

THE RISING NEPAL

ALL BE HAPPY, ALL BE WELL



Devotees, along with a government team from Bajura district, depart for Badimalika Temple on Monday carrying ritual materials for worship. PHOTO: RSS

FM KHANAL TO PARTICIPATE IN NAM MEETING

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Nepal will participate in the High-Level Commemorative Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) scheduled to be held in Belgrade, the Capital of Serbia, on August 31 and September 1 this year.

Nepali delegation will be led by Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal.

The Minister's Secretariat informed in a statement on Monday that the Cabinet decided on August 11 to send a three-member Nepali delegation led by Foreign Minister Khanal to participate in the meeting.

The meeting is being organised in Belgrade this year to mark the 65th anniversary of the first summit which was held there in 1961.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Minister Khanal will depart for Serbia on the evening of 30 August and return to Nepal on 2 September.

World leaders, delegations from various countries and representatives of member states of the NAM will attend the event, read the statement.

Nepal has adopted the principle of non-alignment as one of the pillars of its foreign policy, while the Constitution also recognises Nepal's commitment to the NAM as a key policy.

MPs demand harsher laws on rape

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Lawmakers from ruling and opposition political parties have demanded that stringent action be taken against the perpetrators by amending the law related to crimes such as rape. They have called for formulating a law that imposes strong action on culprits involved in the rape and murder of a girl in Bara.

In a meeting of the House of Representatives on Monday, MPs said that there is no legal provision for adequate punishment for perpetrators involved in incidents like rape.

They argue that the punishment given by the state to the perpetrators involved in rape is not sufficient and that a legal review should be made. They also demanded that a policy should be adopted so that the court process should not be prolonged.

Padma Aryal of CPN-UML demanded that the government should properly investigate and take strong legal action against the wrongdoers of the Bara incident. "If proper action is not taken in such incidents, such heinous crimes will happen unabated. We should seriously study why such incidents occur and make an action plan to eradicate it," she said.

Krantishikha Dhital of Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), also the whip

Business Committee stresses Parliament efficiency

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

The meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of the House of Representatives concluded under the chairmanship of Speaker Dol Prasad Aryal.

The meeting discussed the upcoming parliamentary calendar of the House of Representatives, measures to make parliamentary proceedings more effective, systematic and result-oriented, and the prioritisation of issues currently under consideration in the House.

The meeting approved the agenda and programme for the upcoming meetings of the House of Representatives scheduled for August 31, September 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9.

Similarly, the meeting discussed the need to conduct parliamentary proceedings regularly, orderly and effectively, prioritise important bills and contemporary issues; and make parliamentary business more systematic.

The meeting was attended by the chief whips and whips of various political parties represented in the House of Representatives, as well as concerned officials.

Dhital said.

Similarly, another RSP MP, Shradha Kunwar, said that women are being victimized from house to transportation and social media to parliament.

"The question is, if a girl is made to feel like a sin just because she is a girl, should we only look at the letters of the constitution or should we also ensure the right to live with dignity given by the constitution," Kunwar said.

SEE PAGE 6

74 bird species recorded in Ilam's highland areas

BY PREM ADHIKARI
Ilam (Pashupatinagar), Aug. 24

The Thumke-Nayabazar-Jaubari area of Ilam is emerging as a new birdwatching destination in eastern Nepal, with its dense forests, cool mountain climate, mist-covered hills and rich diversity of rare and attractive bird species.

During a week-long birdwatching trip, ornithologist Deven Kharel, president of the Mechi Bird and Wildlife Conservation Society, recorded 74 bird species in areas including Thumke, Nayabazar and Jaubari of Maijogmai and Sandakpur rural municipalities.

Kharel said four species were recorded as his personal first sightings, known as 'lifers'. They were the Grey-headed Parrotbill (nigali badarchari), Red-headed Tit (ratoutauke patsiune fisto), Black-throated Sunbird (sipahi tiru) and Large-billed Crow (chaka suchak). He said the findings not only add to the record of bird species in the area but also highlight the potential for bird tourism in the hills of eastern Nepal.

Kharel said the Thumke-Jaubari area could become an important



PHOTO COURTESY: DEVEN KHAREL
Various bird species recorded in the Nayabazar, Thumke and Jaubari areas of Ilam.

birdwatching destination in Nepal if it is properly promoted, particularly for birdwatchers and photographers interested in rare and high-altitude species

Society needs ethics, honesty more than technology: President

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

President Ramchandra Paudel has said that Nepali society needs ethics, good conduct and honesty more than technology. Addressing the Hem Bahadur Malla Award distribution ceremony jointly organised by the Public Administration Association of Nepal (PAAN) and the Salt Trading Corporation (STC) on Monday, President Paudel said that technology and expertise could be acquired from others, but conduct, ethics and honesty were matters of individual conscience.

He said, "Although modern administration is needed along with modern technology, we should not forget that the basis of modern administration is moral and responsible leadership."

"I feel that today our society needs a little more of that ethics, conduct and honesty," he said. President Paudel said that the pace of technological development and change had accelerated significantly in the present era.

"Artificial intelligence, digital governance, globalisation and new economic structures have transformed traditional practices of administration and management over time. However, even as technology changes, some values never become outdated—honesty, discipline, responsibility, ethics, humanity and commitment to the public interest," he said.

He said that the people's aspirations for development must be fulfilled through good governance amid the country's changing circumstances.

With the advancement of information technology, globalisation and modernisation, he said, the success and development of the state should not be measured solely through economic

indicators. "We must not forget that people expect the state to provide fast, hassle-free and quality services, transparency in decision-making, accountability of institutions, fair treatment, the rule of law and trust in public institutions," President Paudel said.

He said that sustainable development depended on capable institutions, competent institutional leadership, high ethical standards, professionalism and a culture of accountability.

He expressed confidence that professional and academic institutions such as the Public Administration Association of Nepal would continue to play an effective role, as they had in the past, in policymaking, administrative reform, public service delivery and good governance. President Paudel said it was a matter of satisfaction that the PAAN and STC had continued the award programme to keep alive the memory of the late Hem Bahadur Malla, who had established himself as a successful administrator and manager.

He said collaboration among the state, professional organisations, public enterprises and society could help institutionalise the positive values necessary for nation-building.

He said that building a just, capable, accountable and prosperous Nepal was possible only through collective efforts.

Strengthening the federal democratic republic and translating the people's aspirations for national development into reality was a shared responsibility of all, he added.

President Paudel congratulated Dr. Ram Kantha Makaju Shrestha and Rameshore Prasad Khanal, who were honoured with the Hem Bahadur Malla Award, saying that they had been recognised for their dedication to public service and contributions to nation-building.

Govt committed to clean, transparent ad market

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Minister for Information and Communications Dr. Bikram Timilsina has said the government is working to reform the entire advertising cycle to make Nepal's advertising market clean, transparent, competitive and professional.

Speaking during a meeting with office-bearers of the National Advertising Association of Nepal (NAAN) on Monday, Minister Timilsina said the government had taken seriously reports of financial irregularities in the distribution of government advertisements in the past.

According to the Minister's Secretariat, he noted that all stakeholders involved in the advertising cycle must

take their responsibilities in a transparent and professional manner to prevent such problems from recurring in the distribution of government advertisements.

Minister Timilsina said the National Advertising Policy had been issued recently and pledged to effectively implement policy reforms aimed at making the advertising sector more organised, transparent and competitive.

He said all stakeholders directly or indirectly connected to the advertising market, including advertisers, advertising agencies, media outlets, regulatory bodies and consumers, had an important role to play in strengthening the sector. The minister stated that the rapid growth of digital platforms in recent years had brought significant changes to advertising practices and consumer behaviour.

SEE PAGE 6

Nepali brand Yatri launches P2 electric scooter



BY MODNATH DHAKAL
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Sipradi Electric Vehicles and Yatri Design Studio revealed the Yatri P2 electric scooter in Kathmandu on Monday.

Minister for Finance Dr. Swarnim Wagle unveiled the vehicle, that represents the initial product output under the joint venture between Sipradi and

Yatri, at a programme.

The company said that the first Nepali brand e-scooter features a mid-drive PMSM motor delivering up to 10 kW of power and 315 Nm of wheel torque, reaching a top speed of 90 km/h.

The model offers three lithium-ion battery capacities - 3.0 kWh with standard range of 90 km, 3.7 kWh with standard range of 112 km, and 5.2 kWh with standard range of 157 km.

SEE PAGE 6

BULLION
(Rs. per tola)

Hallmark Gold : Rs. 322,700/-
Worked Gold : NA
Silver : Rs. 4,965/-

STOCK

NEPSE : 2,599.58

Total Amount : 3,239,760,549.52

No. of Share : 8,572,970

PEARSON LAUNCHES
PTE AI PRACTICE

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Pearson has launched official PTE AI Practice, its official AI-powered tool that helps test takers to prepare for the Pearson Test of English (PTE) exam needed to study, work and live abroad.

Test takers can complete mock tests and individual questions and receive immediate scoring and feedback and then get targeted guidance from an AI tutor that shows them precisely where to improve. The tool supports preparation for both PTE Academic and PTE Core.

With Official PTE AI Practice, learners prepare with official practice questions and receive scoring and feedback aligned to the official scoring traits, giving them greater confidence and a clearer understanding of what to expect on test day, said Prabhul Ravindran, Regional Director, English Language Learning, Pearson South Asia.

Dr. Makaju, Khanal honoured with
Hem Bahadur Malla Award

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Dr. Ram Kantha Makaju Shrestha and Rameshore Prasad Khanal have been honoured with the prestigious Hem Bahadur Malla Award for their significant contributions to public administration, public service, management and institutional development.

President Ramchandra Paudel presented the awards to Shrestha and Khanal at a function held in Kathmandu on Monday.

The Public Administration Association of Nepal (PAAN) conferred the Hem Bahadur Malla Award on Dr. Shrestha and Khanal in recognition of their significant contributions to public administration, public service, management and institutional development.

Dr. Shrestha received the Hem Bahadur Malla Award-2081 for his contribution to establishing and operating Dhulikhel Hospital and promoting quality public services.

Similarly, Khanal received the 2082 award in recognition of his contribution to public administration and public service.

As part of its corporate social responsibility, the Salt Trading Corporation (STC) established the Hem Bahadur Malla Memorial Award in 2000 in memory of its founding president, the late Hem Bahadur Malla, to honour his contribution to the organisation.



Dr. Ramkantha Makaju and Dr. Rameshwar Khanal, who were honoured with Hem Bahadur Malla Award 2082, pose for a group photo with President Ram Chandra Poudel.

The award carries a certificate of honour and a cash prize of Rs. 200,000.

Addressing the function, PAAN President Madhu Raman Acharya said the two awardees were selected by a committee in recognition of their contributions to public administration, management, public distribution,

public service and matters of public concern.

He said the award aimed to recognise long-term, exemplary and institutional contributions to public life at the national level and promote professionalism, accountability and institutional values in public service.

Chairman of Salt Trading Corporation Limited Pradip Lal Shrestha said the contributions of the awardees would inspire others to perform their responsibilities in public service delivery with honesty and accountability.

“STC established the Hem Bahadur Malla Award as part of its corporate

social responsibility in recognition of its then manager, Hem Bahadur Malla. We will expand our CSR activities in the days to come alongside our quality commercial service delivery,” he said.

On the occasion, awardee Dr. Shrestha said the award had made him more responsible and encouraged him to further expand his work in the days ahead.

He expressed his belief that institutions must be stronger than the individuals who lead them.

“Sustainable institutions require clear vision, integrity, professionalism, accountability and a shared commitment that can continue beyond any one leader,” he said.

Similarly, Khanal said the award had added to his responsibility to contribute further to public service delivery.

He expressed hope that the recognition would encourage others to perform their duties with honesty and responsibility. The Hem Bahadur Malla Award has been conferred annually since 2003 on individuals who have made notable contributions to public administration, management, public distribution, public service and matters of public concern.

According to the association, 23 distinguished individuals, including Dr. Shrestha and Khanal, from the fields of public administration, management, health, education, justice, diplomacy, social service and other areas of public concern have received the award to date.

