16

Ward No. 9 of Shaheed Lakhnan Rural Municipality, Namjung, Gorkha, has urged Home Minister Sudhan Gurung to take necessary initiatives for the resettlement of people affected by the inundation caused by the Budhigandaki Hydropower Project, reconstruction of local infrastructure and improvement of health services.

According to ward chairman Ram Kumar Shrestha, a memorandum submitted to Minister Gurung called for coordination through necessary policies and programmes to properly manage settlements and infrastructure that will fall within the inundation area during construction of the Budhigandaki Hydropower Project, as well as to resettle affected residents.

The memorandum also called for the reconstruction of infrastructure in the inundation area to be given priority. It further urged the authorities to prepare a detailed project report (DPR) and make necessary arrangements for relocating the already reconstructed Bhimsenwor Mahadev Temple to an appropriate site.

Likewise, it urged the authorities to continue the blacktopping of the Churchula-Bunkotghat road and take necessary measures to facilitate local people's movement. The ward office also called for the operation of laboratory services at Namjung Health Post and the deployment of adequate health personnel, including qualified doctors.

Minister Gurung was requested to coordinate among the concerned agencies and take necessary steps to address important local problems.

The ward office has called on the state to take concrete decisions by prioritising the resettlement of residents affected by the Budhigandaki Project, preservation of religious and cultural heritage, road infrastructure and health services.

According to Rastriya Swatantra Party leader Dhruva Adhikari, Minister Gurung, while receiving the memorandum, pledged that the government would take necessary policy decisions to resolve problems related to the Budhigandaki Hydropower Project and work to address the demands of residents in the affected areas.

Minister Gurung said solutions would be sought in coordination with the concerned agencies on issues including the resettlement of project-affected people and reconstruction of infrastructure.

OLI STANDS AGAINST REORGANISING PARTY

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Damak, Aug. 16

CPN-UML chairman and former prime minister KP Sharma Oli has urged party leaders and cadres to rise above personal interests and the pursuit of positions and work in the interests of the country and the people.

Inaugurating the UML's 'Mission Party Awakening Campaign-2083' organised in Birtamod, Jhapa, on Sunday, chairman Oli said he had not entered politics to become prime minister or party chairman.

"I did not enter politics with the intention of becoming prime minister or party chairman, nor am I doing so now," he said. Meanwhile, Oli dismissed discussions about reorganising the party and changing its leadership as baseless.

He said various rumours were being spread about restructuring the party and removing its leadership, but claimed there was no basis for such talk. "Talk of restructuring the party and removing its leadership is a baseless rumour. It is neither possible nor necessary," Oli said.

Recalling that the party and the communist movement had been reorganised three times in the past when the movement faced crises, he said those reorganisations had taken place under specific circumstances.

He said there was no such need in the present situation.

Oli urged party leaders and cadres to further strengthen the party organisation and move forward effectively in the interests of the country and the people. Party leaders and cadres participated in the programme held in Birtamod. UML Jhapa chairman Prem Giri said the 'Mission Party Awakening Campaign-2083' aims to further activate the party organisation and increase political awareness among party cadres.

NRNA summit to boost unity...

He also said the government has been continuously working to protect the interests of Nepali citizens living abroad, provide convenient and effective services, and make its relationship with the Nepali diaspora more trusted, stronger and more results-oriented.

He said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has already initiated the legal process through amendments to certain Nepal laws to ensure the

practical implementation of non-resident Nepali citizenship, as guaranteed by Nepal's constitution, and to address practical issues including unrestricted travel to Nepal, property rights, and the transfer, purchase and sale of property.

Minister Khanal also said that the proposed amendments would be tabled in Parliament as soon as the MoFA receives opinions from the other relevant ministries.

Monsoon wreaks havoc, deaths...

Floodwaters in the Narayani River also intensified riverbank erosion in Susta of West Nawalparasi, threatening settlements and farmland. The swollen river damaged sections of an under-construction embankment, prompting local residents, security personnel and technical teams to reinforce vulnerable stretches using sandbags and gabion wire mesh. Residents renewed demands for a permanent embankment, saying temporary measures would not provide lasting protection.

Disaster management authorities have urged people living in

landslide-prone hillsides, riverbanks and floodplains to remain vigilant, strictly follow official advisories and relocate immediately if conditions deteriorate. With more heavy rainfall forecast in several parts of the country, emergency agencies, security forces and local governments remain on high alert amid fears that the humanitarian impact of this year's monsoon could escalate further.

(With inputs from Karnali and Lumbini Province bureaus and district correspondents)

NRNA seeks simplified legal procedures, investment security...

