

GURKHA INTERNATIONAL GROUP

Website: www.gurkha.com.hk

Newsletter

Issue 330 - February 2025



Shipping Companies And Ships Linked To Us

We are working with 11 shipping companies, and have a total of 262 crew and staff on board.

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We welcome :

Bikram Shrestha (Universal Ship)
Bijay Gurung (Universal Ship)

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In February, 32 crew rejoined ships. We have another 49 scheduled to go back to work during the next month or so.



AIDABELLA

We publish this month a photograph of AIDABELLA, a cruise liner of AIDA Cruises.

We have had good news this month about the signing of a contract to supply crew for an agent of the British Government. I cannot give details of this at the moment but will return to this subject when everything is clarified.

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Editor of Newsletter:

➤ Mamta Gurung Tamang



Cert No: FS 740460

GI (HK) Business

We are providing security services for 20 Hong Kong Clients and have 79 security staff employed.

Contents

Contents Page	p. 2
World Security	p. 3
Nepal News	p. 4-5
Hong Kong News	p. 6-7
Conclusion	p. 8



World Security

The major news of the month was the removal of American support for Ukraine. The US President is attempting to force an end to the fighting, but his withdrawal of support has caused a deterioration in relations, not only between the US and Ukraine, but also between the US and Europe. European governments are now being forced to re-arm and build up their depleted military forces.

In Palestine, the speed and method of return of Israeli hostages held by Hamas in Gaza has nearly disrupted the ceasefire. Lebanon and Syria remain at peace.

India sees continued violence with Naxalite terrorists attacking police in Bijapur, Chattisgarh; 2 police were killed and 2 injured; 31 terrorists were killed.

Islamic terrorists attacked a village at Kasanga in the Democratic Republic of Congo and beheaded 70 or more civilians. Later, at Bukava in the same country, terrorists killed 16 and injured over 70 in a grenade and automatic weapon attack.

At Villach in Austria, an Islamist stabbed 6 walkers, killing a 14-year-old boy. A similar attack took place in Mulhouse, France, where an Islamic militant killed 1 and injured 7 in a knife attack.

In Somalia, Al-Shabaab Islamic militants captured four villages and attacked military bases, killing about 160 people; up to 240 militants were killed.

On the last day of the month, Islamic State terrorists attacked a Muslim seminary in Nowshera, Khyber, Pakistan, killing 7 and injuring 20; 1 terrorist died.

Nepal News

Nepal Literature Festival from February 27



Pokhara is set to host the Nepal Literature Festival 2025 from February 27 to March 2. Organised by the Bookworm Foundation, this twelfth edition of the festival will once again take place at Lakeside.

This year's festival will be inaugurated by Minister for Information, Communication, and Technology Prithvi Subba Gurung. According to the organisers, the event will see the participation of more than 200 prominent figures, including authors, politicians, artists, journalists, and scholars.

Over four days, attendees will discuss literature, politics, economy, cinema, and contemporary issues, with more than 50 panel discussions, interactive sessions, musical performances, and creative showcases.

One of the key highlights of the festival is the inaugural keynote speech by economist and professor Mahendra P Lama. According to the organisers, actress Manisha Koirala and journalist Vijay Kumar will also engage in a conversation on resilience.

Actor Rajesh Hamal will unveil the cover of his upcoming book, 'Yugdekhi Yug Samma', while entrepreneur and writer Jiba Lamichhane will launch his work, 'Akshat Antarctica'.

Nepal, Myanmar play 2-2 draw



Nepal played a thrilling 2-2 draw against Myanmar in their final group-stage match of the Four Nations Cup on 23rd February at Dasharath Stadium. The result saw both teams finish the group stage unbeaten with seven points each, but Myanmar topped the standings on goal difference.

Myanmar took the lead in the 6th minute through a free-kick by Myat Noe Khin. Nepal responded quickly when Sabita Rana Magar scored the equaliser in the 11th minute, converting a chance created by Sabitra Bhandari.

Myanmar regained the lead in the 16th minute when May Htet Lu capitalised on a defensive error by Nepal. However, Sabitra Bhandari once again came to Nepal's rescue, scoring the leveller in the 40th minute after receiving a precise pass from Preeti Limbu.

This was the fifth meeting between Nepal and Myanmar, with Myanmar holding a superior record of three wins and two draws. The two sides will now meet again in the final on Wednesday, where Nepal will seek their first victory over Myanmar.

In the earlier match on Sunday, Lebanon defeated Kyrgyzstan 2-0, but the result was not enough to secure a place in the final. The top two teams from the group will contest the final, scheduled for February 26.

Hong Kong News

Hong Kong's MTR Corp back on track as profit doubles to HK\$15.8 billion



Hong Kong rail giant the MTR Corporation's net profit doubled to HK\$15.8 billion (US\$2 billion) last year from HK\$7.8 billion in 2023, driven by robust contributions from property development and strong demand for local and cross-border train services.

It marked the firm's strongest result since 2018 when it pulled in HK\$16 billion. The corporation recorded a property profit of HK\$10.3 billion last year, up from HK\$2.1 billion in 2023, with income generated from projects in Tseung Kwan O, Ho Man Tin station and Wong Chuk Hang.

But the corporation warned that most of the profits would be committed to fund future projects.

"While our operating results were satisfactory in 2024, much of these profits will be committed to the substantial funding required for the upgrading and renewal of existing lines, as well as planning and constructing new railway projects," CEO Jacob Kam Chak-pui said.

Kam said the firm would continue to focus on financial prudence through cost management, optimising funding arrangements and maintaining a strong balance sheet.

Hong Kong considers cash grants for schools to hire more native English teachers



Hong Kong schools may be allowed to hire more native-speaking English teachers (NETs) under a review of a recruitment scheme introduced more than two decades ago, the Post has learned.

But the proposed changes may result in lower pay and fewer benefits for these teachers, with the Education Bureau giving schools the flexibility to choose between taking cash grants for recruiting NETs or hiring them under the existing allocation system.

Three principals the Post spoke to explained the bureau had been consulting the sector through various focus groups about introducing a cash grant option for schools to hire NETs.

“The bureau official said to us it would be implemented as soon as the next school year if all details could be finalised,” a principal said on condition of anonymity.

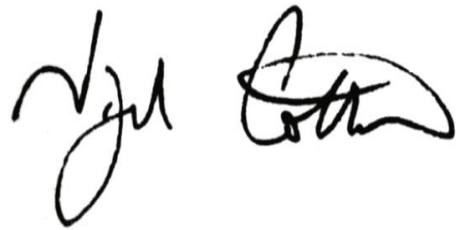
Confirming the plan, Polly Chan Suk-ye, vice-chairwoman of the Hong Kong Aided Primary School Heads Association and a primary school principal, said it remained unclear how big the cash grant would be or what the requirements for the teachers’ qualifications would be.

“More schools would definitely prefer using the cash grant to hire 1.5 or even 2 NETs, unless they had already hired an excellent NET under the existing scheme,” Chan said, referring to some teachers who only took up part-time work.

Source: South China Morning Post

Conclusion

Despite the increasing danger of conflict across the world, the cruise industry is once again growing strongly. The future for jobs at sea is secure, and it is good that we are part of that.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Collett', written in a cursive style.

Nigel A. Collett
Managing Director