Chandra Nahar to be linked with tourism

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Biraj Bhakta Shrestha has said the historic Chandra Nahar (Canal) in Saptari should be preserved as an important heritage site while being modernised to support agricultural production and promote tourism.

Inspecting energy and irrigation systems in Madhes Province, Minister Shrestha said the canal at Phatampur could be developed as a model linking irrigation, agriculture, heritage conservation and tourism.

He said the ministry was prepared to formulate plans in coordination with local governments for the protection, maintenance and rehabilitation of the century-old irrigation system. He also stressed that preserving the canal should be regarded as a shared responsibility of the government, local governments, water-user organisations and the wider community.

“Irrigation infrastructure does more than deliver water to farmland; it can make a multidimensional contribution to agricultural production, the local economy, employment and tourism,” Minister Shrestha said.

The Chandra Nahar, whose construction began during the reign of Chandra Shamsheer, is known as Nepal’s first modern state-built irrigation system.

This system, which brings water from the Triyuga River and provides



irrigation facilities to about 10,500 hectares of agricultural land in Saptari, is an infrastructure built a century ago.

Minister Shrestha said it was no ordinary achievement that a structure built nearly a century ago was still delivering water to farmers’ fields, stressing the need to preserve its historical and technical significance and pass it on to future generations.

According to him, the ministry is

seriously working on recommending the Chandra Nahar for inclusion in the World Heritage Irrigation Structures list of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID).

“Nepal has a long and proud history of irrigation. It is the responsibility of our generation to preserve it, showcase its significance to the world and modernise it as necessary,” he said.

The Eastern Tarai Irrigation System Rehabilitation Project was

implemented with grant assistance from the government of Japan to improve the deteriorating structures of the Chandra Nahar. Under the project, completed with a grant of around 2.25 billion Japanese Yen, 32 structures within the canal system were repaired and reconstructed.

The project involved the construction and improvement of eight canal underpasses, nine cross-drainage structures and 15 canal-crossing bridges.

Rehabilitation was undertaken after deteriorating structures had restricted water flow to around 80 per cent of the canal’s designed capacity, increased leakage and posed the risk of structural failure, according to the ministry.

Following rehabilitation, the project set a target of increasing the actual irrigated area from around 5,500 hectares to 10,500 hectares and raising the productivity of monsoon paddy from 3.65 tonnes per hectare to 4.38 tonnes per hectare.

The Chandra Nahar is also important to Saptari from the perspective of agricultural production and food security. As a major irrigation system based on a domestic water source—the Triyuga River—its sustainability is directly linked to agricultural production for thousands of farmers in the district.

Minister Shrestha said that regular maintenance was required from the main canal to its branch and distributary networks, and urged water-user organisations and local governments to play an active role in its preservation.

Australia experience inspires
Rs. 120 M oil industry



BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Kapilvastu, Aug. 24

The Bhardwaj Oil Industry has come into operation at Sihorawa in Mayadevi Rural Municipality-5, Kapilvastu, with an investment of around Rs. 120 million.

The industry, established with the aim of creating employment opportunities locally, currently provides direct employment to 80 people.

Local youth Om Shankar Upadhyay, who spent three years in Australia and gained experience in oil production while working there, established the industry after returning home. He is currently serving as the industry manager.

“We established the industry with the objective of doing something in our own country and creating employment opportunities at the local level,” Upadhyay said.

According to him, around Rs. 120 million has so far been invested in

establishing and operating the industry. Further investment is expected in the coming days to expand production capacity and improve management.

The industry produces rice bran oil. Upadhyay said rice bran oil is considered one of the edible oils beneficial to human health. He added that the oil produced by the industry has been fortified with vitamins A and D.

The oil is currently being sold at Rs. 365 per litre. To make the product easily accessible to consumers, the industry has introduced free home delivery throughout Kapilvastu district.

On the occasion of its inauguration, the industry has announced an 8 per cent discount on one-litre packs and a 12 per cent discount on five-litre packs.

The industry also plans to create indirect employment opportunities for more locals through its free home-delivery and distribution services. The industry aims to produce between 4,200 and 4,500 metric tonnes of oil annually.

Industrial village
still incomplete

BY SANTOSH SUBEDI
Pakhribas (Dhankuta), Aug. 24

An industrial village under construction at Ramchedanda in Pakhribas Municipality-7, Dhankuta, has been left in limbo due to a lack of adequate funds to complete the required infrastructure. The construction of the industrial village was initiated based on a cost estimate of Rs. 540 million, of which more than Rs. 14 million has so far been spent.

In the first phase, a contract worth Rs. 12.5 million was awarded to begin construction. Thulung Construction and Suppliers of Dhankuta started the work after securing the contract under a Rs. 10 million budget allocated in fiscal year 2020/21.

A two-storey building comprising four rooms and a hall has been constructed, and the building itself has been completed. However, other components of the project have remained stalled due to a lack of funds. Grass and weeds have overgrown the area surrounding the building, leaving the site looking abandoned.

With the completed structures left without proper maintenance, there are concerns that they could gradually deteriorate.

The industrial village was developed under the federal government’s policy of establishing one industrial village in each local unit and as part of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies’ multi-year programme.

It was proposed to mobilise local resources, raw materials, technology and skills, while creating employment opportunities for local people. The project was also expected to contribute to the local economy and increase production and productivity.

However, the industrial village, spread over 117 ropanis of land, has remained stalled even at the construction stage, raising concerns that the state’s investment is going to waste. In the second phase, Harelo Consultancy and Traders Pvt. Ltd. was awarded the contract to carry out additional construction work.

The company completed the work for Rs. 3.968 million, including VAT. Under the agreement, the project was scheduled for completion by May 31, 2024, but the work was completed four months after the stipulated deadline. More than two years have passed since the construction was completed, but the industrial village has yet to come into operation, said local resident Baburam Bhandari.

Milk chilling centre opens in Arjunchaupari

BY ARJUN KAFLE
Syangja, Aug. 24

A milk chilling centre has been brought into operation for the first time in Arjunchaupari Rural Municipality at its market area in Ward No. 1.

The centre was established on the initiative of the Jana Bikas Small Farmers Agricultural Cooperative with the objective of improving the economic condition of buffalo-rearing farmers.

The centre was established with 90 per cent financial support from the Animal and Livestock Development and Training Centre, Pokhara, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Land Management and Cooperatives of Gandaki Province.

The Animal and Livestock Development and Training Centre provided Rs. 472,500, while the cooperative contributed Rs. 52,500 for the establishment of the chilling centre.

A 500-litre milk chilling machine has been installed at the centre.

A milk analyser, printer, milk cans and a centrifuge machine have also been purchased and brought into use.



Speaking at the inauguration of the centre, Chairperson of Arjunchaupari Rural Municipality Prakash Tiwari said that the local government would provide production-based subsidies to farmers every month to compensate for the lower price they may receive for milk supplied to the chilling centre.

He said that the rural municipality would provide a 50 per cent interest subsidy on loans taken

through the cooperative to purchase improved breeds of buffaloes.

Tiwari said that a building for the milk chilling centre had already been constructed with government support, but it had remained unused.

“Starting a project is easy, but bringing it to a successful conclusion is not,” he said.

He stressed the need to expand the chilling centre into a full-fledged

dairy and pledged that the rural municipality would work in partnership with farmers to address their problems.

Cooperative Chairperson Khandananda Paudel said that farmers had taken up buffalo farming after the cooperative began providing loans at an interest rate of 7 per cent, adding that the operation of the chilling centre had given further motivation to their efforts.

Dispute within NCP stalls swearing-in of three ministers

BY PREM RAJ SIMKHADA
Kalikot, Aug. 24

It has been 28 days since Mangal Bahadur Shahi was appointed Chief Minister of Karnali Province. However, despite becoming the CM, Shahi has been unable to finalise the names of ministers from his own party due to internal disputes.

The party’s internal differences have also stalled the swearing-in of three ministers in Karnali.

The swearing-in of three ministers representing the NCP in the Karnali provincial government had been scheduled for 11 am on Monday. However, the ceremony was postponed at the last minute after the party failed to reach an agreement on the selection of ministers.

Chief Minister Shahi had requested the Office of the Provincial Chief to arrange the swearing-in ceremony. Accordingly, the office had fixed the ceremony for 11 am. However, as Chief Minister Shahi failed to recommend the names of the ministers, the swearing-in could not take place.

The Office of the Provincial Chief said Chief Minister Shahi himself had requested that the ceremony be postponed. Under an agreement between the ruling coalition partners, the NCP and the CPN-UML, the three ministries allocated to the NCP in Karnali remain vacant.



Karnali Chief Minister Mangal Bahadur Shahi.

PHOTO: PREM RAJ SIMKHADA

A NCP leader said the swearing-in, which was expected to take place on Monday, could not go ahead due to the party’s continuing internal dispute.

Three ministers from the UML were appointed a week ago, but criticism of Chief Minister Shahi has intensified as he has failed to resolve the differences within his own party.

Ratna Bahadur Karki, a provincial committee leader of the NCP, questioned

the reason behind the delay. “There will certainly be a search for what is lacking and why the swearing-in was stopped. But how much more embarrassment do we intend to face?” he asked.

The NCP has been allocated the ministries of Physical Infrastructure and Urban Development, Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment and Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Even 28 days after NCP parliamentary party leader Mangal Bahadur Shahi was appointed Chief Minister, the provincial Cabinet has yet to be given full shape.

Former Finance Minister Bindaman Bista, Jumkit Lama and Milan Khadka were among those being discussed as possible ministers from the NCP on Monday.

However, NCP leaders said the dispute had intensified after the former Socialist faction also sought a share in the provincial Cabinet.

“The former Socialist faction is also making a claim to a ministerial position,” a NCP provincial assembly member said.

“There is also a large number of aspirants within the NCP. Instead of finalising the names through a party meeting, the Chief Minister appears to have sent names of his own choice. That is why the issue has become contentious.”

NCP leaders said the dispute had intensified because the party was trying to give almost all its provincial assembly members a turn at becoming ministers instead of selecting competent individuals.

Khem Bahadur Singh, former Chief Minister Mahendra Bahadur Shahi’s personal secretary, said the practice of giving everyone a turn was only bringing disrepute to the party.

The former Socialist faction has only one member in the Karnali Provincial Assembly. Leaders of the faction have been lobbying to have that member appointed a minister.

CM Karki secures vote of confidence



Chief Minister Karki seeking a vote of confidence in the Provincial Assembly.

BY SACHIN POKHREL
Biratnagar, Aug. 24

Koshi Province Chief Minister Hikmat Kumar Karki has secured a vote of confidence from the Provincial Assembly for the third time.

In Monday’s vote, Karki received 57 votes in favour of his motion. Members of the CPN-UML and the Nepali Communist Party (NCP) voted in support of the Chief Minister.

The Koshi Provincial Assembly has 40 UML members and 17 members from the NCP, giving Karki all 57 votes from the ruling alliance.

Members of the main opposition Nepali Congress (NC) voted against the motion. Although the NC has 29 members in the Provincial Assembly, only

22 voted against the Chief Minister.

Eight NC members and the sole member of the Janata Samajbadi Party, Nirmala Limbu, were absent from the vote.

The Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) has five members in the Provincial Assembly, including the Speaker. As the Speaker is constitutionally barred from voting, the RPP members did not vote either for or against the motion.

The Koshi Provincial Assembly has 93 seats, but its strength currently stands at 92 following the resignation of one member. A total of 83 members were present at Monday’s meeting.

The final result showed 57 votes in favour and 22 against Chief Minister Karki. With the vote of confidence secured, the Koshi provincial government led by Karki has gained political stability for now.

Reconstruction of Nityanath Temple completed

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

The reconstruction of the Nityanath Temple has been completed at a cost of around Rs. 22.7 million. The first floor of the three-storey temple will be used to set up the Sandhya Library. The second floor will be used for social activities, musical instrument training and banquets. The third floor, or the basement, will house the shrine of Nityanath.

Sunita Dangol, Acting Mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC), said that the metropolis has given high priority to plans to preserve its identity, originality, tangible and intangible heritage, archival heritage and natural heritage.

