



# NEWSLETTER



We publish this month a photograph of the *AIDAvita* of *AIDA 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 721 men and 170 women on ships, a total of 891 crew and staff under management.

### *We welcome:*

<b>Myanmar Crew:</b>	<b>Nepalese Crew:</b>
Indra Jang Dura	Sabrina Gurung
Hnin Yu Khing	Indra Jang
Zaw Htoo	
Ye Naing Win	
Caeser Mg Mg Kha	
Phone Maung Maung Thein	

*This month*, I visited Thailand, Nepal and India. In Bangkok, I interviewed some candidates for Ship Security Guard for Norwegian Cruise Line at our training school, Chemstar.

In Nepal, I had the great pleasure of joining Major Gyan Bahadur Gurung, Chairman of BGOS, in signing our next 5 year contract with BGOS, our fifth. This will take us through to 2023. I am most grateful to BGOS's Directors, Managers and Staff for all we have achieved together over the last 20 years, in which we have secured good and honest work for many thousands of men and women from Nepal. We in GIMS look forward to developing our joint project further over the next five years.

My visit to India was a rather sad one, as I went to say thank you and farewell to our Indian agent, Ms Daphne Chauhan. As we wrote in the Newsletter a few months back, changes in Indian regulations have made it impossible to carry on recruiting Indian seafarers in the way we did. We are very grateful for Ms Daphne Chauhan's contribution, thank her warmly and wish her well in future.

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We are providing security services for 27 Hong Kong Clients and have 97 security staff employed.



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End of the new block with water tank under construction



School children in four new classrooms

## PATALE

While in Nepal, I and a party from BGOS visited our school project in Patale, Dhading Jilla, and were delighted to see that the funds our two Companies, and our kind Hong Kong donors, had contributed had been put to good use. The four classrooms that we had all funded with about NRs21 lakhs had been built and were already occupied by four

classes of school children, although the classrooms had not yet been provided with doors and windows. The building has been constructed to be earthquake resistant according to the latest specifications, so should prove durable in future. We shall see if we can collect another similar sum of money for another four classrooms that the school needs.



School Staff and Visitors



Patate School, New Classrooms

# WORLD SECURITY

**Economics** – The reduction in monetary easing in the US caused alarm this month as stock markets fell, but the situation stabilised after some days. There is no other major news about the world's economy this month.



**Nuclear** – Tensions remain high between the United States of America and its allies Japan and South Korea on the one side, and North Korea on the other. There is no news relating to the treaty limiting Iran's development of nuclear weapons.

# EUROPE

Tension between Russia and NATO countries remains high. Russian-backed separatists continue to battle Ukrainian forces in the east of the country.

# THE MIDDLE EAST & THE ARAB WORLD

The Syrian civil war continues.

Conflict continues in Libya and Yemen.

Saudi Arabia and its allies in the Gulf Cooperation Council have continued the blockade of Qatar.

# PALESTINE

There is no news this month.

# AFGHANISTAN & PAKISTAN

In Afghanistan, Islamic State militants continued their attacks on Afghan soldiers, government buildings and public places.  
The security situation in Pakistan continues to be under control.

## ASIA

Tension continues in both the South China Sea and the Sea of Japan around islands claimed by China.

## THAILAND

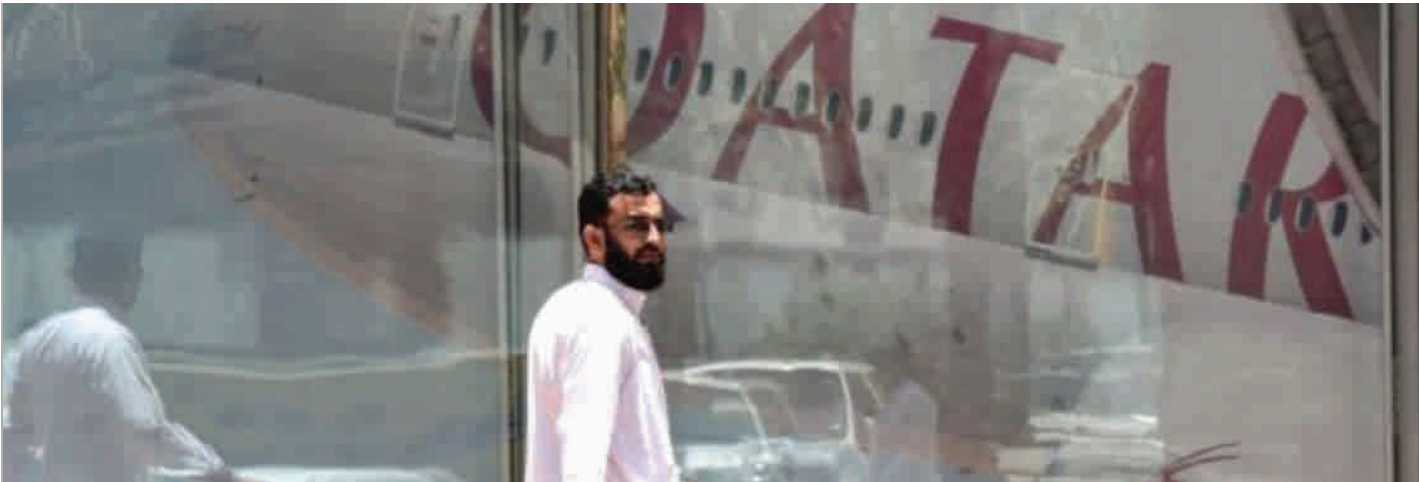
The Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand, near the Malaysian border, continues.

