



Newsletter

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We publish this month a photograph of MV Genting Dream of Star Cruise.

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

We Welcome

Carnival UK

Binu Choudhary
Subash Ranabhat
Sandhya Gurung
Manoj Budhathoki
Prakash Singh Mahat
Yamuna Gurung
Uttam Thakuri

Columbia Cruise Services Ltd

Suraj Subba
Shekhar Gurung
Beddhi Bahadur

Saga Shipping

Dammer Bahadur Thapa
Ruk Bahadur Gurung

Norwegian Cruise Lines

Utra Bahadur Gurung
Tuk Prasad Gurung
Kisan Ale
Asha Thapa Saru
Anita Thapa
Firoz Khan A.G.

Prestige Cruise Holdings

Sabita Giri Khadka
Keshari Shrestha

The month has been a busy but routine one. BGOS has been occupied with preparing crew for Columbia's new ship, the Tui Discovery (the former Legend of the Seas), with dispatching new crew to ships of Carnival UK and with recruiting for Disney, NCL and Universal Shipmanagement. We are also in the process of having our new crew for AIDA trained on the Carnival Security Course in Manila, a course also attended by Carnival United Kingdom crew. You will see here the names of those who are now in the pipeline over the next few months.

SHIPPING COMPANIES

AND SHIPS LINKED TO US

We are working with 21 shipping companies, and have 745 men and 173 women on ships, a total of 918 crew and staff under management.



GI (HK) Business

We are providing security services for 28 Hong Kong Clients and have 104 security staff employed.

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

Editor of Newsletter



Derek Lin

World Security

Economics

The Eurozone as a whole recorded a small period of growth, but the Greek economy seemed to be sliding back into recession and the massive debt of Italian banks threatens to cause another crisis in the EU. Arguments between creditors and Greece over its debt programme continue.

Nuclear

There is no news at present.

Europe

Tensions on the border between Ukraine and Russia remain high, and NATO forces continue to deploy to member countries bordering Russia: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. Russian ships seem also to be testing America's borders.



Polish and U.S. soldiers attend the inauguration ceremony of bilateral military training between U.S. and Polish troops in Zagan, Poland, January 30, 2017.

The Middle East and the Arab World

Conflict continues in Syria despite the arrangement of a ceasefire in the civil war. Iraqi forces have re-captured half of Mosul, which they lost to ISIS over two years before. The area of the ISIS 'caliphate' in Iraq and Turkey is being squeezed from by all sides.

Conflict continues in Libya and Yemen.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

The security situation in Afghanistan remains grave, but that in Pakistan now gives less cause for concern.

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.



Iraqi Forces recapture Mosul airport

Thailand and Malaysia

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

Asia

Tension continues in both the South China Sea and the Sea of Japan around islands claimed by China. The US President, Donald Trump, has sent a carrier group to the area, much to China's anger, but he seems now to have accepted the 'One China' policy that had been the basis for US-China relations since the late 1960s.

The Philippine military has resumed operations against left wing and Muslim guerrillas in the southern islands of the archipelago.



US aircraft carrier begins patrol in South China Sea

Palestine

There is no news at present.

Africa

Nigerian forces continue to attack Boko Haram Islamic terrorists in the north of the country. Civil conflict continues in South Sudan.

Myanmar

Fighting continues in Shan State between the army and several local militia. The fighting in Rakhine State between Muslim guerrillas and the Army seems to have died down.



A Myanmar government soldier secures the ground while a military helicopter carrying troops takes off from Muse in Shan State near China's border.

The Malacca Straits

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

India

Kashmir remains disturbed.

The Americas

Venezuela, where the government's disastrous policies have led to impoverishment of the people, remains susceptible to civil unrest.



Members of the national guard control people as they queue to buy eggs in Caracas, Venezuela.



Nepal News

Medical students head to Nepal to fight sickle cell disease

28 Feb- Eight first-year medical students are heading to Nepal this May to assist in the largest public health screening in the country's history.

Based on data collected in 2015 by the founding UBC Sickle Cell Project team, over nine per cent of people in the indigenous Tharu community in Dang, Nepal have sickle cell disease (SCD).

"In a normal red blood cell, you have hemoglobin which is used to carry oxygen to your various tissues and to your brain," said Natasha Benson, the project fundraising coordinator and first-year medical student. "In a sickle cell patient, you have a genetic mutation in that hemoglobin and it doesn't perform its duty. That causes the misformation of the red blood cells — hence, sickle cell."

This sludging of the blood in the veins affects oxygen delivery because sickle-shaped blood cells can get stuck in blood vessels. It is a genetic disease.