“We are implementing policies, plans, budgets and programmes. This year, we have increased the number of programmes and the budget compared to last year,” she said.

“We have reconstructed the heritage structure and restored it as part of the community’s heritage. The community should take responsibility for its conservation,” she added.

Ashaman Sangat, coordinator of the Heritage and Tourist Committee of the Kathmandu Metropolitan City and ward chairperson, said, “We were able to revive the structure associated with traditional rituals.

We are satisfied with this.”

Stating that the temple, Sattal, pond and water fountain are community assets, Sangat said, “A lot of support has been received from the locals for the reconstruction of the temple. We believe that its true originality has been restored due to the direct supervision of the locals and users.”

Balkrishna Maharjan, chairperson of Ward No. 12, pointed out that if attention is not paid to how the originality associated with places within Kathmandu is being utilised, the tradition could be lost. He said there is a need to work to correct the situation while there is still time.

The foundation stone for the reconstruction of the temple was laid on Jan. 21, 2025.

Meanwhile, the formless stone statue of Nityanath was restored on Nov. 21, 2025. Earlier, only the idol was worshipped instead of the statue.

The idol, which is now about three feet tall, has been placed inside the replica and restored to its original position. Thursday is considered a special day for the worship of Nityanath.

The temple, which was already in a dilapidated condition before the 1933 (1990 BS) earthquake, was demolished and rebuilt in 1982 (2039 BS) during the tenure of the then ward chairperson, the late Subarna Baidya. A floor was later added to the structure, and a library was opened on the lower floor.

SHAHID LAKHAN RURAL MUNICIPALITY PROVIDES SHELTER TO ORPHANS

BY GUNA BAHADUR ROKA
Gorkha, Aug. 24

Shahid Lakhan Rural Municipality has provided residential facilities to children who are at risk of being deprived of education due to lack of support from their parents and financial constraints.

The housing built by the rural municipality at Himalaya Secondary School, Baskot, aiming to target orphaned and economically disadvantaged children of school age, has been operational since Monday.

Rajendra Khanal, the head of the rural municipality’s education department, stated that the rural municipality has prepared a procedure for operating the housing and selected the beneficiary students by publishing a notice on the basis of that.

According to him, 13 children studying in various schools have been selected for residential facilities.

Shahid Lakhan Rural Municipality has stated that the students were selected on the basis of the family status of the selected students, the status of their parents, financial hardship, and geographical distance.

Some of the children on the selection list have lost their fathers or mothers, while some have disappeared during foreign employment.

Similarly, some children have been living in the shelter of relatives due to poor financial conditions and family problems. The rural municipality’s statement states that some have faced challenges in regular education due to the death of their parents, second marriages and other family circumstances.

Dukhukhola bridge at risk



PHOTO: THAKUR PRASAD ACHARYA

The motorable bridge at risk due to river erosion.

BY THAKUR PRASAD ACHARYA
Beni, Aug. 24

The Dukhukhola motorable bridge along the Beni-Darbang-Takam-Muna-Jajjala road, which connects Myagdi district headquarters Beni with the western parts of the district, is at risk due to river erosion.

The bridge lies on the border of Mangala Rural Municipality-2 and Malika Rural Municipality-6. Floods in the steep Dukhukhola during the monsoon have eroded the area around the bridge, putting the structure at risk.

The bridge was also threatened by river erosion last year. The Infrastructure

Development Office, Myagdi, had installed gabion structures to protect it.

Local Shriram Paudel said floodwater has started flowing beneath the foundation on the Mangala side of the bridge, while the road has also become narrower. “The flood has damaged the structures built to protect the bridge. River erosion has also put the road at risk. The concerned authorities should take immediate measures to protect the bridge,” he said.

He added that passenger vehicles and large trucks carrying materials for hydropower projects under construction in the western part of the district were now facing difficulties while crossing the bridge. “If the bridge collapses, direct road connectivity will be

disrupted,” he warned.

The Infrastructure Development Office said it started work to protect the bridge on Saturday.

Senior Divisional Engineer Dr Mahendra Baniya, chief of the office, said a dozer had been deployed to divert the river and construction of protective walls had begun to safeguard the bridge pillars and approach road.

He urged travellers to exercise caution while using the bridge as it remains at risk.

The 20-metre-long and six-metre-wide bridge was constructed at a cost of Rs20.6 million after the then District Infrastructure Office awarded the contract. It was completed and brought into operation in 2019.

Historic Dudhkunda remains in shadows

BY GOKARNA DAYAL
Baitadi, Aug. 24

The historic Dudhkunda, a sacred pond associated with the famous Ninglasaini Bhagwati Temple in Baitadi, has remained ignored due to the lack of a proper walking trail to the site.

Water from Dudhkunda is offered at the temple and is also used to soak biruda, a mixture of grains used during the Gaura festival, a major festival celebrated in Sudurpaschim Province.

Located in Gurukhola of Dasharathchand Municipality-1, Dudhkunda is believed to have originated from streams of milk when the goddess Ninglasaini Bhagwati appeared.

Visitors have to travel around four kilometres along a rural dirt road from the Dasharathchand Highway towards Gurukhola, followed by a 500-metre walk to reach the pond. However, the lack of a proper footpath has made the site difficult for devotees to access.

Senior social worker Maya Prakash Bhatta of Gurukhola said he had helped conserve the pond through donations and built a water outlet where devotees can bathe.

However, there is no proper trail, guesthouse, traditional stone



PHOTO: GOKARNA DAYAL

Historic Ninglasaini Dudhkunda in Gurukhola, Dasharathchand Municipality-1.

Gaumukhe water spout or historic Chhabisko Khalo courtyard used for celebrating the Gaura festival, he said.

Priest Dev Datta Bhatta of Ninglasaini Bhagwati Temple complained that no government-funded programme

has been introduced to conserve Dudhkunda, apart from donations from local devotees.

He said the Kalaun area of Gurukhola, where Dudhkunda is located, is itself a historically and religiously

significant place.

Local culture expert Sidharaj Bhatta said there is a long-standing tradition of people from different communities gathering at Chhabisko Khalo to celebrate the Gaura festival. He said the tradition of appointing the priest of Ninglasaini Bhagwati Temple from the same village continues to this day.

According to local belief, Bhatta priests from the Kalaun area bathe in Dudhkunda and take its water to the temple for worship. Bathing in the pond is also believed to bring religious merit. Locals say the water remains cool during summer and warm during winter.

Around 15 to 20 devotees who visit the Ninglasaini temple each day also come to Dudhkunda to bathe. Locals said the lack of a proper trail has made the journey difficult.

Water from a pond below Dudhkunda is also used to irrigate farmland in nearby villages. Farmers say vegetables grown using the water have a good market.

Tourism entrepreneur Mayaprakash Bhatt said all three levels of government -- the federal, provincial and local governments -- should pay attention to conserving and promoting the historic Dudhkunda, which has significant religious and tourism potential.

Court issues show-cause orders on appointment of Chief Minister Thapa

BY RAMMANI DAHAL
Makwanpur, Aug. 24

The Hetauda Bench of the Patan High Court has issued a show-cause order in petitions challenging the appointment of Bagmati Province Chief Minister Kiran Thapa Magar.

A single bench of Judge Babita Upreti on Monday issued show-cause orders to the defendants in two separate petitions filed at the Hetauda Bench of the Patan High Court.

Kumari Tamang, chief whip of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) Parliamentary Party in Bagmati Province, and advocate Mohan Prasad Dhakal had filed the two separate petitions.

Although the petitioners have sought an immediate interim order, the court did not issue it. Instead, it has scheduled a hearing for August 26, summoning both sides for discussions before deciding whether to issue an interim order.

The petitioners have sought writs

of certiorari and mandamus in both cases. The Office of the Chief of Bagmati Province, Chief of Bagmati Province Dipak Prasad Devkota, the Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers, Bagmati Provincial Assembly, Speaker of the Provincial Assembly, CPN-UML, Nepali Communist Party, the leader of the RPP parliamentary party in Bagmati Province, among others, have been named as defendants.

The court has directed the defendants to submit written replies within 15 days.

The petitions claim that the support on which Chief Minister Thapa’s appointment was based was disputed and that recognising such support and proceeding with the appointment was unconstitutional.

The petitioners have sought annulment of Thapa’s appointment, arguing that it was based on support extended by then RPP parliamentary party leader Uddhav Thapa to UML’s Thapa in violation of the party’s decision and directives.

Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.
- Carl Jung

EDITORIAL

Iron Mining Holdup

Modern and high-tech infrastructure development is crucial for the economic development of any country. Quality infrastructure accelerates the pace of industrialisation, agricultural modernisation, service sector expansion, and social development of every country. Iron and steel industries are regarded as the backbone for the development of all basic infrastructure. Iron and steel products are heavily used for the development of transportation, energy, telecommunication, water and sanitation, as well as social infrastructure like education, healthcare, governance and security and financial infrastructure.

Despite the abundance of iron deposits available in various locations, Nepal has still been unable to excavate the important metal for industrial use. As a result, the country is forced to import iron and steel products and iron-based industrial raw materials worth billions of rupees every year. As per the latest statistics, iron and steel are the second-largest import items of Nepal after petroleum products. In fiscal year 2024/25, imports of iron and steel reached Rs. 169.56 billion, constituting more than 8 per cent of the total imports of the country.

In this context, a news report published in this daily the other day highlights the failure of the major iron mining projects, raising serious concern about the state ability to exploit valuable natural resources. This is really disappointing news when the government is aiming to enhance its production base to promote self-reliance in the economy. As per the report, iron mining initiatives at Dhaubadi in Nawalparasi (East), Jhumlabang in Rukum (East), and Phulchoki in Lalitpur have failed to gain momentum.

Jhumlabang, located in Bhume Rural Municipality-3 in Rukum (East), has the largest deposits of iron ore, which are estimated to be around 200 million tonnes – almost double that of Dhaubadi in Nawalparasi (East). The Department of Mines and Geology (DMG) was planning to begin the drilling work in Bhume by the end of 2025, but no progress could be made so far. Voices raised by local residents against the operation of the Jhumlabang mining project, tendered out to a private company 30 years ago, have pushed it into uncertainty. Lack of basic infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and information technology, at the remote project site is also hindering the project.

Although the government had given priority to the Dhaubadi-based iron mining project, substantive progress has not been seen. Dhaubadi Iron Company Limited is conducting the chemical analysis of the iron ore from the sites and is set to begin the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR). The DMG informed that while 3,000 tonnes of iron could be produced from ore processing at Jhumlabang, Dhaubadi can produce 1,500 tonnes. Similarly, another crucial mining project in Phulchoki has come to a complete halt for the last 12 years due to the verdict of the court barring commercial mining in the ecologically sensitive conservation area. A private sector company, Sagarmatha Iron, has leased the iron excavation in Phulchoki, but the government did not facilitate the company in clearing the policy hurdles, including those created by the court decision.

The situation of the mining projects sheds light on the facts of why Nepal gradually turned to an import-based economy, losing its production base. Environmental concerns, local obstructions, lack of infrastructure, and policy issues have adversely affected the overall productive sector. The government, which has made a good start with an effort to reopen closed industries, should also pay proper attention to extracting and utilising available natural resources to accelerate domestic production and substitute major imports.

Civic Courtesy

SWAANSH MAHAT

On a crowded microbus, a schoolbag sometimes gets a seat before an elderly passenger. Everyone notices. A few look away, one shifts slightly, and the bus keeps moving. Nothing dramatic happens. Still, the moment says something: in public, many of us wait for somebody else to be considerate first.

Courtesy is easy at home, where people know our names. We greet guests, offer tea and tell children to respect elders. Outside, that attention often becomes selective. We push into a queue because others are pushing. We play videos aloud because the bus is already noisy. We drop a wrapper beside an overflowing bin and decide one more will not matter. Each action seems too small to deserve an argument, which is exactly how it spreads.

Public manners are often treated as personality. Some people are “well brought up”; others are rude. Yet behaviour follows the space around it. When a queue is clearly marked and respected, cutting in feels embarrassing. When everybody crowds the door before passengers get off, waiting politely feels foolish. People copy what appears normal, even when they dislike it.

