



Tourists watching a traditional dragon boat parade during the Dragon Boat Festival celebrations in the Xixi Wetland Park in Hangzhou in eastern China's Zhejiang province, on Saturday.

## Dragon boats thunder thru HK waters

Associated Press  
Hong Kong, May 31

Thousands of people flocked to southern Hong Kong today to watch the iconic dragon boat races, a highlight of a Chinese festival with over 2,000 years of history.

Following their drummers' rhythm, crews powered their dragon boats through the water in unison, racing to become the first to

reach the finish line. Residents and tourists cheered for them. The origin of the Dragon Boat Festival, also known as 'Tuen Ng' in Cantonese, is linked to various legends. But the most well-known story is about commemorating a patriotic and righteous official in ancient times who drowned himself after falling out of favour with his leader and seeing his kingdom decline.

Villagers rushed out to the river with boats to search for his body, and threw rice dumplings into the river to prevent fish from eating it.

The government previously estimated that about 380,000 mainland Chinese tourists would visit the city during a three-day Dragon Boat Festival holiday break starting today, marking a 16 per cent increase in daily average visitor arrivals.

## Monsoon floods kill 5 in India

Agence France Presse  
New Delhi, May 31

Torrential monsoon rains in India's northeast triggered landslides and floods that swept away people in Assam, disaster officials said today.

India's annual monsoon season from June to September offers respite from intense summer heat and is crucial for replenishing water supplies, but also brings widespread death and destruction.

The deaths recorded are among the first of this season, with scores often killed over the course of the rains across India, a country of 1.4 billion people.

The monsoon is a colossal sea breeze that brings South Asia 70 to 80 per cent of its annual rainfall.

Rivers swollen by the lashing rain — including the mighty Brahmaputra and its tributaries — broke their banks across the region.

But the intensity of rain and floods has increased in recent years, with experts saying climate change is exacerbating the problem.

Assam State Disaster Management Authority officials today confirmed five deaths in the last 24 hours. A red alert warning had been issued for 12 districts of Assam after non-stop rains over the last three days led to flooding in many urban areas.

## Beijing rebukes Macron's comparison of Ukraine and Taiwan

Agence France Presse  
Beijing, May 31

China hit back at French President Emmanuel Macron today for drawing a connection between the Ukraine conflict and the fate of Taiwan, saying the two issues are "different in nature and not comparable at all."

Comparing the Taiwan question with the Ukraine issue is unacceptable," China's embassy in Singapore said on social media, a day after Macron warned Asian defence officials in Singapore not to view Russia's

invasion of Ukraine as a far-away problem.

"If we consider that Russia could be allowed to take a part of the territory of Ukraine without any restriction, without any reaction of the global order, how would you phrase what could happen in Taiwan?" Macron told the Shanghai-La Dialogue, Asia's premier annual security forum.

"What would you do the day something happens in the Philippines?"

China's embassy fired back that the Taiwan question is entirely China's internal affair. There is but one China in the world, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory.

While Taiwan considers itself a sovereign nation, China has said it will not rule out using force to bring it under its control.

US Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth warned today at the same forum in Singapore that China was "actively preparing to use military force to upend the balance of power in Asia, adding the Chinese military was building the capabilities to invade the island and "rehearsing for the real deal."

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

for Services LRPS-2025-9197694- Implementation Research in Non- Communicable Disease (NCD) program through PEN Plus approach in Nepal

UNICEF Nepal is inviting interested national agencies to provide the bid as per the LRPS-2025-9197694- Implementation Research in Non- Communicable Disease (NCD) program through PEN Plus approach in Nepal. The detailed bidding documents can be easily accessed here: <https://www.unicef.org/nepal/procurement>

Virtual pre-bid meeting will be held at 15:00 HR (Nepal Time) on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to address any queries/comments on the LRPS. Please register on the Pre-bid meeting or click the below link. <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/join/1148b753-b181-4f02-b104-916710d40938?7410195-14&l=458-904b-cb1892022562>

IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE SUBMISSION OF LTB THROUGH EMAIL, THE SUBMISSION DULY STAMPED AND SIGNED CAN BE DONE ELECTRONICALLY IN PDF FORMAT AND SENT TO [penbid@unicef.org](mailto:penbid@unicef.org) (Bids sent and/or copied to any other email ID will be considered invalid). The submission subject line should have the bid number and name. UNICEF will only accept bid submitted via email.

Offers with samples MUST be received before midnight 24:00hrs (Nepal Time) on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

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एसजेवीएन अरुण-3 पावर डेवलपमेंट कंपनी प्रा. लि.

