



Summit **TIMES**

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Panchayat Adhyakshas and Upadhyakshas nominated; CM for return of pre-election social cohesion

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 07 NOV:**

A meeting of Parliamentary Board of Panchayat Election 2017 was held at Mintokgang which was chaired by president of Sikkim Democratic Front, Pawan Chamling, who is also the Chairman of the Parliamentary Board.

The meeting was attended by all the MLAs and members of the Parliamentary Board.

The meeting unanimously

decided to nominate elected Zilla Panchayat members in various posts. For East district, Samsher Rai [OBC-C] has been nominated as Adhyaksha of Dalapchand Rongli Changey-lakha Territorial Constituency, Chujachen with Sharmila Chettri [OBC-S-W] as Upadhyaksha of Khamdong Dung Tung TC, Khamdong Singtam.

For West district, Devika Subba [ST-W] has been nominated as Adhyaksha of

Siktam Okherey TC, Daramdin with Ashok Kumar Gurung [OBC-C] as Upadhyaksha of Sangadorjee Rinchenpong TC, Rinchenpong.

Farwanti Tamang [ST-W] has been nominated as Adhyaksha of Mellidara Turuk TC, Melli, and Bhim Bahadur Lakhay [SC] as Upadhyaksha of Namphing Bemyak TC, Temi Namphing for South district.

Likewise, Namdey Lepcha [ST] has been nominated as

Upadhyaksha of Phensong TC, Kabi Lungchok, with Theneney Bhutia [ST] as Upadhyaksha of Tingchim Chadey TC, Dzongu for North district.

Meanwhile, an official press communiqué from the SDF informs that the party president, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling has exhorted the party's legislature party and members of the parliamentary committee to introspect on the panchayat elections.

"He said the misunderstandings and local electoral rivalries should now give way to pre-election social cohesion," the press release issued today by the SDF spokesperson, Bhim Dahal, states.

He congratulated the legislators for a "remarkable" election result along with the people of Sikkim who participated in the democratic process with "vigour and gaiety", the release adds.

Centre launches portal for workplace sexual harassment complaints

NEW DELHI, NOV 7 (PTI): Women who are sexually harassed at their workplaces in the private sector can now lodge their complaints on a government portal, Minister for Women and Child Development (WCD) Maneka Gandhi said today.

Launching the portal, the minister said the online complaint management system 'SHE-box' (sexual harassment electronic box) would be hosted on the WCD's website.

Harassment could include the use of foul language or cracking of lewd jokes, she said.

The complaint mechanism, which the ministry had initiated for government employees in July, is now open for

women working in the private sector, too.

"We received 346 complaints from women employed in the government sector. Seeing such a huge response we are opening SHE-box to all women who have faced any kind of sexual harassment at the workplace in India," Gandhi told reporters.

Referring to the #MeToo campaign on Twitter sparked by allegations of sexual harassment against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, Gandhi said, "India is the first country in the world that is responding as a government."

A cell under the ministry will look into every complaint filed online

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They cannot silence us: Kabul TV station back on air moments after attack

KABUL, NOV 7 (AFP): A defiant Kabul TV station was back on the air today moments after the end of an attack by gunmen who had stormed the broadcaster, killing at least one person and leaving two dozen wounded.

The assault on Shamsad TV by militants disguised as policemen, which was claimed by the Islamic State group, highlights the risks facing journalists who are increasingly targets in the war-torn country.

After about three hours of fighting Afghan special forces overpowered the attackers, who were armed with guns and grenades, and freed staff trapped inside the building.

"The attack has ended. According to the commander of the special forces all the staff who were inside the building have been rescued," Shamsad TV announced as it went back on the air.

A Shamsad news presenter, his hands bandaged after cutting himself on glass as he fled the attackers, told viewers that 20 colleagues had been wounded. Six were in a critical condition.

"We have all come back (to work), all our journalists and colleagues are back on duty," he said.

Shamsad news director Abid Ehsan, in-

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Smog turns Delhi into 'gas chamber', precautionary measures begin

NEW DELHI, NOV 7 (PTI): A combination of smoke from stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana and moisture turned Delhi into a "gas chamber" today, prompting authorities to announce a series of preventive measures including a four-fold hike in parking fees and slashing of metro fares.

The smog brought down visibility levels, affecting flight and train operations. The heavy air permeated living rooms and even the underground metro stations in the city making it difficult to breathe, turning eyes watery.

In the evening, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia announced that primary schools in the national capital will remain closed on Wednesday.

The Supreme Court-mandated Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Author-



ity, empowered to enforce the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), also directed the states in the region to start preparing for implementing measures like 'odd-even' in light of the "crisis situation".

The air quality index was in the 'severe', with a score of 448 in a scale of 500, category for the second time this year. Earlier, Diwali fireworks had triggered peak pollution

levels on October 20.

The National Green Tribunal took the governments of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana to task, seeking to know why steps to prevent steps were not taken despite knowing well in advance that such a situation was likely to arise.

The Delhi government is mulling over shutting schools till the

peak pollution levels prevail. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted: "Delhi has become a gas chamber. Every year this happens during this part of year. We have to find a solution to crop burning in adjoining states."

"Considering high level of pollution, I have requested Manish Sisodia, Education Minister, to consider closing schools

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HC gets Display Board Screen for viewing live case status

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 07 NOV:**

Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim, Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri, in the presence of Judge, Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, and Judge-cum-Chairman of Steering Committee, High Court of Sikkim, Justice Bhaskar Raj Pradhan, inaugurated Display Board Screen for viewing live case status in the High Court of Sikkim on 06 Nov, a press re-

lease informs.

The Display Board Monitors are installed outside the Court Rooms and will provide the live status of Case proceedings to the advocates and litigants. Further, the provision of live status of Case proceedings will be integrated with the Mobile App and website of High Court in a few days so that the status of Case proceedings can be viewed sitting anywhere on the click of a button.

Sikkimese society yet to recognize child labour as a problem

**NITESH R PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 07 NOV:**

Child labour as an issue hardly finds any importance in the collective conscience in Sikkim but it is something that continues to be a problem in the state.

The recent case that has emerged of a child taken as a domestic help who was subjected to physical abuse has once again brought the silent problem of child labour in the State to the forefront.

One 10-year-old child, subjected to torture and physical abuse at a tender age, not only left the child scarred

and afraid but also mentally stressed.

The employer, Pratima Dahal, pleads innocence and says, "I had no idea about the Child Labour Act."

Ignorance, if that is really the case, cannot be taken as an excuse for the loss of childhood.

Sikkim attracts a lot of domestic workers from other States especially from West Bengal's tea belt of Dooars.

Due to financial crisis, families send their young ones to work as help in households in hope of money and now, education.

As the society turns a blind eye to this human crisis right at our door steps, many have started speaking up against this menace.

Members of Shanti Guni Samaj, Nimtar, East Sikkim, a social organisation instrumental in helping the child in this particular case deserves rich appreciation for their vigilant approach to a sensitive issue like child abuse and child labour.

President-Shanti Guni Samaj, Shrawan Kumar Chettri, says, "We found him in a critical condition in the village so we had to bring him to hospi-

tal for treatment."

He further adds, "We don't know the inside story as to how the family treated him but there were many complaints regarding how the child was being treated."

The story has generated a sharp response from people with many voicing the opinion that the problem of child labour must now be dealt with an iron hand in the State which has the potential to tarnish its glowing image.

"Now we must speak up and complain without hesitation to make sure that such issues don't come up in the

State," says Krishna Dhakal, a lawyer.

Citizens turn a blind eye to this problem even when they see it firsthand due to the close knit society we live in wherein the need to maintain cordial relations is more important than speaking up against wrong-doings.

"We hardly speak up as sometimes we may have to speak up against our own relatives or friends as we are a small population interconnected with each other," states a research scholar in Sikkim University, Saurav Tamang.

Similarly, Dr Swadhin Rai

states that due procedure should be followed before a child is adopted. He also said that police verification and medical examination of the child should be done.

"In Sikkim, it is hardly followed," says the doctor who has also worked with children.

Now it is up to the citizens to become active vigilant members of the society and work in tandem with the authorities for swift and speedy action in such cases. Unless the society gives a clarion call to end a social ill, nothing can be fixed.

Pregnant woman found dead in Namchi hotel

GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

The body of a woman hailing from Ravangla was found in a hotel room at Kazitar in Namchi on 05 Nov. Investigation revealed that the deceased and her husband had booked the room on 01 Nov and were supposed to check out on 05 Nov. However, on the day they were supposed to check out, the deceased's husband had gone out to look for a vehicle leaving his wife behind.

Later, her dead body was recovered from her room. During inquest, it was learnt that the deceased was pregnant. However, no external injuries on her bodies were found. The deceased's husband has gone missing since then.

One allegedly assaulted by SDF youth

GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

Five persons hailing from West Sikkim have been accused of physically assaulting one 30-year-old male from Sakyong on 05 Nov. The victim was reportedly returning home from the house of independent Zilla Panchayat candidate's house at Dangrey Road in Bhalthang. The attackers are allegedly SDF Ward Panchayat candidate's supporters

South to felicitate best performing officers and staff for election duty

NAMCHI, 07 NOV [IPR]: The South District Administration including the office of Superintendent of Police-South and under the skillful guidance of District Collector-South, Raj Yadav, has announced the names of the officers and staff that performed outstandingly in ensuring the conduct of smooth and fair Zilla and Gram Panchayat elections in the district.

The best officer for overall management goes to Sub Divisional Magistrate-Jorethang, BC Rai, and Section Officer/PS, Tenzing Bhutia. The Best Assistant Returning Officer title has been given to Benu Gurung, Best Nodal Officer to Dr Mala Bajgai from Animal Husbandry, Livestock & Veterinary Sciences and Joint Director-Land Revenue & Disaster Management

Department, DK Rai, Best Sector Magistrate to Block Development Officer-Yangang, Saloni Pradhan, and BDO-Sikkip, Ranjan Rai, and the Best Sector Police Officer to Station House Officer-Namchi, Kessang Dorjee Bhutia.

Nodal Officers, Saloni Pradhan and Saran Kalikothi, and staff have been adjudged as the Best Team for EVM Commissioning, Saloni

Pradhan, Mandeep Lama and their team from Yangang have been acknowledged as the Best Reporting Team on Poll Day. The best counting team on counting day was BDO-Namchi, Bimal Rai and Sangam Rai and team. The winner in this category will be presented with a cash prize of Rs 5,000.

Likewise, Revenue Officer-LR&DMD, Karma Choda Bhutia, OS-

HRDD, Saran Kalikothi, DPM, E-governance Cell, Mandeep Tamang, Network Associate/NIC, Manoj Rai, Assistant Revenue Surveyor-LR&DMD, Prabin Ranpal, Ste-no-LR&DMD, Daniel Rai, HA-Peshkar Section, Sharmila Pradhan, PA to DC, Trishna Toya Rai, QRT, Pradeep Rai, and Safai Karmachari-NSSS, Rama Rawat, have been named as the Best Supporting Officer and Staff

for their efficiency in handling nomination activity, commissioning of EVMs, manpower management, handling postal ballot during the Panchayat elections in the South district.