I have often wondered why the quiet person is expected to adjust. The passenger on the phone speaks louder. The person blocking the footpath does not move. The group occupying the whole staircase continues talking. Everyone else bends, waits or walks around. Courtesy fails when inconvenience is repeatedly handed to whoever is least willing to create a scene.

Public life is messy, and nobody behaves perfectly. Children cry,

people rush, vendors need space and buses become crowded. We all inconvenience others sometimes. Courtesy begins with noticing it, perhaps apologising, and making room before someone has to ask.

Families can teach this more honestly. Respect should include waiting one's turn, cleaning up after eating and lowering one's voice when others are working or resting. Schools can move beyond speeches by making students queue, share facilities and take responsibility for the mess after an event. Adults cannot demand considerate children while cutting lines in front of them.

Design matters. A bin belongs where people eat, not at the other end of a park. Bus stops need room for people to wait without blocking the pavement. Offices and hospitals need clear turns instead of a crowd around one desk. Good systems make courtesy easier and leave less room for needless disorder.

Yet no municipality can supervise every bus seat or phone speaker. The final decision remains personal. Before taking more space, making more noise or leaving something behind, we can pause for a second and look around. That brief awareness is a form of citizenship.

We speak proudly about Nepali hospitality, and rightly so. The same warmth should not end at the front door. A stranger may never thank us for moving a bag, waiting our turn or carrying a wrapper to the next bin. Perhaps that is the point. Courtesy matters most when nobody knows whose child we are, what position we hold or whether we will meet again.

Can You Write Without Using AI ?

Mahabir Paudyal



Bret Stephens' article entitled "I'm Begging You: Never Write With A.I." (The New York Times, August 4, 2026) is instructive for all writers.

Stephens makes a strong case against using artificial intelligence tools to write articles, school papers, work briefs, letters, speeches or emails. He argues that writing with AI is mentally enfeebling; it undermines our individual ability to write, society's collective ability to reason, and it is accelerating the decline of writing. Writing, he argues, compels thought but AI renders our words hollow.

Citing Dan Sarofian-Butin's study entitled "Detecting AI in Doctoral Dissertations: An Exploratory Empirical Analysis of Edd Dissertation Integrity and Implications for Doctoral Program Design," published on May 15, 2026, in Social Science Research Network (SSRN), Stephens mentions the pervasive use of AI in doctoral dissertations and pleads with all not to fall for AI temptation.

His arguments made a direct appeal to me for two reasons: First, he presents a fresh perspective on AI and writing, and second, he deals with the subject matter that I have been trying to delve deeper into in The Rising Nepal columns for the last many months. Admittedly, my first teachers to help me understand how AI functions and how students have been using it for writing

assignments and making PowerPoint presentations, among other purposes, were my students. Now, I have understood how overreliance on AI is taking a heavy toll on our ability to read, reflect, think, revise, analyze and assess.

Asking ChatGPT to track and provide surveys on AI use, how AI is transforming the pedagogical landscape, and its potential to make learning easier (or dull) has helped me access relevant materials to cite as references in my articles. It has also helped me rectify shortcomings in some writings. Recently, I was working on an essay for an online newspaper. I wrote, rewrote, edited and reedited, yet I felt something was amiss. I had nobody to give it to for peer review and so I asked ChatGPT to check consistency, relevance and reasoning, which it did for me very well. When I accommodated its feedback, the article became much richer than before.

Hobson's choice

AI presents a Hobson's choice for those who work in classrooms and newsrooms. If you give a command with the right prompts, you can get what you want effortlessly. You get the content you had in mind. You may have to work a little with word choice, fact-checking, and appropriate diction and syntax, but you still get what you want. Many writers, on their part, may no longer be interested in sitting in front of the computer screens, thinking, rethinking, revising, rewriting, reviewing what to write and finally not write anything or write something entirely different from what they had intended to write.

Instead, if they assigned that task to AI, commanding, for example, 'I am thinking about writing a column by taking reference from Bret Stephens'

Could ChatGPT have written a better essay than mine? I don't know. But when I asked if AI can replace human emotions, he said 'no.'

article,' it could give well-reasoned and well-thought-out paragraphs within seconds. You could use that time for planning a meeting, brainstorming how best to teach Bertrand Russell's essays in the next class, play with your children, or read books that sit on your cupboard unread since you bought them.

In Nepal's classrooms, AI use is still not something to be extremely worried about because our evaluation system is still based on handwritten examinations. And in newsrooms, getting AI to do the writing is still frowned upon. But that is not going to change the reality about the influence of AI in writing.

Words have life

Every word is ascribed life in eastern philosophical tradition. Even an akshara (a syllable which constitutes words) is considered imperishable once it is uttered or written and is thought to constitute brahma, the truth. Every word or the unit of word that is spoken is believed to become immortal.

Writing thus constitutes a tough job of putting together these immortal words to give meaning to your thoughts. But here is a catch: sometimes you can put all of your thoughts and emotions in words, sometimes you struggle to find thoughts to match words you have in mind or find words to match thoughts you have in minds, or sometimes you have thoughts

Invisible Discrimination In Workplaces



Nava Raj Sapkota

In many offices, there is a silent form of discrimination that rarely gets discussed: backgrounding the subordinates. When the accomplishment is presented publicly, the credit often goes to those at the top in hierarchical positions, but the task may have been planned, coordinated and concluded through the tireless efforts of subordinate staff. The people who spent more time, solved problems and carried out the real workload gradually disappear from the discourse of their own work. This practice is seemingly about recognition, but, in fact, can make officials feel invisible, undervalued and unfairly treated.

Every human being desires to be acknowledged and respected for their contribution as well as accomplishments. In many institutions, subordinate officials, employees, or lower-ranked persons' contributions are made invisible or inessential, while those of office bearers or leaders are elevated. Not only does this lead to discrimination, but it also devalues labour and reinforces social hierarchies based on status, race, or gender. In the context of digital domination, backgrounding becomes an official tool to discriminate against the subordinate.

International instruments

The international instruments on human rights do not use the specific term "backgrounding". But these documents broadly prohibit structural inequality, forced dependency, and

unequal treatment. The twin covenants on human rights do not explicitly provide this concept. Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966 guarantees equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, or social origin.

Similarly, Article 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966 ensures the right to just and favourable conditions of work. This also includes fair wages and equal opportunity for promotion, countering the systemic undervaluing of a worker's output. In addition, the General Comment of the ICESCR defines indirect discrimination as laws, policies or practices which appear neutral at face value, but have a disproportionate impact on the exercise of rights. Nepal is also a state party to these covenants.

The ICCPR, ICESCR and General Comment on ICESCR prohibit discrimination. They do not expressly recognise backgrounding the contributions of certain individuals as discrimination. This omission leaves an indirect but deeply harmful form of inequality. This is insufficiently addressed, despite its real impact on dignity, recognition, and the right to equality in participation. In today's workplaces and digital spaces, overlooking such experiences jeopardizes human rights, allowing discrimination that is less visible but no less damaging.

Many institutions and officials often ignore subordinates on official social media. They highlight leaders because of their hierarchical status and the belief that senior officials hold more public authority. Because of the traditional management style, focus goes on top leaders in the hierarchy. As a result, subordinate officials feel unnoticed and unvalued. So the public sees a faceless

When individuals are repeatedly pushed into the background despite their contributions, they experience not only professional injustice but also a loss of dignity and belongingness.

group instead of real people. Great contributions by real officials go disregarded. This establishes discrimination as a tool of power politics. Superordinate may be imposing discrimination on subordinates. But a huge number of subordinates may not feel it as discrimination and may be easily accepting it. As a result, discrimination becomes inescapable.

In today's digital era, social media has become an important platform for public and private institutions to showcase their work and strengthen public trust. However, official programmes often reveal an overlooked form of workplace inequality. It is common to see photos of official events posted online with prominent recognition given only to senior office bearers. The names and contributions of the subordinate officials who arranged, coordinated, and successfully executed the activities remain invisible.

Although this may appear to be a minor issue, it sends a powerful message about whose work is valued and whose efforts are ignored. I have personally heard the grievances of many subordinate officials of Nepali bureaucracy quietly expressing their disappointment and a sense of exclusion. They feel as if their dedication receives no acknowledgment despite their central role in delivering results. A culture

that fairly acknowledges the contributions of all officials regardless of rank not only enhances employee motivation and dignity but also promotes equality, mutual respect, and a healthier organisational environment.

Principles of fairness

As social media posts shape public perception, public institutions should ensure the principles of fairness, inclusion, and respect for every individual who contributes to public service in their digital communication. When institutions publish thematic reports, they often highlight the senior officials. This makes the researchers, field staff, and technical team invisible whose dedication made the accomplishment possible. This silent sidelining not only diminishes individual dignity and morale, but also fosters a workplace culture where recognition follows hierarchy rather than genuine contribution.

Nowadays, many employees of both the public and private sectors in Nepal have started reporting such incidents to authorities. The value of an institution is not judged in terms of how it celebrates its leaders, but how sincerely it acknowledges the person whose quiet dedication makes every accomplishment possible. When individuals are repeatedly pushed into the background despite their contributions, they experience not only professional injustice but also a loss of dignity and belongingness. More importantly, the United Nations and other international human rights mechanisms should recognise backgrounding as a subtle but harmful form of discrimination. Human rights are not fully realised until every person is acknowledged, respected, and valued for their contribution.

(The author is a human rights defender.)

50 YEARS AGO

THE RISING NEPAL

August 25, 1976

N. Korean Donation For Flood Victims

Kathmandu, Aug. 24: Counselor General of North Korea today handed over Rs. 10,000 to the Chairman of Flood Relief Committee and Home Panchayat Minister Shailendra Kumar Upadhyaya in aid of flood victims, reports RSS.

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READER'S MAIL

Quake Victims Deserve Decent Shelters

This is about the news story entitled "Earthquake-cracked houses collapse under heavy rain," published in this daily on August 24. According to the story, houses left cracked by the earthquake that struck Jajarkot on November 3, 2023, have become increasingly vulnerable due to incessant rainfall.

Houses damaged by the quake have started collapsing. As reconstruction has remained stalled for nearly three years, locals have been forced to live inside dilapidated houses, risking their lives. People have continued to live dangerously because the temporary shelters built after the quake are said to be made of corrugated sheets, are cramped and extremely hot in



summer and extremely cold in winter. It's a pity that nearly three years after the quake, victims have to live such a precarious life. The reason is the lack of decent shelters pledged by the government. The government cannot afford to allow the people to languish in such flimsy shelters. It must spring into action to build robust houses that can withstand heavy rains.

Priyanka Subedi Dhading

TAILPIECE

An elderly couple was killed in an accident and found themselves being given a tour of heaven by Saint Peter. "Here is your oceanside condo, over there are the tennis courts, swimming pool, and two golf courses. If you need any refreshments, just stop by any of the many bars located throughout the area."

"Heck, Gloria," the old man hissed when Saint Peter walked off, "we could have been here ten years ago if you hadn't heard about all that stupid oat bran, wheat germ, and low-fat diets!"

+++

Three men were discussing coincidences at a bar. The first man said, "My wife was reading a " Tale of Two Cities" and she gave birth to twins." "That's funny", the second man remarked, "my wife was reading 'The Three Musketeers' and she gave birth to triplets." The third man shouted, "Good God, I have to rush home!" When asked what the problem was, he exclaimed, "When I left the house, my wife was reading Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves"!!!!

European leaders join Zelenskyy in Kyiv for Independence Day

AP
Ukraine, Aug. 24

European leaders joined President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Monday for official celebrations marking Ukraine's Independence Day as Russia pushes on with its 4-year-old invasion of the country.

One of President Vladimir Putin's key goals in starting a war with Russia's neighbor in February 2022 was to place Kyiv in Moscow's orbit. Ukrainians voted overwhelmingly for independence in 1991.

With no significant changes on the front line for months and no apparent progress after more than a year of U.S.-led peace efforts, the warring countries are locked in a spiral of escalating aerial attacks that are killing civilians and smashing infrastructure.

U.K. Prime Minister Andy Burnham, on his first overseas trip since taking office last month, on Monday joined almost a dozen other European leaders, as well as other dignitaries including European Council President Antonio Costa, in Kyiv.

