



Newsletter

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We publish this month a photograph of the **Aurora** of P & O cruises .

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

SHIPPING COMPANIES AND SHIPS LINKED TO US

We are working with 21 shipping companies, and have **767** men and **148** women on ships, a total of **915** crew and staff under management.

THE LAST MONTH IN BRIEF

There have been changes to the Boards of Directors of our Companies, and I am very pleased to announce the appointments of:

GIMS

Major Alan Hobbs 6GR, ex-Company Secretary GIMS (UK) to the Board of Directors, GIMS.

We Welcome

Star Cruises

Bhoj Raj Chaudhary

Ramesh Thapa Magar

Norwegian Cruise Lines

Yam Bahadur Garbuja Pun



GI (HK) Business

We are providing security services for 34 Hong Kong Clients and have 110 security staff employed.

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

Dr. DB Shrestha

Medical Advisor

I am very sad to announce the death in Nepal of Dr DB Shrestha, proprietor of the Subba Clinic. Dr Shrestha died suddenly on 7 January of a heart attack. Dr Shrestha, who also held appointments as medical officer to British Gurkhas Nepal and other important organisations in Kathmandu, has been our medical adviser since we began work in Nepal twenty years ago. We are very sad to lose him and send his family our deepest condolences for their heavy loss.

GI (HK)



Mr Hem Chandra Thapa, currently General Manager GI (HK), to the Board of Directors, GI (HK), as Operations Director



Mr Lok Parsad Limbu, currently Manager, Administration and Accounts, GI (HK), to the Board of Directors, GI (H), as Administration and Accounts Director

Congratulations

I congratulate **Mr Roshan Kumar Gurung**, one of our cruise crew at Thomson Celebration, being awarded as a nominee of the month for November 2014.



World Security

Economics

Economic trends remain mixed. The US economy seems now to be entering a period of fast expansion, aided by the growth of the shale oil and gas industry which has provided cheap energy. The United Kingdom also continues to grow well. China is showing signs of a gentle slowdown and a decline in its property market, but is not a cause of concern. Japan's attempt to reflate the economy has so far not pulled the out of recession. Deflation has set in across the Eurozone and a general election to be held this month in Greece is likely to result in victory for parties against the austerity and full payment of debt demanded by creditors and the European Union. The European central bank seems likely to have to flood the market with large amounts of money in a round of quantitative easing, as Japan is doing and as the US and United Kingdom already did. The drop in the price of oil has reduced the value of many stocks on world stock markets is endangering the Russian and Venezuelan economies, which are heavily

Nuclear

The negotiations with Iran over its nuclear programme have been extended. There is internal political conflict in Iran between the moderates who wish to end sanctions by settling the nuclear issues, and the hardliners who do not want to see Iran back down. There is no news of the North Korean nuclear

Europe

Islamic terrorists murdered 12 people and wounded 11 others at the Paris offices of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, which had depicted the prophet Muhammad in its pages. Another terrorist killed a police woman and four hostages at a Jewish supermarket at the Porte de Vincennes. The attacks led to massive demonstration in Paris in favour of free speech and against attempts to create religious discord, with a crowd of about 2 million led by many world leaders including François Hollande, President of France, Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, David Cameron, Prime Minister of Britain, Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, Jordan's King Abdullah II and Queen Rania, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. The cry 'Je suis Charlie' ('I am Charlie') spread worldwide in support for freedom of speech. The attackers had links with Islamic jihadists in ISIS, Syria and Yemen and more attacks in Europe are feared.



Millions march with world leaders to honour 17 victims

The Arab World

The air campaign against the Islamic State (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria has continued. Kurdish forces have pushed ISIS back in some border areas. Iraq had its worst year for deaths caused by factional fighting and terrorism since the end of the Gulf war. Much of the country is out of central control. Syria's civil war continues unabated and continued to cause many deaths and massive destruction of the country. In Yemen, al Qa'eda has struck back at military and tribal opponents and taken control of some areas of the country.