## INDIA

Kashmir remains disturbed.



Convoy of military hardware spotted in Russia, near Ukraine border



Saudi Arabia has ordered the closure of Qatar Airways offices in the kingdom



Security officials closed off roads leading to the Marshal Faheem Military academy, after an attack in Kabul



# THE MALACCA STRAITS

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

## SOMALIA

There are no more reports this month 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 seek Boko Haram Muslim terrorists. Civil conflict continues in South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

## MYANMAR

The Rohingya problem continues to plague Myanmar and Bangladesh, where many Muslim refugees are currently housed.

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The plight of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people is said to be the world's fastest growing refugee crisis.

The whole refugee population - almost one million people - require food aid





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# NEPAL NEWS

# SINGH VERSUS DEUBA LIKELY IN NC PP LEADER ELECTION

This combo shows Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba (left) and former general secretary Prakash Man Singh.



**I**t's likely to be a contest between Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and former general secretary Prakash Man Singh, as the party prepares to hold its parliamentary party leader election on March 5.

Although Deuba is under pressure from the camp led by senior NC leader Ramchandra Paudel not to eye the PP leader's post after election defeat, leaders close to Deuba say the party cannot afford to have 'two power

centres' amid rampant factionalism. Also, Singh is in no mood to back off from his stance that a 'failed leader' such as Deuba should not be allowed to be elected uncontested.

Another aspirant for the PP leader post, Shashank Koirala, has said he will file his candidacy only if he is elected unanimously.

Leaders close to Deuba, who are in majority in the NC parliamentary party, have been lobbying for Deuba as PP leader to 'avoid further dispute in the

party'. "The need of the hour is unity and discipline within the party. So two power centres at this point in time will further exacerbate division," said NC leader Bal Krishna Khand, who is close to Deuba.

Stating that Deuba would continue to remain the party's president until the next general convention, Khand said a single person remaining at the helm of the party and the parliamentary party would be ideal for maintaining unity. "The possibility of further dispute increased after some leaders, especially senior leader Ramchandra Paudel, held Deuba alone responsible for the election defeat in a statement that he published. Things that should have been resolved internally are being brought to the public," he said. "So if there's unanimous selection of PP leader it's Deuba. Or else, there will be an election."

On the other hand, Singh, who represents the Paudel camp, said he would not allow Deuba to be elected unopposed. He is of the view that Deuba, who has proven a failure as both the PM and party president,

should not eye the PP leader's post.

"A failed leader continuing at the helm means further weakening of the party. If Deuba goes for selection of PP leader acceptable to all on the basis of consensus, that's different. But if he contests the election, I will also file nomination," he said.

Meanwhile, the NC parliamentary party leader election committee today came up with a schedule for the polls.

According to member of the committee Nabindra Raj Joshi, the election will be held on March 5 from 10:00am to 1:00pm.

The committee will publish the electoral roll on March 4 at 4:30pm immediately after the swearing-in of members of Parliament.

The time for filing nomination has been set between 5:45pm to 7:15pm, while complaints can be lodged till 7:45pm.

The candidates can withdraw their candidacy from 8:00pm on March 4 to 8:00am on March 5 before the election begins at 10:00 am.

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# COUNTERFEIT CURRENCY IN CIRCULATION

NRB suspects fake notes changed hands during elections

Circulation of fake banknotes in the market was the discussion topic at Nepal Rastra Bank today after one high-ranking official was deceived with a fake note.

The fake note was sent to the Currency Management Department of the central bank for the purpose of investigation and disposal.

Central bank officials suspect that circulation of high denomination fake notes spiked during the elections, when cash transactions rose exponentially.

Police, who have been receiving increasing number of counterfeit currency complaints, say racketeers tend to circulate counterfeit notes when circulation of cash is high in the market.

