



Newsletter

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We publish this month a photograph of the *M/S Superstar Aquarius* of Star Cruises.

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

We Welcome

Norwegian Cruise Lines
Kumar Tamang
Kumar Bahadur Khati

SHIPPING COMPANIES AND SHIPS LINKED TO US

We are working with 21 shipping companies, and have 741 men and 168 women on ships, a total of 909 crew and staff under management.

I was in Nepal this month visiting BGOS and going up into the hills in Dhading Jilla to the west of the Kathmandu valley where much of the damage was done in last year's earthquake. I and the Directors of BGOS were on a hunt for a suitable recipient for the funds that our three Companies had collected last year. We had planned to help rebuild houses in Sindhupalchowk in the Valley, but these will be paid for by the Government, so we looked elsewhere. This time, we found a village that had been entirely flattened by the quake.

We visited the village of Patale, which is on a ridge at about 1,350 meters in height and had, before the quake, consisted of 92 houses and a school for 300 children of the area. All but two of the houses were destroyed. The school was flattened. One year later, only two buildings have been restored. The villagers remain in shelters and tents and the children are being educated in canvas, plastic and tin in a 'temporary learning centre'. The village used to have a water supply, but the quake moved the water table and now all water has to be carried up the hill from the valley below and the rice paddyfields are dry. We decided to help the village rebuild the school.

Unfortunately, the price of material and labour has rocketed and the money we had (about NRs780,000 or US\$7,500), which we had thought enough to build four classrooms to an earthquake-proof standard (on 8 feet of foundations with reinforced pillars) turns out to be enough only for one classroom. So we must find another NRs2,800,000, or US\$27,000, and will be starting to fund raise. I shall keep you all posted.

Across Nepal, it sadly seems that little has been done to rebuild after the quake. Money is not getting through to those who need it. So we must do what we can.



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.



Village of Patale

World Security

Economics

There is little news at the moment in the rather dull world economy.

Nuclear

North Korea tested a medium range missile out to sea which failed.

Europe

Arrests and prosecutions are following the ISIS terrorist attack that killed 35 people and wounded over 100 in the previous month in Brussels. The continent remains vigilant against future attacks, which are thought likely.

The number of refugees and economic migrants reaching the European Union has declined since the agreement made the month before with Turkey to send back refugees and migrants leaving Turkey for Greece and other countries.

In Ukraine, tensions with Russia remain high.



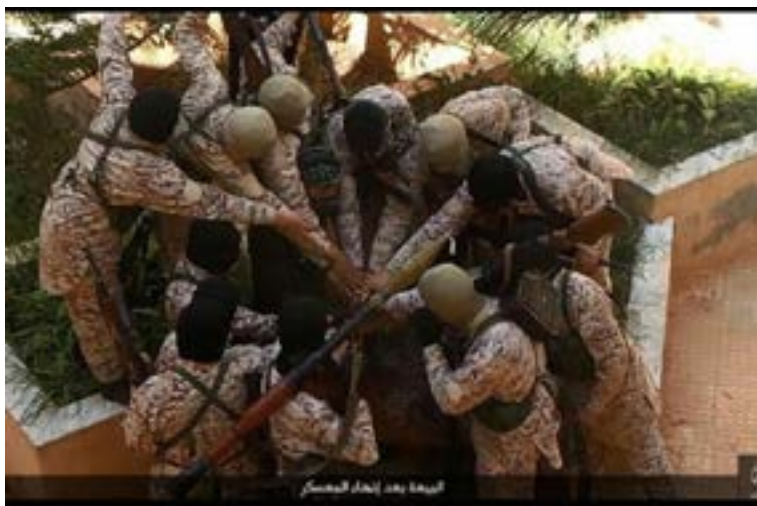
The main departure hall at Zaventem airport was severely damaged in the March 22 attacks.

The Arab World

Peace negotiations continue to end the Syrian civil war but violence has not ceased. The US has announced that it will send more troops to the region. Areas under control of ISIS are being slowly reduced in both Iraq and Syria.

Conflict has not yet ended in Libya, despite recent attempts to form a government acceptable to all factions. The war in Yemen between the Sunni government, Saudi Arabian and some Gulf state forces on one side and Shia Muslim Houthi rebels backed by Iran continues.

ISIS fighters in the Libyan port city of Sirte, March 2016.