SJVN Arun-3 Power Development Company Pvt. Ltd.

(A wholly owned subsidiary of SJVN)

900 मीटर अरुण-3 जलविद्युत परियोजना

900 MW Arun-3 Hydro Power Project

Regd. No.: 1118069079

PRESS NOTICE

SJVN Arun-3 Power Development Company (P) Ltd. (SAPDC) invites sealed open tender enquiries from the eligible bidders/contractors of Nepal as per the following details:

Contract No.	Description of Work	Publishing date on websites	Last date for Submission/ Opening of bid Proposals
PCD-275/2025	False ceiling work in Machine Hall at Power House Complex, Arun-3 HEP, Pukhwa, Distt. Sankhuwasabha	01.06.2025	Submission: at (Tumlingtar Office) 24.06.2025 upto 1530 Hrs. Opening: at (Tumlingtar Office) 24.06.2025 at 1600 Hrs.

Bids are to be submitted either by post/Courier or physically in the SAPDC office at Tumlingtar, Distt. Sankhuwasabha, Nepal. The Tender Documents can be downloaded from websites: <https://sjvn.nic.in> & <https://www.sapdc.com.np>. Further, Amendment(s) / Notification(s) etc. shall be issued on above websites only.

Sd/-  
Chief Engineer (P&C),  
SAPDC, Satluj Bhawan, Arun Sadan,  
Tumlingtar, Distt. Sankhuwasabha, Nepal.  
Tel.: +977-29-575154  
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# Afghanistan, Pakistan upgrade ties amid diplomatic thaw

The two neighbours to appoint envoys in each other's capitals

Agence France Presse  
Kabul, May 31

Afghanistan welcomed the decision to upgrade ties with Pakistan to the ambassador level, Kabul's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi's office said today.

"This elevation in diplomatic representation between Afghanistan and Pakistan paves the way for enhanced bilateral cooperation in multiple domains,"

the Afghan Foreign Ministry posted on X.

Relations between the two neighbours have long been strained over Islamabad's accusations that Kabul harbours Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also known as the Pakistani Taliban, Pakistan's attempts to deport tens of thousands of Afghans have also contributed to bilateral tensions.

Yesterday, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar an-

nounced that the charge d'affaires in Kabul would be elevated to the rank of ambassador. He also said that their relations are on a positive trajectory since he visited Afghanistan in April.

Later, Kabul announced that it would reciprocate the move.

The decision came after the Afghan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar met with Dar and Muttaqi in a bilateral meeting in a trilateral meeting in Beijing earlier

this month.

After their talks, Wang expressed Beijing's willingness to continue to assist with improving Afghanistan-Pakistan ties.

Muttaqi is due to visit Pakistan in the coming days, Ministry Spokesman Zia Ahmad Takal told AFP.

Since Kabul fell to the Taliban in 2021, only a handful of countries have agreed to host Taliban government ambassadors.

## Man jumps into display of China's Terracotta Army

Agence France Presse  
Beijing, May 31

A domestic tourist climbed over a fence and jumped into a section of the world-famous display of China's Terracotta Army, damaging two ancient clay warriors, the authorities said today.

The 39-year-old was visiting the museum housing the Terracotta Army in the city of Xi'an yesterday when he climbed over the guardrail and the protective net and jumped; public security officials said in a statement.

The man surmised Sun was found to "suffer from mental illness" and the case is under investigation. He

'pushed and pulled' the clay warriors and two were damaged to varying degrees, the statement said. He was 'controlled' by security personnel.

The pit he jumped into is up to 5.4 metres deep, according to the museum's website.

Built around 209 BC, to stand guard over the tomb of the first emperor, the 8,000-strong Terracotta Army is one of China's most important archaeological discoveries and considered a symbol of ancient Chinese artistic and military sophistication.

A major tourist attraction in Xi'an, capital of the northern province of Shaanxi, it has been a UNESCO world heritage site since 1987.

## One dead after insurgents seize control of Pak city

Associated Press  
Quetta, May 31

Dozens of armed separatists briefly seized control of a high-security area in a city in southwestern Pakistan yesterday, killing a government official and looting a bank before fleeing police and officials said.

Hidayat Buledi, a local government official, was killed and his home was set on fire in the attack on Sorab, in the Balochistan region, local police chief Haleem Ullah said.

He said Buledi was 'martyred' while trying to protect women and children trapped inside the burning house during the assault.

Ullah said several insurgents were killed in the shootout with police.

The outlawed Baloch Liberation Army, or BLA, which was designated a terrorist group by the United States in 2019, claimed responsibility for the attack. In a statement, BLA said its fighters had taken control of key government buildings in Sorab.