Similarly, the office of SP-South has identified the Best Supporting Staff from the Police Department in the South district which include LNK-Ravangla, Diku Hang Subba, NK-Mel-

li, Dharma Raj Chettri, HC-Namchi, Purba Sherpa, HG-Namchi, Bhumiika Chettri, HC-Bermiok, Zangpo Bhutia, HC-Communication, Zanga Bahadur Gurung, LNK-SP Office, Romgit Lepcha.

These staff and officers will be felicitated and will be provided with cash prize and certificate by the South District Administration office shortly.

DC East thanks all for smooth conduct of Panchayat Election

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

On behalf of the East District Administration, the Returning Officer-cum-District Collector, East, has extended gratitude to all the officers, staff and general public of the district for helping in the smooth conduct of the Zilla and Gram Panchayat Election 2017 in East District.

In a press release received from DAC-East, the RO has said, "Firstly, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Commissioner and Secretary, State Election Commission for their continuous support throughout the election process and also to all other officers and staff of the Commission. The mammoth task of conducting this election would not have been possible without the contribution of the Commission. The guidance re-



ceived from the Observer, Rinzing Chewang Bhutia, Special Secretary, LR&DMD during the elections was unparalleled and I am greatly indebted for his mentorship. Special thanks must also be conveyed to the Superintendent of Police, Tenzing Loday Lepcha for his untiring efforts in monitoring the law and order aspects during the campaigning period and en-

tire election process. Free and fair elections cannot be run without officers and staff who were in our team. More than 1500 officials offered their time to conduct this significant event, filling important roles right from creating a voters list, ensuring law and order, working at the polling stations on election day, and till the counting of votes and declaring

the results. I would like to thank all the Assistant Returning Officers, Sector Magistrates, Sector Police Officers, Sr. RTO, DIO/IPR, Police personnel, polling officials, counting supervisors and assistants and all the other workers of the election machinery for their laudable effort and sustained hard work."

The RO has also thanked Secretary of

Tourism & Civil Aviation Department and Principal-Modern Senior Secondary School, Tathangchen, for provision of their Auditorium Halls during the election process.

He has further expressed appreciation to the members of the media and press for their cooperation during the month long exercise and has also thanked the candidates, political parties and general public along with the media for their continuous support which ensured that people participated in large numbers which was reflected in the massive 76% turnout during the elections.

"Lastly, I wish to sincerely thank all of you once again for your hard work and dedication during the conduct of a free, fair and credible election," the RO has said in the release.



Cooperation Dept officials attend Management Development Programme

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

Twenty officials of the Cooperation Department attended a Management Development Programme at Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management in Pune from 09-14 Oct. The training-cum-exposure visit was organised to give exposure to the cooperative cadre members of Sikkim on Cooperative Movement in other States, a press release informs.

Besides classroom sessions on 97th Constitutional Amendment and its impact on Cooperatives, GST on Cooperatives, Core Banking Solutions for Cooperative Credit Structures and motivational classes, the training also included field visits to various cooperative banks and other types of cooperatives. Some of the cooper-

atives visited included

Katraj Dairy at Pune, Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank at Mumbai, COSMOS Bank at Pune, Rajarambapu Patil Sahakari Dudd Utpadak Sangh [Islampur], Rajarambapu Patil Sahakari Co-operative Sugar Mill [Islampur], Rajarambapu Patil Sahakari Textile Co-operatives, Rajarambapu Patil Sahakari Urban Cooperative Bank [Islampur], Kolhapur DCC Bank and Sriram Vividh Karyakari Sahakari Vikas Seva Sanstha Maryadit [PACS] at Kolhapur.

The participants have extended gratitude to the Government of Sikkim and the Department of Cooperation for organising the training-cum-exposure programme and expressed hope that more of such programmes will be organised in the near future.

Nepal's Left alliance unveils election manifesto

KATHMANDU, NOV 7 (PTI): Maoist chief Prachanda today said the grand Left alliance will "end Nepal's elongated political instability" by forming a strong government that would ensure stability and prosperity in the country. CPN-Maoist Centre Chairman and former prime minister Prachanda made the remarks here while unveiling the election manifesto of the grand leftist alliance. CPN-UML chairman K P Oli was also present on the occasion.

The CPN-UML and the CPN-Maoist have forged electoral alliance for both the provincial and parliamentary elections giving a tough fight to ruling Nepali Congress, which emerged as the largest party in the last parliamentary elections.

Prachanda claimed that the left alliance was forged to bring political stability and prosperity in the country. He said the objective of the alliance was "to end the country's elongated political instability by forming a strong and a single communist centre, and ultimately achieve stability and prosperity."

According to the manifesto, the per capita income of each Nepali would be increased to USD 5,000 within 10 years. It also proposes to develop the Kathmandu Valley as an integrated town.

Oli said that election manifesto of the alliance was commitment to nation building. He made it clear that the manifesto has ensured nationality, democracy, unity, peace, stability and development in the nation.

"By unveiling the manifesto we have guaranteed alleviation of poverty, employment, healthy environment and fulfilling the millennium development goals," he said.

"No one should be afraid from the current electoral alliance and proposed party unity between the CPN UML and CPN-Maoist Centre," Oli added.

'India suffers' to be Cong theme for protests on DeMo anniv

NEW DELHI, NOV 7 (PTI): Country-wide protests in the form of processions, rallies and candle-light marches are being planned by the Congress and other Opposition parties to mark the first demonetisation anniversary tomorrow, as their leaders would observe it as "black day".

The Congress, which described the note ban decision as the "biggest scam" and "the largest government-abetted money laundering scheme", has asked all its state units to organise protests, processions and marches to mark the day.

It has also asked all its leaders to participate in such protests and "strongly" highlight the demerits of the decision, which it said is a "colossal and completely avoidable failure".

The leaders have also been asked to take out their protests with "Desh Bhugat Raha hai" and "India suffers" as the central theme for the day, besides organising press conferences and "aggressively" participating in TV debates to ensure "good publicity".

While Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi will interact with traders in Surat, the hub of diamond industry in poll-bound Gujarat, other top leaders will partic-

ipate in protests in Delhi and all state capitals. Gandhi will later lead a candlelight march in Surat's Chowk Bazar area.

The Congress, on its website, also put out an article on demonetisation, dubbing it as a "Modi-Made Disaster".

"Even the undeclared emergency in India's newsrooms have failed to contain the news spreading like wildfire through India. Demonetisation was a colossal and completely avoidable failure and the largest government-abetted money laundering scheme in history," the article said.

It further alleged that demonetisation failed to curb black money as 99 per cent of banned Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes were returned. This was expected as black money is not usually stored in currency, but property, bullion and more easily convertible currency like dollars.

It said note ban failed to stem terror attacks and insurgency as there were 23 more attacks in Kashmir after the announcement. It didn't tackle the counterfeit problem, given only 0.0013 per cent of the notes returned were fake.

"The truth is the prime minis-

ter expected to make a tidy profit of 4 lakh crores from dispossessing those who weren't able to exchange their notes. Instead, 21,000 crore rupees of our tax money was squandered on printing notes, while only 16,000 crores were left unclaimed," the article said.

According to the Opposition, the decision to ban currency notes of higher denomination was "totally ill-conceived" and had bad effect on the economy and the poor and down-trodden of the country have suffered most.

It said that hundreds of people died while standing in queues and thousands suffered and the impact of demonetisation has been so bad that lakhs of workers lost their jobs and thousands of small and medium scale industries have shut.

As part of the 'black day' observance, the Congress will organise processions and rallies across the country during the day while carrying placards and banners.

When the clock strikes 8 in the evening, coinciding with the prime minister's announcement last year, candle light processions in every state capital will be taken out to pay homage to those who lost their lives due to demonetisation.

Smog turns Delhi into 'gas chamber', precautionary measures begin

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for few days," he added.

The Indian Medical Association said Delhi was witnessing a "public health emergency" and appealed to the government to stop outdoor sports and other such activities in schools to protect the health of children.

Later, in a meeting to review the status of air quality, the EPCA announced that all measures under the GRAP's severe category will be implemented across the re-

gion till further notice.

CPCB member secretary A Sudhakar told PTI the intensity of pollution peaked since last night as moisture-heavy winds from Uttar Pradesh and hot winds carrying emissions from stubble burning from Punjab and Haryana have dealt a double-whammy.

"We are not expecting a dramatic change in the next two-three days. Shallow fog and a complete absence of wind are preventing the dissipation of pollutants at the

ground level," Sudhakar said.

The wind speed is currently around 3 metres per second, Sudhakar said, explaining it is inadequate to disperse particulate matter like PM2.5 and PM10.

EPCA chairman Bhure Lal and member Sunita Narain directed the municipal bodies in the region to immediately enhance parking fees by four times and instructed the Delhi Metro to lower fares during off-peak hours for at least 10 days, introduce more coaches and ensure frequent

services.

Among other measures, the EPCA instructed Delhi and neighbouring states - Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana -- to strengthen the public transport system by introducing more buses and said a fine of Rs 50,000 would be imposed on road construction agencies violating dust pollution norms.

The body asked the Delhi-NCR governments to start preparing for measures like odd-even and a

complete ban on construction activities if pollution aggravates.

The measures also include complete closure of brick kilns, hot mix plants and stone crushers across the region till further notice and a ban on entry of goods vehicles - not destined for Delhi for the next 20 days - in the city.

Sisodia, who is also Delhi's education minister, convened a meeting of officials of education, health and environment departments over shutting schools. He directed

the environment department to submit a report on the city's pollution levels.

Meanwhile, the CISF ordered issuance of over 9,000 face masks for its personnel deployed to guard the IGI Airport, the Delhi Metro and other government ministries and installations here.

"Delhi has become a gas chamber. Every year this happens during this part of year. We have to find a soln to crop burning in adjoining states," Kejriwal tweeted.

They cannot silence us: Kabul TV station...

contd from pg01

interviewed by rival Tolo News at a hospital in the Afghan capital where some of his wounded colleagues were being treated, said: "This is an attack on freedom of media but they cannot silence us."

The station reported that one attacker blew himself up at the gate. Another went inside and shot at staff before going up to the roof to fire at security forces.

Special forces had to blast their way through

a wall of the compound to enter the premises of the Pashto-language broadcaster.

"I was in my office when gunmen wearing police uniforms attacked the building," Ehsas said.

"They killed one of our guards and entered the building and started firing. Most of us were able to flee but some were wounded and some jumped out of the windows."

He said the station had not received any threats before the attack.