He said they could currently supply goods to Nepal through the northern border points for only about six months a year and that industrialists suffered substantial losses when goods were left at border points for extended periods because the government failed to develop infrastructure on time.

Similarly, former NRNA China president Rohit Agrawal said every investment needed to be linked to profitability and that this required legal guarantees.

"In Nepal, legal complications and prolonged problems are constantly cited, making investors wonder whether or not to bring their investment into the country," he said. "I invested in a hydropower project, but I do not know when it will start generating electricity, while I am already bearing losses."

Arun Kumar Subedi, who has been researching investment issues, said NRNA investment would not come to Nepal as long as the existing system and laws allowed government officials to focus on finding ways to obstruct investors rather than providing the facilities they needed to invest and operate their businesses.

He added that the income of Nepalis

living abroad was more than three times Nepal's GDP, and the country needed to benefit from this resource.

Roshan Khanal, acting ambassador of Nepal to China, said the embassy would provide support if potential investment areas were properly identified. She said 61 per cent of Nepalis who have achieved success in business while living in China had expressed to her their desire to return to Nepal.

Demand for citizenship continuation

Meanwhile, the NRNA has once again renewed its demand for the continuation of Nepali citizenship by descent for Nepalis and people of Nepali origin living abroad.

The conference reiterated the NRNA's long-standing call to put the concept of 'Once a Nepali, always a Nepali' into practice. Participants stressed that non-resident Nepalis should not be viewed merely as a community that sends remittances, but as partners in Nepal's economic, social and overall development, according to the NRNA.

NRNA President Dr. Hemraj Sharma said that whenever the expectations

of non-resident Nepalis are discussed, issues such as citizenship, voting rights, British Gurkhas and people of Nepali origin who are foreign nationals (PNOs) inevitably arise.

According to him, the major common demand of Nepalis living in 110 countries is the continuation of citizenship by descent.

Dr. Sharma said Nepal needed an umbrella law covering all these groups. Rather than addressing citizenship issues in isolation, he argued that a comprehensive legal framework should be developed to resolve the problems faced by non-resident Nepalis.

NRNA chief patron and former president Dr. Badri KC said non-resident Nepalis who send substantial amounts of remittances to Nepal are still having to fight for their citizenship rights.

He said Nepalis and people of Nepali origin who have achieved success in education, business and various other fields abroad, particularly the younger generation, want to return to Nepal and contribute to the country. Nepal should therefore create an environment in which their knowledge, skills, capital and experience can be utilised, he said.

Sarlahi tourist sites seek federal support



BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Sarlahi, Aug. 16

Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Khadak Raj Paudel’s visit to Sarlahi district has raised hopes of fresh federal investment to develop the district’s neglected religious and tourist attractions.

Paudel inspected several tourism sites, including the famous Nadhiman Lake, Pattharkot and Chameli Mai Temple, as well as religious and tourist sites in Lalbandi, Haripurwa and Malangwa.

Local authorities and residents said the minister’s visit could help bring long-awaited development to the sites, many of which have remained neglected despite their tourism potential.

Chandranagar Rural Municipality Chairperson Raj Kumar Mahato submitted a proposal to Paudel seeking federal funding for Nadhiman Lake.

The proposal includes the construction of tourism infrastructure, improvement of roads and other

facilities needed to attract visitors.

Nadhiman Lake, a natural attraction in Chandranagar, is regarded as one of the prominent tourist sites in Madhes Province. The federal and provincial governments and the local authority have already invested in its development, but local officials say more funding is needed.

Sarlahi-1 House of Representatives member Nitima Bhandari Karki said the minister’s visit had raised expectations that new tourism projects and budgets would be allocated for the district. She said it was the first time a federal minister had inspected the district’s religious and tourist sites in person.

Sohan Jha of Malangawa said the visit had encouraged conservation committees working to protect the Chameli Mai Temple and other religious and tourist sites. He said local representatives had urged the minister to allocate funds for the protection and development of tourist destinations in constituencies 1 and 2.

Local residents hope the minister’s visit will lead to concrete projects and funding rather than remain limited to an inspection.

Nag Panchami being marked today

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

The Nag Panchami festival is being celebrated across the nation on Monday by pasting images of the serpent deity above the main entrances of houses and worshipping snakes at various ponds.

Posters featuring various shapes and designs of Nags (serpents) can be found in the market, attracting people’s attention. These posters are attractive and eye-catching, and their demand is high. As a result, fewer people are buying traditional handmade Nag paintings.

Chet Kumari Chitrakar, 73, a painter from Yachhe, Bhaktapur-6, has continued to preserve this traditional art form by drawing Nag paintings by hand.

