

The Himalayan

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work
— Thomas Edison

Smart lockdown

Although the government has been inoculating anti-COVID-19 vaccines for different age groups across the country, the infection and death rates have remained constant since the outbreak of the second wave of the coronavirus in the second week of April. On average, 25 people are dying of the virus every day, and the gap between the number of infections and recovery appears to be widening with each passing day. The gap had come down to as low as 25,000 some weeks ago. Now, the gap has gone up to more than 31,000, with the fatality rate remaining steady at 1.5 per cent, the major concern for the health authorities.

The government should accord the highest priority to rolling out vaccines to the eligible population

Even if the third wave breaks out, it is not possible to re-impose another nationwide lockdown or select prohibitory orders, considering the worsening economic condition that has rendered millions of people jobless. Therefore, the COVID-19 Crisis Management Centre (CMCC), an apex government body formed to take decisions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, has come up with a proposal to categorise the COVID affected areas into four different colour groups to tackle the crisis. As per the proposal, the districts or largely infected areas will be categorised as red, amber, yellow and green zones, depending on the number of COVID cases. Red means most affected area, and green means a safe area. Categorisation of the areas will also be determined based on the seriousness of the virus impact, availability of hospitals, doctors, ventilators and other medical supplements, death rate and other factors.

Act responsibly

With a new coalition government under Premier Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepal Congress at the helm of affairs, it surprises no one that fresh appointments are being made to government bodies, commissions and institutions with people loyal to the parties in power. This has been ritually practised since multi-party democracy was ushered in the country in 1990. However, with about a dozen government bodies being renewed in the past three decades, such frequent appointments of heads do little for the growth of institutions. It is against this backdrop that a delegation of five student unions met the PM the other day demanding an end to the culture of appointing university office bearers on the basis of power sharing.

They were quite right in asserting that appointments be made through open competition based on competency, efficiency and expertise. These criteria apart, all appointments should be for a fixed period so that the appointees have enough time to implement their plan of action. The politically-affiliated student unions should, however, understand that they are equally responsible for the frequent disturbances in the colleges and deteriorating quality of education in the country.

LETTERS

Advice and Olympics

I could not believe my eyes when I read this sage advice to Nepal from his lawyer 'Nepal' advised to turn down an offer to co-chair UML' (THT, July 29, Page 1). My instant reaction was that an alien spirit might have possessed the lawmaker who advised Madhav Kumar Nepal to rival a camp that president Vudha had left the rest of the 18 months comfortably as the prime minister. I had to read the news several times to believe what I read. Although not an apt example, it is just like Labour lawmakers asking their leader to support a Tory prime minister to consolidate the latter's position. Nothing could be ridiculous than



this in politics. This advice could have been put by an alien in a Nepali mouth. Whatever, Nepal will become a pentium. The Red Cross Society has warned Nepal has yet to vaccinate 1.4 million people. Red Cross calls for vaccination support to the most vulnerable..."

JIRA BAI POKHAREL

News about sweeping floods both in Nepal and India has dominated newspaper headlines in both the countries. Floods and landslides have resulted in the demise of many innocuous people in neighbouring India and Nepal so regularly every year that they have been something of a deja vu in either country.

If we take the case of India, in far off Maharashtra, 100 persons have already lost their lives due to the over pouring of rain to the tune of 594 millimeters over a few days of time. An equal number of people have perished in nearby Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in the deluge.

This scenario in Nepal is more distressing. Some 322 events of flood, landslide and heavy rainfall have occurred over a month, between June 11 and July 15, 2021, resulting in the death of a total of 478 people, lost their precious lives to disasters - 202 to landslides, 102 to fires, 62 to floods, 62 to lightning and 50 to snake bites.

programme, for recharging the ground water in India. Now it has been used feverishly for constructing the comfort rooms to give a fill to the Swaccha Bharat campaign of India.

India and Nepal had agreed to build the Sapta Koshi high dam with the twin purposes of preventing disasters and generating the much-needed hydropower.

However, this project has not made the visible headway for fear of drowning several settlements on the river banks. Such macro projects have alarming environmental consequences, leading to the progress of such projects at a snail's pace or not at all.

TOPICS

SHIVA NEUPANE

The craft of writing develops with our ritualistic writing habit. As a writer, I have never stuck to any rule book for enhancing my linguistic talent.

In the past, every time I went through a newspaper, I would go back to see the marvellous etymological structures of the sentences. I used to question myself why I couldn't write like

them. I was envious of people who had great writing skills. The mounting intellectual jealousy ushered me onto the writing journey.

To my mind, the process of writing begins with passion, commitment, perseverance, inspiration and dedication. Writing can be formed much in the same way that an ocean is

Deluge in Nepal and India

Need of micro initiatives

programme, for recharging the ground water in India. Now it has been used feverishly for constructing the comfort rooms to give a fill to the Swaccha Bharat campaign of India.

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and rise of humidity, which have been so irritatingly regular after floods and landslides in Nepal. More comforting is the taming of the pollution monster, which merrily follows the footprint of wildfires.

The presence of ponds contributes to the lush green landscape, confining the wild animals to the periphery of the forests. Lightning which otherwise would strike settlements, resulting in the deaths of many, gets diverted to the surrounding moist forests with tall trees.