"If your parents are carriers of the sickle cell gene, then you are more likely to get SCD," said Maya Rosenkrantz, one of the eight medical students. Research shows that SCD can become prevalent in communities with malaria because the sickle cell gene gives the individual malaria resistance.

The 2017 UBC sickle cell screening team aims to raise at least \$10,000, which will be applied 100 per cent to the cost of medical screening and diagnosis. Currently, they've raised almost \$4,000 and welcome donations to support their cause.

The eight medical students involved in the project have four goals this May. One is to screen as many individuals for SCD as possible. The cost for one screening is approximately \$10 and their fundraising goal of \$10,000 can pay for approximately 1,000 screening tests. The other goals are to successfully diagnose and help treat individuals with SCD, educate the community in Nepal about this genetic disease, and assess needs for long-term medical care and support that can be provided by government.

"SCD has a super widespread effect in the body. It acts on everyone a little differently. Everywhere in the body that has a high need for oxygen, like liver, spleen, kidneys, brain and muscles, can experience tissue damage. It can be incredibly painful and can lead to death through heart and liver failure," said Benson.

Episodes of severe pain crises can be debilitating. "Once you see a 'sickle cell crisis' — a severe pain attack — you won't ever forget what it is," said Rosenkrantz.

"It's already known to be prevalent in certain populations around the world — for example, in Africa — but there isn't very much data on its prevalence in South Asia," said Rosenkrantz. Working off the data compiled by the 2015 team, the 2016 team focused on education. "They realized that a lot of individuals who had been screened positive didn't know what that meant for their kids, their lives or how to deal with SCD," said Alice Liu, another medical student on the 2017 team.

The government of Nepal has recently committed to paying for partial cost of the treatment for SCD. In serious cases, blood transfusions might be needed. In less severe cases, pain management with drugs or hydration would be able to ease an individual's suffering.

"However, we would like to see what the barriers to treatment are. It can be unlikely for SCD-afflicted individuals to access government resources," said Liu. The nearest hospital is two hours away from Dang. "The long-term [10-year] goal is to present this data to the Nepalese government. We would like to advocate for sickle cell screening at birth," said Liu.

The 2017 team continues to work with local NGOs to provide this support — such organizations include Creating Possibilities and Intercultural Women's Network, who connect UBC Sickle Cell Project with local resources and networks.

Nepal residents aided by local Rotary and nonprofit

27 Feb- Helping rebuild a devastated community in Nepal became a profoundly life-changing experience for 21-year-old David Simmons — a story that he plans to share next week at a Bermuda College lecture.

“I’m happy,” David said in the wake of his work with Raleigh International’s new Nepal branch.

“I’m refreshed. Even though I’m back to routine, I know I’m taking baby steps to what is before me.”

That was not always the case: as a student at Bermuda College, David looked forward to graduating in May 2017 with his associate’s degree, but admitted to feeling “stagnant”.

That changed on April 25, 2015, when the catastrophe known as the Gorkha earthquake claimed 9,000 lives across Nepal, levelling buildings and in some cases destroying whole villages.

David, who had completed the Raleigh Bermuda programme in 2013, felt drawn to help, and turned to the international organisation to get him there.

Getting a job as a dish washer, David washed cars and held pot luck suppers to raise the \$7,500 needed to get him there in June 2016.

India offers \$340 mn in soft loans for Nepal’s infrastructure projects

19 Feb- India on Sunday committed to provide \$ 340 million in soft loans to Nepal for building infrastructure projects.

Railways minister Suresh Prabhu, who arrived here on Saturday to attend the ‘Nepal Infrastructure Summit 2017’, signed a letter of exchange with Nepalese minister for Physical Infrastructure and Planning Ramesh Lekhak in which India committed to a bridge project and 15 road projects totaling \$ 340 million of soft loans to Nepal.

The death of his grandfather two days before David headed off on a 40-hour journey to Kathmandu made for a bittersweet departure. David said that travelling with a female cousin his age helped him deal with the loss.

The hectic jostle outside the airport in Nepal served as a first “cultural awakening”, with many Nepalis flocking to the city in a desperate bid to support their families in the ravaged countryside.

The toll taken by the quake was apparent as David hiked with his group to the village of Chapthok, where he would spend the next 45 days. Relief efforts, robust in the wake of global headlines, had faltered. More than a year later, families remained in ruined homes, but still flocked to welcome the newcomers.

“They were living with nothing and seemed to be the happiest people,” he said. “They were willing to help and fed us, allowing us to sleep in a kind of community centre, as their homes were considered uninhabitable for us.”

David and his team finished three houses in Chapthok while other Raleigh volunteers headed out to similar communities.