Afghanistan and Pakistan

Taliban forces have taken the offensive in many areas of Afghanistan. Large numbers of government forces are being killed or wounded, but they have so far held all major populated areas, although much of the countryside is under Taliban control. The security situation in Pakistan remains dangerous with large numbers of active Islamic militants at large.

Palestine

There is little new currently in Gaza or the West Bank.

Asia

Tension continues in the areas of the Spratly and Paracel Islands in the South China Sea, which are all claimed by China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia, and in the Sea of Japan around islands claimed by China, Japan and South Korea. 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, and a terrorist recently hijacked an Indonesian ship in the area.



A lookout watches on the bridge of the U.S.S. John C. Stennis aircraft carrier in the South China Sea on April 25, 2016

Thailand and Malaysia

The Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand, near the Malaysian border, continues.

The Malacca Straits

There is no news this month of piracy in the area.

Somalia

There have been no more reports of Somali piracy. Fighting continues in the country between the government and its foreign allies and Islamic militant al-Shabaab fighters.

Africa

Nigerian forces continue to battle Islamic terrorists Boko Haram in the north of the country. The security situation in the Central African Republic remains disturbed. The situation in South Sudan seems to be improving as rival factions appear to be negotiating currently.



A girl does laundry in the Dalori camp for internally displaced persons in Maiduguri, Nigeria, which houses close to 20,000 people.

The Americas

Venezuela appears to be heading towards bankruptcy. In Brazil, moves are underway to impeach the president. Dilma Rouseff.

Myanmar

There is no news of a security nature this month.

India

There is little news of a security nature this month.



A year after the devastating earthquake, people across Nepal still live in tin shacks erected amid rubble they can't afford to clear.

Nepal News

Patience wears thin among Nepal quake survivors as calls for help go unheeded

25 Apr - The villagers gather on top of a mountain in Nepal's Sindhupalchowk district, on the sun-spotted ground in the canopy of two trees, to make a last-ditch cry for help. A year after the worst earthquake in 80 years hit Nepal, their patience with the government and international agencies has all but vanished.

Clutching a pink smartphone with a patchy internet connection, connected to a loudspeaker so everyone can listen in, Ram Krishna calls the people they know they can count on: relatives and friends overseas, who will send home remittances.

He places a Viber call to Saudi Arabia. At the other end of the line, migrant workers have convened to discuss how to help. But they have barely begun the meeting before the connection cuts.

"I hope it helps but migrant workers earn so little they can't send much," says Govindra Buri, 74, as a younger man carries the loudspeaker away. "I hope they can send just 1,000 rupees [£6.67] each."

Across the country, where the quake killed almost 9,000 people and destroyed an estimated 600,000 houses (pdf), people still sleep in makeshift tin shacks amid heaps of rubble – with an estimated four million in sub-standard temporary shelters. As they wait for the government

to deliver aid, families sink deeper into an economic slump.

If the approaching monsoon season wasn't worrying enough, much of Sindhupalchowk is also experiencing a dire water crisis, as the quake destroyed pipes and dried up sources. The economic consequences are severe. With barely enough water for humans, let alone animals, villages have had to give away cattle.

The earthquake lasted approximately 50 seconds but it will upend people's lives for years. The scale of suffering in this mountainous district east of Kathmandu is staggering. One in seven of the 22,733 people killed in natural disasters worldwide last year was from Sindhupalchowk.

It could have been even worse. In Katunjabani, a village a few kilometres from the gathering, no one was killed because the quake occurred when they were working in the fields. But the cattle were locked up inside, and all died.

"I was sick and lying in bed when the earthquake hit. I had a fever and everything came tumbling down," 80-year-old Sabitri Upadhyaya recalls. Childless and a widow since her husband died 16 years ago, she is used to taking care of herself but is running out of means.

"My neighbours and I are old and feeble. No one has come here to help us. I wanted to protest but I'm too old and I don't have the energy," she says, not bothering to

wipe away tears.

Like many fellow villagers who were unable to show financial assets to the bank, Upadhyaya had taken out a private loan to construct a shed for new cattle. Such loans carry interest rates of up to 24% a month, according to several villagers.

A \$200m World Bank grant has allowed the Nepalese government to promise 200,000 rupees (£1,335) to 100,000 families each to rebuild their homes. But the money has stalled, due to political gridlock that, until recently, delayed the establishment of the National Reconstruction Authority, the body responsible for distributing the aid. Fewer than 700 families have received the first instalment of £335.

