



# Newsletter

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We publish this month a photograph of the **Leisure World** of *Universal Ship Management*.

If you have pictures or postcards of your ship, please send them in to us for future Newsletters.

We are recruiting again in Nepal, this time for NCL and AIDA, so will begin moving those selected to ship over the next half year. We have also started to recruit in a new area, as Universal Shipmanagement in Singapore has taken for trainee dealers from us. They reached ship this month and we wish them every success!

Following the merger of NCL with Prestige Cruises, the crew we recruited for both will now be handled from NCL's office in Miami, and we shall also be able to recruit for the ships of Oceania Cruises as a result.

## We Welcome

### Star Cruises

Shaphal Neupane  
Suman Gurung

### Columbia Ship Management

Harka Bahadur Thapa

### Norwegian Cruise Line Limited

Vinod Kumar Jain



07 09 2015 10



### GI (HK) Business

We are providing security services for 32 Hong Kong Clients and have 100 security staff employed.

Our employment agency placement service found 0 Bodyguard/Driver post position over the last month.

### SHIPPING COMPANIES AND SHIPS LINKED TO US

We are working with 21 shipping companies, and have 780 men and 156 women on ships, a total of 936 crew and staff under management.

## World Security

### Economics

Greece buckled to the demands of its creditors and has agreed a new round of austerity. The likelihood of Greece now paying back what is 180% of its annual national product is now recognized as nil, but the Euro nations whom are Greece's creditors have failed to recognize that there is a need for a debt write off. This story will now last a lot longer and the Greek people will suffer more hardship.



Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras delivers a speech during an emergency parliament session in Athens, Thursday, July 23, 2015. Greek lawmakers launched a late-night debate Wednesday on further reforms demanded by international creditors in return for a third multi-billion-euro bailout, with attention focusing on government dissenters who have vowed to reject the measures.

### Nuclear

An agreement was reached in Geneva between foreign powers including the United States of America, China and Russia with Iran to limit its nuclear programme and prevent it making nuclear weapons in exchange for a lifting of sanctions. The agreement still has to be ratified in Tehran and Washington, and many Republicans in the US oppose it (egged on by Saudi Arabia and Israel, both enemies of Iran), so it is not home yet. However, if it is ratified, it will alter the balance of economic and political power in the Middle East. North Korea has said that it is not interested in a similar agreement.

### Europe

Fighting has eased and a new agreement has been made to withdraw heavy weapons. Britain foiled an ISIS plot before it was launched against targets in the United Kingdom. European navies continue to rescue thousands of African illegal immigrants in the Mediterranean, but their governments still cannot agree about what to do with those they rescue.

## The Arab World

The Islamic State (ISIS) continues to be the major problem across the Arab world. In Syria and Iraq, it controls large areas of territory and its influence has spread to Libya, Yemen, Nigeria and other countries in the Muslim world. A bomb attack thought to have been conducted by an ISIS suicide bomber killed 32 Kurdish youth activists in Suruc, near the Syrian border; the Kurds are fighting ISIS across the Middle East. The civil war in Syria continues. Saudi Arabia and some Gulf state forces continue to attack Shia Muslim Houthi forces in Yemen, where the old government has resisted Houthi attacks on Aden. Libya remains in a state of civil war.



The moment and the aftermath of the attack.

## Afghanistan and Pakistan

There is little news this month. Both countries remain subject to extremist Muslim terrorism and large parts of Afghanistan are in the control of the Taliban.

## Palestine

There has been little news this month. Israel announced plans to enforce a twenty year jail sentence on any Palestinian youth convicted of throwing stones against Israeli police.

## Asia

China has nearly completed construction of an airfield and military bases on coral reefs and atolls it has made into islands in the South China Sea around the Spratly Islands. Islands disputed by China and Japan in the Sea of Japan continue to cause tensions, and China has denounced Japan's recent vote to change its constitution to allow a more aggressive military posture. China's insurgency problems in the Muslim areas of far-western Xinjiang province and in Tibet continue. The Black Flag Movement, an ISIS-linked group, continues Muslim terrorism in Mindanao in the southern Philippines.