Aside from two project co-ordinators offering logistical assistance and two Nepalese translators, David and his teammates were left on their own to forge working relationships and friendships.

Prabhu also called on Nepal’s President Bidya Devi Bhandari at Rastrapati Bhawan here and discussed key issues in the bilateral relations.

During the meeting, the two leaders discussed bilateral relations, according to a press release issued by the President’s office.

Prabhu is in Nepal to attend ‘Nepal Infrastructure Summit 2017’ that is being organised by the Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) in association with the Nepal government and Youth Community for Nepalese Contractors



David Simmons

“We basically had to make it work,” he said. “There were no options, really. I tried to just immerse myself in the culture and made sure I engaged with as many people as I could.”

Chapthok became “more than a second home to me”, and leaving at the end proved difficult and highly emotional.

David said his entire perspective had changed. He was also determined to go back.

“I have a passion in me now,” he said.

David plans to pursue an undergraduate degree, possibly in Tanzania where he first travelled with Raleigh, and become “an activist for building up underdeveloped or rural communities”.

(YCNC) to be held between February 19-20.

The minister, who is the guest of honour and keynote speaker at the summit, said the infrastructure meet would be pivotal for accelerating Nepal’s economic growth at a time when the country is striving to graduate to the league of developing nations.



(Left) Bhimsen Dahal, a village development committee secretary of Lapilang, and the Rotarian team handing over the key to the project to a senior-most woman of Lapilang.

Nepal residents aided by local Rotary and nonprofit

27 Feb- After an onslaught of earthquakes devastated central Nepal, Rotary International and a local nonprofit donated \$44,000 to install latrines in a small Nepali town.

An original Rotary proposal to introduce 400 new latrines in a Lapilang, Nepal town eventually led to installing and repairing facilities for more than 550 families.

Lapilang residents celebrated the completion of the plumbing project in January, a Trumansburg Rotary Club press release stated. The project was a collaboration between the Ithaca office of Educate the Children, a nonprofit to improve health, welfare and self-sufficiency in Nepal; and Rotary clubs in Nepal, Trumansburg, Ithaca, Dryden, Groton, Nimmonsburg, Endicott, Binghamton, Cortland and Cooperstown.

Local Educate the Children and rotary club members initially discussed the project in 2013, the club said. Afterward, Ben Curtis, a former Trumansburg Rotary Club, spearheaded the effort, convincing other

Central New York Rotary clubs to join in contributing and helping to secure the Rotary International Global Grant, funded by local Rotary clubs and the international Rotary Foundation.

“The overall purpose of providing latrines is to keep a lid on health issues,” Curtis said. “You wind up having a much better feeling for another culture, and how limited your own culture is in a world full of people with all kinds of perspectives. It was a profoundly valuable exercise, and I feel fortunate to have been able to do this. I’d like for every Rotarian to have a similar experience.”

The Central New York Rotary clubs and Educate the Children initially provided \$5,000 to a Rotary club in Jawalakhel, Nepal after Educate the Children provided a grant and the New York Rotary clubs raised funds, the club said.

Then, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake occurred in central Nepal in April 2015, and, less than two weeks later, a 7.3 magnitude aftershock destroyed remaining facilities.

After the earthquakes hit, Educate the

Children was able to secure additional funds to repair or replace an additional 151 bathroom facilities, raising the total to \$44,000 to be wired from the Rotary Foundation to the Nepali club’s bank account, the club said. Subash Pyakurel, a health field professional and secretary of the Jawalakhel Rotary Club, served as Rotary’s “boots on the ground” and used his expertise to distribute the money where it was most needed.

After the latrines were completed, more than 700 people Lapilang residents, and local Rotary and Educate the Children members had a four-hour celebration with local music and dance, the club said.

“That amount of money is huge in Nepal and we couldn’t have done it without so many groups pooling resources,” said Ithaca resident Lisa Lyons, U.S. Director of Educate the Children. “We so appreciate it.”



Hong Kong News

Police officers jailed for 2 years for assault against Occupy activist Ken Tsang

17 Feb- The District Court sentenced seven police officers to jail for two years on Friday for assault against activist Ken Tsang during the 2014 pro-democracy Occupy protests.

All of the defendants were sentenced to two years and six months' imprisonment, but the term was reduced by six months taking into account their backgrounds, such as their "long distinguished career."

The defendants were: police chief inspector Wong Cho-shing, 48, senior inspector Lau Cheuk-ngai, 29, detective sergeant Pak Wing-bun, 42, and constables Lau Hing-pui, 38, Chan Siu-tan, 31, Kwan Ka-ho, 32, and Wong Wai-ho, 36.