Most affected families have received only 25,000 rupees and basic food and winter items. Even if delivered, the promised money is a pittance compared with what people lost, and nowhere near sufficient to build a new house.

With household economies gutted by a year of struggling for survival, there are more immediate concerns.

For 22-year-old Usha Parajuli, eight months pregnant, the financial pressure has become a source of great anxiety. Her husband lost his job as a clerk in Kathmandu due to the recent constitutional protests and blockade of says. When asked if she blames the government, she says: "Of course we are angry, but we don't know which door to

knock on. We are powerless.”

Not all villages are left to their own devices. International agencies are assisting some of the most vulnerable. Near Tamche village, Christian Aid has installed a 10,000-litre tank and a pump to transport water uphill to the village, where it built temporary shelters for 52 households.

The project is partly funded by a €900,000 (£726,000) grant from Echo, the European commission's department for humanitarian aid, which has given €16.4m to Nepal since the earthquake.

International donors pledged \$4.4bn (£3.1bn) to reconstruction in Nepal, of which the European commission pledged more than \$120m (pdf). However, most of that money is still on hold. If there is any sense of urgency from the government, Sindhupalchowk's residents don't see it.

“The government did an assessment four months ago but hasn't been back since,” says Chetlal Shrestha, 37, from Tamche.

In Badari, another village, Christian Aid has trained a team of carpenters to teach fellow villagers their skills. One of them, Namaraj Tolange, 27, spent two years in Saudi Arabia, earning money to send home, but said he left because he couldn't stand the heat. However, the economic duress of his village is pushing him to take his skills overseas again.

“I have applied for a visa for Dubai so I can make money to build a permanent house,” he says, adding that he is planning to stay for two years. There he will, once again, become part of the growing community of Nepalese migrants on whom the villagers on the mountain call for help.

Earthquake survivors left stranded in Nepal as red tape stops aid flowing

25 Apr - Donors drummed up billions of dollars for Nepal after the devastating earthquake on 25 April 2015, but the trickle of money to the affected population has been excruciatingly slow. Despite pledges of \$3bn, few of the 3.5 million Nepalese needing assistance have received more than initial handouts that are not even enough to clear the rubble. Across the Himalayan country, where the quake destroyed about 600,000 houses, 34,000 classrooms and killed close to 9,000 people, many Nepalese still live in shacks of corrugated iron next to mounds of mud and stone, formerly their homes.

To get here, aid money has to move

through a thicket of political bickering and bureaucratic hitches. A controversial constitution triggered protests in the south, a four-month blockade of the border with India – Nepal's main trading partner, and led to a new government in October.

In the midst of this storm came the nomination of the head of the national reconstruction authority (NRA), a prerequisite for beginning to assess victims' needs, but which was delayed until December, eight months after the quake, and well into the winter.

“It is basically due to political haggling that [reconstruction] hasn't been done faster,” the head of the EU's delegation to Nepal, Rensje Teerink, told reporters in Kathmandu this month.

However, Teerink admitted that international donors could have prepared better for a disaster that was widely expected. Despite giving €80m (£63m) in humanitarian aid to Nepal since 2001, “here at the delegation, we were not really well prepared,” she said. “When the disaster happened, it became clear that so much more had to be done.”

Shortly after the earthquake, aid agencies distributed survival items, including rice, clothes and iron sheets for cover. However, not until this month did the Nepalese government dole out the first instalment, to about 600 families in Dolakha district, of 50,000 (£330) of a promised 200,000 rupees for reconstruction.

A total of 100,000 families will be eligible for the support, but even if a family is selected, the money falls short of the actual cost of building a house.

“It's a joke to think we can build a house with 200,000 rupees,” said Phattalal Shrestha from Tamche in Sindhupalchowk, the hardest-hit district, where 95% of

houses, according to local authorities, are uninhabitable. He said a house costs at least three times that.

To get the remaining 150,000 rupees, families have to start constructing a house, following a seven-step building code. While meant to ensure new houses are earthquake resistant, the regulations, drawn up with advice from foreign donors, are difficult and costly to adhere to.

Having waited a year, most villagers the Guardian spoke to had given up hope of ever seeing any aid.

In Badari, one of the few villages reached by international agencies, 52-year-old Debi Sapkota, who has four children, said she heard on the radio that the government would deliver aid. “But I'm not at all confident they will,” she said.