The digging of such ponds does not involve rocket science. It can be carried out by people with modest skills, like green

the digging and digging, giving them the much needed employment. The cost of one pond comes to well less than Rs 5,000.

The multi-headed disasters can be tamed with the digging of 0.5 per cent of the land area in the country from the mountains down to the Tarai, which comes to construction of about one square kilometers of ponds by each local government of Nepal. This is far less than the Almighty

Further digging of 90 ponds is beginning soon this week in a bid to hit a

noble maiden century. The government has also allocated financial resources for the digging of ponds in the mountains in the budget this year, which needs to be mobilised soon

regularly in the country. But the government and non-government organisations like the Rotary Club alone cannot accomplish such a Herculean task.

All other institutions short of government should be also supported by India in view of its massive charitable activities it has launched in the past because the storage of water in the hills leads to lesser flow of sedimentation flow to India.

This activity will also enhance the unparalleled people-to-people relations existing between the two countries.

Writing, a never-ending journey

JIRA BAI POKHAREL

formed from the tributaries, rivers and creeks of the world. A person who wants to become a writer must have many qualities and interests. These are acquired by being in an environment where a reading culture is prevalent.

One thing that tickles my fancy is the quote by legendary author Stephen King: "Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work."

Well, some colleagues underestimate their classmates, thinking that they are a dune with no reading or writing skills. In my view, we should not be making fun of people even if

they do not have the skills you have. School life might not necessarily project the potential that one has in life.

We have seen many examples of people who were once considered to be dim-witted in school becoming phenomenal successes in the later phase of life. One of the nicest things of becoming successful is one's writing career is that a person can hone his or her writing skills without having to acquire a university degree.

We have seen many authors in the world who have achieved great success in their life at an early age. In a nutshell, a true writer puts a hell lot of efforts to become one. The practice of writing should be incessant and persistent.

BLOG SURF

JONATHAN GROSVENOR

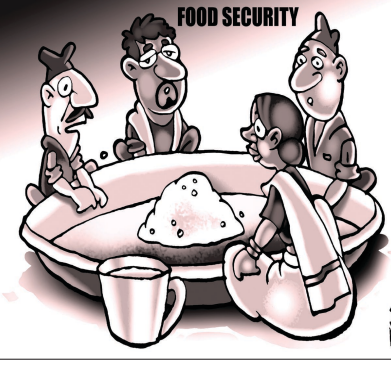
Whilst the pandemic has rocked populations and health systems, it has also prompted unprecedented economic challenges and strains on financial systems, particularly in the developing world.

The initial shock of the pandemic manifested in a flight to quality from investors, which eventually spilled over into a flight to cash as liquidity concerns grew. This meant that investors sold their emerging markets bonds and equities as they scrambled for safe-haven assets and even for hard cash as the worst fears materialized.

18-year-old lad from Tunisia, the fountain of 2011 Arab spring, has created history by winning the gold in a swimming event, beating American and Australian veterans. Apart from creating confusion in football, Nepal set some individual records in eye-blinking Tokyo. "Chaandary ends Olympics campaign with average performance" (THT, July 31, Page 8).

Third wave Nowadays, the COVID-19 graph is soaring, and people are worried about the future. The government has relaxed the prohibitory orders to ease daily life. With the relaxation of

CARTOON



THT 10 YEARS AGO

Finance minister, secy guilty of leaking budget

Himalayan News Service Kathmandu, July 31, 2011

Parliamentary probe panel has found ADM and Finance Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari and Finance Secretary Krishna Hari Baskota guilty in the leakage of fiscal budget. The seven-member panel, headed by Nepa Congress Chief Whip Laxman Prasad Gaire, today submitted its report to Constituent Assembly Chairman Subas Nembang. However, details of the report are yet to be made public as it could not be presented at today's session due to NC's ongoing obstruction of the House. "Political and administrative heads of the Finance Ministry were found responsible for the leakage," a member of the panel said on condition of anonymity. The report has not suggested any action against the guilty. The panel member added: "Finance ministers in UK and Kenya had resigned after the budget contents leaked. So, resignation of Adhikari and Baskota took moral responsibility for the incident, while Minister Adhikari told the committee that he would speak on it only after the full report comes out."

Dahal committed to five-point deal

Himalayan News Service Kathmandu, July 31, 2011

Amid uncertainty over reshuffling of the Cabinet, press conferences called by Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal in the span of two hours may not have been a mere coincidence. Sources claimed that Prime Minister Khanal and Dahal had forged an understanding to organise the press conference. Dahal to express commitment to peace, constitution and implementation of five-point deal and Khanal about the reshuffle. Addressing the press meet at party headquarters in Patan Durbar, Dahal said party would begin discussion with other parties to implement the five-point agreement and formation of a consensus government as soon as the new ministers were inducted. He reiterated that the reshuffle was nothing but party's move to make the Cabinet proportional and inclusive and that it would never affect the implementation of five-point deal. He, however, said the party would take a concrete decision if PM fails to get new ministers by Monday, adding that withdrawal of party's support could be one option. Janardan Sharma said his party would take concrete steps on the peace process.

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