Kurdish Peshmerga forces foil ISIS attack on southern Erbil

The government in the capital, Sanaa, has lost control of much of the country and seems powerless to prevent violence. Libya has collapsed into warring areas, with Islamic militants holding the old capital, Tripoli, and the remnants of the democratically elected government and the old military holding the east. Destruction of much of Libya's oil infrastructure has occurred. ISIS militant have set up camps in the country.

Palestine

Israel cut off customs dues it collects for Palestine after the Palestinian Authority successfully applied for membership of the International Criminal Court at the Hague, Netherlands. Palestine had earlier been unsuccessful in an attempt to get the UN security Council to set a time limit for Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, largely due to American obstruction of this proposal.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

Afghan forces are now the sole combat troops fighting Taleban insurgents across the country, though many foreign support troops and advisers remain in country. There is now likely to be a strong attempt by the Taleban to take areas from government control, so violence will increase. Pakistani forces continue to strike into Northwest Frontier border areas to root out the Islamic militants responsible for the earlier slayings of army school children. Artillery fire has broken out across the Line of Control in Kashmir between Pakistani and Indian forces.

Asia

There is no news of the conflicting maritime claims of China and its neighbours this month. Occasional terrorist acts continue to occur in Muslim areas of western China's Xinjiang province.

Thailand

The Thai military continues to run the country. The Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand, near the Malaysian border, continues.

Somalia

There are no new reports of piracy at present.

Malacca Straits

There are occasional reports of piracy attacks aimed at small tankers in the region.

Africa

In Nigeria, Islamic militants Boko Haram attacked and largely destroyed the town of Baga in Borno state, massacring several hundred people and forcing soldiers of several nationalities from the military base in the town to flee. They have also attacked a number of villages and launched an unsuccessful attack on another north-eastern town, Damaturu. They sent suicide bombers into major towns of the north and north-east, Jos, Potiskum and Maiduguri, killing many. The 200 children kidnapped into slavery from Chibok seven months ago by Boko Haram have so far not been found. The Nigerian armed forces seem incapable of dealing with the situation. The security situation in Burkino Faso, the Central African Republic, Mali and South Sudan remains grave. The outbreak of Ebola Virus in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea is gradually being brought under control and infection rates are dropping.

Ukraine

The situation in eastern Ukraine remains highly unstable. Russian interference continues and western sanctions are now damaging the Russian economy, currently also hit by the rapid drop in the price of oil. Ukraine is rapidly running out of money and is seeking western aid.

The Americas

President Obama of the United States of America and President Raoul Castro of Cuba announced the normalisation of relations between their two countries. Relations had been broken, and Cuba had suffered US sanctions, since the Cuban revolution of 1959.

India

Indian forces have engaged in artillery duels with Pakistani forces across the Line of Control in Kashmir.

Myanmar

There is no news of a security nature from Myanmar this month.



The aftermath of a deadly terrorist bombing suspected to have been carried out Boko Haram last year in Nigeria's capital.



Spectators watch two bulls fighting in Nepal's Taruka village, some 80km from Kathmandu

Nepal News

Nepal capital on strike as police arrest activists

Kathmandu Jan 13 - Police have arrested dozens of activists taking part in a strike aimed at crippling Nepal's capital Kathmandu.

Opposition parties called the strike to protest at the government's decision to draw up a draft constitution by next week without their agreement.

The one-day strike hit factories, schools, colleges, markets and public transport.

Police said they detained activists who were vandalising vehicles which were still running and defying the strike.

"In two cases, protesters broke the windows of moving vehicles. In another case cadres threw stones at a taxi, injuring a passenger inside," a police spokesman told AFP news agency.

The opposition alliance, made up of 30 parties, is headed by former Maoist rebels, who waged a decade-long insurgency that ended in 2006 with a peace deal.

Since the civil war, Nepal's politicians have yet to draw up a new constitution, with parties in parliament, known as the

Constituent Assembly, disagreeing over how to divide the country into states.