Gangtok on Wednesday, 08 Nov
 Temp: 23°C / 08°C
 Forecast: Mostly sunny and not as warm but pleasant.
 Sunrise: 05:50 AM
 Sunset: 4:40 PM

IMA says children at risk, outdoor activities be stopped in Delhi

NEW DELHI, NOV 7 (PTI): As the city recorded a sharp dip in air quality, the Indian Medical Association today said Delhi was witnessing a "public health emergency" and appealed to the Delhi government to stop outdoor sports and other such activities in schools to protect the health of children.

In a letter to Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, IMA National President Dr KK Aggarwal and the Secretary General Dr RN Tandon, said children are "especially at risk" in air quality ranging from 'poor' to 'severe'.

The IMA mentioned in the letter that when Air Quality Index (AQI) levels cross 200, it is "generally advised" that time spent outdoors be restricted.

"Hence all outdoor sports, marathons and other outdoor activities in schools should be stopped.

"Children are more prone to harmful effects of air pollution as their lungs are still growing," the letter said.

The IMA stated that children, who play or exercise outdoors need more oxygen, so they take in more polluted air into their lungs, which hampers the growth of their lungs leading to breathing problems later on in life.

"We appeal to you to stop all outdoor activities and sports in schools due to the very poor air quality keeping in view the harmful impact of air pollution on health of children and immediately issue an advisory in this regard for all schools in Delhi-NCR, which should be disseminated through different media such as radio, print including social media.

The association has also urged organisers of the Delhi half marathon and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal seeking cancellation of Airtel Delhi Half Marathon because of the increased pollution levels in the air.



Bharat Scouts and Guides Sikkim Unit celebrates Foundation Day

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

Governor Shrinivas Patil today granted audience to a group of 17 students of Bharat Scouts and Guides, Sikkim Unit at Raj Bhavan on the occasion of its Foundation Day/Flag Day. The group was escorted by State Organising Commissioner-Scouts, Subash Tamang, and Assistant State

Commissioner-Guides, Anita Pradhan.

A press communiqué received from Raj Bhavan informs that the students presented the flag and scarf to the Governor of Sikkim, who is also the Chief Patron of Sikkim Unit Bharat Scouts and Guides. The Governor while providing a brief history of Raj Bhavan also extended best

wishes to the students' contingent for their activities and endeavors to serve the nation.

Later this evening, General Officer Commanding-Trishakti Corps, Lieutenant General, PM Bali, VSM, called on the Governor at Raj Bhavan. It was a courtesy call by Lt Gen Bali following his assumption of charge as GOC, Trishakti Corps in

August 2017, the release informs.

The Governor offered traditional welcome and extended best wishes to him for his new assignments. He also urged the GOC to maintain and promote further the existing civil-military collaboration and cooperation under the Eastern Command in Sikkim.



Sikkim-Darj merger more feasible than Gorkhaland: GRC

SUMMIT REPORT KALIMPONG, 07 NOV:

The Gorkha Rastriya Congress [GRC] has yet again brought up the Sikkim-Darjeeling merger issue. The party has said that the centre is not for the formation of a new state but can be con-

vinced about a merger. Working president of GRC, Amar Kumar Lepcha, said that they have seen many failed agitations and now there is no point in organizing such agitations and harassing the public.

"We are worried about the future. We had

gone to Delhi in October to submit a memorandum to leaders like Rajnath Singh and Amit Shah and 16 others. We tried telling them about merging Darjeeling and Sikkim and they have shown positive interest on this topic," said Amar

Kumar Lepcha. Gorkhaland is unlikely now but Sikkim-Darjeeling merger is a possibility, according to GRC. "The GRC has been trying to convince the public but they are not willing to understand this," said Mr Lepcha.

State level workshop on Vulnerability Reduction Plans held



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

A state level workshop on Vulnerability Reduction Plans for National Rural Livelihood Mission [NRLM] Self Help Groups was organized at Janta Bhawan in Gangtok today under the chairmanship of Special Secretary-cum-Chief Executive Officer, Sikkim Rural Livelihood Mission [SRLM], Rural Management and Development Department, P Senthil Kumar.

The workshop was attended by Block level resource persons [BRPs] and Block and State Mission Units, three National Level Resource Persons [NRPs], two from National Institute of Rural Development [NIRD], Guwahati and Hyderabad and one from National Mission Management Unit [NMMU], New Delhi, State Project Manager, Project Managers, Deputy Project Managers and other staff of SRLM, informs a press release issued by Special Secretary-cum-Chief Executive Officer, SRLM, Mr Kumar.

In the concluding session, the NIRD resource persons appreciated the efforts and proactive approach of the SRLM and lauded the active participation of the SHG BRPs in the programme. The NIRD stated that Vulnerability Plan preparation module of Sikkim will be developed as a model template for VRP plan preparation for all other states in the country under NRLM as the process followed by the SRLM is worth replicating in other states.

National Mission Management Unit representative stated that the prepara-

tion of VRP by Sikkim can be showcased as a Best Practice in NRLM and requested SRLM to develop this best practice document and share it with NMMU for adoption in other states.

During the workshop, the CEO appreciated the quality inputs provided by NIRD and NMMU and assured them that the development VRP module for SRLM will be fully supported by the SRLM, Sikkim and directed the Block Project Managers [BPMs] to proceed to fine tune the prepared VRPs of the Ward Development Societies under SRLM in seven Intensive Blocks and submit it to SRLM for funding.

He also requested the NIRD resource person to fine tune and finalize the VRP module for NRLM out of the Sikkim experience. He directed the BPMs to develop the process followed in VRP preparation in Sikkim as a Best Practice document for promoting it to get it adopted in other states. He assured that all the worthy VRPs will be supported with funds within a month's time in order to enable BPMs to implement it in their respective block.

It may be mentioned here, NRLM has plans to reduce and mitigate vulnerability of SHGs and its members by adequately planning and supporting it. To receive this support from NRLM, the SHGs need to prepare a Vulnerability Reduction Plan encompassing each of the SHG members. To achieve this, Block resource persons of SHGs have prepared Vulnerability Reduction Plan for one Panchayat's ward in each block after the training was imparted to them.

ITBP Chungthang organises cultural programme

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

The 11th Battalion of Indo Tibetan Border Police, Chungthang, organised a unit cultural programme on 06 Nov. Commandant Rajesh Kumar Tomar along with

the family of ITBP personnel and jawans and the general public of Chungthang and Pengong attended the event, a press release informs.

The programme was organized with the aim to entertain the locals

of Chungthang and Pengong as well as foster better coordination with them. During the function, events related to patriotism, cleanliness, dance and mimicry were performed by the jawans.

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Centre launches portal for workplace...

contd from pg01

and share it with the concerned organisation's internal complaints committee (ICC), which is a mandatory requirement under the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, 2013.

Complainants will also be able to monitor the status of the inquiry initiated by the ICC.

Elaborating on the kind of offences women can complain about online, Gandhi said, "Not just physical harassment but also complaints of being transferred or terminated by an employer, discrimination due to maternity (can be filed). It is not necessary that there is physical touch but (harassment

can include) men using foul language or cracking lewd jokes."

While the law requires all organisations to submit an annual report on the number of complaints of sexual harassment received, there is no mechanism to ensure compliance.

Maneka Gandhi said she would appeal to the finance ministry once again to make the disclosure of the constitution of an ICC mandatory under Section 134 of the Companies Act, 2013 -- a proposal earlier shot down.

Under the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, 2013, it is compulsory for any organisation with 10 or more employees to set up an

ICC for addressing complaints of sexual misconduct.

A committee should consist of a presiding officer who is a woman employee at a senior level in the same organisation, at least two employees "preferably committed to the cause of women", and a member from an NGO or a person "familiar with issues relating to sexual harassment".

The committee would have powers similar to that of a civil court and have to complete its inquiry within 90 days.

An employer who doesn't constitute an ICC could face a fine of up to Rs 50,000.

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Votes Count, the Women Know

For real empowerment, women will have to continue voting more

At least half of the panchayats in Sikkim are women. A substantial leap from the 33% reservation set aside for them in Panchayat elections 2007. During the course of the same term of 2007-12, the State government increased the reservation to 40% and before the next polls were held in 2012, scaled it still higher to the present 50%. When it comes to proportional representation in a participatory democracy, this figure is close to what should come to women in an ideal equal-opportunity scenario since they constitute 48 per cent of the electorate. But we do not live in an ideal world, hence the reservation. Centuries of denial and generations of sidelining ensured that even when they could, women did not step out and take their rightful share of decision-making processes. Reservations are not necessarily the best solution, but the 50% reservation that women now enjoy in Sikkim at the panchayat level is a welcome course correction, and if allowed to join forces and effect policy implementation without interference, the new crop of rural level representatives could unveil a new facet of rural empowerment.

The reason why the 50% reservation is special can be best appreciated if put in the right perspective. In the Sikkim context, women have secured only a sliver of the elected representation sans reservation. Politics and its parties are still overwhelmingly male-dominated. The present Legislative Assembly with three women MLAs, and the most that any Assembly has had at a time in Sikkim was four (in the last term). The story of the nation is no better. Even though ladies head four of the more influential political parties in an extensively fractured national political space at present, their presence as people's representatives is still personality and family driven and not representative of their share of the population; not even remotely. In the 66 years of Independent India, women's representation in the Parliament has hobbled along from 4.4% to 9.02%. The average for women's representation for countries with elected legislatures is 15%. We have a long way to go even to meet this rather low average. Going by our trajectory so far, it will be another 50 to 60 years before we can increase women's representation by the 6% that we are still short of the international average; but by then, the international average too would have climbed.

Is reservation the answer? Indian male chauvinism is known to toss only token sops and not nurture political ambition if it can suppress or distract the expression of half of the electorate. Till the decision making process is controlled by them, expect no real headway. The debate over political reservation for women will be stretched out, diverted, digressed and diluted and granted only when the fear of women wising up to their actual strength looms real. To push an interpretation into the data, the 5% increase in women's representation in Parliament in the last 60 years has not necessarily happened because political parties became more conscious, but because women's participation in the voting process increased. In the 1962 Parliamentary elections for example, only 46.6% female voters made their way to the polling booths. By 1998, 57.86% of them were voting. With more of them deciding to exercise their franchise, it only followed that parties were forced to award more tickets to more women as well. Fact remains that increased participation is the best way for women to wrestle the representation they deserve. Stay away from the polling stations and the nation will continue to live with the incongruity displayed in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Puducherry. These six, are states where women voters actually outnumber the male voters, but their voting habits are poor, leading to a situation where their representation pales in comparison to even States that one traditionally sees as women-repressive. Sikkim throws up more respectable data. Where female voter turnout in parliamentary elections hovered in the low fifties till 1991, it jumped to 74% in the 1996 general elections itself. The record till then was the 68% turnout of women voters recorded in 1989, the only time when a lady, Dil Kumari Bhandari, was contesting for the Lok Sabha. No prizes for guessing who the ladies of Sikkim voted in strength for that year. Even in 2004, when voters in four assembly constituencies were required to vote only for the Lok Sabha [and thus has little reason to brave the monsoons and vote], 76% women made it to the polling stations. And, in the 2009 Assembly elections, women voters in Sikkim outperformed the men. Against 81.46% male voter turnout in Election 2009, Sikkim's women posted an 82.77% turnout, a national record! It will be interesting to see how the male-female voter turnout breaks up for the recently concluded panchayat polls in Sikkim. One hopes that the involvement is sustained, because, as past experience has shown, for real empowerment, women will just have to vote more.