"For Ukraine, independence is not an abstract idea. We defended it against all odds," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said on social media. "In times like these, nations learn how important it is to have allies by your side."

Burnham was to co-chair a meeting of the so-called Coalition of the Willing group of countries helping Ukraine resist Russia's onslaught, with the leaders of France and Germany expected to join online.

The visiting leaders took to Kyiv pledges of further military and financial support. Burnham is expected to announce that the U.K. Government has agreed to allow defense company



Britain's Prime Minister Andy Burnham, centre, smiles upon his arrival by train, in Kyiv, Monday, Aug. 24, 2026.

MBDA to release classified information relating to British components used in the SCALP long-range missile, according to his office. That would pave the way for France and Ukraine to advance plans for local production of the weapon in Ukraine.

SCALP is the French version of the UK's Storm Shadow missile, with both systems incorporating shared French and British technology.

Ukraine has leaned heavily on NATO countries for help fighting Russia's bigger army, although relations with the United States have been cooler under President Donald Trump.

Russia, meanwhile, is getting help from North Korea and China.

Both Russia and Ukraine are trying through long-range strikes to inflict economic pain, disrupt military supplies and erode public morale.

Ukraine's long-range drones have repeatedly hit facilities in Russia's vital oil industry, causing fuel shortages, and have also engaged in a campaign against Russia's largest online retailer Wildberries.

Three teenagers were killed and six children were wounded in the southern Russian city of Krasnodar, Russia's children's rights ombudswoman Maria Lvova-Belova said Monday, as Ukraine attacked several warehouses of Ozon for the third straight day, according to officials and the company.

Ozon is one of Russia's major

e-commerce retailers. The company said a large fire raged at an Ozon logistics facility in the suburbs of Krasnodar following the overnight attack.

A drone also hit the grounds of an Ozon logistics center in the southern Russian region of Adygeya, regional governor Murat Kumpilov said, though the company said its Adygeya warehouse wasn't damaged.

In all, four Ozon premises appeared to have been targeted.

Russia's Defense Ministry said its air defenses overnight intercepted and destroyed 351 Ukrainian drones over eight Russian regions, as well as occupied Crimea and the waters of the Azov and the Black Seas.

Indonesia steps up aerial firefighting as forest fires spread

AP
Indonesia, Aug. 24

Indonesia on Monday intensified ground and aerial firefighting operations as huge blazes in central and western parts of the country scorched thousands of hectares of forests and peatland, created a choking haze that blanketed cities and crossed borders.

Indonesian authorities have been battling fires driven by an intensifying El Nino pattern and a prolonged dry season, generating dense smoke that crossed into Malaysia and Brunei, according to Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency, or BNPB.

The BNPB said Monday that fires remain active in several regions, while large-scale suppression efforts continue in fire-prone provinces including West, Central and South Kalimantan on Borneo island and in Riau, South Sumatra and Jambi on Sumatra island. The fires are part of a broader surge in wildfire activity across Indonesia this year.

After visiting areas devastated by forest and peatland fires in Central Kalimantan on Saturday, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto flew to fire-affected Riau province on Sumatra island, where more than 11,500 hectares (28,400 acres) have burned, to encourage authorities to get the haze cloud under control.

Prabowo vowed the government would continue supporting firefighting operations, including through the deployment of additional water-bombing helicopters and oxygen supplies for firefighters. He urged authorities to "thoroughly document and report the work being carried out by firefighting teams" directly to him.

The Transportation Ministry said

it has authorized the use of 35 foreign-registered aircraft to support wildfire response operations, including water-bombing missions and aerial patrols. The ministry said the aircraft can be rapidly redeployed to disaster-hit areas as conditions change, while complying with Indonesian aviation safety regulations.

The Environment Ministry satellite data on Monday showed South Sumatra recorded the highest number of hot spots nationwide with 1,429, followed by West Kalimantan with 1,226 and Central Kalimantan with 811. East Kalimantan logged 576 hot spots, ahead of Riau with 503, while West Papua and Jambi recorded 468 and 458 hot spots, respectively.

Forestry Ministry data indicated that nearly 94,000 hectares (232,000 acres) burned in July alone.

Drought, strong winds and dry vegetation have complicated efforts to contain the fires, BNPB said in a statement on Monday. Some hot spots remained inaccessible to more than 10,700 ground firefighters who were deployed as of Sunday, prompting local officials to request additional water-bombing support and firefighting vehicles.

Cloud-seeding resumed over Kalimantan on Monday, with 30 helicopters for water-bombing and aerial patrol missions, and another 22 helicopters covering Sumatra.

Fires are a regular problem during dry season in Indonesia, a vast archipelago nation of more than 17,000 islands, and often strain relations with neighbors. Plantation owners and traditional farmers often start fires to clear land for farming. It triggers hazardous haze that reduces visibility, disrupts land and air transportation and threatens public health, sometimes affecting neighboring countries in Southeast Asia.

Political amnesty law takes effect in Thailand

AP
Bangkok, Aug. 24

An amnesty for political offenses committed in Thailand over the past two decades took effect Monday, but the law excludes some of the more serious cases, including those involving lese majeste, or defaming the monarchy.

The amnesty was introduced to promote reconciliation after past political instability, violent protests and military coups and could cover about 6,000 people, according to estimates made in Parliament. But the exclusion of lese majeste offenses has drawn criticism that the amnesty will not truly resolve political divisions.

The Peaceful Society Promotion Act passed a final vote by lawmakers in July and was published in the Royal Gazette on Sunday. A committee chaired by the prime minister will determine who qualifies for the amnesty. The committee must hold its first meeting within 30 days, although it's unclear how long the process will take.

The law covers a range of offenses related to political activities from Jan. 1, 2005 to July 15, 2025. It will not only grant release for current prisoners, but also close investigations and prosecutions, dismiss pending court cases, and clear criminal records of those eligible for the amnesty.

In addition to lese majeste, the amnesty will also exclude corruption and crimes resulting in death or serious injury.

The lese majeste law, also known as Article 112 of the Criminal Code, is controversial not only because it has been used to punish things as simple as liking a post on Facebook, but also because anyone not just royals or the authorities can lodge a complaint that most of the time leads to detention during lengthy legal proceedings.

A conviction of defaming the monarchy carries a prison term of up to 15 years, and critics say Article 112 has often been used to quash political dissent.

Student-led pro-democracy demonstrations starting in 2020 sought reforms of the lese majeste law, but the protesters became targets of the law.

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, a law advocacy group, says more than 290 people, many of them student activists, have been charged with violating Article 112 since early 2020.

As of July, the group said at least 54 people remained imprisoned in connection with political cases. Only about 10 were expected to benefit from the new amnesty, since the others were accused of lese majeste.

Thailand's machinery of state remains deeply conservative. Its political establishment is sensitive about any perceived threats to the status of the monarchy.

New Zealand's PM proposes social media ban for children

AP
New Zealand, Aug. 24

New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon has unveiled a proposed law banning children younger than 16 from using social media platforms, citing what he said Monday was "harm being done to a generation" of young people.

However, the bill hasn't yet attracted enough support to pass into law because two of the three parties in Luxon's coalition government will vote against it. Passage would require support from opposition lawmakers, who have yet to decide how they would vote.

There also wasn't enough time for lawmakers to hold a vote on the proposal before Parliament dissolved on Oct. 1 ahead of November's election, Luxon said. Bills are required to pass three rounds of voting, usually over a period of months, before they become law.

If reelected, Luxon is seeking to make his government the latest worldwide to enact age restrictions for social media platforms after dozens of countries have either introduced or are mulling such measures. He said 2025 research showed a third of New Zealand teenagers spent at least five hours a day on social media.



New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon speaks to reporters at Parliament in Wellington, New Zealand, on Aug. 12, 2026.

"Social media is exposing them to harmful content, addictive technology and pressures they are not equipped to deal with and it's affecting their family life, mental health, sleep, and education," Luxon said.

The proposal would require social media platforms including Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and Facebook, to "take reasonable steps" to check users were older than 16, according to material supplied by Luxon's party Monday. This could include "existing account information, facial age estimation, digital ID services and formal ID," the

material said.Excluded from the proposed law are messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, online gaming platforms like Roblox and AI apps with productivity uses including ChatGPT, Gemini and Copilot.

No penalties are proposed for parents or children, but tech firms could be fined up to 10% of their global revenue for failing to meet their obligations. Platforms regularly used by children would be required to assess and report on the risks their networks posed, Luxon said.

Workers fear AI will take their jobs

AP
Hongkong, Aug. 24

Computer programmer Fei Zhaojun's boss asked him if artificial intelligence could soon replace humans in coding jobs. Two weeks later, he was laid off from his job in Beijing, together with about 160 of his colleagues.

It's an increasingly common scenario as artificial intelligence, supported by government policies, reshapes China's massive job market. Some economists believe that might eventually undermine the overall strength of the world's second largest economy.

Rapid adoption of AI in many fields, from computer programmers to script writing and physical tasks, is pushing people out of their jobs or leaving them afraid that it might. China is at the vanguard of AI adoption as government policies encourage people and businesses to use AI applications and robotics in all aspects of life, so people like Fei are figuring out how to adapt.

"There appears to be far less anti-AI sentiment in China (than elsewhere). Most people seem either positive,



Fei Zhaojun, a former software engineer, works on his computer at his home in Beijing on July 13, 2026.

neutral, or mildly interested in AI," said Shujing He, a Beijing-based senior analyst at advisory and research firm Plenum. "Individuals who worry about being replaced, as well as those who have already left traditional workplaces, are often eager to experiment with AI-enabled businesses and

independent ventures," she said. "The level of interest is striking."

Until recently, Fei had doubted AI could do programming work perfectly, even though his bosses thought it was close enough. "Mid-level coders' job are essentially replaceable in most of the cases," said Fei, 40. "Even if it is a disaster that leads

PRISM

Ring flushed down toilet returned to owner

New Jersey: A New Jersey woman who accidentally flushed her wedding ring down a train toilet was reunited with the precious object thanks to NJ Transit employees. Julie Angelicola said she had just left the bathroom aboard an NJ Transit train when she realized her wedding ring was missing. "So I'm kind of meticulously getting all of this soap off of my hands with toilet paper and literally going finger by finger, and crumpling it all up, trying to do it quickly - threw it in the toilet, flushed the toilet, went back to my seat," Angelicola told WPVI-TV. She reported the ring's loss to NJ Transit, which took the train out of service. Employees put the train up on jacks, removed the toilet tank and opened it up to discover Angelicola's ring on top.

Dog lost for 72 days wins Award

California: The 18th annual Hambone Award, presented to the most unusual pet insurance claim of the year, was given to a golden retriever who spent 72 days lost in the mountains. Nationwide Pet Insurance said Milo Bear was spooked by a sudden noise during a Christmas Day trip to the mountains near Lake Tahoe in California and fled up a cross-country ski trail. Milo was missing for 72 days before turning up at a shelter, extremely thin but otherwise unharmed. He was able to return home to his family after four days in a veterinary hospital. "The joy of being reunited with a beloved pet after weeks of uncertainty is hard to put into words. Milo's journey reflects the determination of his family, his own incredible resilience, and the importance of getting pets the care they need when the unexpected happens.

Agencies

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1543 – António Mota and a few companions become the first Europeans to visit Japan.
- 1609 – Galileo Galilei demonstrates his first telescope to Venetian lawmakers.
- 1825– The Thirty-Three Orientals declare the independence of Uruguay from Brazil.
- 1830 – The Belgian Revolution begins.
- 1904 – Russo-Japanese War: The Battle of Liaoyang begins.
- 1912 – The Kuomintang is founded for the first time in Peking.
- 1916 – The United States National Park Service is created.
- 1939 – The Irish Republican Army carries out the 1939 Coventry bombing in which five civilians were killed.
- 1940 – World War II: The first Bombing of Berlin by the British Royal Air Force.



Women return home carrying fodder for livestock in Barahathawa, Sarlahi district.