Although families here had been given temporary shelters by the NGO Christian Aid, her friend, Ganga Sapkota, 47, said: “After the earthquake, we still don't sleep well.”

With monsoon season approaching, some have lost patience and have begun rebuilding their houses, plunging themselves into debt. By flaunting the government's building regulations, the builder is disqualified from receiving reconstruction aid.

Gajendra Giri didn't care. The 46-year-old villager from Sindhupalchowk said he had used his social connections as a shopkeeper to borrow money. The government grant would not even be enough to build one room, he said.

“I spent 60,000 rupees just to buy sand to make cement,” he said.

Prices for construction materials, and fuel to transport them, skyrocketed last year when protesters in the south blocked the border crossings in protest against what



A woman carries a metal roof panel to rebuild her damaged house in Laprak, in Nepal's Gorkha district.

they saw as a discriminatory new constitution, wreaking more economic damage than the earthquake, according to Nepalese authorities.

If aid doesn't come soon, it will severely impact rural areas that already suffer from lack of investment and development, according to Chandan Sapkota, an economist formerly with the Asian Development Bank.

"The slower the reconstruction, the harder it will be for the economy to get back to normal," he said. "If reconstruction doesn't happen soon, and local economic activities don't pick up, then the only option is to either migrate to cities for temporary work or to foreign employment destinations."

Compounding public discontent is mistrust of international charities. A widely shared article in a local newspaper, Himal Khabar, claimed that only about 30% of international aid reaches beneficiaries, while 40% disappears into administration costs such as consultant fees, salaries and logistics.

However, three of the criticised NGOs – the World Food Programme, Save the Children and Handicap International – all said the criticism was baseless and founded on flawed calculations.

Sarah Blin, country director for Handicap International, said that, according to national government rules, NGOs have to limit operational costs to 20%. When they get dispensation to exceed that, it is to pay salaries for professionals, such as physiotherapists – rather than "simply hand over crutches and wheelchairs" – or to lease helicopters to bring aid to inaccessible areas, she said.

In fact, said Blin, who is also vice-chair for the Association of International NGOs in Nepal, it is the Nepalese government that tends to drive costs up. Six weeks after the quake, the ministry of finance demanded that international NGOs pay a 43% tax on corrugated iron sheeting for shelters, arguing that the emergency was over and normal procedures would apply.

"This meant that 43% less of our budget could be delivered to beneficiaries and had to be paid to government coffers. This is not in line with standard practices when international help is called for," Blin said.

When the money finally makes it to the communities, corruption watchdogs

warn that local officials might siphon off even more money before it reaches affected families.

Ashish Thapa, executive director of Transparency International in Nepal, said people in rural areas, often illiterate, are vulnerable to exploitation.

"If an official tells them he has deducted a bit for fees, they won't know if it's corruption or not," said Thapa. "Corruption is a general syndrome in Nepal, and it will seep into relief work as well. We shouldn't expect too much money to reach beneficiaries."

Nepal Begins Reconstruction of Quake-Damaged Heritage Sites

26 Apr - Nepal's prime minister announced on Monday the start of reconstruction of key heritage sites in and around the capital that were damaged by an earthquake that killed nearly 9,000 people and devastated the country one year ago.

Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli offered prayers at the 17th century white-walled temple Anantapur, which was damaged in the magnitude 7.8 quake on April 25, 2015, long with more than 600 other historic structures. More than half a million homes were also destroyed, but hardly any have been rebuilt.

Nepal has been criticized for delays in reconstruction — largely due to bureaucratic bungling — of its historic structures and residents' homes despite foreign donors pledging \$4.1 billion toward that end. Aid groups have demanded that authorities speed up the process and change some of the laws

that have become obstacles.

Oli said Monday that work would begin on rebuilding the temple and three other heritage sites in Kathmandu, including the old palaces and temples at Kathmandu's Durbar Square and key sites in the nearby cities of Patan and Bhaktapur.

Anantpur is one of the small Buddhist temples, stupas and monasteries surrounding the 5th-century hilltop shrine of Swayambhunath that lies in ruins. The site is also called the "monkey shrine" for the thousands of monkeys that congregate on the spot at the northwest edge of Kathmandu. It is listed among the UNESCO heritage sites.

The prime minister said the work would progress swiftly, adding it was a huge task that would require time. He also said construction of private houses have been initiated in 10 districts to mark the anniversary.