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Qatar blockade and Saudi Arabia: could there be a power shift in Doha?

CHRISTOPHER DAVIDSON
theconversation.com

When it erupted in June 2017, the "Qatar crisis" drew immediate speculation that the emirate's enemies, who accuse it of sponsoring terrorism and destabilising the region, were preparing for some sort of military action.

After all, since the inconclusive resolution to an earlier dispute with Qatar in 2014, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have been determined to take a bolder and more assertive stance, bloodily intervening in Yemen and, according to recently leaked emails purportedly sent by the UAE's ambassador in Washington, at one point even coming "pretty close to doing something in Qatar".

Whereas Barack Obama was highly unlikely to ever support such action against Doha, later hinting that he would no longer reflexively side with Saudi Arabia in its squabbles, Donald Trump's administration seemed at first to re-open the door to more drastic measures.

Trump pointedly chose Saudi Arabia for his first official overseas visit, on which he signed several big-ticket arms deals. And just hours after Riyadh severed relations with Doha, he tweeted that, when it comes to terrorism funding, "all reference was pointing to Qatar" and that "perhaps this will be the beginning of the end to the horror of terrorism".

But the White House was soon apprised of the full extent of the US's military facilities in Qatar, including the difficult-to-move forward headquarters of US Central Command (CENTCOM), and the secretary of state, Rex Tillerson, hurriedly attempted to strike a more conciliatory tone. For a moment, it seemed any immediate danger to Doha had



subsided. Indeed, as recently reported, Trump had apparently given an emphatic "no" to any military action, preferring to leave the quarrelling Gulf states to their own devices.

Nonetheless, even as the days dragged into weeks and then months, it seemed that Saudi Arabia and the UAE, along with their allies in the "Anti-Terror Quartet", Bahrain and Egypt, were gaining the upper hand.

STALEMATE

While Qatar received aid and public support from both Turkey and Iran, the Quartet-led economic blockade was undoubtedly beginning to bite. By the end of July, Doha had already had to plough more than US\$40bn of its US\$340bn sovereign wealth fund into local banks, while simultaneously selling off stakes in several foreign companies. Facing further downgrades by ratings agencies and now a negative credit outlook, Qatar's position is still very shaky; the Quartet can probably afford to sit it out and wait for Doha to come to the table.

The accompanying mud-slinging contest being fought out in the international media by the two camps seems unlikely to tip the balance any time soon. The Quartet's siege-like position seems relatively strong and its members are apparently impervious or indifferent to reputational assaults.

That much was clear from their recent ministerial meeting in New York, where they concluded there would be no dialogue with Qatar until all "demands and principles" were met.

And yet, there are now strong signs that Riyadh has also begun preparing a parallel "Plan B": a campaign to promote the replacement of Doha's current ruler, Emir Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, with a more compliant, pro-Quartet client.

With the Saudi crown prince, and king-in-waiting, Mohammed bin Salman al-Saud probably impatient for quicker results than the blockade can deliver, a coup d'état must be appealing. The Saudis need some sort of decisive victory to distract from their disastrous Yemen campaign – and Salman is currently embarked on a "night of the long knives" at home, locking up a whole range of political opponents in the name of reform and "returning to moderate Islam". A diplomatic (or forceful) victory abroad would be just the thing to defuse the domestic tension.

VAIN HOPES

Even if it is bloodless, beyond the White House such a coup might not fully suit the US's broader interests – its military facilities could be affected and a delicate balancing game between Saudi Arabia and Iran could be

disrupted. But barring any high-profile defections in the Qatari military, or a sudden collapse in the current emir's popularity – perhaps triggered by severe economic hardship – a coup does not yet seem a credible prospect.

Any moves that have been made in public aren't cutting much ice. September saw a strange "Qatar opposition" conference held in London – it only seemed to feature one prominent Qatari and mostly featured Western speaker-circuit regulars espousing vague notions of bringing democracy to Doha. Whatever its intended purpose, the conference made close to zero discernible impact.

In another odd move, the Saudis recently decided to publicly endorse and elevate two hitherto obscure Qatari ruling family members: the uncle-nephew team of Abdullah bin Ali al-Thani and Sultan bin Suhaim al-Thani. Based in London and Paris, they have only a distant claim to the throne and rarely feature in Qatari public life. Until Abdullah's apparently successful "negotiation" to allow Qatari pilgrims to travel to Mecca this summer, most in Doha had either never heard of him or simply forgotten who he was.

If anything, this particular Saudi strategy is backfiring. In his first televised interview since the crisis began, Emir Tamim struck a defiant and confident tone. Indubitably, most Qataris seem well aware that a Doha under the control of such characters would probably end up little more than a Bahrain-like Saudi vassal state, with all of the attendant downsides: complete loss of control over foreign affairs, censorship, and of course significant repression.

[The writer is Associate Professor of Middle East Politics, Durham University]

Four things the Paradise Papers tell us about global business and political elites

RONEN PALAN
theconversation.com

The so-called Paradise Papers may sound familiar – leaked documents from a law firm that specialises in offshore services reveal how the global elite avoids paying taxes. Even the name has the same ring to it as last year's Panama Papers expose. But the Paradise Papers are different, reflecting the complexity of the global offshore tax system.

Panama is generally considered among tax haven experts as one of the least reformed corners of the offshore world. International rules regarding tax evasion and avoidance are intended to help national governments to pursue their own offenders, but the Panama Papers revealed that the country was being used primarily by the business and political elites of countries like Russia, China and many more in Latin America and Asia; countries where the governments are closely linked to business and which are less likely to use tools provided by new international rules to pursue offenders. Hence, relatively few Americans or Europeans were caught in the Panama story. And Mossack Fonseca, the law firm at the centre of the leak has since been discredited.

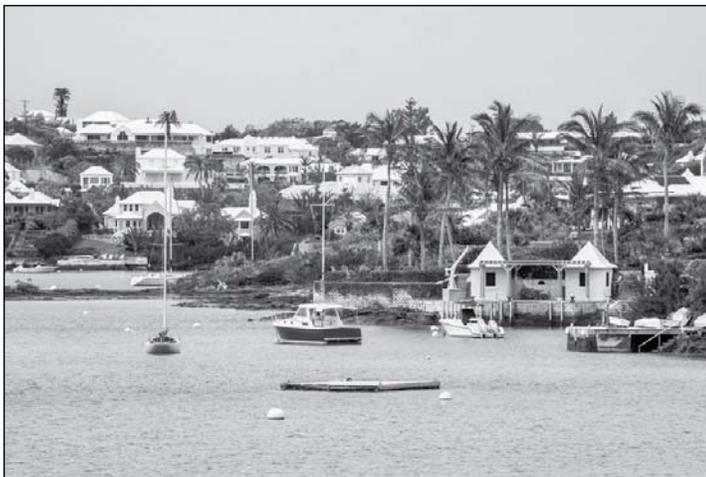
The Paradise Papers reveal the goings on of the elites of the offshore world – this time in the supposedly highly-regulated havens of the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Singapore and the like. All places that received a fairly clean bill of health during the OECD peer review process only a few years ago. The law firm at the centre of this new leak, Appleby, insists there is "no evidence of wrongdoing" in any of the revelations.

Nonetheless, the Paradise Papers will tell us a lot about the activities of business and political elites of well-regulated countries like the US and UK – implicating big multinationals such as Nike and Apple, and individuals including the British Queen.

1. TAX AVOIDANCE IS A BOOMING INDUSTRY Clearly, jurisdictions such as the Caymans Islands and Bermuda that levy no income tax, capital gains tax, VAT, sales, wealth or corporate tax, still attract a great deal of businesses. Why, for instance, has the Duchy of Lancaster, the Queen's private portfolio, invested in two offshore funds, in Cayman and Ber-

muda? After all, the Queen pays tax only voluntarily.

A more charitable interpretation is that any big investor who is seeking to diversify their portfolio would inevitably end up using offshore funds. The papers show that about £10m (US\$13m) of the Queen's private money was invested offshore – a very small percentage of her wealth. There is nothing



Trouble in paradise: Bermuda is at the centre of the Paradise Papers leak.

illegal about this but the ethics of it have been questioned.

Practically, the entire wealth investment industry – the industry that invests for the rich and the wealthy of our world – operates through the offshore world. And the reason why is simple. Each fund or transaction, or aeroplane or yacht, or whatever that one cares to register in the Caymans or Bermuda, is not subject to tax. And it's hidden from public view.

2. SECRECY PREVAILS THROUGH TRUSTS Despite a spate of new regulations, the Paradise Papers show that anyone who wishes to conceal their affairs from competitors, allies, governments or the public can still do so with great ease. And they can do so through the facilities of a "trust", an archaic Anglo-Saxon instrument that serves as a foolproof shield from scrutiny.

We have learned, for instance, that Wilbur Ross, the US secretary of commerce, had commercial links to Vladimir Putin's family, which operated through a system of linked trusts located in various offshore jurisdictions. I do not think that even the Mueller inquiry in the US into the Trump administration's links with Russia could have pierced the veil of secrecy offered by offshore trusts.

But the leaked documents from law firm Appleby reveal that any complex business deals that would involve concealment and subterfuge would work their way through trusts. It is high time we do something about these trusts.

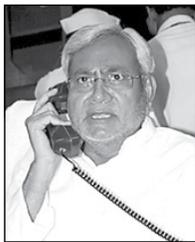
3. HIGHLY COMPLEX TOOLS ARE USED The Paradise Papers show how complex financial innovations such as the use of derivatives and financial swaps arrangements, can be used for tax avoidance. This is an area of avoidance that is normally not well understood and scantily studied.

New research colleagues and I are conducting, however, has found that cross-currency interest rate swaps are used pervasively in tax minimisation mechanisms. It is difficult to detect and involves a parent and subsidiary companies swapping a loan in one currency to another. This swaps the risks and the interest rate of the original currency for the subsidiary's – a legitimate risk minimisation instrument. At the same time, this facilitates moving funds offshore to low tax jurisdictions.