PHOTO: KABITA THAPA/TRN

Two tigers captured in BNP in a week

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT
Bardiya (Gulariya), Aug. 24

Two problem tigers have been captured in Geruwa Rural Municipality of Bardiya within a week, creating additional challenges for the authorities responsible for their management.

The two adult male tigers were captured after they were repeatedly seen near human settlements and began entering cattle sheds and attacking livestock, according to Bardiya National Park (BNP).

The park said one tiger was captured from Shantipur in Geruwa Rural Municipality-6 on August 18 after a 19-day effort. Another was captured from Gola in Geruwa-4 on Monday after nearly a month of attempts. Both tigers are adult males aged over eight years.

The captured tigers have been taken to the wildlife rescue centre at the Rambhapur Range Post of BNP. The centre has a capacity to accommodate three tigers, but it was already operating beyond capacity. The addition of two



more tigers has made their management even more challenging.

Ashok Kumar Ram, chief conservation officer of the park, said troublesome tigers need to be captured when

they pose a threat, but there is a shortage of space to keep them.

"Once a tiger is identified as a problem, we have to capture it, but there is a serious shortage of space to keep them.

If another tiger needs to be captured, we have nowhere to keep it," he said.

At the rescue centre, a large enclosure has been divided with wire fencing to keep the tigers separately. Ram said three tigers are being kept at the park headquarters and four at the Rambhapur rescue centre.

All the tigers at the rescue centre were captured after entering human settlements and creating problems. The park said younger tigers are released into suitable natural habitats after their behaviour and health improve.

Conservationists have called for the development of an open zoo to manage problem tigers. They say such a facility could also help promote tourism. Conservationist Ram Bahadur Shahi said Banganga and Thakurbaba municipalities have been taking policy-level initiatives to establish an open zoo in Bardiya.

According to BNP, the latest tiger census recorded 112 tigers in the park. Ram said more than five per cent of the total tiger population is identified as problem tigers requiring management every year.

Productive Nepal-Brazil ties stressed

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal has emphasised further strengthening bilateral relations between Nepal and Brazil in the days ahead.

Such relations could be promoted with a particular focus on tourism, cultural exchanges and expanding people-to-people ties, he said during his meeting with Brazilian ambassador to Nepal Claudio Raja Gabaglia Lins at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) on Monday. Lins paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Khanal.

"Nepal and Brazil have maintained cordial relations for a long time. We are committed to further strengthening and making this relationship more productive in the days ahead," Minister Khanal said.

"There is considerable potential for developing tourism, cultural exchanges and people-to-people relations between Nepal and Brazil. Further cooperation is needed to translate these possibilities into reality," he said.

FM Khanal also briefed the ambassador on the priorities of the current government and said Nepal would continue its cooperation with Brazil. He also praised Brazil's leadership role in global governance, particularly in South-South cooperation.

There is considerable potential for developing tourism, cultural exchanges and people-to-people relations between Nepal and Brazil.

Ambassador Lins said that, despite having arrived in Nepal only recently, he had been impressed by the country's art and culture and the warm hospitality of the Nepali people. He noted that Nepal and Brazil had completed 50 years of diplomatic relations and said ties between the two countries were becoming increasingly friendly and close.

Lins said a Brazilian technical team had recently visited Nepal to advance cooperation in the dairy production sector. He also said that the Nepali side had reviewed a draft memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the sector and conveyed its feedback to the Brazilian side a few days ago.

Similarly, Lins informed the minister that Kathmandu University and Brazil's Butantan Institute were cooperating on research related to antivenom for snakebites. "Brazil is ready to cooperate with Nepal in promoting tourism, investment and exports in line with the priorities of the current government," he said.

Special task force to address Gen Z demands

RSS
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

The government is to work through a special taskforce to address the demands of martyr families and injured of Gen Z movement.

During a meeting held under chair of Home Minister Sudhan Gurung at his office on Monday, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Sobita Gautam, members of House of Representatives, chief secretary, home secretary, representatives from martyr and injured families of Gen Z movement were present.

On the occasion, views were exchanged about the situation of implementation of 10-point agreement approved by cabinet on December

10, 2024 for the implementation of demands of martyr families and injured of Gen Z movement of September 8 and 9, 2025 as well as 24-point proposal approved on July 2.

A decision was taken to assign the facilitation committee formed under chairmanship of joint-secretary under the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers as the special taskforce to implement only Gen Z related issues to address their demands.

Discussion was also held on various issues including declaring Gen-Z Council, declaring Gen Z Martyrs Day, declaring Daulat Thapa as 'Living Martyr', amendment to 24-point proposal, construction of Gen Z statues in Parliament Building premises and Gen Z park, according to the Home Ministry.

MPs demand harsher...

Stating that a society that teaches girls to cover their shame and defend themselves also needs to teach sons humanity, she argued that it is not enough to change society by strengthening girls alone; the entire society needs to change its thinking.

Khushbu Oli, of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party, called for a review of the penal system concerning heinous crimes, noting that rape convicts can face the death penalty in India.

She demanded that punishment for such crimes should be terrifying so that the perpetrators are afraid to commit crimes.

"I would like to urge the government to review it and show political courage to find a legal solution. The debate should focus on whether the state's penal system is sufficient to prevent such heinous crimes," Oli said.

Ranju Neupane of RSP emphasised that the government should be serious about preventing such crimes by responding structurally. She also demanded that sex education should be provided from primary school, aiming to prevent such crimes.

"Sex education should be made mandatory in textbooks from grades 1 to 12. As long as women and girls are shown as sexual objects in advertisements, stories, and films, no woman or girl is safe," Neupane said.

Lawmaker Kushum Maharjan said that the situation where victims have to wait for years to get justice should end. She said that the government should also take care of the

safety and livelihood of the victims.

"Victims have been waiting for years to get justice. Even after getting justice from the court, it seems that the perpetrators easily return to society after serving their sentences. Therefore, my question to the government is, when will the state effectively take responsibility for not only punishing the perpetrators legally but also for the protection, treatment, psychosocial support, and rehabilitation of the victims," she said.

Similarly, Ashika Tamang of RSP said that legal provisions should be made to punish the criminals according to their cruelty.

Geeta Kumari Sendang of Nepali Congress argued that the incidents of rape and murder have raised serious questions about the security system of the state.

"It is not enough to just raise your voice for a few days after the incident. The mechanism of the rule of law should be strengthened to prevent such incidents from recurring. I would like to demand from the government that the criminals who commit rape and murder should be given the strictest punishment and life imprisonment," she said.

During the zero hour, some lawmakers called for the death penalty in cases of rape and murder. They argued that international treaties and the constitution should not prevent the imposition of the death penalty on individuals who commit such heinous crimes against girls and women.

Govt committed to...

Traditional advertising methods alone were no longer sufficient, he said, stressing the need to adapt the advertising market to technological advances and changing consumer preferences.

Minister Timilsina also emphasised the need for cooperation between the government and private sector to make Nepal's media and advertising industries more creative, competitive and professional.

He said the development of the advertising sector would not only strengthen the financial foundations of media outlets but also contribute to employment generation and business promotion.

Therefore, he stressed the need to make the sector more organised and dignified.

During the meeting, the NAAN drew the ministry's attention to problems faced by the advertising market and agencies, as well as legal and policy issues, citing that the advertising business had also been adversely affected by the economic downturn following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The association said advertising agencies had been serving as an important bridge between the government, media outlets, advertisers

and consumers.

It added that the sector had created thousands of jobs and made a significant contribution to promoting trade and businesses.

4G service reaches Badimalika

Telephone and internet services have reached the Badimalika area of Bajura, a region of religious and tourism significance, with Nepal Telecom expanding its 4G service there from Monday.

The service was launched on the eve of the religious fair to be held in the Badimalika area on the occasion of Janai Purnima.

Located at an altitude of around 4,200 metres above sea level, the area is now expected to have easier communication access for locals, pilgrims, tourists and government and non-government agencies.

The 4G service came into operation at around 1:00 pm on Monday after the installation of a telecommunications tower was completed.

Minister for Communications and Information Technology Dr. Bikram Timilsina inaugurated the service virtually, citing that the government was committed to ensuring that citizens in remote parts of the country were not

Studio Asim Pandey said that the P2 is nine years of Nepali engineering distilled into one product.

"Every system on this scooter - the motor, the battery architecture, the software - was designed and validated here, for the way Nepal actually rides - our hills, our heat, our monsoons. With Sipradi alongside us, we finally get to put that engineering in front of every rider in the country," he said.

He said that an optional 1.8 kWh range extender adds 50 km of additional range, providing up to 207 km in total. The battery pack supports DC fast charging to reach 80 per cent capacity in 41 minutes, while the 1350 W onboard AC charger completes full charging in under 2.5 hours. The scooter incorporates a 7-inch TFT instrument display equipped with 4G connectivity, Apple

CarPlay, and Android Auto integration. It comes with fall detection with automatic power shut-off and emergency location sharing, anti-theft system featuring location tracking, movement alerts, and remote immobilisation, three-ride modes, hill hold assist and 30 litres of storage space.

Pre-bookings for the Yatri P2 will begin at the NADA Auto Show that is set to begin in Kathmandu this week. The company also said that the price announcement would be made during the commercial launch of the e-scooter in September this year.

"Deliveries for the 3.7 kWh and 5.2 kWh variants are scheduled to start in mid-October 2026 and run through November, while deliveries for the 3.0 kWh variant will commence in December 2026," said the company.

TWO DEAD, 17 INJURED IN GALYANG ROAD ACCIDENT

RSS
Waling (Syangja), Aug. 24

Two people died on the spot and 17 others were injured in a road accident that took place in Galyang of Syangja district this evening.

Spokesperson of District Police Office Syangja, Ramesh Dutta Awasthi, said that 25-year-old Nisha Pachbbhaiya of Galyang-8 and Yam Bahadur BK, 60, of Galyang-8 died in the mishap. Of the 17 people injured in the accident, the health condition of Basanti Bishwakarma, 27, and Devi BK, 48, is report to be critical, according to police.

The injured have been rushed to the United Mission Hospital in Palpa. Five other injured ones returned home, while remaining are receiving treatment in Galyang Municipal Hospital.

Awasthi said that the accident took place when a passenger jeep heading to Sangliya village from Galyang Municipality-3 met with an accident at the Karadi area of the municipality.

ROAD TO TATOPANI BORDER OPENS

RSS
Sindhupalchowk, Aug. 24

The Eco section linking the Tatopani border point along the Nepal-China border area in Sindhupalchowk district opened on Monday for traffic after 40 days of disruption. The road was obstructed since July 15 after a landslide at Kodari of Bhotekoshi Rural Municipality-2 in the district.

The traffic resumed on Monday after the Road Division Office opened a new track, it is said. Six tippers and two heavy equipments were mobilized to clear the debris for the resumption of vehicular movement.

Chief of Division Office, Narayan Dutta Bhandari, said that road maintenance will start soon in the Liping area too.

Artists celebrate ‘Elephants in the Fog’



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Fifteen visual artists participated in a Paint and Celebrate event at Bhaktapur Durbar Square on Sunday to celebrate the international success of the Nepali film Elephants in the Fog.

Inspired by the film, the artists created their own original artworks.

Directed by Abinash Bikram Shah, Elephants in the Fog became the first Nepali film to be officially selected for the Un Certain Regard section of the Cannes Film Festival. It also won the Jury Prize in the same section, marking a historic achievement for Nepali cinema.

The day-long creative event was organised with support from the British Council and the French Cultural Centre in Kathmandu.

Painters, printmakers and conceptual artists took part in the programme. They explored the film’s atmosphere, emotions, themes and international journey through their own artistic

styles and perspectives.

Producer of the film Anup Poudel said, “The film itself was inspired by a photograph by American photographer Nan Goldin. So, we wanted to create a platform that brings different art forms together. Paint and Celebrate is part of that effort.”

Artists from Lalitkala Campus and Kathmandu University School of Arts and Design, as well as emerging and established artists, participated in the event.

Artists from different parts of Nepal, including Sudurpaschim, Lumbini, Birgunj and Pokhara, presented a variety of styles and perspectives.

The artworks included realism, surrealism, printmaking, textile art and semi-abstract mixed media. Rather than directly recreating scenes

from the film, the artists drew freely from its themes, characters, emotions and cultural meanings.