In the past, when traditional Nag paintings were in high demand, she used to earn between Rs. 60,000 and Rs. 70,000 during the festival season. But now, she said, “I only make them for household use and give them to relatives and neighbours. I now make only 100 to 200 pieces, whereas I used to make 5,000 to 6,000 pieces in the past.”

She further shared, “I continue doing this in my old age just to honour the last words of my father-in-law on his deathbed. He told me to continue this tradition after his passing.”

As part of the ritual, people place images of serpents at their doorways using cow dung and make offerings of cow dung, milk and money.

It is believed that honouring the serpent deity in this way protects households from disease, misfortune and negative energies.

However, with the growing availability of machine-made posters in different sizes, traditional handmade paintings are gradually disappearing. Handmade paintings are now rarely found in the market. On this day, devotees visit Nag



Pokhari and nearby temples dedicated to snake deities to offer prayers and perform rituals.

According to the Nepali calendar, Nag Panchami falls on the fifth day of Shrawan Shukla Panchami. On this day, devotees perform snake-worship rituals, accompanied by fasting and prayers.

Fairs will be held at sites such as Taudaha in Kirtipur, Nagdaha in Lalitpur and Nag Pokhari in Naxal, Kathmandu.

Ahead of Nag Panchami, a cleaning campaign was carried out at Nagdaha, a famous natural spring located in Ward No. 24 of Lalitpur Metropolitan City.

A team comprising members of the Nepal Army, Armed Police Force, Nepal Police and Metropolitan Police Force, along with office bearers and representatives of women’s groups around Nagdaha, removed water-lily weeds from the pond.

Snake worship in the Newar community is considered an ancient tradition and is regarded as a form of nature worship rather than a strictly religious practice.

According to legend, when Manjushree released the water from a massive lake that once filled the Kathmandu Valley, the serpent kings and queens became angry over the destruction of their habitat and prepared to leave with the receding waters. Realising that their departure could lead to future water shortages, Manjushree prayed for forgiveness and calmed them by creating ponds in various locations. It is believed that the Newar community began worshipping the serpents from that time onward.

In Newar tradition, Nagraj, the serpent king, and Nagrani, the serpent queen, are also worshipped as bringers of rain. Since snakes are associated with water, it is customary to worship them at natural water sources such as stone spouts, wells and ponds.

According to another legend, during the reign of King Narendra Dev, Guru Gorakhnath, angered by the people of the valley, subdued all the snakes and sat upon them, causing a drought. When Rato Machindranath was brought to the valley,

Gorakhnath rose to honour his guru, thereby freeing the snakes. Rainfall soon followed, and the tale has continued to be passed down through generations.

After Manjushree established the valley, it is believed that 12 great serpents were entrusted with protecting the valley and its water resources.

The 12 great shrines in the Kathmandu Valley and their guardian Nagarajas are: Punya Tirtha of Gokarna — Takshak Nagaraj; Shanta Tirtha of Guhyeshwari — Sokshiki Nagaraj; Shankhar Tirtha of Shankhamul — Shankhpala Nagaraj; Raj Tirtha of Sanepa — Swaroop Nagaraj; Manoratha Tirtha of Tokhaduwa — Kulik Nagaraj; Nirmal Tirtha of Shobha Bhagwati — Apla Nagaraj; Lakhu Tirtha of Kankeshwari — Nanda Nagaraj; Gyana Tirtha of Kalimati — Upananda Nagaraj; Chintamani Tirtha of Teku Dobhan — Basuki Nagaraj; Pramod Tirtha — Padmadhaval Nagaraj; Sulakshan Tirtha of Bhajanjali — Mahapadmadhaval Nagaraj; and Jay Tirtha of Nakhu — Kanti Nagaraj.

Dutraj set to perform in Beni

BY AMRIT PRASAD POUDEL
Myagdi, Aug. 16

A boy who once collected sand and gravel from the Myagdi and Kalikhola rivers to pay for his education and support his family has now become a popular singer.

Now, his long-held dream of performing a live concert in Beni is set to come true.

Prakash Dutraj is scheduled to perform his first solo live concert at the open-air stage in Beni on August 28.

The event is being organised by the Myagdi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and has been named ‘Myagdi-Beni Prakash Dutraj’s New Practice’.

For Dutraj, the event is more than just a musical performance. It is the fulfilment of a dream he has had since the beginning of his musical journey.

“I had dreamed of performing a live concert for 13 or 14 years,” Dutraj said. “I came to Beni from my village and began my struggle by working in the mornings and evenings and attending school during the day. I continued my journey by balancing work and education. Today, people know me, and with their love and support, I have been able to continue singing.”