Handing down the sentence, Judge David Dufton said: "The defendants damaged Hong Kong's reputation in the international community... There was no justification to take Tsang to the substation for the assault."

He said the court needed to "make an example" out of it to ensure that no

officers would attempt to commit the offence in the future.

Judge Dufton acknowledged the "unique circumstances" and stress police officers faced during the Occupy protests, but he rejected the defendants' plea for suspended sentence on the basis that the case was "very serious."

The defendants all wore the same outfit – blue blazers and white shirts with black and red ties. Tsang was not present at the sentencing.

After sentencing, a family member of one of the defendants was heard crying in the prosecution witness room.

Pro-police and pro-democracy supporters shouted at each other inside the courtroom. They were told to stop by security.

A spokesperson for the pro-establishment group Politikh Social Strategic said outside the court that he thought the sentence was too long. "It is unfair; the organisers behind the Occupy protests were not prosecuted."

The seven officers were originally

charged with causing grievous bodily harm with intent, but were acquitted on Tuesday on the basis that the injuries sustained by Tsang did not amount to grievous bodily harm.

Instead, Judge Dufton convicted them of the lesser charge of assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

Constable Chan was found guilty of an additional charge of common assault for slapping Tsang twice on his face inside the Central Police Station. For this he was sentenced to one month's imprisonment, which will be served concurrently with his two-year term.

Upon being convicted on Tuesday, the defendants were remanded in custody at the Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre, a maximum security institution.

Man arrested after firebomb attack on Hong Kong MTR train injures at least 18

10 Feb- A man, declaring he would burn passengers to death, set off a firebomb on a crowded MTR train during Hong Kong's evening rush hour on Friday, injuring at least 18 people and spreading chaos among panic-stricken commuters.

The attack on the Tsuen Wan Line as the train was pulling into Tsim Sha Tsui station shortly after 7pm forced authorities to shut down one of the city's busiest transport interchanges, as the platform was turned into a triage zone for shell-shocked victims requiring first aid.

A police source said: "A man tried to hurl a lit Molotov cocktail [petrol bomb] on board a packed train when it was about to reach TST platform and he caught fire." The suspect said "burn you to death" before he drew the bottle and lit it, a police source said.

Yau Tsim District Commander Kwok Pak-chung said a 60-year-old man, Cheung Kam-Fai, was arrested in connection with the incident. He claimed to have started the fire for "personal reasons".

Kwok dismissed suspicions that it was a terrorist attack, saying so far there was no such evidence, but said they would not rule out any possibilities in their investigations.

"Our initial investigations show the incident has nothing to do with [terrorism]," he said, adding that 160 police officers were deployed. The Fire Services Department deployed 130 officers.

The man was badly injured and was transferred from Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Jordan to Prince of Wales Hospital in Sha Tin, where he was said to be in a critical condition.

It is understood that the suspect, who is married with one son and one daughter, had been arrested in the past in connection with minor offences such as gambling.

A police source said initial investigations showed he had a poor relationship with his family and had disputes with his wife, and officers believe the move was prompted by his personal and family problems.

Police are investigating whether he wanted to attack the other passengers or tried to set himself alight.

Government chemists will examine the affected carriage at the MTR depot in Tsuen Wan.

Tsim Sha Tsui MTR station remained closed to the public. A group of police officers with bomb disposal equipment were seen going down to the platform to carry out an investigation.

Water bottles and tissue paper could be seen strewn on the floor near the customer service centre on the empty concourse in

the aftermath of the incident.

"Extra travelling time can be expected on the Tsuen Wan line. Please allow more time for travel. More details to follow," the MTR said in a statement on its official website.

It said no trains would stop at Tsim Sha Tsui MTR station.

"MTR staff are handling the situation," it said.

As of 10.40pm, one man and one woman were in a critical condition. Two men and three women were in a serious condition and four men and six women were stable. One had been discharged.

On Friday night, Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying expressed concern about the incident, urging relevant departments to investigate it. He also extended his deepest sympathy to the injured and wished them a speedy recovery.

Health minister Dr Ko Wing-man visited Kwong Wah Hospital, one of the five public hospitals that were treating the injured.

"Patients suffered different injuries, including to their limbs and faces. For those with facial injuries, they might have inhaled thick or very hot gases," said Ko, who went on to Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

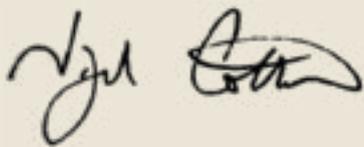
He sent the government's regards to all patients and their families, and gratitude to medical staff who have been treating the patients.



A man was seen on fire in the MTR station.

Conclusion

I conclude with my best wishes to you all.



Nigel Collett
Managing Director



Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2017