4. THE LAW NEEDS TO CHANGE Many professional service firms operate through offshore jurisdictions. They all claim to be highly professional, following not only the letter, but also the spirit of the law. But if these firms are not directly liable for the activities of their clients, the offshore world will continue to thrive. These firms take advantage of regulatory loopholes to arbitrate between different rules and jurisdictions in order to minimise taxation. The question is for how long such practices are going to be considered legitimate.

The Paradise Papers reveal how little the world really knows about the level of tax avoidance that takes place. UK citizens, for instance, can legally invest in offshore funds and set up companies in those havens. But they must reveal these holdings to the tax man. We do not know whether those named in the papers did, and we do not know whether the tax authorities will do something about those who did not. We only know that a lot is going through offshore. The Paradise Papers show that, despite promises of the opposite, opacity is still pervasive in the offshore world.

[The writer is Professor of International Politics, City, University of London]



Nitish dials Manipur CM over assault on Bihari students in NIT

PATNA, NOV 7 (PTI): Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar today telephoned his Manipur counterpart N Biren Singh to express concern over reported assault on students of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) at Imphal, many of whom hailed from the state.

Kumar urged the Manipur CM to put a check on such incidents and ensure adequate security to students hailing from Bihar, an official release said here.

The Chief Minister also asked his senior officers to coordinate with their counterparts in Manipur and look into the matter following which Director General of Police P K Thakur and Principal Secretary (Home) Amir Subhani spoke to their counterparts in the north-eastern state, the release added.

Several students, many of them from Bihar, were reportedly injured yesterday when some locals barged into the NIT campus and beat them up.

A report from Imphal said that heated arguments had taken place during a football match between locals and hostellers on Sunday last. In the wake of it some locals barged into campus yesterday and thrashed students, many of them from Bihar.

The students have alleged that when the police was called, they sided with the locals and beat them up with batons and also took some of them into custody.

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Another ex-armyman asked to prove citizenship in Assam

GUWAHATI, NOV 7 (PTI): A retired armyman here has been served a notice to prove his citizenship, a month after a Foreigners' Tribunal in Assam had sent a similar notice to a retired Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) of the army.

Mahiruddin Ahmed, who retired as a havildar from the Indian Army in 2004, along with his wife, was served notices by a foreigners tribunal in

Barpeta district on September 16.

The notices claimed that both of them had entered India from Bangladesh after March 25, 1971, without any valid papers.

The tribunal had asked him to appear before it yesterday with the proof of his citizenship, Ahmed told reporters.

"It is very painful and shocking that we are subjected to such humil-

iation after serving in the Army," he said.

Stating that he was born in 1964 in Barpeta, Ahmed wondered how could he have joined the Army if he was not an Indian citizen.

Last month, Mohammad Azmal Hoque, who had been a JCO in the army, was asked to prove his Indian citizenship and that he was not an "illegal Bangladeshi immigrant" by a foreigners tribunal,

which had charged him with entering the country in 1971 without proper documents.

Hoque, who had retired from the Army on September 30 last year, after serving in the force for 30 years, was living in Guwahati post-retirement.

He had received a notice from the tribunal, which placed him in the "Doubtful Voter" category and asked him to

appear before a local tribunal on October 13 with relevant documents to prove his citizenship.

"Why do I have to be humiliated so many times? I request the prime minister, president and home minister to put an end to this harassment of a citizen," said Hoque, adding that he was not the first person from his family to be served such a notice as in 2012, his wife Mamtaj

Begum was also summoned by the tribunal to prove her citizenship.

The Assam Police, however, later apologised to him as it was a case of mistaken identity.

The foreigners tribunals were set up in the state under the Foreigner (Tribunal) Order of 1964 to determine the status of citizens whose Indian nationality is found to be doubtful.

The number of for-

igners tribunals was increased from 36 to 100 in 2015 following an increase in the number of cases related to alleged illegal migrants.

The Assam Accord signed in 1985 between AASU (All Assam Students' Union) and the Centre had fixed March 25, 1971 as the cut-off date for detection and deportation of illegal Bangladeshi migrants in Assam.

Indo-Bangladesh joint military exercise begins in Meghalaya

SHILLONG, NOV 7 (PTI): The Indian Army and its Bangladesh counterpart have begun their week-long joint training exercise at the Joint Warfare Centre in Umroi cantonment of Meghalaya.

The Indo-Bangladesh exercise, the seventh such joint training exercise, is held alternately in India and Bangladesh every year to build and promote positive relations between the two Armies in view of an "emerging threat from transnational terrorism".

General Officer Commanding Gajraj Corps, Lt



Gen AS Bedi, yesterday inaugurated the joint exercise 'SAMPRITI' in which 14 officers from the Bangladesh Army

and 20 officers from the Indian Army were participating.

In his speech, Lt Gen Bedi welcomed the for-

eign contingent and briefed them on the week-long exercise, an Army spokesperson, Lt Col Suneet Newton, said

in a statement.

"The Indian Army believes that the joint Army exercise is a signal that both India and Bangladesh understand the emerging threat of transnational terrorism and are united in countering this menace," the statement said.

The exercise also aims to enhance inter-operability between the two nations and enrich from each other's experience while carrying out counter insurgency/counter terrorist operations, the statement said.



Indo-Bangladesh ocean research collaboration to resume

PANAJI, NOV 7 (PTI): India and Bangladesh are likely to resume their collaboration in the oceanic research after the earlier attempts to share the expertise failed due to diplomatic issues.

CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) and Dhaka University had signed memorandum of understanding in the year 2015 following which NIO's ship had ventured for the research but was not allowed to enter Bangladesh's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

"During that time the collaboration that had started between two countries (India and Bangladesh) was at scientists' level. The ministries of both the countries were not involved," CSIR-NIO Director Sunil Kumar Singh told PTI.

He said the Indian

researchers were not allowed to enter the exclusive economic zone of Bangladesh by their government. "Now the collaboration will resume in near future as it would be done at the level of ministries of both the countries," he said.

Singh said the mission which was set as a part of Indo-Bangla collaboration was "not suspended" as "our researchers did work in our own areas but could not go into Bangladesh's EEZ." He said that the collaboration will resume soon with Myanmar also being considered to be part of it.

Indo-Bangladesh initiative was announced by then Union Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan in presence of senior researchers in Goa in the year 2015.



Boney M to perform at Kohima on Dec 10

KOHIMA, NOV 7 (PTI): Popular German vocal group Boney M will perform here on December 10 at the Hornbill festival.

Making the announcement during a press conference at Rattle and Hum here today, Convenor of Nagaland Outdoors Club (NOC) Kethosituo Elvis Mepfuo said Boney M would feature the band's lead vocalist Liz Mitchell and others.

Everything has been contracted and seven member crew of the band would arrive on December 9 for their live performance, which has

been coined as 'Christmas with Boney M', he said, adding that "the band would be performing their original hits of the 80s and 90s".

Boney M was formed in 1976 and achieved popularity during the disco era of the late 1970s.

Elvis informed that tickets for the concert of the German band would be sold out November 13. Music lovers can book their tickets over phone by contacting +91 9089350469, he said.

Five lucky ticket holders from each category would be get an opportu-

nity to have dinner with Boney M, he said.

Elvis also said that though the state government would be shifting the International Rock Contest and music festival to Dimapur, Boney M concert will be staged in Kohima.

On the government's view that the Rock Contest needs to shifted due to security reasons and problems of traffic congestion in the State capital, he said, Dimapur is no better than Kohima but the main reason should be sharing of the much hyped Hornbill Festival to different parts of the State.

Asiatic Society launches digital archives, website

KOLKATA, NOV 6 (PTI): About two lakh pages of journals from as far back as 1788 till date have been put online as a part of the digital archives of the Asiatic Society, a research organisation of national importance here.

The publications and memoirs will now be available on www.asiaticsocietykolkata.org, which was launched today, Asiatic Society Publication Secretary Ramkrishna Chatterjee said.

Asiatic Society President, Professor Isha Mahammed said very old manuscripts, old paintings by Europeans and works of famous sculptors were also being digitised and uploaded on the website.

"It had started from library, then to manuscripts which had already been completed totalling 2 lakh pages. All are being put on public domain," Mahammed said.

Former Prasar Bharati CEO Jawahar Sircar, present at the launch and architect of the 14-point museum reforms to link them,

said, "The Asiatic Society is a repository of more heritage, more wisdom than perhaps any other body."

"The sheer volume of digitised catalogues and manuscripts... will be put up on public domain, with a huge quantum of knowledge for researchers," he said.

According to Secretary and Curator of Victoria Memorial Hall Dr Jayanta Sengupta, it is a small step, a combined endeavour to digitise materials for public domain. It also has a huge revenue-generating potential.

"In Victoria we have seen how big the demand is. We acquired collections of work of Abanindranath Tagore and Rabindranath Tagore. For over past three years, we got 45 requests from scholars for image of Abanindranath's paintings," he said, referring to Asiatic Society's digitisation of rare ancient paintings.

The publications page of the Asiatic Society contains categories like books, bulletin, catalogues, journals and memoirs among others.

485 fake Rs 2K notes seized by BSF along Bangla border in WB

KOLKATA, NOV 7 (PTI): Fake currency notes with a face value of Rs 9.70 lakh have been sized from along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal's Malda district, the BSF today said.

A senior officer of the border guarding force said Iqramul Seikh (50), a resident of Kaliachak in Malda, has also been apprehended by them after fake notes were allegedly seized from him yesterday night.

Seikh, he said, was nabbed as part of a special operation planned by the Border Security Force to check the fake Indian currency notes (FICN) menace along the Indo-Bangla border.

"A total of 485 fake notes of Rs 2,000 were seized from Seikh. The face value of the seized currency is Rs 9.70 lakh," he said.

The man has been handed over to the local police, he said. The BSF, in the area of the south Bengal frontier, has seized FICN of the face value of Rs 53.56 lakh and has apprehended seven smugglers this year, he said.

When an Indian king offered shelter to 1,000 Polish orphans

NEW DELHI, NOV 7 (PTI): When the horrors of the Second world war left thousands of Polish children orphaned in 1942, Jam Sahab Maharaja of Nawanganar, a princely state in Gujarat, welcomed them with warmth and offered them shelter.

He built a camp near the Balachadi seaside estate, where the children not only regained their physical strength, but also rediscovered their lost childhoods.

To document this lesser known story of benevolence, Polish director Tomas Stankiewicz is making a documentary that offers to tell the extraordinary story of the Second World War children refugee camp in Gujarat.

Titled, "Brave Brunch in India", the story is being told through the perspective of two children -- an 11-year-old Polish boy and the nine-year-old daughter of the Maharaja.

The narrative is based on the first-hand accounts of an 80-year-



old Polish man, who was around 17 when he spent his days in the Maharaja's camp.

"This was in the middle of the war. The children who came to India recovered from whatever they went through in Russia.

"There was a school for them, they sang and danced and were given full freedom to practise their own religion," Monika Kowalczyk-Szumowska, one of the producers of the film, said.