His songs cover village life, love, life abroad, personal experiences and stories from Nepali society. Several of



his songs have also crossed 100 million views on digital platforms.

The main feature of the concert will be Dutraj’s live performance. According to the organisers, he will

perform with live musical instruments instead of using pre-recorded tracks. This will allow the audience to experience his singing and musical skills more closely.

Bonnie Tyler’s coffin returns to Welsh Village

AP
London, Aug. 16

Hundreds of fans lined the streets of a seaside Welsh village on Saturday to bid farewell to late singer Bonnie Tyler as her coffin was brought home.

The Grammy-nominated Welsh pop star, beloved worldwide for her 1983 chart-topping power ballad “Total Eclipse of the Heart,” died last month in a hospital in Portugal. She was 75.

Tyler was hospitalized in May in Faro, where she had a home, for emergency intestinal surgery.

Locals and fans from around the United Kingdom and beyond took to the streets of Mumbles, near the city of Swansea, to see the hearse, which carried her coffin, draped in a Welsh flag. Dozens waited outside the singer’s former home or left floral tributes there.

“She was always coming home and making sure that she came back to her fans in Wales,” said Carys Edwards, 18. “Her songs really did touch a lot of people here in Wales; we loved her a lot.”

Tyler was born Gaynor Hopkins, a coal miner’s daughter in public housing with an outside toilet in Skewen, Wales, about 7 miles (11 kilometres) outside Swansea. She grew up with three sisters and two brothers.



The singer earned three Grammy nods and in 2013 represented Britain at the Eurovision Song Contest, where she came in 19th. She was honoured as a Member of the Order of the British Empire in 2022 for her services to music by Queen Elizabeth II, thanks mainly to “Total Eclipse of the Heart.”

The ballad shot to the top of the charts in Britain and the United States and has had more than 1 billion streams, boosted by real eclipses in 2017, 2024 — and most recently during this week’s solar eclipse.

She was also known for other hits including “It’s a Heartache” and “Holding Out For a Hero,” from the soundtrack of the film “Footloose.”

A celebration of Tyler’s life for family and friends will take place at a church in Swansea on Monday, before the singer makes a final journey through her hometown of Skewen.

HOROSCOPE

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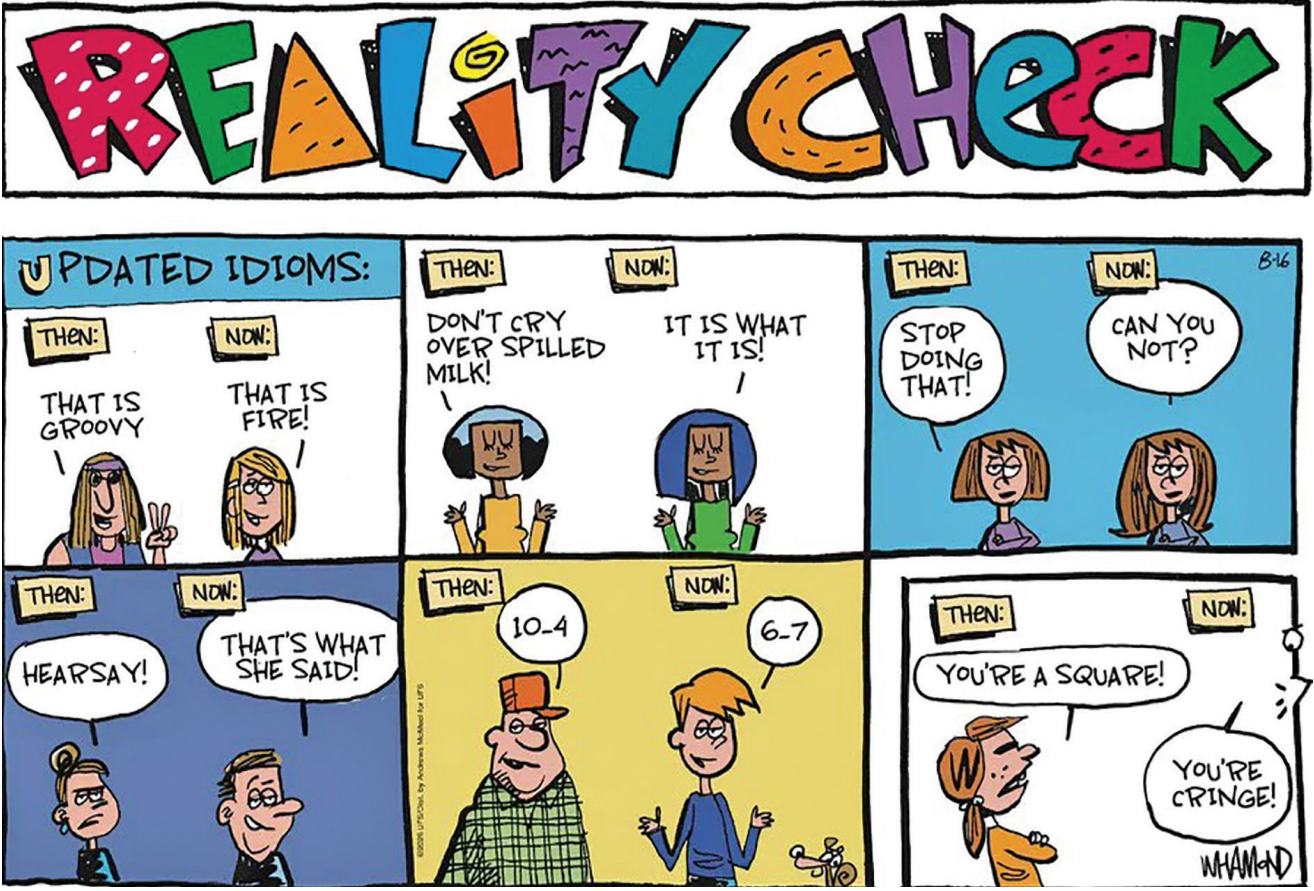
- **ARIES:** A home issue gets easier when everyone knows their role. Mars in Cancer activates your 4th House of Home, Family, and Emotional Roots while squaring Neptune in your 1st House of Self.
- **CANCER:** Your drive becomes stronger when the target is clear. Mars in Cancer activates your 1st House of Self while squaring Neptune in your 10th House of Career and Reputation.
- **LIBRA:** A professional plan gets steadier when expectations are named. Mars in Cancer activates your 10th House of Career, Reputation, and Authority while squaring Neptune in your 7th House of Partnership.
- **CAPRICORN:** A partnership plan works better when home realities are included. Mars in Cancer activates your 7th House of Partnership while squaring Neptune in your 4th House of Home, Family, and Emotional Foundations.