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, an estimated 4 million people are still living in sub-standard temporary shelters in conditions that pose a threat to their health and well-being. Only 661 families have received the first installment of a 200,000-rupee (\$1,868) government grant, getting 50,000 rupees (\$467) so far.

Out of the \$4.1 billion pledged, Nepal has so far received just \$1.28 billion. The delay in getting the money has been blamed on the government taking months to set up the National Reconstruction Authority, which was done only in December.



Nepalese people prepare to light candles in memory of those who died in last year's devastating earthquake in Basantapur Durbar Square in Kathmandu, Nepal, Sunday, April 24, 2016. Nepalese held memorial services to mark the anniversary of the disaster that killed nearly 9,000 people and left millions homeless.



Hong Kong News

Hong Kong's ATV to Close After Denial of Broadcast License

2 Apr - Hong Kong's oldest broadcaster has been denied renewal of license and will cease to broadcast on April 1, 2016.

The Hong Kong government has issued a non-renewal decision on Asian Television Limited's (ATV) application for renewal of the domestic free television program service on April 1.

The end of the 58-year-old broadcaster, the first of the two free-to-air stations in Hong Kong, concludes months of turmoil for the company. ATV has been in dire financial straits since December 2014, and has delayed paying wages to its employees and the license fee to the government. Its viewership was dismal, at times earning zero points in ratings for some programs.

ATV has been in talks with potential buyers and new investors for the last three months. It has announced on its Chinese channel primetime news program on March 31 that Ricky Wong, founder and owner of Hong Kong Television Network and chief executive of ATV for 12 days in 2008, has agreed to buy the 52 percent stakes offered by ATV major shareholder Wong Ching. Ricky Wong denied such claims the next morning.

ATV's free TV license is due to expire on November 30, 2015. Under the

Broadcasting Ordinance, a notice in writing of the non-renewal decision has to be served on ATV at least 12 months before the expiration of its license. As a result, ATV will have its license extended to April 1, 2016.

"Over the past few months, the government has been acutely aware of the developments surrounding ATV," said Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Gregory So. "Since it is necessary for the purpose of legal procedural fairness to give ATV reasonable time to submit a concrete restructuring program on its 'planned transformation' this January, the chief executive in council earlier imposed a deadline of March 31, 2015 for ATV to submit concrete implementation details. ATV, however, failed to do so by the deadline, and the chief executive in council today has made a non-renewal decision based on all information available to him."

"The Communications Authority (CA) considers that the overall performance of ATV is unsatisfactory. Its performance in various aspects has clearly deteriorated after the mid-term review of its license. The CA has serious doubts as to whether ATV would be capable of making the necessary improvements, and whether it has the financial capability to deliver its investment plans, and indeed

to continue its business as a going concern," So said.

"This is the first time in the local broadcasting history that an incumbent's broadcasting license is not renewed," So added.

ATV's 600 employees will be dismissed when the station dissolves, but its top executive said that the station might not be able to last that long. ATV executive director Ip Ka-po told a radio station on April 2 that ATV does not have the plan to enable it to run until next year, and needs to determine the station's operational mode, program content and whether to cooperate with another operator so as to reduce the manpower required.

On the same day as ATV's license was denied renewal, a new TV license was formally granted to HK Television Entertainment Company Limited (HKTVE), operated by Richard Li's PCCW, which also runs the IPTV platform nowTV. The validity of the license will run for 12 years — until March 31, 2027, subject to a mid-term review in 2021. HKTVE's new free TV service will be delivered through fixed network. Its integrated Cantonese channel and integrated English channel will begin broadcast within 12 months and 24 months, respectively, after the grant of license.

Joshua Wong says HSBC rejected applications to open accounts

5 Apr - Hong Kong's well known student activist Joshua Wong says HSBC refused to give him a new bank account over political concerns, even as the Panama Papers show the bank has helped the world's most powerful people set up offshore shell companies to hide their assets.

Wong, founder of the now defunct Hong Kong student activist group Scholarism, told a local radio station (link in Chinese) on Monday (Apr. 4) that HSBC rejected his bid to open a new savings account last week. He was trying to open the account to manage funds raised by his new political party, along with Agnes Chow Ting, another activist. HSBC also would not upgrade a "child" account Wong has held there since he was 14 years old to an "adult" account which can issue checks, he wrote on Facebook, despite the fact that he is a year older than the bank's 18-year-old age limit.