The head of Central Investigation Bureau of Nepal Police, Deputy Inspector General Pushkar Karki said earlier the police used to deal with such cases occasionally, but the flow of complaints has gone up significantly in recent days.

NRB is apprehensive about the circulation of high denomination counterfeit notes, as it could adversely affect the country's

economic security. The central regulatory and monetary authority has urged banks to properly check notes during deposits.

Deputy Governor of NRB Chinta Mani Siwakoti expressed dissatisfaction at the negligence of banks while accepting deposits in bundles of notes with tags of other banks.

NRB has urged the public to carefully check high denomination notes during transactions. Fake notes can be identified by checking security thread and paper quality. Those who receive fake notes will have to bear the loss themselves. Any person found carrying bulk amount of such counterfeit notes and repeatedly cheating people will be taken into custody based on complaints, Siwakoti told THT.

The central bank has no idea about the amount of counterfeit currency in circulation. However, bankers believe that such forged notes are mainly in denominations of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000. They advise people to use cards and make digital payment for major transactions.

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## How to detect fake notes:

1. They have no watermark
2. Security thread is missing
3. Ink is delible
4. Paper quality is poor



A fake Rs 1,000-note seized in Kathmandu, on Tuesday, February 27 2018.

# DAMAK INDUSTRIAL AREA GETS GOVT GREENLIGHT

The industrial area is being built as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, an ambitious plan of Beijing to revive the ancient Silk Road to promote trade and support economic integration across Asia, Europe, and Africa

**L**and compensation process for construction of Damak Industrial Area (DIA) has kicked off with the publication of a public notice requesting landholders to apply for compensation for land that they will have to relinquish.

In the notice, Industrial Districts Management Limited (IDML), a state-owned enterprise which looks after all the industrial areas in the country, has requested landholders to apply for compensation with supporting documents within next 35 days. To facilitate compensation distribution process, IDML has also opened Land Acquisition Contact Office in Damak.

The industrial area is being built in Damak as part of the Chinese government's Belt and Road Initiative, an ambitious plan of Beijing to revive the ancient Silk Road to promote trade and support economic integration across Asia, Europe, and Africa. Nepal and China governments had signed the final agreement on construction

of the industrial area two months ago.

The industrial area will spread across 2,200 bighas of land in Damak and Gauradaha municipalities and Kamal rural municipality.

The Chinese government will invest Rs333 billion to build the industrial area, which will house 90 enterprises of international standard, including those that manufacture electronic goods, automobiles, garments and food items.

About 40 percent of the industrial area would be open space or occupied by school, bank, hospital, shopping mall and housing units for workers. The detailed project report of the industrial area is currently being drafted.

The industrial area would enable Nepal to gain access to Indian, Bhutanese and Bangladeshi markets through nearby Nepal-India border points, according to Govinda Thapa, chairman of Damak Industrial Area Management Committee (DIAMC).



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“In the initial phase, the industrial area will host enterprises and factories related to agriculture, herbal products, automobiles and daily consumables,” Thapa said, adding, the industrial area will employ ).

“In the initial phase, the industrial area will host enterprises and factories related to agriculture, herbal products, automobiles and daily consumables,” Thapa said, adding, the industrial area will employ over 65,000 people within next five years.

According to Thapa, construction of the industrial area will kick off right after compensation amount

is disbursed to landowners.

IDML is planning to provide compensation to owners of around 366 bigahas of land in the first phase.

As per this plan, 420 families would receive compensation for their land, Thapa said. The size of these land plots ranges from 3 katthas to over 3 bighas. A fund of Rs320 million has been allocated for disbursement of compensation in the first phase.

“The compensation would be provided after evaluating documents submitted by landholders,” Thapa said.

Padam Sedain, a local resident and former regional secretary of Nepali Congress, said he is glad that DIAMC will acquire his two bighas of land.

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A general view of Damak Municipality office.



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# HONG KONG NEWS



Paul Chan delivers his budget.

## **FINANCE CHIEF PAUL CHAN DISHES OUT SWEETENERS WORTH BILLIONS TO HONG KONG TAXPAYERS**

Despite widespread calls for some of the bumper HK\$138 billion surplus to be ploughed back to the public in cash handouts only needy students will get a grant

**R**ebates, allowances, rate waivers and free cash for pupils – Hong Kong taxpayers will benefit from billions of dollars in sweeteners and tax incentives this year as the city’s bulging fiscal surplus balloons to a record HK\$138 billion (US\$17.7 billion).

But despite widespread calls for some of the riches to be ploughed back to the public in cash, Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po put to rest all talk of handouts to residents – with the exception of needy students, who will get a one-off HK\$2,000 grant to support their learning.