- **TAURUS:** A careful question can keep a conversation from drifting sideways. Mars in Cancer activates your 3rd House of Communication while squaring Neptune in your 12th House of Hidden Patterns and Private Worries.
- **LEO:** Your words carry authority without losing warmth. Mercury in Leo moves through your 1st House of Self and trines Saturn in your 9th House of Learning, Beliefs, and Big-Picture Plans.
- **SCORPIO:** Your strategy becomes stronger when your routine supports it. Mercury in Leo moves through your 10th House of Career and trines Saturn in your 6th House of Daily Systems.
- **AQUARIUS:** A clear agreement can make teamwork feel refreshingly simple. Mercury in Leo moves through your 7th House of Partnership and trines Saturn in your 3rd House of Communication.

- **GEMINI:** A practical conversation can turn a loose idea into a shared plan. Mercury in Leo moves through your 3rd House of Communication and trines Saturn in your 11th House of Friends, Community, and Future Plans.
- **VIRGO:** A group plan can stay friendly when the numbers are clear. Mars in Cancer activates your 11th House of Friends, Community, and Future Plans while squaring Neptune in your 8th House of Shared Resources.
- **SAGITTARIUS:** Adventure stays exciting when the shared terms are clear. Mars in Cancer activates your 8th House of Shared Resources, Trust, and Intimacy while squaring Neptune in your 5th House of Creativity, Romance, and Play.
- **PISCES:** Little pleasures feels better when your resources are protected. Mars in Cancer activates your 5th House of Creativity, Romance, and Play while squaring Neptune in your 2nd House of Money, Values, and Self-Worth.

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NSJF Pulsar Sports Award

Nominees for ‘People’s Choice’ revealed

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

The Nepal Sports Journalists Forum (NSJF) announced on Sunday the five nominees for the ‘People’s Choice’ award, a marquee category of the 23rd NSJF Pulsar Sports Award.

The shortlist features volleyball player Mina Sunar, footballer Puja Rana, karateka Sanumaya Thing, cricketer Sher Malla, and mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter Rabindra Dhant.

During the announcement, the NSJF also signed a partnership agreement with the digital wallet provider Khalti by IME, which will serve as the exclusive platform for electronic voting.

The memorandum was signed by NSJF President Nirnanjan Adhikari and Khalti Manager Puja Dhami.