Ullah dismissed the claim, saying the insurgents fled when security forces responded to the assault.

He said the attackers stormed Buledi's home and also set fire to several residences of government officials. Four civilians were injured.



Sainamaina Municipality  
Office of the Municipal Executive  
Urban Resilience and Livability Improvement Project (URLIP)  
Project Implementation Unit (PIU)  
Buddhanagar, Rupandehi  
Lumbini Province, Nepal.

## Invitation for Bids

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2025

Loan/Grant No. and Title : 4433-NEP(COL) / 0927-NEP(SF), Urban Resilience and Livability Improvement Project (URLIP)  
Contract No. and Title : URLIP/SM/CW01  
Sainamaina Drainage, Road, Footpath and Street Improvement including Beautification and Scope

Deadline for Submission of Bids : 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2025, 12:00 Noon

1. The Government of Nepal (GoN) has received financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of Urban Resilience and Livability Improvement Project (URLIP). Part of this financing will be used for payments under the Contract named above. Bidding is open to Bidders from eligible source countries of ADB.

2. The Sainamaina Municipality, Office of the Municipal Executive, Urban Resilience and Livability Improvement Project (URLIP), Project Implementation Unit (PIU), Buddhanagar, Rupandehi ("the Employer") invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the construction and completion of Sainamaina Drainage, Road, Footpath and Street Improvement including Beautification and Scope ("the Works").

3. Open competitive bidding will be conducted in accordance with ADB's Single-Stage: Two-Envelope (1s2e) procedure and is open to all Bidders from eligible countries as described in the Bidding Document.

4. Only eligible Bidders with the following key qualifications defined in the Bidding Document may participate in this bidding. (refer Section 3 for other qualification criteria):

a) Minimum Average Annual Construction Turnover (as per section 3 of Bidding Document): NRs 1286.30 million (ex. VAT) calculated as total certified payments received for contracts in progress or completed, within the last five (5) years.

b) Financial Resources (as per section 3 of Bidding Document): Must demonstrate availability of Financial Resources (less its financial obligations for current contract commitments), meets or exceeds the total requirement for the sole bidder: NRs 173.70 million

Joint Venture  
One partner must meet or exceed its required share of 40% NRs 69.50 million

Each partner must meet or exceed its required share of 25% NRs 43.50 million  
The combined financial resources of the Joint Venture NRs 173.70 million

c) Contracts of Similar Size and Nature (as per section 3 of Bidding Document): NRs. 989.40 million (excluding VAT). 1. Participation Participation as a contractor, Joint Venture partner, or Subcontractor, in at least one (1) contract that has been satisfactorily and substantially completed within the last five (5) years and that is similar to the proposed works, where the value of the Bidder's participation exceeds NRs. 989.40 million (Excluding VAT).

ii. Each Partner must have completed One "Road Improvement/ Upgrading/ Construction Project" construction contract where the value of the Bidder's participation exceeds NRs. 309.20 million (excluding VAT).

d) Bid security (as per section 2 of Bidding Document):  
For cash deposit of bid security:  
Bank : Agricultural Development Bank Limited  
Account No. : 0414201149244015  
Office : Sainamaina Municipality  
Office Code : 801054806

5. To obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents, Bidders should contact:  
Project Manager:  
Urban Resilience and Livability Project (URLIP)  
Project Implementation Unit (PIU),  
Sainamaina Municipality, Buddhanagar, Rupandehi  
Telephone: 071-440553, Email: [sainamainamunicipality@gmail.com](mailto:sainamainamunicipality@gmail.com)  
OR Visit PPMO's e-GP system [www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp](http://www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp)

6. To purchase the bidding documents in English, eligible bidders should download the bidding documents from Public Procurement Monitoring Office's (PPMO) e-GP portal [www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp](http://www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp).

7. The non-refundable fee of NRs. 20,000 (Rs. Twenty Thousand Only) in the form of Bank Voucher in employer's Rajaswa (revenue) account as specified below:  
Name of the Bank : Agricultural Development Bank Ltd, Parroha Sakha  
Name of the Office : Sainamaina Municipality Office  
Office Account No. : 0414201659915011  
Before : 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2025, 12:00 Noon.

7. Interested Bidders shall submit their electronic bids, accompanied by a Bid Security of NRs. 26.40 million must be delivered through PPMO's e-GP system [www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp](http://www.bolpatra.gov.np/egp) on or before 12:00 hours of 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2025. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives who chooses to attend at the address above on 13:00 hours of 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2025.