Szumowska added that build-

ing the film around a single person's narrative ensured it was short yet impactful. The creators have decided to make the film in an online interactive format.

"We want children to use it as an educational tool," she said.

The production also takes into account the period after the war was over, and the children had grown up.

In 1945, when Poland was on its way to become a communist country controlled by the Soviets, the country wanted its children to be sent back. But, many of them were unwilling to leave India. So, the Maharaja decided to adopt them.

"The children stayed in India for 5 years. Whosoever was under 18 at that time was adopted by the Maharaja, a Polish priest and a British officer.

"They adopted nearly 200 kids," Szumowska said.

The documentary takes from an earlier film "Brave Brunch: The Uprising through Children's Eyes", which was about the Warsaw Uprising of 1944.

It talked about the 63-day-long heroic struggle to liberate Warsaw, the Polish capital, from Nazi Ger-

many occupation during the Second World War.

"Brave Brunch in India" is scheduled to be launched in October 2018.

The project will also include a book, which is expected to be translated in Hindi and other regional languages.

Szumowska said it was one of the greatest stories of that time as it cemented warm relations between Europeans and Indians.

"It is an important event of the history because a lot of Europeans needed help and India extended their support. It showcases the beautiful character and spirit of the people here.

"But unfortunately it was kept as a secret in Poland due to communism. And when we came to India we realised it was not well known here either. I think it is important to talk about it at least now," she said.

Big hearts, sharp minds bowl over India's Italian boxing coach

POONAM MEHRA GUWAHATI, NOV 7 (PTI): Left thoroughly "confused" by the sheer enormity of India at first, the country's first foreign coach for women youth boxers, Raffaele Bergamasco, says the "big hearts" and "sharp minds" of his wards have only added to his astonishment three months into the job.

Bergamasco, who has coached the Italian youth and senior teams of both men and women, took up the Indian offer in July this year.

"From 2001 to 2007, I was coaching the elite women's Italian team. From 2008 to 2016, I coached men -- youth and elite -- for Italy. I have participated (as a coach) in three Olympics -- Beijing, London, Rio," Bergamasco told PTI in an interview here.

Bergamasco's trial by fire starts at this month's Youth World Champion-



ships for women, scheduled from November 19 in Guwahati.

Asked to speak of his India experience so far, Bergamasco spoke fondly of the roller-coaster ride, which also included learning English and Hindi to add to the fluent Italian he is accustomed to.

"Being in India has been very enjoyable. The first day I came here, it was very confusing. It's a very big country with

a lot of people but after two days, I fell in love with India.

"I have been studying English for five days a week otherwise it would have been very difficult for me. I have to speak to so many people all the time in the camp, so it was important for me," he explained.

"I have also learnt some Hindi. I can say 'namaste', 'namaskaar', 'aap kaise ho? (How are you),' he said grinning.

Bergamasco, under whose tutelage the Italian boxers have gone on to win world and European level medals, said he foresees a bright future for India.

"India is a very strong boxing nation because of two qualities which I did not see in my Italian boxers. A big big heart, and a very sharp mind. They have to work a little bit on the technical aspects such as coordination," he said.

"India's future is very bright. Boxing will be very big in India. The boxers in India have what it takes to get an Olympic gold medal," he predicted.

Bergamasco was also full of praise for the Indian coaches who are working with him, including chief coach Bhaskar Bhatt.

"I can only say thank you to the Indian coaches who are working with me. They are a very good team, they helped me in picking up English. Step by step I think, we are getting in sync in planning," he said.

Asked what the aspects he wants to improve in Indian boxing, Bergamasco said, "They have to change diet, change timing to ensure that every aspect of training is compartmentalised. They are adapting slowly although. I know it has been difficult for them.

Surat Raj Subba wins Kanchenjunga Marathon for 2nd time

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 07 NOV: Defending champion, Surat Raj Subba of Sikkim has again emerged champion of the Kanchenjunga Marathon 2017 for the second consecutive time. He finished the full marathon of 42 KMs from Gochala to Yuksam with a timing of 3 hours and 13 minutes, a press release informs.

In the full marathon, Uttam Bhujel of Kalimpong stood second [3 hours and 15 minutes] and Prabal Chettri finished on the third po-



sition [3 hours and 19 minutes]. A total of 18 runners participated in the full marathon.

In half marathon [men] of 21 KMs from Phedang to Yuksam, Pu-

ran Rai of Kalimpong secured the first position, Bhusan Gurung of Yuksam finished second with Sojan Limboo of Yuksam finishing on the third position. Twenty-six runners participated in the half marathon for men.

In half marathon women, Chandra Kala Sharma of Gangtok finished first, Soniya Rai of Kurseong stood second and Brigid Kimitwai of Kenya took the third position.

The prize distribution ceremony of the marathon was held at Yuksam today.



Mary, Sonia in final; 5 others end with bronze at Asian boxing

HO CHI MINH CITY (VIETNAM), NOV 7 (PTI): MC Mary Kom (48kg) remained on course for a fifth Asian Championships gold after making the finals along with Sonia Lather (57kg) while five other Indians settled for bronze medals at the continental showpiece here today.

Former world champion L Sarita Devi (64kg), Priyanka Chaudhary (60kg), Lovlina Borgohain (69kg), Seema Punia (+81kg) and Shiksha (54kg) signed off with bronze medals after losing their respective semifinal bouts.

Mary Kom started the day brightly for India, defeating Japan's Tsubasa Komura in a unanimous 5-0 verdict to make the summit clash for the fifth time in her six appearances at the event.

Should she go on to win the final tomorrow, which will be against North Korea's Kim Hyang Mi who got the better of Mongolian Nandintsetseg Myagmardulam, the Indian would be claiming her first Asian gold medal in the 48kg category.

"It is a very special medal for me like all others I have won because every medal has a story behind it," Mary Kom told PTI.

"I am delighted to be in the final. I was expecting a tough fight but I managed to figure Komura out early enough.

I am already looking towards the final but I am not going to think too much and put pressure on myself," she said.

"I will just go out and do my best, just like I have done so far in this tournament."

The 35-year-old Rajya Sabha MP, who is also a former Olympic bronze-medallist and a five-time world champion, returned to her preferred weight category after five years of competing in 51kg, which was made an Olympic category in 2012.

Once again, it was a bout fought

largely on defensive tactics. The Japanese boxer seemed too wary to go near the Indian, who had to quite literally lunge at Komura for her right hooks to connect.

Mary Kom's patience with Komura's tactics ran out in the second round and she increased the pace and ferocity of her own attacks to unsettle the Japanese.

The shell guard to stave off Komura's feeble right straights ensured that the Manipuri hardly took any blow in what turned out to be a lopsided contest.

Sonia, in contrast, had to steer past a very aggressive Yodgoroy Mirzaeva, who lacked accuracy in placement of punches but not persistence.

Mirzaeva's wild swings were easy to deflect for the Haryana-boxer, a former silver-medallist at this event, but it was nonetheless a draining contest given the Uzbek's relentless attempts at connecting something.

In the end, Sonia was unanimously adjudged the victor and will be up against China's Yin Junhua in the summit clash tomorrow.

However, things went downhill for India after that as Asian Games bronze-medallist Sarita went down to China's Dou Dan in the semifinals.

Shiksha too ended with a bronze medal after being out-punched by Chinese Taipei's former youth world champion Lin Yu-Ting in the semifinals.

Also signing off with bronze medals were Priyanka and Lovlina. Priyanka lost to Korean Oh Yeonji, while Lovlina went down to Kazakhstan's Valentina Khalzova.

In India's last bout of the day, Seema, who got a direct entry into the semis courtesy the small size of the draw, lost to Kazakhstan's Guzal Ismatova to end with a bronze medal.

Smog affect: Hry govt fixes new timings of schools

CHANDIGARH, NOV 7 (PTI): In view of the dense smog that has engulfed the state during the past few days, the Haryana government has decided that the timings of all government, government aided and unaided private schools will be from 9 am to 3.30 pm till November 30.

Education Minister Ram Bilas Sharma said in an official release that these orders will be applicable with immediate effect.

Thick smog mainly caused by stubble burning continued to envelop many parts of Punjab and neighbouring Haryana today affecting normal life.

The MeT Department here today said the situation was unlikely to improve over the next two days as winds were calm and rains unlikely during next four days.

The smog has even caused fatal accidents at some places in the two states during the past few days.



Sikkim Inter Church Football Tournament kicks off at Paljor Stadium

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 07 NOV:

Sikkim Christian Sports Committee kicked off the 6th edition of Sikkim Inter Church Football Tournament here at Paljor Stadium in Gangtok today.

The opening match was played between EPCS Saramsa and PFC Martam wherein Amit Subba and Smile Rai scored two goals each for EPCS Saramsa securing a win over PFC Martam 2-0.

Twenty-six churches from across the State are participating in the tournament.

Secretary-organizing committee, Andrew Chettri, stated that the committee has been organizing the tournament since the past many years and the idea of holding

the tournament is to facilitate a platform for hidden talents of the State along with building better relationship with other churches of Sikkim.

Likewise, by holding such tournament the committee wants to generate awareness amongst the youth to avoid anti-social activities and step into the field of sports instead.

It is informed that from 08 Nov, two matches will be played daily. The quarter finals of the tourney will be held on 17 Nov with the final match scheduled to be held on 21 Nov.

The opening ceremony of the tournament was attended by president of United Christian Welfare Society of Sikkim, Patrus Gurung,

as chief guest along with president of Sikkim Pentecostal Council Churches, Smile Gurung, as guest of honour.

President of the organizing committee, Bhupal Basnet, stated that the theme of the tournament this year is 'Goal for Glory'. He went on to add that every player should perform well not just for their own sake but for the glory of God.

The winner of the tournament will be awarded with cash prize of Rs 30,000 with Rs 20,000 for the runner-up along with trophies.

On 08 Nov, HFC Ranka will take on Bethany Marchak in the first match while United Mangan will play against Geetang West Sikkim in the second match of the day.

"Last prince" of Awadh dies- in decrepit "palace"

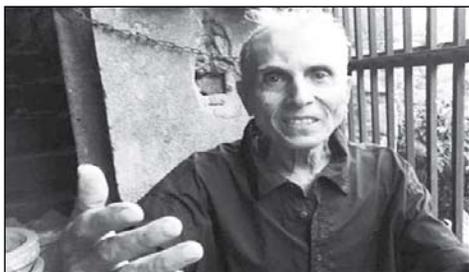
SOURAV ROY BARMAN AND SALONI BHATIA NEW DELHI, NOV 7 (PTI): The "last prince of Awadh" was found dead on September 2 in Delhi's 'Malcha Mahal', police said.

Under ordinary circumstances, that would have conveyed the story, followed by a brief obituary narrating his lavish life and times.