Chinese state media shows 'Gundam' as evidence of Japanese military aggression.

## Thailand and Malaysia

The problem of Muslim Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh and Myanmar has not been solved, and no country will accept them as citizens. The Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand, near the Malaysian border, continues.

## The Malacca Straits

Small scale piracy continues to be a cause of concern in the Malacca Straits and nearby areas of the South China Sea.

## Somalia

There are no new reports of piracy at present. Fighting continues in the country between the government and its foreign allies and Islamic militant al-Shabaab fighters.

## Africa

Nigerian and Cameroon have suffered bombing attacks at bus stations as Islamic militants Boko Haram, linked now to ISIS, continue to terrorise populations. The security situations in Burkino Fasu, the Central African Republic and Mali remain disturbed. The civil war in South Sudan rages unchecked.

## The Americas

There is little news of a security note this month. America and Cuba have re-opened embassies in each other's country.

## Myanmar

There is no news of note this month.

## India

The security situation in India's far north-east provinces (Assam, Arunchal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram) is causing concern. Local ethnic struggles for autonomy are causing an increasing number of deaths and casualties of civilians and government forces.



Bombers targeted a market in the heart of Maroua.



Sanjay Gupta said he was asked by a Nepalese medical team to assist with the surgery on an 8-year-old girl.

## Nepal News

### **CNN investigates star correspondent 'life-saving surgery' report after Nepal earthquake**

8 Jul - CNN said Thursday that it is working to verify the identity of the Nepalese patient operated on this spring by its medical correspondent Dr. Sanjay Gupta, following a published report that said Gupta mistakenly told viewers that he had treated someone else.

Gupta, a practicing brain surgeon, operated on a girl on April 27 at Kathmandu's Bir Hospital shortly after he had been sent to Nepal to cover the aftermath of a deadly earthquake there. In a video report that day, Gupta identified the patient as 8-year-old Salina Dahal and said she needed emergency surgery because of a fractured skull, blood clot and swelling of the brain.

The Global Press Journal reported this week that according to the girl's family and doctors, Dahal was never operated on. Instead, Gupta operated on a 14-year-old girl, Sandhya Chalise.

Gupta, speaking on CNN Wednesday, said the hospital's triage unit was a chaotic situation that was "unlike anything I've ever seen." He had relied upon the hospital to identify his patient and CNN acknowledged that the hospital may have provided him with incorrect information.

Asked how Gupta might have mistaken the girl on a stretcher in his report for the person he operated upon, CNN spokeswoman Neel Khairzada noted that it was brain surgery, and the rest of the patient's body was obscured by drapes. Confusing matters, a CNN text report from Nepal that was posted online before Gupta spoke on the air identified the patient as Chalise, which the Journal said was accurate. But after Gupta's report, CNN changed its text story to say the doctor operated on Dahal.

Apparently, different people at the hospital had given conflicting information to the two CNN representatives, Khairzada said.

CNN is now working to make sure it has the correct information about the patient and will correct the record if Gupta's report is proven wrong, she said. Both Dahal and Chalise are apparently doing well, Gupta said.

"Sanjay spent a week in Nepal, helped save a young life in the operating room, and we couldn't be prouder of him," CNN said in a statement provided by Khairzada. "He has our full and unequivocal support."

### **Nepal's farmers need more than seeds and new tools to recover from quakes**

15 Jul - Two months after the first of two major earthquakes hit Nepal, people in

six farming districts in the north of the country are warning that some of the greatest dangers lie ahead.

Heavy monsoon rains have begun, dumping water relentlessly on mountain slopes already loosened by the quakes and many aftershocks.

These areas bore the brunt of the devastation, with one district — Sindhupalchowk — accounting for four out of 10 of the more than 8,700 people killed in the disaster. An estimated 90% of homes were damaged.

The threat of further landslides hangs over the slopes and valleys, adding more stress and worry for farmers who are already traumatised. Before the rainy season, more than 1,000 landslides had been recorded, claiming lives and destroying more crops, roads and irrigation systems. At the same time, food insecurity is rising. In the hardest-hit areas, most people depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. They produce just enough food for their families with the bare minimum of livestock and basic tools, sometimes on as little as an acre of land. Any damage or loss instantly translates into less food on plates.