The Maoists, have pushed for new states to be created along ethnic lines to recognise and help minorities, but others have said that is too divisive.

The Constituent Assembly is aiming to get a draft constitution ready by 22 January.

When Prime Minister Sushil Koirala was elected in February 2014, he had promised to see this done within a year of his appointment.

Opposition alliance spokesman Prem Bahadur Singh was quoted by AFP as saying: "We called the strike to oppose ruling parties' attempt to establish a new constitution by exploiting their majority numbers in the assembly.

"We will call more protests if the ruling parties neglect our demands."

AP news agency reported that another general strike has been planned for next Monday.

Thousands celebrate Nepal bullfighting fiesta

TARUKA Jan 15 - Thousands of spectators packed a makeshift arena in Nepal's Himalayan foothills Thursday to cheer a bullfighting festival whose popularity dates back to the 19th century.

Unlike its Spanish counterpart, Nepalese bullfighting requires no matadors as the bulls — usually buffalo — fight each other in a contest to mark the Maghe Sankranti festival which heralds the end of winter according to the Hindu calendar.

Around 5,000 people descended on the dusty village of Taruka, 35 kilometres (22 miles) northwest of the capital Kathmandu, to watch 16 pairs of bulls butt heads, with the winner of each bout taking home 2,000 Nepalese rupees (around \$20) in prize money.

Some of those present were watching the festival for the first time but many were repeat visitors, drawn to the spectacle year after year.

Dahal to lead unified movement

KATHMANDU Jan 15 - Even as the ruling parties plan to begin the voting process in the Constituent Assembly on Friday, a meeting of the protesting parties — those represented in the CA and those outside the CA — today decided to launch a unified movement of all the agitating parties.

Claiming that separate movements would have no effect on the ruling coalition, agitating parties and alliances launching separate movements for identity-based federalism and institutionalising the achievements of the past movements have agreed to launch a unified movement.

Speaking at the meeting, Unified CPN-Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal reiterated the need of youth volunteer squad to counter the state's suppression whenever necessary, though the movement would be peaceful.

CPN-M Chairman Mohan Baidhya said unified movement was essential to

safeguard the past achievements.

Nepal to grow at 4.8pc: WB

KATHMANDU, JAN 15 - The World Bank (WB) has projected Nepal's economic growth at 4.8 percent for this fiscal year—far lower than the government's 6 percent target.

Although the government has announced a number of reforms programmes this year, the latest WB projection is even lower than last year's growth rate. The WB estimated Nepal's Gross Domestic Product grew 5.2 percent in the last fiscal year.

The report titled "Global Economic Prospects: Having Fiscal Space and Using It" has not given explicit reasons for the lower growth forecast, but stated Nepal faces considerable challenges on the expenditure side.

As of January 11, only 12 percent of the allocated capital budget has been spent, according to the Financial Comptroller General Office.

The global lender has also pointed out the challenges of unreliable electricity supply. It, however, said the recent electricity-related agreements with India would support Nepal's growth outlook.

Recently, Nepal and India signed Power Trade Agreement, enabling the trade of electricity between the two countries like any other commodities. The Investment Board Nepal also signed Project Development Agreement with two Indian companies for the development of Upper Karnali Hydropower Project and Arun III Hydropower Project.

"There have been positive steps including about \$2 billion worth of agreement between Nepal and India in 2014 that would help develop the latter's hydropower resources and substantially raise electricity exports to India over the medium term," read the report.



Activists from the 30-party opposition alliance have been marching in the deserted streets of Kathman



Clearance of the Occupy Central site in Admiralty.

The new MTR Kennedy Town station

Hong Kong News

MTR's West Island line extended

Dec 28 - MTR's West Island Line extension opens today. A further three stations, Sai Ying Pun, HKU, and Kennedy Town would be added to extend the length of the Island Line. Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying officiated at the ceremony at Kennedy Town's new station. He told a crowd of more than 100 that it was he who had persuaded the previous administration to build the extension. Trains will, however, skip Sai Ying Pun station, which is not projected to open until March.