Instead, bank staff asked both applicants for information about their parents' income and jobs, Chow and Wong told the radio station. Their application cannot proceed for "administrative" and "commercial" reasons, the bank reportedly told the two, even though they believe they provided all necessary paper work.

"I think HSBC is just adopting political

censorship towards my application," Wong told Quartz in an email.

HSBC told Quartz it could not comment on individual customer accounts, and reiterated an earlier statement that "applications with appropriate information and documentation will be handled according to our standing procedures." A spokesman added that the bank does "not discriminate in account opening on the grounds of race, gender and political viewpoint."

HSBC Hong Kong's standard bank account application asks for a Hong Kong identity card, contact information and employment status, but says no parental information is necessary for applicants over age 18.

Meanwhile, the leaked Panama Papers show HSBC helped its clients set up 2,300 offshore shell companies to hide wealth, more than any other bank involved, including UBS and Credit Suisse. "It's not okay for me to open an account, but not a problem for the rich to set up offshore companies like crazy," Wong wrote Tuesday on his Facebook page.

"If HSBC claims that they do not discriminate over various political viewpoints, why would it help rich and sensitive clients register more than 2,300 shell companies?," Wong told Quartz.

Wong is best known as one of the organizers of the pro-democracy

Umbrella Movement in 2014, and was named one of Time Magazine's 25 Most Influential Teens of 2014. Chow, 19, one of the most visible female protest organizers, drew international attention in January for her outcry over Hong Kong's five missing booksellers. Chow called their abductions, believed to be by mainland officials, a "white terror incident," in a YouTube video that has been viewed one million times.

Previously, Wong said he would set up a new political party with former Scholarism members including Chow this month, to push for a referendum on Hong Kong's future. Chow said in the radio interview (link in Chinese) they will turn to other Hong Kong banks to open a joint account, before they complete a company registry for the party.

HSBC's refusal to give the two activists a bank account is the latest action that some Hong Kongers see as critical of the city's pro-democracy movement. Before the 2014 protests, HSBC pulled advertising from a Hong Kong newspaper critical of mainland China, and the bank's analysts told investors to sell Hong Kong stocks because of the potential negative impact. One bank director likened Hong Kong's citizens to freed slaves in the US, and wondered publicly why they couldn't be more patient about the right to vote.



Joshua Wong and Agnes Chow suspect HSBC rejected their applications because of their political stance.

I never pressured airport staff: Leung

8 Apr - An internal Cathay Pacific airline document detailing an incident whereby Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying's youngest daughter was reportedly able to bypass security rules with help from her parents, has been published by Apple Daily. The incident at Hong Kong International Airport unfolded after she accidentally left her carry-on baggage behind when entering a restricted zone. She was preparing to board a flight to San Francisco.

The chief executive and his family have denied abusing their position after a handbag their youngest child left behind in the departure hall of the airport was given back to her in a restricted area.

For the bag was fetched from the departure hall and reunited with its owner Leung Chung-yan against strict security regulations.

In a rare show of unity, Leung Chun-ying, his wife Regina Leung Tong Ching-ye and Chung-yan released press statements separately last night to clarify the situation and deny they had abused their power.

The 23-year-old was about to board Cathay Pacific flight CX 872 bound for San Francisco on March 27. It was scheduled to depart at 12.30am on Monday. Then she found she had left her black handbag outside the restricted area.

The Cambridge University economics graduate of 2014 was on her way back to Stanford University, where she's reading international policy studies for her master's.

Regina Leung, who saw her off, was not inside the restricted area, but was worried when she learned about it as the

bag contained her daughter's medicines. CY Leung said in the statement that he did not request any one to "address me as Chief Executive Leung" and "did not exercise any privilege on that night." He also denied contacting Airport Authority officials or exerting pressure on them. But he acknowledged he had called his daughter through her mobile phone. It was then he learnt "from the airline staff assisting Chung-yan about the arrangements for claiming the hand luggage left behind in the case where Chung-yan was to depart Hong Kong first."

Leung stressed his daughter followed usual boarding procedures and used the passage used by regular passengers when departing that day.

He also said his wife was only seeing their youngest child off at the departure hall used by regular passengers and did not enter the restricted area or the boarding gate area as claimed by a news report. Apple Daily broke the story yesterday.

"She did not wear any special identity as claimed by the news report," Leung said in the statement.

His wife and daughter said: "Leung Chung-yan did not tell anyone that she is the daughter of the chief executive. On that night, neither the chief executive, his wife or Leung Chung-yan were exercising privilege or pressuring anyone."