A report recently released by agencies working on food security in Nepal gives the clearest picture yet of the impact of

the disaster on farmers in the worst-affected areas. It found they have lost much of their harvested crops of rice, maize, wheat and millet, and seeds for future planting, which are now buried under collapsed homes.

Cattle, poultry and other livestock were killed, and many farm tools lost, delivering a heavy blow to household income and nutrition. The report also found that one in four of these farm households were headed by women, with many men working in the Gulf states or elsewhere overseas to support their families. These households are more vulnerable to poor nutrition and more likely to resort to selling valuable assets, such as tools, for cash to buy food.

For now, these mountain farmers have salvaged what they can from their destroyed homes and are sheltering under tarpaulins, in plastic vegetable tunnels, or even in cowsheds. Many are waiting out the monsoon before deciding what to do next. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has warned that more international support is needed to stave off the threat of prolonged food insecurity faced by some 900,000 people in these six districts. It estimates that \$23.4m (£15m) in emergency agricultural assistance is required. Only about 25% has been received so far, from Norway, Canada, Italy, Belgium and FAO's own funds. These humanitarian needs remain critical.

At the same time, the positive idea of "building back better" during longer-term reconstruction was mentioned repeatedly at a major international donor conference in Kathmandu in June. It is encouraging to see strong interest in projects to reduce the risk of future disasters and increase resilience to these crises.

The challenge now is to agree on how that would work in the context of Nepal, a country prone to earthquakes and landslides. Much of its landscape is covered by small-scale farms, clinging to the sides of mountains that run along a major faultline between the Indian and Eurasian plates. It's not enough to simply help these farmers rebuild their homes, hand over some seeds for planting, and then walk away.

For example, as well as providing immediate support for crops and animals, the FAO is planning urgent rehabilitation work to stabilise risky mountain slopes and map and monitor major cracks in the earth for any movement. Farmers could be given early warning of significant new landslide risks over the radio. The FAO will also support irrigation repairs, to help ensure a good winter harvest – particularly for potatoes and wheat.

The Nepalese are tenacious and hard-working. We owe it to them to help them emerge from this crisis stronger and better able to cope next time around.

Now is the time to start building resilience.

There is both an opportunity and an imperative to help Nepal build back better. We must maintain the momentum on this idea, while continuing to meet the pressing humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable families.

### **Nepal's earthquake forces 'living goddess' to break decades of seclusion**

**20 Jul** - Dhana Kumari Bajracharya was forced from her cloistered life after the 7.8 magnitude quake in April and walked on the street for the first time in her life.

When a massive earthquake struck Nepal in April, Nepal's longest-serving "living goddess" was forced to do the unthinkable: walk the streets for the first time in her life.

In a rare interview, Dhana Kumari Bajracharya, who still follows the cloistered lifestyle she entered aged two, also spoke about her unusually long 30-year reign, suggesting the pain of her unceremonious dethroning in the 1980s was still raw.

Before the 7.8 magnitude quake on 25 April, Bajracharya had only ever appeared in public while being carried in an ornate wooden palanquin.

The Himalayan nation's living goddesses, known as kumaris, live in seclusion and rarely speak in public, bound by customs that combine elements of Hinduism and Buddhism.

But as the tremor hit, shaking the ground, reducing buildings to rubble and killing



Nepalese farmers plant rice in the district of Sindhupalchok at the start of the monsoon season.

8,800, Bajracharya, 63, left her quarters in the historic city of Patan, south of Kathmandu, for the first time in three decades. And for the first time on foot.

"I had never thought about leaving the house like that," she said. "Perhaps the gods are angry because people don't respect traditions as much any more."

As the disaster ripped through Nepal, shaking Bajracharya's five-storey home, her family stayed inside, waiting to see if the retired kumari would break tradition and walk out with them.

"We couldn't just leave the house like everyone else – we had to think of her. We didn't know what to do," said her niece, Chanira Bajracharya. "But when nature forces you, you do the unthinkable."