The artworks created during the event will be exhibited at Dali-La Hotel from August 27 to 29.

Elephants in the Fog is set to be released in cinemas across Nepal on September 4, coinciding with the Krishna Janmashami festival.

Rita Tamang wins Mrs. Nepal title

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Rita Tamang has won the Mrs. Nepal title at the ‘Miss and Mrs Beautiful Nepal’ competition held at the Rastriya Nachghar in Jamal, Kathmandu, on Saturday.

Along with the main title, she also won the Mrs. Photogenic, Mrs. Talent and Mrs. Best Walk titles.

A beautician by profession, Tamang runs her own beauty parlour in Kathmandu. Active in the beauty industry, she showcased her professional experience, confidence and talent on the competition stage, securing titles in four categories.

Senior actor Shiv Shrestha, veteran actress Tripti Nadkar and veteran singer Anand Karki were among the guests at the event. The competition was organised by Daksh International.

Following her victory, Tamang said she was extremely happy, proud

and emotional. She said the Mrs. Nepal title had given her a new sense of responsibility and enthusiasm, as well as motivation to do even better.

Tamang expressed the belief that competitions that bring art, beauty, talent and confidence together on a single platform provide Nepali women with opportunities to showcase their abilities while opening doors to new identities and possibilities.

Mandira Acharya was declared first runner-up, Gita Budhathoki second runner-up, Sirjana Ghimire third runner-up. Ghimire also won the Viewer’s Choice Award.

In the Miss Nepal category, Samiksha Sharma was crowned the winner. Tarakumari Dulal was named first runner-up, Nisha Rajbahak second runner-up, and Sanjina Chaudhary third runner-up.

Ashwin Jha served as the choreographer for the competition.



GAUTHALI LEADS AT THE BOX OFFICE



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Nepali film Gauthali has recorded the highest box-office earnings among the three domestic films featured in the latest official box-office report. Directed by Kapil Rijal, the film was released on July 17.

According to a report published by Cinema Box Office, Gauthali sold 9,09,426 tickets and generated Rs. 250.6 million in revenue up to midnight on Sunday.

Likewise, another film, Halee, which was released in Nepali cinemas on August 7, sold 8,385 tickets and earned Rs. 2.30 million.

Similarly, Nepali film Lajawati, released on August 14, sold 2,696 tickets and collected Rs. 768,450 during the same period.

The figures were obtained through the Cinema Box Office system and are part of the weekly box-office report for films screened domestically.

Jessica Lynn in Kathmandu



BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

American singer and songwriter Jessica Lynn is in Kathmandu for a week of professional exchange, mentorship, and collaboration with Nepali musicians, artiste managers, independent labels, policymakers, and cultural institution representatives.

According to a press release issued by the US Embassy Nepal, the programme will run from August 24 to 29 as part of the Arts & Music Envoy Programme, funded by the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA).

Throughout the week, Lynn will engage with Nepali singers, musicians, songwriters, producers, artist managers and other music professionals through interactive sessions focusing on songwriting, music business, digital platforms, copyright and the wider music industry.

The programme is expected to provide Nepali artistes and music professionals with new perspectives

on markets, audiences and opportunities for collaboration with their counterparts in the American music industry.

“The US-Nepal partnership extends to the arts, and we are proud to share American musical excellence as we celebrate 250 years of American independence this year,” US Chargé d’Affaires Scott Urbom said.

“Music is a powerful way to connect our peoples. By creating space for American and Nepali artists and audiences to learn from one another, share their perspectives and build meaningful professional connections, we are glad to contribute to economic growth and creativity in Nepal’s growing industry,” he added.

The Arts & Music Envoy Programme will culminate in a public concert on Saturday, August 29, at The Plaza in Pulchowk.

The concert will feature performances by Lynn as well as Nepali artists Rato Rani (stage name of Jeny Yonjan) and Ujan Shakya. It will also include a special fusion performance by Lynn and renowned sarangi player Kiran Nepali.

Spider-Man leads, Odyssey breaks Nolan record

AP
Los Angeles, Aug. 24

“Spider-Man: Brand New Day” fought off a slew of newcomers, including a comedy, a horror franchise, a Jason Statham action movie and a family film, to maintain its first-place spot at the box office in its fourth weekend in cinemas.

“The Odyssey” also became Christopher Nolan’s highest-grossing film ever, both domestically and internationally.

For the year, “The Odyssey” is second only to “Spider-Man”, which added \$39 million from 4,006 cinemas in the US and Canada, according to studio estimates on Sunday.

“Spider-Man”, which has now made over \$854.9 million in North America, will soon surpass “Avengers: Endgame” to become the second highest-grossing domestic release of all time.

The record holder is currently “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” (\$936.7 million).

Sony also had the second biggest film of the weekend with “Insidious: Out of the Further”. The sixth film

in the franchise, produced by Blumhouse Atomic Monster, made \$25.3 million from 3,303 cinemas. Internationally, it made \$35 million. Its \$18 million production budget makes it the most expensive film of the series.

Third place went to “The Odyssey”, which earlier this week became the highest-grossing R-rated film of all time, surpassing “Deadpool & Wolverine”. It added \$19.5 million in its sixth weekend in North American cinemas, where it continues to play in over 3,000 locations, bringing its domestic total to just under \$539.1 million. That pushes it past the \$534.9 million from “The Dark Knight” — a previous high-water mark for Nolan — not accounting for inflation. Internationally, it added \$68 million, driven largely by China and South Korea, which brings its worldwide total to \$1.4 billion.

The other big newcomers landed further down the charts. “Mutiny”, starring Statham as a man wrongly accused of murdering his billionaire boss, opened in sixth place with \$7.5 million from 2,703 locations. The Lionsgate release, an acquisition, was intended to be a theatrical-only release, but a few days before it opened, it was accidentally available for free on Prime Video for a few hours before the mistake was remedied. The glitch

might have impacted its opening weekend earnings, but the film also had some fairly bad reviews working against it.

Even more poorly reviewed was “Spa Weekend”, a girls’ trip comedy from the men behind “The Hangover” and “Bad Moms”, starring Isla Fisher, Leslie Mann, Anna Faris and Michelle Buteau.

It made an estimated \$3.1 million in 2,009 locations. Women accounted for some 84% of opening weekend ticket buyers, according to PostTrak. The 25th anniversary re-release of “The Fast and the Furious” made slightly more.

“The Magic Faraway Tree”, starring Andrew Garfield, opened outside of the top 10 with \$1.4 million from 1,611 screens. The young Anthony Bourdain film “Tony” continues to do quite well, however, earning \$5 million from 1,652 screens.

The summer season, which runs through the August bank holiday, has now generated an estimated \$4.4 billion in ticket sales in North America, putting it among the top four highest-grossing summers ever.

“We’re in the home stretch of what I think will go down in box office history as maybe one of the most key and pivotal summer film seasons ever,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the head of marketplace trends for Rentrak.

HOROSCOPE

tarot.com

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ARIES: A money or trust conversation may need clearer terms. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 8th House of Intimacy, Shared Resources, and Vulnerability while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 5th House of Creativity and Play.
- 

CANCER: A clear budget can make today’s fun easier to enjoy. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 5th House of Creativity, Romance, and Play while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 2nd House of Money and Self-Worth.
- 

LIBRA: A group plan feels lighter when the financial piece is clear. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 2nd House of Money, Values, and Self-Worth while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 11th House of Friends and Community.
- 

CAPRICORN: A shared goal needs terms that everyone can respect. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 11th House of Friends, Community, and Future Plans while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 8th House of Shared Resources, Trust.

- 

TAURUS: An expectation close to home may need clearer communication today. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 7th House of Partnership while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 4th House of Home, Family, and Emotional Roots.
- 

LEO: It is easier to share your feelings today when your words stay simple. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 4th House of Home, Family, and Emotional Roots while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 1st House of Self.
- 

SCORPIO: Your authority grows when your message is direct and easy to follow. The Moon moves through Scorpio and your 1st House of Self while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 10th House of Career, Reputation, and Authority.
- 

AQUARIUS: A shared goal becomes easier when everyone understands the next step. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 10th House of Career, Reputation, and Authority while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 7th House of Partnership.

- 

GEMINI: Your day runs better when you focus on one thing at a time. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 6th House of Work, Health, and Daily Habits while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 3rd House of Communication.
- 

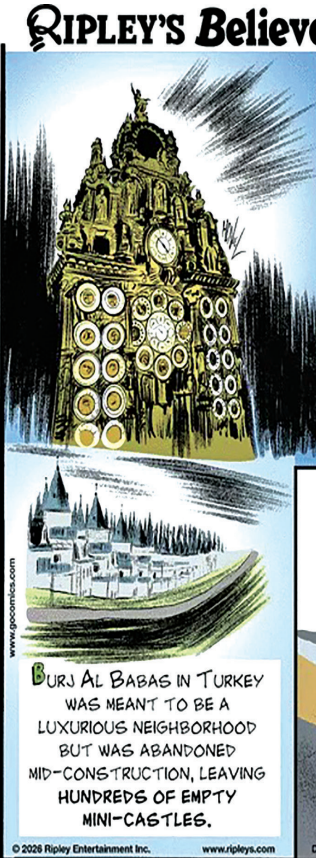
VIRGO: A thoughtful pause can make your message more useful. The Moon in Scorpio moves through your 3rd House of Communication while squaring Mercury in Leo and your 12th House of Solitude and Hidden Patterns.
- 

SAGITTARIUS: A little quiet can help your next big idea take shape. The Scorpio Moon in your 12th House encourages solitude, while its square to Mercury challenges your beliefs, learning, travel, and perspective.
- 

PISCES: A bigger vision becomes clearer when details are supported. The Scorpio Moon in your 9th House inspires learning, travel, and belief, while its square to Mercury challenges your work, health, and daily habits.

CARTOON

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THE ASTRONOMICAL CLOCK OF BESANCON CATHEDRAL IN FRANCE WAS INSTALLED IN 1860 AND FEATURES 30,000 PIECES, 60 DIALS AND 122 INDICATIONS!

SUMMITTED BY: DIMITRI TAVAKOLIS, AMSTERDAM, N.Y.

IN 2024, ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN LONDON DISCOVERED A 2,000-YEAR-OLD ROMAN ROAD UNDER OLD KENT ROAD.

BURJ AL BARAJ IN TURKEY WAS MEANT TO BE A LUXURIOUS NEIGHBORHOOD BUT WAS ABANDONED MID-CONSTRUCTION, LEAVING HUNDREDS OF EMPTY MINI-CASTLES.

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WELL, THERE'S A BIGFOOT... I GUESS IT ONLY STANDS TO REASON THERE'D BE A LITTLEFOOT...

W.H. MADD 8-24 ©2026 UFS Ltd. by Andrews McMeel for UFS

Jurel century lifts India to formidable score

AP
Colombo, Aug. 24

Druv Jurel scored an unbeaten second test century to help India to a formidable 503 for nine declared in the first innings on the second day of the second cricket test against Sri Lanka.

Devdutt Padikkal had also made a century on the opening day Sunday to set up India's big score.

At stumps on the second day Sri Lanka was in trouble with 8 for two wickets.

Jurel remained not out on 115 when India captain Shubman Gill declared the first innings. He spent nearly five hours at the crease, faced 177 deliveries and hit two sixes and nine boundaries.

Earlier he shared 112-run partnership for the second wicket with Rishabh Pant (63) who was out first ball after lunch trying to step out and hit off spinner Keshara Nuwantha.

Pant had returned to bat late Sunday after being hit by a Lahiru Kumara delivery. He faced 89 deliveries and hit two sixes and six boundaries.

India had resumed after lunch at 419 for six and despite being interrupted by a long rain delay, managed to score 84 more runs in the last two sessions with the tailenders holding one end firm.

Only 58 overs of play was possible for the day with most of the second session being lost to rain and another short break in the final session.

Sri Lanka were eight for two at stumps with opener Lahiru Udara and nightwatchman Prabath Jayasuriya



being dismissed within the three overs bowled in the innings.