But the story of Ali Raza, known as Cyrus, is no ordinary tale.

So, it can be rewritten thus:

The "last prince of Awadh", who lived in abject penury, was found dead on September 2 in Delhi's 'Malcha Mahal', a Tughlak-era hunting lodge, tucked deep



inside a patch of forest, overrun by moss and disrepair.

He was the last surviving member of a family that traced its lineage to the royals of Awadh - a claim that was never verified.

The news of the death was broken by a section of the media yesterday, over

two months after a team of police officers found him lying motionless inside the derelict 14th century structure.

He had been staying here since 1985, after his imperious mother Begum Wilayat Mahal, who allegedly swallowed crushed diamonds to

death in the early '90s, forced the then Union government to provide them with accommodation behoving their royal antecedents.

She claimed she was a direct descendant of the kings of Awadh, who were known for opulence and luxury.

Armed with an unparalleled sense of entitlement, the Begum started camping in a first class waiting room of the New Delhi Railway Station in the '70s, demanding recognition for the sacrifice made by her family during the 1857 war of independence, also known as the Sepoy Mutiny.

Sometime in 1985, the Begum and her two children - Cyrus and his sister Sakina

- moved into the lodge, which was then known as 'Bistadari ruins'.

Old pictures show the Begum posing in regal attire inside the lodge, its beds covered in Persian carpets and table holding expensive porcelain crockery.

"She hung a metal sign outside: Entry restricted.

Cautious of hound dogs. Proclamation: Intruders shall be gundown (sic)," the BBC reported.

Subsequently, the place came to be known as 'Malcha Mahal' for its close proximity to Malcha Marg, which houses the Delhi elite including diplomats, businessmen and authors.

The family chose a life of

isolation and notorious hostility such as letting loose a pack of ferocious dogs on outsiders who came knocking as they zealously guarded their royal status and studiously avoided the commoner.

Foreign correspondents posted to New Delhi were treated somewhat better.

"Ordinariness is not just a crime, it is a sin," Sakina had declared to a reporter, the BBC reported, adding how the prince once dismissed the Mughals as "common as dirt".

However, over the years, the bloodhounds perished, as did the Begum and her daughter.

And now Cyrus. "The body of the prince

was found on September 2. There were some contact numbers found from the spot but none of them could be reached. We waited for 72 hours for anyone to come and claim the body but no one came.

"We sought help from the Delhi Waqf Board and he was buried near Delhi Gate on September 5. A post-mortem was carried out and it said that he died due to natural causes.

No foul play was found. A detailed autopsy report is awaited," a senior police officer said.

The tenth and last Nawab, Wajid Ali Shah, ruled Awadh for nine years till 1856, and died near Kolkata in 1887.

India's effort in renewable energy led to in solar price: US Senator

WASHINGTON, Nov 7 [PTI]: India's massive effort towards renewable energy has resulted in considerable drop in solar price and the country now believes that the solar power is cheaper than coal without subsidy, US lawmakers have been told.

"I was really struck by just the transition in this single year between April and June, driven I think by decisions in India related to that dropping price," influential Senator Jeff Merkley said during a Congressional hearing last week.

Merkley said during the hearing on Energy and International Development that because of India's effort in renewable energy there has been a considerable drop in solar price.

He referred to his conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the transition.

"At one point in a conversation with the Prime Minister in India, he was relaying - this is now outdated, but he wanted to reach two-thirds of the 300 million folks in India with electricity from coal-powered plants and a third with renewable," he said.

"And I asked what was driving the separation between those two, and said it was a very high interest rate on a renewable energy projects which I think he pegged at about 15 per cent. What kind of work are we seeing in the international community to provide affordable financing for renewable energy, electricity?" Merkley asked.

S Korea 'in talks to buy nuclear submarine' from US: reports

SEOUL, Nov 7 [AFP]: South Korea is negotiating with the United States to buy nuclear-powered submarines to guard against threats from Pyongyang, according to local reports as President Donald Trump said Seoul would buy "billions of dollars" of US weapons.

Nuclear-powered submarines can stay submerged for months, giving them a far greater range than their diesel-powered counterparts, and are also crucial to any seaborne nuclear deterrent.

Such a purchase would redraw the balance of power in north-east Asia, and could trigger a regional arms race.

Japan -- another US ally -- does not have nuclear-powered subma-



rines, and is barred from having a military under its post-World War II pacifist constitution.

And while China's increasingly powerful navy does include them in its fleet, Beijing would undoubtedly be infuriated

by any such acquisition by Seoul.

After a summit in South Korea with his counterpart Moon Jae-In, Trump today said Seoul would be buying a large amount of US weapons "whether it's planes,

whether it's missiles, no matter what it is".

"South Korea will be ordering billions of dollars of that equipment, which for them makes a lot of sense and for us it means jobs, reducing our trade deficit with South

Korea," he said.

While Moon did not give specific details of the purchases, he described them as essential for national defence.

Multiple South Korean media outlets said the two leaders ordered officials to begin the purchase talks "immediately", citing a senior official who gave an anonymous briefing.

"The strategic assets under discussion include a nuclear-powered submarine and a sophisticated surveillance asset," the reports quoted a senior official of Moon's office as saying.

"We will have close consultations with the US about these two in the future," the official was quoted as saying.

Seoul heavily relies on its security guarantor Washington, which has

28,500 troops stationed in the South, for national defence to protect itself against potential attacks by the nuclear-armed North Korea.

But growing atomic and missile threats by the North in recent years prompted calls in the South to have more sophisticated weapons of its own, with some even demanding that Seoul develop its own nuclear weapon.

The country is currently barred from developing atomic weapons under the deal with the US, which in turn offers Seoul "nuclear umbrella" against potential attacks by the North.

Pyongyang staged a sixth atomic test in September and has test-launched multiple missiles capable of reaching the US mainland, spark-

ing global alarm over its military ambition.

Trump also said the US had agreed to remove a 500 kilogram (1,100 pound) warhead weight limit on Seoul's ballistic missiles.

The allies had agreed in principle to do so in September following the North's latest nuclear test, by far it is most powerful to date.

Moon, noting "ever-growing threats" from the North's missiles and nuclear weapons, said Tuesday the two allies had reached a "final agreement" to remove the restriction.

"We also reaffirmed our stance to put maximum pressure and sanctions on the North until it... comes forward for genuine negotiations," he told reporters.

US Air Force failed to report Texas gunman's conviction

HOUSTON, Nov 7 [PTI]: The gunman who killed 26 people at a church in Texas could buy weapons because the US Air Force did not submit his criminal history to the FBI as required by military rules, authorities have said.

The gunman, identified as 26-year-old Devin Patrick Kelley, wearing black tactical-style gear walked into the church and started firing from an assault rifle just after the Sunday morning service began at the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs.

Kelley was previously a member of the US Air Force and served at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico from 2010 until his discharge. He was court-martialed in 2012 for assault on his spouse and their child.

An Air Force officer failed to enter Kelley's domestic violence court-martial into a national database that would have barred him from buying weapons, NBC News said.

Top Air Force brass ordered a full review of how the service handled Kelley's conviction at a general court-martial in 2012, Ann Stefanek, a spokeswoman for the Air Force, said in a state-

ment.

Kelley's name should have been entered in the National Criminal Information Center, Stefanek said, but the Special Investigations Office at Holloman failed to transmit the domestic violence charges.

That would have alerted whoever sold Kelley his weapons that he was ineligible to own firearms under the 1996 Lautenberg Amendment, which bars anyone convicted of domestic violence even misdemeanors from getting access to guns.

Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson and Gen. David Goldfein, the Air Force chief of staff, have ordered a "complete review of the Kelley case" by the service's inspector general, Stefanek said.

The Air Force will also review its databases to make sure that records in other cases have been reported correctly and it has asked the Pentagon to review records and procedures across the Defence Department, she said.

Evidence show that Kelley died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, and multiple weapons were found in the vehicle.



The death toll from typhoon downpours and floods wreaking havoc along Vietnam's south-central coast has risen to 61, an official said today, as the country opens its doors to world leaders for this week's APEC summit. Typhoon Damrey struck just before Vietnam was set to host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] meetings in Danang, which will bring together US President Donald Trump, China's Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin, among other leaders. While Danang itself was spared the worst damage, muddy flood waters have submerged the hardest-hit provinces and swamped nearby Hoi An, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that was set to host APEC spouses later this week.

Modi's talk of doubling farmers' income will become another 'jumla': Manmohan

AHMEDABAD, Nov 7 [PTI]: Taking a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his promise of doubling farmers' income in five years, his predecessor Manmohan Singh said it would end up just being another election 'jumla' (rhetoric) as the government had no concrete plan to achieve the target.

Singh, addressing a press conference here today, said that in order to achieve the target of doubling farmers' income in five years, the agriculture sector needed to grow at a rate of 10 per cent.

He also slammed the Modi government, saying its "nice sounding slogans" such as 'Start up India, Stand up India' and 'Skill India' are not backed by effective policies.

In a veiled attack on Modi's style of functioning, Singh said leaders should also listen to criticism to take corrective action, instead of just expecting praise.

Modi has said that he dreamt of seeing farmers' income getting doubled by 2022 when the country completes 75 years of its Independence.

Singh said that the average growth of agriculture in the first three years of the Modi government "is only 1.8 per cent per year. This is half the average of agricultural growth

of 3.7 per cent, which we have achieved in our ten years (of UPA rule)."

Stating that 50 per cent of the country's population is dependent of agriculture, the former prime minister said, "Modiji has given the slogan of doubling the farm income in five years. Doubling it in five years requires an annual growth rate of farm incomes of 14 per cent."

"I do not know if doubling was meant to include the effects of inflation. If he was building



inflation at say four per cent, it still requires a growth rate of 10 per cent in real terms," Singh said.

"I have seen no programme that would achieve such a growth for the country's farmers as a whole. Perhaps, this

is another election jumla (rhetoric). But, I feel that the government would be well-advised to come forward with a credible plan to achieve a growth rate of this order," Singh said.

While sharing his views on the negative ef-

fects of demonetisation, Singh also took a dig at Modi's other initiatives -- 'Start up India, Stand up India' and 'Skill India', saying there exists no policy in place to back these "nice sounding slogans".

"We have a number of nice-sounding slogans, such as Start up India, Stand up India... But, they are not backed up by effective policies on the ground. In fact, the policies should come first before the slogans invented to describe these poli-

cies. (But today) Slogans come first and efforts come much later. This is not helpful," said Singh, an eminent economist.

"I have spent a lot of time on demonetisation because it worries me that in a world, where economic policy is becoming increasingly complex, we are not developing a culture where policy option are critically-assessed and criticism offered are heard to take a corrective action," he said while expressing his views on the note ban.