In a significant departure from previous years, the NSJF has introduced a new voting format to improve transparency and shift the focus from financial capacity to merit.

Previously, supporters could cast an unlimited number of paid votes, leading to criticism that the system favoured candidates with greater funding. Under the new rules, each user is restricted to one vote per day, at a fixed cost of Rs. 10.

“Our objective is not profit, but ensuring the most deserving candidates are recognised,” said President Adhikari. “We are confident this equitable approach will be welcomed by all stakeholders.”

The winner will be determined by a weighted scoring system, with digital votes via Khalti accounting for 50 per cent of the total.

The remaining 50 per cent will be aggregated from votes cast on the official ‘NSJF Pulsar Sports Award’ and ‘Pulsar Nepal’ Facebook pages, alongside ballots submitted by national coaches and NSJF members.

The eventual victor will be presented with a Pulsar motorcycle.

Mina Sunar, a spiker and captain of the Everest Volleyball Club in Butwal,



PHOTO: BIKASH/TRN

Unveiled: Nominees for the People’s Choice category at the 23rd NSJF Pulsar Sports Award are announced during a press conference in Kathmandu on Sunday.

The shortlist features volleyball player Mina Sunar, footballer Puja Rana, karateka Sanumaya Thing, cricketer Sher Malla, and mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter Rabindra Dhant.

earned her nomination following standout performances in the CAVA Women’s Championship and the CAVA Women’s Club Championship.

Footballer Puja Rana, who has gained professional experience with Transport United in Bhutan and Bangladeshi clubs Farashganj SC and Nasrin Sports Academy, was recognised for her consistent high performance during the Asian Cup Qualifiers in

Uzbekistan.

Karate athlete Sanumaya Thing has established herself on the international stage by representing Nepal at the World Karate Championship in Cairo and the 21st Asian Karate Championship.

Her career highlights include gold and silver medals at the South Asian Karate Championship and a gold medal at the UKKC 1st Ultimate Kata and Kumite Challenge.

Cricketer Sher Malla remains a rising talent, having famously claimed a wicket on the first ball of his ICC T20 World Cup debut. A vital member of the Lumbini Lions’ Nepal Premier League (NPL) title-winning side, he secured 17 wickets across 10 matches during the season.

Finally, MMA fighter Rabindra Dhant, widely known as the ‘Tiger of Bajhang’, is the reigning Matrix Fight Night 17 Bantamweight Champion.

He holds a top-205 ranking in the Asia-Pacific region and is the first Nepali fighter to reach the semi-finals of the ‘Road to UFC’ series.

Bangladesh make history with first-ever Test win in Australia

AFP
Darwin Australia, Aug. 16

A dominant Bangladesh stunned Australia to win the opening Test by a crushing nine wickets in Darwin on Sunday for a historic first-ever Test victory on Australian soil.

After bowling Australia out for 284 and needing 57 to win, the visitors cruised past the total when Mominul Haque slashed Beau Webster to the backward point boundary.

Unfancied Bangladesh dominated a full-strength Australia throughout and the margin of victory will send shock waves through the cricketing world.

"This is the biggest win so far for Bangladesh in any format," captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said.

"Going forward we want to do something special in the future.

"I'm very happy, proud of myself and the way the boys played. We did a lot of hard work."

After bowling Australia out for 198 in the first innings, the visitors always looked the more likely to win.

They kept the pressure on throughout Sunday and didn't panic when Cameron Green (104) brought up his third Test century after lunch on day four.

Green was offered no real support from his teammates and the Bangladeshis kept taking vital scalps to leave Australia on the ropes, with Mehidy Hasan Miraz taking 5-66.

Najmul said the shock win was the result of Bangladesh players, especially the fast bowlers, putting more emphasis on red-ball cricket.

"Five years ago pacers didn't want to play Tests, but we've been playing lots of Test cricket and they are giving importance to the Test format," he said.

"They want to play, want to perform, want to be world-class. That is the mindset they now have."

Australia captain Pat Cummins was full of praise for their opponents, admitting Bangladesh were better in every aspect.

It was Bangladesh's first Test win in Australia, at the third attempt. "They outplayed us in all facets, they were patient and disciplined," said Cummins.



PHOTO: AP

Bangladesh players pose for a team photo as they celebrate after defeating Australia on day four of the first cricket test in Darwin, Australia.

"I thought our prep was spot-on, no excuses.

"They played well. We had to find a way to bat longer and then we couldn't penetrate with the ball."

Australia out of answers

The visitors went into the match with most observers giving them no chance of winning.

Their only warm-up game, against a Cricket Australia XI, ended in a big loss that included a second-innings collapse where they were all out for 54.