Fast bowler Prasid Krishna had Udara (1) caught at slip by a diving Yashasvi Jaiswal and spinner Manav Suthar trapped Jayasuriya (2) lbw.

India's day started at 300-5 and lost their sixth wicket with just seven runs added to the overnight total. Saransh Jain, who played his maiden test innings, was out for six caught by Kamil Mishara as he tried to fend off a bouncer from fast bowler Asitha Fernando.

Fernando had the best bowling figures for Sri Lanka with 4-60, while spinners Jayasuriya and Nuwantha picked up two wickets each.

On Day 1, Padikkal scored his second test century and shared two crucial partnerships to help India lay a strong platform.

Continuing his top form from the first match, when he scored 167 runs in the first innings to set up a big win, Padikkal made 117 off 193 deliveries. He spent nearly five hours at the crease and hit 12 boundaries.

India leads the two-match series after defeating Sri Lanka by 165 runs in the first test at Galle.

Nepal 'A' register first win at Top End T20 Series

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Nepal 'A' registered their first victory in the Top End T20 tournament in Australia, defeating Hobart Hurricanes Academy by 39 runs on Monday.

Chasing a target of 155, the Hurricanes were bowled out for 115 in 18.3 overs, undone by a disciplined Nepalese bowling attack.

Medium-pacer Narayan Joshi led the defence, taking 3 for 5, whilst left-arm spinner Shahab Alam (20) and off-spinner Pawan Sarraf claimed two wickets apiece.

Bipin Khatri also chipped in with a wicket to complete the rout.

Nitesh Samuel top-scored for Hobart with a 32-ball 37, but found little support from the other end. ZAC Curtain (12), Nivethan Radhakrishnan (20) and Tim Ward (23) were the other two digit scores for Hobart.

Earlier, after being put into bat upon losing the toss, Nepal 'A' posted a competitive 154 for 8 in their allotted 20 overs.

Opener Kushal Bhurtel anchored the top order with 39 off 34 balls, striking six boundaries.

Mayan Yadav provided vital momentum with 31 off 25 deliveries, while skipper Anil Sah struck two sixes in a 21-ball 28.

A brisk unbeaten 20 off 16 balls from Lokesh Bam ensured Nepal finished strongly.

For Hobart, Raf MacMillan picked three wickets while Marcus Bean had two batters dismissed.



PHOTO: CAN FACEBOOK
Nepali players celebrating the wicket of Hobart Hurricanes during their third match at the NT Top End T20 Series being held in Darwin, Australia.

Nepal 'A' had suffered back-to-back defeats in their opening fixtures, including a heavy nine-wicket

loss to the Bangladesh High Performance squad after being skittled for just 99.

DOTS ESPORTS CROWNED PMNC FALL CHAMPIONS



PHOTO CREDIT: ESAN
DOTS Esports (L) after receiving the winners trophy from the hand of Minister for Education and Sports Sasmit Pokhrel at the Covered Hall of Dasarath Stadium.

BY A STAFF REPORTER
Kathmandu, Aug. 24

Dots Esports (DOTS) clinched the PUBG Mobile National Championship (PMNC) Fall Season title at the Covered Hall of Dasharath Stadium on Sunday evening.

Along with a cash prize of US\$400, the victors secured their berth at the PMNC Fall South Asia 2026, a pathway event leading to the prestigious PUBG Mobile Global Open (PMGO).

Nepal is scheduled to host the regional South Asia tournament in September. Dots Esports topped the standings with a total of 122 points, accumulating 53 placement points and 69 eliminations across the championship.

Trained To Kill (T2K) finished as runners-up, followed by Not Your Fire Nation (NYF), Hidden Leaf Esports (HLX), DRS Gaming (DRS), The Gaming Broskis (TGB), Royal Dragon (RD), Abrupt Slayers (ASL), 4 Death Machine (4DM), Karo Esports (KARO), Real Savages (RS), and Sega Titans (ST), occupying third through twelfth positions respectively.

The top 12 teams out of the 16 national contenders qualified for the upcoming PMNC Fall South Asia tournament.

National Sports Council recognised- Esports Association of Nepal (ESAN) joined as an associate partner in the event. According to a press release issued by ESAN, the championship was conducted under the national sports tournament scheme approved by the National Sports Council.

Torres scores twice in debut for PSG

AP
Madrid, Aug. 24

Ferran Torres scored twice in his Paris Saint-Germain debut to help the French defending champion draw 2-2 at Rennes in its league opener on Sunday, while Barcelona began its defense of the Spanish league title in style with a 5-0 rout of Elche.

Manchester City left it late to win in its first Premier League match under Enzo Maresca and Mohamed Salah scored his first goals for Turkish club Trabzonspor.

Julian Alvarez heard boos from the Atletico Madrid crowd in his return to action in the Spanish league after asking to leave the club, and both Juventus and AC Milan won in the Italian league.

Feyenoord's game in the Dutch league was disrupted by fireworks.

Torres' dream start with PSG

Torres, who joined PSG from Barcelona after scoring Spain's World Cup winning goal last month, came off the bench to score in the 71st and 82nd minutes, helping his new club avoid a second consecutive loss after a penalty shootout loss to Lens in the French Super Cup.

Both goals were assisted by Torres' Spain teammate Fabian Ruiz.

Sebastian Szymanski and Esteban



Lepaul had put host Rennes ahead with first-half goals.

Earlier, Olivier Giroud, who turns 40 next month, scored from about 20 meters (yards) out as Lille won 2-0 at Angers. Midfielder Ayyoub Bouaddi was left out of Lille's squad amid reports of an imminent big-money move to Man City.

Easy win for Barca in La Liga

Raphinha and Fermin Lopez scored two goals each as Barcelona cruised to a 5-0 victory at Elche.

Newcomer Karim Adeyemi also scored for Hansi Flick's team, which is looking to win a third straight La Liga title.

It was the biggest win so far in the competition this season.

Maresca wins with City

Enzo Maresca enjoyed what he called a "perfect day" as Man City rallied late to defeat Bournemouth 2-1 in its Premier League opener.

City scored twice in the final 10 minutes to grab the victory at home as Maresca debuted as Pep Guardiola's successor.

Liverpool salvaged a 2-2 draw at Newcastle thanks to Dominik Szoboszlai's penalty kick in the ninth minute of stoppage time.

Brighton scored four goals in the opening 31 minutes in a 4-0 trashing of Aston Villa.

Salah gets his first goals

Salah scored twice as Trabzonspor beat Basaksehir 2-1. The Egypt forward scored in the eighth and 48th minutes.

Salah signed a two-year contract with the Turkish club after a long and successful stint with Liverpool.

Alvarez booted by Atletico fans

Alvarez was booted by Atletico fans upset with his request to leave the club. Alvarez came off the bench in the 67th minute of Atletico's 2-2 draw against Villarreal at the Metropolitano stadium.

Alvarez had not played in Atletico's first game. The club said it does not intend to sell the Argentina forward. Giuliano Simeone scored an 85th-minute equalizer for Atletico, which played a man down from the 76th because of a red card for Robin Le Normand.

Villarreal finished third last season, just ahead of Atletico, the perennial challenger to Barcelona and Real Madrid.

Juve, Milan get off to winning starts

AC Milan opened its Serie A campaign with a 2-1 win at Torino with goals three minutes apart from Alphonso Areola and Adrien Rabiot in the second half. Milan will be trying to improve from a fifth-place finish last season.

Gleison Bremer scored in the first half to give Juventus — sixth last season — an opening 1-0 win at Frosinone.

Chinese humanoid robots smash human records in 100m sprint and high jump

AP
Beijing, Aug. 24

Chinese humanoid robots broke records set by humans, including beating Usain Bolt's 100-meter sprint world record, on the opening day of the Olympics-like World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing on Saturday.

More than 2,000 humanoid robots were participating in the event, the organizer said.

The five-day games, now in its second year, are a spectacle demonstrating China's rapid progress in advanced robotics as the technology race with the U.S. heats up, with 51 events and more than 1,000 competitions taking place including running, table tennis and soccer.

The games, which are taking place in the National Speed Skating Oval built for the 2022 Winter Olympics, opened the same week as Beijing held the 2026 World Robot Conference, where companies showcased around 3,000 products, including humanoid robots.

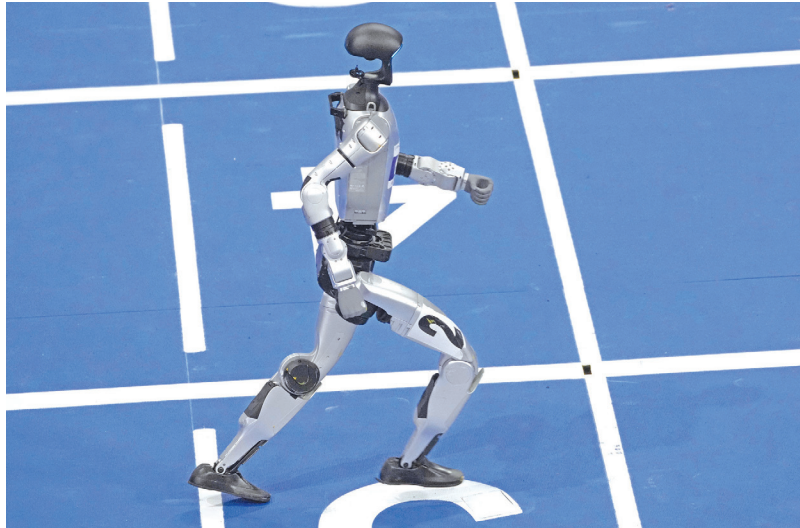


PHOTO: AP
A robot competes in the 100m obstacles final during the World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, Monday.

At Saturday's opening of the robot games, the organizer and robot makers

said that Chinese humanoid robots defeated human world records, as

CUMMINS EYES ODI RETURN AHEAD OF SOUTH AFRICA TEST SERIES

AFP
Mackay, Aug. 24

Skipper Pat Cummins said he "can't wait" to play in Australia's first Test series in South Africa since the infamous "Sandpapergate" affair and he intends to use one-day games beforehand to prepare.

The next assignment for Australia after drawing a two-Test series against Bangladesh are three ODIs in Zimbabwe and another three in South Africa in late September.

They then play Tests in Durban, Gqeberha and Cape Town in October.

Cummins indicated he could miss the Zimbabwe leg, but would make himself available for some of the South Africa white-ball games.

It is likely to be a similar scenario for fellow quicks Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood. "I'm not sure I should say this, but I think the focus is on the Test series," said Cummins after their innings and 51-run thrashing of Bangladesh in Mackay on Sunday.

"So a lot of the white-ball (series), and how we play that, would be with an eye to the red ball.

"So I'd imagine it'd be one, two, probably a maximum of three games out of those six."

Cummins, who remains Australia's official ODI captain, has played just two from a possible 28 matches in the format since the 2023 World Cup.

Hazlewood told reporters in Mackay he too expected to play some of the 50-over series while Starc said he would "do what he's told".

All three have prioritised Tests over limited-overs cricket in recent years.

The Tests in South Africa will be Australia's first in the country since a 2018 ball-tampering scandal rocked the sport. Steve Smith was banned for a year and sacked as captain after conspiring to alter the ball using sandpaper during the third Test in Cape Town, while David Warner was suspended for 12 months.

Cummins called the series "big" with revenge on his mind after Australia lost the World Test Championship final to the Proteas at Lord's last year.

"We had a big series against them a couple of years ago in Australia (in 2022-23) and we probably exceeded expectations and played really well," said Cummins of their 2-0 series win.

"They got us back at Lord's last year and outplayed us. So it's going to be big in their home conditions and places we have haven't played for quite a while.

"Even the difference between Durban to, say, Cape Town can be quite different styles of pitches.

"That's why I love playing Test cricket. It's all different conditions, different opponents, different parts of the world. Can't wait."

Only Cummins, Starc, Hazlewood, Smith, Nathan Lyon, and Matt Renshaw have played Test cricket in South Africa. Opener Renshaw is likely to hold his place despite a tepid return in Mackay after three years away, with the big question whether Marnus Labuschagne should be on the plane.

The number three made just 36 runs in three knocks against Bangladesh and has not scored a century since 2023.