Bajracharya was enthroned in 1954 when she was just two and reigned for three decades as the kumari of Patan.

The kumari, a pre-pubescent girl from the Newar community, is considered an embodiment of the Hindu goddess Taleju.

Selection criteria is strict and includes a number of specific physical attributes, from an unblemished body to a chest like a lion and thighs like a deer.

Unlike Kathmandu's "living goddess" who must move to an official residence, the Patan kumari is allowed to live with her family, but can emerge only on feast days when she is paraded through the city to be worshipped.

"I loved going out during the festivals the most," said Bajracharya, remembering how devotees lined up, eager to receive her blessings.

The Patan kumari is traditionally dethroned once she begins to menstruate and, since Bajracharya never started her periods, she continued to serve well into her 30s.

But in 1984, Nepal's then crown prince Dipendra, who would go on to massacre his family 17 years later, stirred up a controversy which eventually ended her tenure.

"Why is she so old?" the 13-year-old prince reportedly asked when he saw Bajracharya during a festival, prompting priests to replace her with a young girl.

Thirty years later, the memory of her abrupt dismissal still stings.

"They had no reason to replace me," she said. "I was a little angry ... I felt the goddess still resided in me."

Forced into retirement, Bajracharya decided to continue living the life she had always known, unable to abandon her duties or end her withdrawal from the outside world.

Every morning she wakes up, drapes an embroidered red skirt like the one she wore during her years as a kumari, scrapes her hair into a topknot and lines her eyes with kohl curving upwards to her temples.

On special occasions, she uses red and

yellow powder to draw a third eye in the middle of her forehead, and then takes to a wooden throne decorated with brass snake carvings.

Devotees are received, as when she was an official kumari, on Saturdays and during festivals in a separate room in her red brick home, reached by narrow stairs above two floors rented out to a shop and financial cooperative.

"The priests did what they had to do, but I cannot abandon my responsibilities," she said.

When Bajracharya's niece Chanira was chosen as a kumari in 2001, she guided her through the process.

Nepal has seen sweeping changes during Bajracharya's lifetime, transforming from a Hindu kingdom to a secular republic, but the former kumari's daily routine remains the same.

Her one concession to modernity is a fondness for television, especially current affairs shows and Indian mythological dramas.

Since the quake, however, she spends most of her time engrossed in prayer, Chanira says.

"It saddened her immensely ... Our astrologer had predicted last year that my aunt would leave the house, and we were wondering how that would ever happen," she said. "But we never expected this."



Dhana Kumari Bajracharya, the longest reigning Kumari of Nepal, sits in her quarters in Kathmandu.



The number of people attending the annual protest was far lower than last year.

## Hong Kong News

### Thousands attend anniversary democracy rally

**1 Jul** - Tens of thousands of people in Hong Kong have attended a pro-democracy rally to mark 18 years since Britain handed the territory back to China.

Organisers say that as many as 48,000 people took part but police estimates were far lower at just under 20,000.

The BBC's Juliana Liu in Hong Kong says the protest was far more low key than this time last year when organisers said 500,000 people demonstrated.

In June a Beijing-backed reform package was rejected by Hong Kong legislators.

The reforms would have given Hong Kong voters the right to choose their leader for the first time - subject to approval by China - and foreshadowed the huge so-called umbrella protests that followed for several months afterwards.

Campaigners dismissed the reforms as offering only "fake democracy".

Our correspondent says that the lower number of protesters this year has resulted in questions as to whether the public is growing tired at the failure of the pro-democracy movement to gain concessions from the Chinese

government.

Some have expressed disappointment that after nearly three months of paralysing the city's streets, they were unable to secure greater voting rights from China.

Protesters on Wednesday congregated at Victoria Park to march in sweltering conditions to city government headquarters. Many held yellow umbrellas, the symbol of last year's demonstrations and the preferred tool of defence against police pepper spray. The demonstrators chanted derogatory slogans against Hong Kong's Beijing-backed leader CY Leung, demanding his resignation.

Some carried banners calling for universal suffrage or for the downfall of the Communist Party, while others carried colonial-era Hong Kong flags.