But they completely outplayed the Australians and won every session, batting, bowling and catching better than their more illustrious counterparts.

Australia, fielding their best possible team, looked out of sorts from the beginning.

Their batting failed in the first innings when they were bowled out on the opening day, then their much-vaunted bowling attack struggled against the gritty Bangladesh batsmen.

Led by a maiden Test century from opener Tanzid Hasan, Bangladesh made 426 and kept Australia in the field for 138 overs in Darwin's heat and humidity.

The bowlers then showed great patience Saturday to make regular breakthroughs and keep

Australia under the cosh. When Australia resumed Sunday on 161-4, their hopes lay with Alex Carey and Green.

Carey lived dangerously in the opening 30 minutes, twice edging seamer Hasan Mahmud through the vacant slips cordon for boundaries.

But on 30 off-spinner Mehidy produced a beautiful ball, pitching in line then turning sharply to take Carey's outside edge to wicketkeeper Litton Das.

He struck again soon after, bowling Webster for five to leave Australia 193-6 and in deep trouble.

A famous victory edged closer when Cummins pushed forward to a Mehidy delivery and got an inside edge to short leg, where Shadman Islam took a sharp chance.

Australia were 207-7, still 21 runs behind Bangladesh's first-innings total.

Green and Mitchell Starc batted sensibly to ensure Bangladesh had to bat again.

Starc fell for 18 caught behind but Green was playing well.

But despite looking increasingly comfortable, he was undone when a Hasan ball kept low, hit the toe end of his bat and cannoned into the stumps.

Mehidy wrapped up the innings when he trapped Nathan Lyon plumb in front leg before.

SNIPPETS

Douglass betters 50m free WR

California (AP): Kate Douglass lowered her own world record in the women's 50-meter freestyle for the second time Saturday, winning the final in 23.19 seconds. In the morning preliminaries, she swam 23.49 to take the mark away from teammate Gretchen Walsh, who finished second in the evening final in 23.74. Walsh had owned the record of 23.55 since June when she set the mark at an international meet in Rome. It's the third time Douglass has lowered the world mark in the sprint race. She first did it on June 19 at the TYR Pro Swim Series meet in Indianapolis, posting a time of 23.59. Nine days later, Walsh lowered it again. Douglass, 24, is a five-time Olympic medalist. She earned silver in the 50 free at the 2024 world championships but didn't compete in the event at the 2024 Paris Games.

PSG sign Belgian winger Godts

Paris (AFP): Paris Saint-Germain have signed Belgian left winger Mika Godts from Ajax on a five-year contract, the two-time European champions announced on Saturday. The 21-year-old had a breakout season last year, scoring 17 goals and providing 12 assists in the Dutch league, where he was named young player of the year. According to Ajax, the transfer fee was 55 million euros (\$64 million), including bonuses. Godts has been capped twice by Belgium but missed out on a spot in their World Cup squad. After coming through the academy at Genk, he signed for Ajax in 2023.

Spence leaves Spurs for Inter

London (AFP): England international Djed Spence has left Tottenham Hotspur to sign for Inter Milan, the reigning Italian champions announced on Saturday. According to specialist website Transfermarkt, Inter paid 30 million euros (\$35 million) for the 26-year-old right-back. "The English full-back, born in 2000, joins the Nerazzurri from Tottenham on a permanent deal. Spence has signed a contract with the club until June 30, 2031," Inter said in a statement. Tottenham posted confirmation of Spence's departure on their website. "An arrival from Middlesbrough in July, 2022, the defender made a total of 85 appearances in our colours, scoring twice... We wish him well for the future," it said.

AC Milan beat Man Utd

London (AFP): Manchester United's pre-season campaign ended with a decisive 4-2 defeat by Ruben Amorim's AC Milan in the Polish city of Wroclaw on Saturday. Michael Carrick's side led twice, through Harry Maguire and Patrick Dorgu. But they were undone in defence as AC Milan scored three goals from close range before Ruben Loftus-Cheek raced clear to add a fourth and give former United manager Amorim a win against his old club. This was only United's second defeat in a run of six pre-season matches, which included a win over Atletico Madrid and a 1-1 draw with European champions Paris Saint-Germain. "On the whole, (pre-season has) been very good, I think there a lot of positives to take from it," Carrick told MUTV, United's in-house television station, in a post-match interview. But the former United and England midfielder added: "We're disappointed with today. We didn't play well today, so there's reasons for that."

Padikkal steals the show with 167 in first Sri Lanka Test

AFP
Galle, Aug. 16

Comeback star Devdutt Padikkal hit a polished 167 as India scored 460-9 on a rainy second day of the first Test against Sri Lanka in Galle on Sunday.