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3296 3336 3861 3863 3881 3884 3959 4023 4117 4267

4327 4378 4459 4557 4584 4859 4878 4910 4966 5065

5121 5272 5295 5303 5318 5431 5482 5587 5603 5844

5884 5906 5927 6137 6257 6330 6343 6367 6376 6396

6549 6598 6621 6676 6682 6702 6749 6890 6900 7135

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0841 0944 0990 1155 1347 1358 1376 1527 1836 1889

1902 1924 1977 2015 2076 2250 2424 2497 2519 2540

2571 2920 3064 3295 3364 3448 3464 3506 3573 3574

3771 3824 3905 3922 4230 4367 4473 4660 4669 4767

4777 4852 4861 5071 5083 5113 5176 5260 5276 5420

5625 5710 5738 5813 5874 6043 6052 6116 6119 6200

6359 6367 6424 6500 6588 6749 6852 6912 6959 7304

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KINDLY CHECK THE RESULT WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE



TALK ABOUT COMFORTABLE! Vanessa Hudgens took advantage of her empty schedule as she ventured out in a dressed down ensemble to pick up a takeaway in Los Angeles.

Milind Soman, trolled for dating 18-year-old Ankita Konwar, posts new selfie with girlfriend

Something is definitely wrong with the internet – either trolls have too much of time to waste or they find it difficult to mind their own business.

Milind Soman, who just celebrated his 52nd birthday, is holidaying in Norway with his girlfriend Ankita Konwar and updating his Instagram as always. But that's not what he's been trending for – Twitter is divided over his alleged age difference with his girlfriend.

A section of Twitter has identified certain reports which state Ankita, an air-hostess, to be 18 and Twitter is being all forms of judgemental over it. "18-yr old girl dating a 51-year old Milind Soman. Modi Govt urgently needs to start Beti padhao Beti ko Milind Soman se bachao Abhiyaan," read a comment on Twitter while reference was also drawn to his previous relationships: "Keep in mind that this is not new, and Milind Soman's last girlfriend was about 20 years younger," said a tweet.

Well, Ankita could be 18 or 27 – her age, it seems, stopped Twitter in its tracks. Ironically, Twitter isn't parochial enough to comment on Milind's physique – a frame, which the actor has maintained extensively considering his age.

Apart from nosy trolls, some [none of their business though] on Twitter



suggest Milind Soman's case to make the impossible happen: "Peeps, if Milind Soman can score a half-age with that fitness, you, get those feet in those dusty shoes and run."

The internet, however, contains a generous lot as well. And while folks were at their judgmental best, some also respected his personal choice and life as well.

Fans or not, several netizens are also of the opinion that his private life is his concern only, and not Twitter's. "Doesn't matter if he's 50. He's Milind Soman and he's hot. So please shut up everybody," read a tweet in his defence.

Last month, Milind attended the Spring-Summer 2018 edition of the Amazon India Fashion Week (AIFW) with

Ankita and reportedly walked hand-in-hand with her at the event. From the do, Milind posted a selfie with Ankita – a picture which the internet just could not digest, as a result of which Milind trended furiously throughout.

Milind, however, is least perturbed by the alleged reports and the mixed reactions on Twitter – proof is on his Instagram. Amidst the many reactions on Twitter, he dropped a set of new vacation pictures with Ankita, including an adorable selfie. "#Never2early4aselfie", he added in the caption.

Milind reportedly met Ankita last year and sources have told Mumbai Mirror that the actor's mother is quite fond of his girlfriend, who is an air hostess.

In 2006, Milind married Mylene Jampanoi, who also featured in his film Valley Of Flowers. After they divorced in 2009, Milind was reportedly dating Shohana Goswami.

Milind Soman is currently busy with popular TV show India's Next Top Model, which he's part of as a judge. He is best-known for Alisha Chinai's 1995 music video Made In India and has films like Rules: Pyaar Ka Superhit Formula, 16 December, Bheja Fry and Bhrm on his resume. In movies, Milind Soman was last seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Bajirao Mastani.

ARIES: Tension in the romance department may arise for you. You want to get things started in a relationship that's important to you, yet something always seems to stand in the way of the plan. Instead of trying to sidestep your way into the picture, take a direct approach. If you don't try, you're just as bad off as if you'd tried and failed. Go for it.

TAURUS: You may feel the urge to put your loved one on a pedestal today. You want to see him or her as the perfect mate for you. You're willing to go to great lengths to bring this person pleasure. You're wearing your rose-colored glasses, so

very little will convince you of anything but the fact that things are perfect and beautiful.

GEMINI: Romance isn't going perfectly for you. Things may be a bit unclear in this realm. Events may crop up today that will make it hard for you to ignore the issue any longer. Communication is key to helping you sort through the feelings associated with these issues. Don't be too judgmental in your approach.

CANCER: Love and romance are most certainly in the cards today. Play the hand you're dealt and you should come away from the table victorious. There's some transformation that may

take place regarding issues of the heart. Don't compromise yourself in any way. Settle for nothing but the best. This is a day to shine.

LEO: Issues regarding romance could be a big part of the picture today. The scales could tip either way in terms of your success at this game. The decision is up to you. You're probably better off keeping things light and entertaining. Reveal the scope of your passionate and powerful emotions on another day.

VIRGO: Matters of the heart are in your favor today. You should prepare for a day full of social activities and good

conversation. Your creative spirit may also be heightened. You can't go wrong picking the right item in a clothing store or flea market. Your taste for the elegant is impeccable, so feel free to indulge.

LIBRA: You might focus on romance today, but it's possible that you're having problems figuring out a way to express your feelings. There's power influencing the scene, and certainly no shortage of passion. You might find that there's a bit of superficiality to the situation that makes it hard to commit with all of your energy.

SCORPIO: When it comes

to issues regarding romance, don't hold back today. Things are working in your favor. You shouldn't hesitate to act forcefully and confidently. Show others that you're serious. Don't back down as things heat up even more. This is a sign that things are progressing in your favor and you shouldn't mistake this intensity for anything but true passion.

SAGITTARIUS: The center of your power might find it difficult to commit to anything today. Issues regarding love and romance could arise, and you may feel the need to start something moving in this department. You

may be indecisive about which way to go. Spruce up and get out in the social arena. You can let someone else take the lead from there.

CAPRICORN: In matters involving love and romance, things might get a little sticky today. You might want to charge ahead with a plan, while a close partner wants to sit, discuss, and work things out together. Tempers might flare. You'd do well to be ready to compromise. A hotheaded approach will do more harm than good.

AQUARIUS: Love will probably be on your mind most of today, so give your heart your full

attention. You're having trouble communicating with a loved one now, so try to be patient. He moves left and you move right. You move left and she moves right. Each time you bump into each other. Let the other person make the first move.

PISCES: Issues regarding love and romance are in your favor. There's a strong force spurring you to take action. Heed this helpful energy. Feel free to display yourself openly in the social arena. Talk among friends could be rewarding for you now. All sorts of connections are favored for you today.

Thor: Ragnarok beats Spider-man: Homecoming!

Scores highest first Monday collection for a Marvel film in 2017...

Post enjoying a thunderous response on the opening weekend, Chris Hemsworth's Thor: Ragnarok witnessed a usual Monday dip at the box office. The superhero flick raked in Rs 4.10 crore yesterday and currently stands at the grand total of Rs 31.76 crore [Gross Rs 40.71 crore].

Trade analyst, Taran Adarsh tweeted the official collections, saying, "#Thor-Ragnarok Fri 7.77 cr, Sat 9.43 cr, Sun 10.46 cr, Mon 4.10 cr. Total: ₹ 31.76 cr Nett. Gross-BOC: ₹ 40.71 cr. India biz."

Interestingly, Thor: Ragnarok has collected more on its first Monday compared to Marvel's last release Spiderman: Homecoming, which had collected Rs 3.70 crore. While Thor's collection dipped from Rs 10.46 crore to Rs 4.10 crore from Sunday to Monday, Spiderman: Homecoming saw a drastic dip from Rs 15.02 crore to Rs 3.70 crore.

The film received immense praise from the critics and moviegoers, especially for its direction, screenplay and acting performances. Looking at the current trend, Thor: Ragnarok is expected to cross the Rs 40 crore mark by the end of its opening week at the box office. The Marvel flick, which also has huge star cast comprising of Tom Hiddleston, Cate Blanchett, Idris Elba, Jeff Goldblum, Tessa Thompson, Karl Urban, Mark Ruffalo, and Anthony Hopkins, has outperformed Bollywood's murder mystery Ittefaq, which released in the last Friday.

Thor: Ragnarok has already become the most successful film in the Thor franchise in India. In the recent times, we have seen that the Hollywood's superhero franchises are garnering huge fanbase in our country and Thor franchise is the perfect example of that.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

08TH NOV

WORLD HISTORY

1895: Physicist Wilhelm Conrad Rontgen [1845-1923] discovers the X-ray.

1917: Lenin makes his first appearance before the Congress of Soviets, in which the Bolsheviks hold a 60% majority.

1939: Johann Georg Elser plants a bomb at the Burgerbrau Beer Cellar in Munich, where Hitler is due to give a speech. Hitler leaves 8 minutes before the bomb detonates.

1960: Senator John F Kennedy is elected the 35th President of the United States, at 43 years of age the 2nd youngest ever-President.

1965: The Murder [Abolition of the Death Penalty] Act 1965 is given Royal Assent, formally abolishing the death penalty for murder in the United Kingdom.

1974: Detectives search for British aristocrat Lord Lucan following the death of his children's nanny the evening before.

1975: David Bowie reached No.1 in the UK charts with Space Oddity.

1987: Eleven people are killed



after a bomb explodes during a Remembrance Day service at Enniskillen in County Fermanagh.

1990: Ireland elects Mary Robinson as first woman president of the country.

1996: Football hardman Vinnie Jones vows that if he got sent off again, he would retire from football. He had by then been sent off 12 times in his pro career.

INDIAN HISTORY

1927: LK Advani, Indian politician, was born.

1908: Raja Rao, Indian writer of English language novels and short stories, was born.

LOCKHORNS

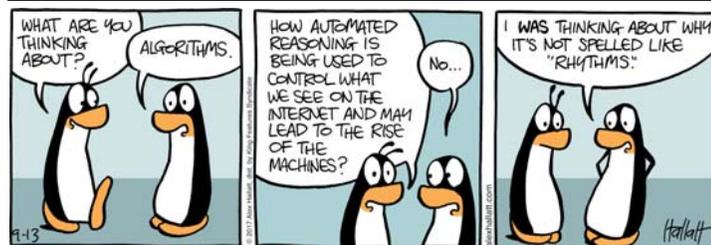
- HOEST & REINER



"HERE I AM TOSSING THREE COINS IN THE FOUNTAIN. AND THERE'S LEROY DIVING IN AFTER THEM."

ARCTIC CIRCLE

- HALLATT



BABY BLUES

- KIRKMAN & SCOTT