The demonstrators were in places heckled by pro-Beijing groups who hurled insults at them as they made their procession through the streets, with police often having to separate the two sides.

Earlier in the day Mr Leung urged people to look to the future, Reuters news agency reports.

"Even though political reforms have

taken up considerable effort and time, the Hong Kong government will strengthen economic development and improve people's livelihoods," he told a flag-raising ceremony to mark the anniversary.

### PLA live-fire drill shows transparency, says CY Leung

**4 Jul** - Chief Executive CY Leung has said that the high-profile live-ammunition exercise by the People's Liberation Army Hong Kong garrison last Saturday demonstrated the army's transparency. The media was invited for the first time to report on the live-fire drill. Leung said on Tuesday that the public invitation was a "good thing" as it allowed the Hong Kong public to understand the PLA's duties and preparation work for defending Hong Kong.

Leung asked the public not to over-interpret the exercise, which took place just three days after Beijing passed the revised national security law stressing Hong Kong's responsibility.

The 45-minute drill at the Castle Peak shooting range involved a simulated attack on militants in a mountainous area. Armoured vehicles, smoke grenades, rocket launchers and helicopters were deployed.

Some analysts saw the live-fire drill as Beijing's warning to pro-independence activists in Hong Kong. State media have been criticising "radical" pro-democracy activists for promoting Hong Kong independence and separatism. In January, CY Leung also publicly criticised an HKU student magazine for advocating "Hong Kong nationalism".

Veteran journalist Ching Cheong said that the Chinese government might want to use the drill to show the world that Hong Kong is part of its national defence system, as well as warn separatists or pro-independence activists.

Cheong added that the Hong Kong garrison will probably abandon its low-profile policy and make its presence more known to the public over time.

Leung said on Tuesday morning that the revised national security law is not applicable to Hong Kong. But he added that legal systems and practices outside of Hong Kong are "not something that [the Hong Kong public] is able to comment or give assurances on".

Article 14 of the Basic Law stipulates that the PLA Hong Kong garrison is responsible for the territory's defence, but it is not allowed to interfere in Hong Kong's local affairs. The Hong Kong government may ask the Chinese government for "assistance from the garrison in the maintenance of public

order and in disaster relief".

### **Zinc poisoning fears at public housing estates over China-made tap**

**9 Jul** - A mainland-made brass tap which has been supplied to 15 public housing estates in Hong Kong was found to contain an excessive amount of zinc, according to Apple Daily.

Residents of Kai Ching Estate in Kowloon City sent taps from their homes for testing after water samples from the estate were found to contain a high level of lead, which was revealed earlier in an investigation by the Democratic Party.

Test results showed that the taps contained 99.2% zinc and only 0.7% copper. According to industrial standards, brass taps should contain a maximum of 42% zinc and at least 58% copper.

The brand in question, Ansporn, is manufactured by Guangdong company Biaotu. Professor Chan King-ming of the School of Life Sciences at the Chinese University of Hong Kong told the Apple Daily that the substandard taps are unlikely to release harmful substances unless mixed with strong acids or alkalis.

Earlier this week, the Democratic Party commissioned a test of fresh water samples from 13 residential estates in Kowloon West. The level of lead in four samples from Kai Ching Estate, put into use in 2013, exceeded health standards. However, the Housing Department

and the Water Supplies Department said an earlier test conducted by the government showed water from Kai Ching Estate comply with standards set by the World Health Organisation.

### **DSE results 2015 Released**

**15 Jul** - Eleven pupils - six boys and five girls - achieved top scores in seven subjects in this year's Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education examinations.

They are among 74,131 candidates who will get their results today after sitting the exams, taken by all pupils before graduating and which are crucial for those looking to win university places. Last year, the number of top scorers was 12.

The candidates include 61,136 secondary school pupils and 11,932 independent candidates, including those repeating the exams or taking them at an earlier age. The youngest candidate was just 12; the eldest 65.

The 11 top-performers came from eight secondary schools located on the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories.