Only 43 overs were possible at the picturesque venue, with the morning session completely washed out by the weather.

Padikkal, recalled to the side after almost two years as an injury replacement for Sai Sudharsan, impressed the most among the batsmen.

His knock was the fourth-highest Test score by an Indian in Sri Lanka behind Sachin Tendulkar (203), Virender Sehwag (201 not out) and Shikhar Dhawan (190).

Padikkal, playing his third



Test match, looked solid as he struck elegant drives during his 230-ball knock that lasted more than five hours.

His 167-run knock contained 15 fours and a six.

When play resumed in the afternoon, Sri Lanka took the new ball and got the much-needed breakthroughs.

Their spinners managed to get more purchase off the surface, picking three quick wickets.

Rishabh Pant (39) was the first to go when he was caught by Sonal Dinusha off debutant

spinner Keshara Nuwantha.

Dinusha ran in from wide mid-off and dived to take the catch, giving Nuwantha his first Test wicket.

Nuwantha also dismissed K.L. Rahul who was caught by close in fielder Nishan Fernando for 82.

Rahul had to retire on 77 on day one due to cramps and he could only add five more runs on day two.

Prabath Jayasuriya claimed the big wicket of Padikkal, having him stumped by Niroshan Dickwella.

Batting at number six, Dhruv Jurel hit 51 off 68 balls to ensure India did not collapse after the dismissal of Padikkal.

He was involved in a 55-run stand for the fifth wicket with Manav Suthar, who made 24.

Paceman Asitha Fernando struck late to dismiss tail-ender Mohammad Siraj.

Historic victory for Magar in professional MMA debut

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 16

Susmita Thapa Magar has created history by becoming the first Nepali female fighter to win a professional Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) bout.

Competing in the Ronin FC-3 event at the Koramangala Indoor Stadium in Bengaluru, India, on Saturday night, Magar defeated home favourite Shalu Sharma on her professional debut. Hailing from Gandaki Province, Magar began her martial arts career in taekwondo before expanding her skill set into kickboxing and Muay Thai.

Thapa is currently ranked 13th among the world's female super-flyweight contenders in the July 2026 WBC MuayThai rankings. She also secured a decision victory against India's Aarti Khatri at Ronin FC-2, Kickboxing event, in May 2026.



Photo Credit: LockerRoom.in

Díaz thrives for Alaves as La Liga kicks off

AP
Madrid, Aug. 16

Europe's top domestic leagues kicked off Saturday with Alaves defeating 10-man Getafe 3-0 in Spain.

Mariano Diaz scored a goal and had two assists against a Getafe squad that played a man down from the 42nd minute.

In the day's other game, Gerard "Peque" Fernandez converted a penalty deep into stoppage time as Sevilla came from behind to defeat Rayo Vallecano 2-1.

The Spanish league was the first of the main five in Europe to start, less than a month after its national team won the World Cup.

Defending champion Barcelona and José Mourinho's Real Madrid won't start their campaigns until next weekend because they had players return late from the World Cup.

Barcelona, chasing a third straight Spanish league crown, visits Elche on Aug. 23. Madrid, revamped under Mourinho after a second consecutive season without a major title, starts at Espanyol on Aug. 22.

The European season officially started on Wednesday when Paris Saint-Germain defeated Aston Villa 2-1 in the UEFA Super Cup.

The Premier League, the Italian league and the French league start next weekend. The German league will get going the following week.

Diaz, the former Real Madrid forward, gave the pass for Nahuel Tenaglia's header in the 73rd before claiming Alaves' second goal with a well-placed shot into the top corner in stoppage time and then setting up Mikel Rodriguez's final score in the final minutes.

Getafe's Kiko Femenia was sent off for a dangerous foul just before halftime. His initial yellow card was changed into a red after video review.



Alaves' Ángel Pérez was reprimanded by coach Quique Sánchez Flores after being substituted and punching the bench several times.

Alaves was 14th in the league last season, one point above the relegation zone.

Getafe was coming off a seventh-place finish, having earned a Conference League spot. The Madrid club has added Enes Unal and Johan Mojica to its squad this season but neither were included in the starting lineup. Unal came off the bench in the second half.

Sevilla hosted a Valleciano team in turmoil amid administration issues that have kept the club out of its Valecas stadium for the beginning of the season. It must play its first home game at second-tier Leganes' venue because of unsafe conditions.

Rayo finished eighth last season and reached the Conference League final, which it lost to Crystal Palace.

Sevilla finished 13th, also one point above the relegation zone.