The details were unveiled by Chan in his one hour, 50 minute budget speech on Wednesday, in which he pledged to reduce tax burdens on individuals. He announced that bands for salaries tax would be widened from the current HK\$45,000 to HK\$50,000, and the number of bands raised from four to five.

The marginal rates for these bands will be adjusted to 2 per cent, 6 per cent, 10 per cent, 14 per cent and 17 per cent respectively.

“These measures will reduce the tax burden of 1.34 million taxpayers and reduce tax revenue by HK\$4.09 billion a year,” Chan said.

Married couples will also have the option to decide whether to elect for personal tax assessment, Chan added.

For individual salary earners, a 75 per cent reduction in salaries

tax and tax under personal assessment for 2017-18 – subject to a ceiling of HK\$30,000 – is in store, benefiting 1.8 million taxpayers.

Taxes on profits will also be slashed by 75 per cent subject to a ceiling of HK\$30,000, up from last year’s HK\$20,000 and benefiting 142,000 taxpayers and reducing tax revenues by HK\$2.9 billion.

For property owners, rates will be waived for all four quarters of the 2018-19 financial year, subject to a HK\$2,500 cap per quarter per rateable property, more than double that of last year’s waiver. The sweeteners will be enjoyed by owners of some 3.25 million properties across the city.

Last year, Chan also waived rates for four quarters of 2017-18, but the ceiling was much lower, at HK\$1,000 per quarter for each rateable property.

More than 600,000 taxpayers will also enjoy higher allowances for dependent parents and grandparents.

Childcare allowances for 335,000 taxpayers will also be doubled from HK\$100,000 to HK\$120,000.

Those burdened with hefty elderly residential care expenses will see allowances raised from the current HK\$92,000 to HK\$100,000, while a new personal disability allowance of HK\$75,000 has been introduced for eligible taxpayers.

Chan also proposed a tax deduction with a ceiling of HK\$8,000 per insured person for those who join the government's Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme.

For many of the middle-class families, tax breaks are seen as one of the most effective measures to lighten their burden.

During his speech, Chan revealed a record HK\$138 billion fiscal surplus and pledged to share nearly 40 per cent of it with the public, while investing the rest on the future and on improving public services.



Rates will be waived for property owners for four quarters.



Married couples will be have the option to decide whether to elect for personal tax assessment.

Chan pledged to provide extra allowances for social security recipients, equal to two months of the standard rate comprehensive social security assistance payments, old-age allowances and disability allowance, totalling to added expenditures of HK\$7 billion.

Similar arrangements will apply to recipients of the low-income Working Family Allowance and Work Incentive Transport Subsidy, involving an additional expenditure of about HK\$379 million.

Commenting after Chan had finished his address, Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor said: "While ensuring the health of our public finance, the financial secretary has adopted forward-looking and strategic financial management principles in optimising the use of surplus to invest for Hong Kong and relieve our people's burdens."

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# HONG KONG POLICE ISSUE WARNING OVER BUYING USED GOODS ON FACEBOOK

People need to remain vigilant after fraudsters target second-hand market to scam people out of thousands of dollars online

**H**ong Kong police have warned residents to be wary of used goods bought on websites like Facebook, saying that deals that look too good to be true probably are.

Police have been investigating an online scam that takes advantage of Hongkongers' support for environmental friendliness by selling second-hand home appliances that were never delivered.

The new con came to the force's attention this month after officers discovered fraudsters targeting social media forums that promote used goods for sale.

Police said buyers were instructed to pay the deposit via mobile electronic payment platform.

"To win their trust, fraudsters also claimed that transportation would be arranged for the delivery. However, no sooner was the deposit collected, than the fraudsters disappeared without a trace," police said on their website.

Several victims have fallen for the scam and lost thousands of dollars.

The fraud prompted the force's Anti-Deception Coordination Centre to issue an alert on Tuesday about the fraud.

To guard against the scam, the force advised consumers to stay alert during online shopping.

"Do not deposit money into strangers' accounts including mobile electronic account," police said. "If in doubt, call the anti-scam helpline, 18222."

There were 1,188 cases that scammers bagged HK\$12.9 million in the whole of 2016. Police handled 1,354 cases in 2015 involving the losses of HK\$13.8 million.

The Anti-Deception Coordination Centre began operating in July and has dealt with more than 14,000 calls to its 24-hour inquiry hotline, preventing 57 callers from falling for scams.

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We in Hong Kong wish you all a Happy Chinese New Year of the Dog, and send our greetings to BGOS and our commitment to another five years' work together. Jai BGOS and GIMS!

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

Nigel Collett  
Managing Director