The eight schools are Shun Tak Fraternal Association Leung Kau Kui College in Tuen Mun; Hong Kong Taoist Association Tang Hin Memorial Secondary School in Sheung Shui; St. Paul's School in Lam Tin, HKUGA College in Wong Chuk Hang; Queen's College in Causeway Bay; St.



11 of 74, 131 pupils achieved the highest score in Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination.

Mary's Canossian College in Tsim Sha Tsui; King's College in Sheung Wan and Diocesan Girls' School in Jordan, according to a source familiar with the information.

Ten out of the 11 top-scorers achieved 5\*\* - the highest score - in seven subjects belonging to the senior secondary subjects category. The remaining candidate achieved 5\*\* in six subjects in the category and A in one subject in the other language subjects category. A is the highest score achievable in this category.

Two pupils with special needs got top scores in six subjects. One independent candidate gained top scores in five subjects.

Each candidate can take a maximum of eight subjects from all three categories, which also include applied learning subjects.

About 40 per cent of candidates achieved the minimum scores required to enrol in local undergraduate programmes. The percentage is similar to last year, which means about two pupils will compete for each of 15,000 undergraduate places provided by the eight local public universities and institutions.

Almost 70 per cent - slightly higher than last year - gained the minimum scores required to apply for sub-degree courses

and civil service posts.

This year, supervisors from 35 exam venues reported audio quality problems during the listening part of the Chinese language subject exam on March 31. A total of 2,470 candidates also reported similar problems. Christina Lee Wong-wai, director of public examinations of the Examinations and Assessment Authority, said all but 31 candidates, who failed to substantiate their complaints, had their scores adjusted.

### **Dangerous levels of lead found in blood of 39 mothers and children, gov't confirms**

**21 Jul** - The government has revealed that 39 people living in public estates affected by lead contamination have blood lead content above acceptable standards.

The 39 affected individuals include 27 children under the age of six and 12 lactating mothers. A total of 302 people were tested.

The government announced on Tuesday that they would send the affected children for developmental testing. It will broaden the scope of blood testing and increase the number of blood samples processed per week. Officials said they may install water filters at the affected estates as a short term measure to provide safe water.

The lead content in blood for the 39 people ranged from 5 to 15 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ). According to standards set out by the Department of Health, a blood lead level in the range of 5 – 44  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  is considered elevated with potential health risks for people under 18, and pregnant and lactating mothers. Measurements above 45  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  are considered significantly elevated with risks of lead poisoning. For adults, the corresponding standards are 10 – 50  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  and above 50  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .

In the results of the first batch of blood testing announced by the government on Saturday, all samples were considered normal. Secretary of Health Ko Wing-man also said that tests to verify that the blood lead content was related to water contamination could be done once more blood test results are released.

Last Saturday, the government first confirmed that the Kai Ching Estate had lead concentrations in its water supply exceeding World Health Organisation standards. Lead contamination was soon found in two other estates last Tuesday and on Monday. Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying recently announced the establishment of an independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate the issue.



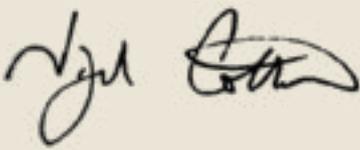
Blood samples from a mother and her son have been shown to contain high levels of lead.

# Conclusion

I am glad to be able to let you know that our two Hong Kong-based Companies, GIMS and GI (Hong Kong), have each contributed a total of HK\$25,000 (a total of HK\$50,000) for earthquake relief in Nepal. The money will be given to small, needy, local projects in the worst affected areas, and we shall let you know details of the projects as they arise. The money has been added to by NRs250,000 of funds raised by BGOS in Nepal, and BGOS will administer the grants and watch the projects for us.

The first projects we have assisted are run by a local NGO named CIF Nepal, to whom we were introduced by Rabin Thapa of Disney Lines. They will assist villagers in dire need in Kavre Jilla. We have also give a small amount to a student group doing volunteer work at weekends to clear rubble and clean up the World heritage site of Changu Narayan temple, which was damaged in the quake. Here is a photograph of our first grant.

I thank all of you who are involved in this. We shall not forget Nepal as it rebuilds for its future.



**Nigel Collett**  
Managing Director