Public Sentiment Report to Beijing out

Jan 6 - The government submitted a previously promised public sentiment report to the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office. The document, namely "Report on the Recent Community and

Political Situation in Hong Kong", detailed the background and progress of the whole umbrella movement, including the decision on electoral reform by the National People's Congress on 31 August, 2014, and the controversial clearing method ushered by the police force. The report, consisting of over 1,000 pages, however did not contain an analysis of the cause of the movement, and concluded with a statement saying it was a mutual hope of the PRC government, the HK government and the public to witness the implement of the electoral reform, causing discontent from the pan-democracy camp.

Labour Department raided ATV headquarters on delayed payment

Jan 9 - The Labour Department raided ATV headquarters to collect evidence over the station's delayed payment of staff salaries for December. The

department said some ATV employees had agreed to become prosecution witnesses should the department take the station to court again.

Last month, the Labour Department prosecuted ATV for "wilfully and without reasonable excuse" failing to pay its staff on time during the period from July 1 to September 30.

Court summonses were sent to ATV and its directors, the case will be heard in Sha Tin Court at the end of this month.

Meanwhile, some ATV employees said they had received the second half of the November salaries that had been delayed for over one month. But ATV still cannot name a date for when December salaries will be paid. ATV was required to pay those salaries by yesterday, according to labour laws.

Firebombs hurled at Jimmy Lai's home and Next Media headquarters

Jan 12 - During the early hours of 12 January 2015, two masked men hurled petrol bombs at Lai's home on Kadoorie Avenue in Kowloon Tong. At the same time, a petrol bomb was thrown at the Next Media headquarters in Tseung Kwan O Industrial Estate. The fires were extinguished by security guards. The perpetrators fled and two cars used in the attacks were found torched in Shek Kip Mei and Cheung Sha Wan. The crimes were denounced as an "attack on press freedom".

New HOS application ends

Jan 12 - The Housing Authority received 41,000 applications for its coming 2,160 Home Ownership Scheme flats, highlighting the dire need for an affordable home among Hong Kong youth. Young adults were among those who flocked to the authority's customer service center in Lok Fu to hand in their

application forms by the deadline. Of the 41,000 forms, 96 percent or 39,200 were "white forms" submitted by those who are not eligible for renting public housing flats. With 40 percent or 864 of the 2,160 units going to this group of applicants, it means their chances of getting a flat is one in 45. Lots will be drawn in March.

Housing, housing and housing in the 2015 policy address

Jan 15 - Chief Executive CY Leung proposed the 2015 Policy Address. Much of the 65 page address was dedicated to solving the housing problem in Hong Kong, youth policy, and attracting talent. Interaction with the Mainland is a common theme throughout. Constitutional development was also a prominent part of the address, with the CE re-emphasising Beijing's authority in the matter. A university publication was also singled out - and not in a good way - for advocating Hong Kong's "self-reliance" and "self-determination".

Asia growth potential to lure overseas talents

Jan 16 - A scheme to attract second-generation emigrants back to Hong Kong will be implemented in the second quarter as immigration requirements are relaxed for non-local talents.

Chief Secretary for Administration Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor said she believes those of the second generation will want to return to reconnect with their roots and make the most of the growth potential of Asian economies.

The scheme is targeted at financially self-sufficient Chinese nationals born abroad, aged between 18 and 40.

They should at least have a parent who is a permanent Hong Kong resident at the time of application and was a Chinese national at the time of the applicant's birth.

They must be proficient in written and spoken Chinese or English, must have a good educational background, technical qualifications or proven professional abilities or relevant achievements supported by documentary evidence.



Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying attends a press conference on his 2015 Policy Address

Conclusion

The world is currently in a dangerous and unsettled state in many parts so we all need to do our duty to protect those in our care. Keep your eyes open and your minds alert in 2015.

I wish you and all your families a very happy New Year!



Nigel Collett
Managing Director