He was referring to the report which said that, while the mother was talking to Cathay Pacific and security staff to try to retrieve the handbag, the daughter was reportedly calling her father for help after failing to convince the Aviation Security Company, or Avseco, and Cathay Pacific staff to help her get the bag back.

Leung called the staff member. Leung, who is said to have asked to be referred as "Chief Executive Leung" during the conversation, succeeded in getting the authority to offer her daughter the exceptional assistance that was sought.

That saw a Cathay Pacific supervisor retrieving the bag and giving it to the daughter with permission from Avseco.

Meanwhile, Regina Leung continued to talk to staff when she was completing the procedures after the incident, with Cathay Pacific staff apologizing to her.

The Airport Authority said no security regulations were breached.

A security check had been conducted before the bag was reunited with the Leung Chung-yan.

Cathay Pacific did not respond to queries. The Airport Authority said a duty staff member received a report that unclaimed luggage was found in the departure hall at Terminal One.

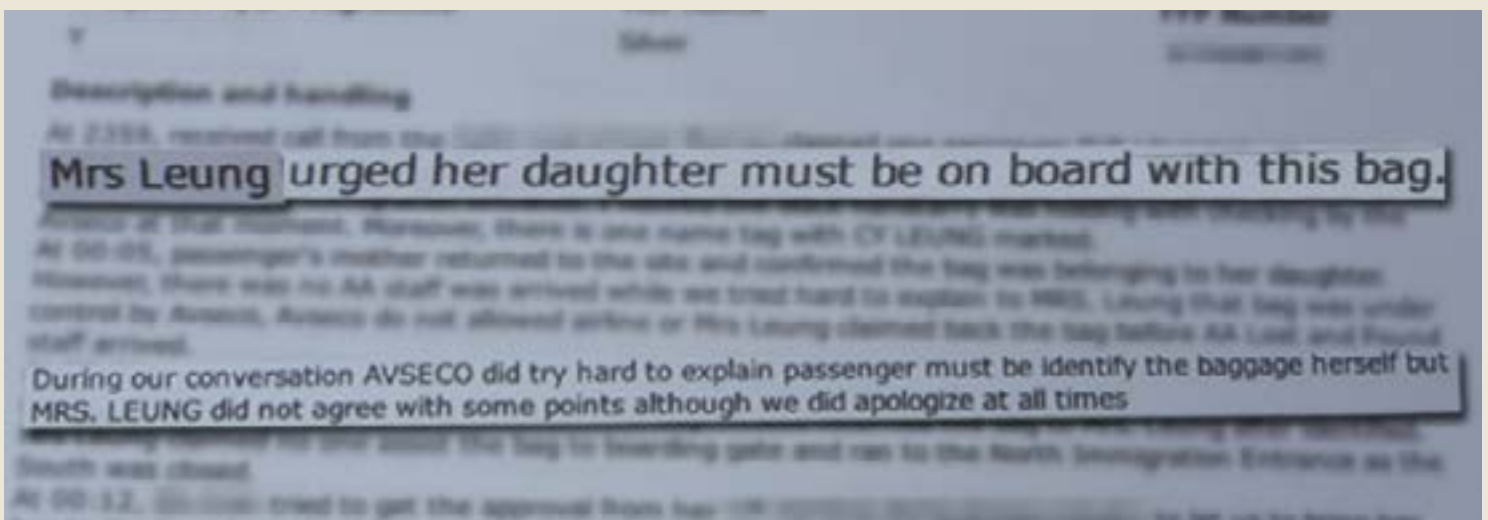
When the staff member arrived, he was told it was claimed by the owner.

Cathay staff then took the bag from Avseco and brought it to the restricted area with the permission of Avesco staff after receiving a security check. Then it was brought back to Leung Chung-yan.

Cathay Pacific's Flight Attendants Union chairwoman Dora Lai Yuk-sim said the incident posed a serious security threat because anyone could have tampered with the piece of baggage.

Virgin Atlantic HK Cabin Crew Union chairman Bobby Yeung Sheung-hang said airport regulations stipulate that anyone leaving a bag outside the restricted area has to retrieve it herself.

"This incident is strange," he said.



Conclusion

I wish you all a very happy Nepalese and Burmese New Year!



Nigel Collett
Managing Director



Dewaraj Limbu promoted to be Assistant Security Supervisor.