



**ACTOR VIKRAM GOKHALE BACKS KANGANA RANAUT ON 1947 FREEDOM BEING 'BHEEK'**  
PG 08

**MEDIA SHOULD INVITE MORE CRITICISM**  
pg 04

**NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO BOOKS EDITOR PETRA MAYER DIES AT 46**  
pg 08



# SummitTIMES

Vol 06 | Issue 288 | Gangtok | Tuesday | 16 November 2021

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | RS. 5

ROLEP SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL: UNDER-STAFFED AND UNDER-SERVED

## Non-teaching staff step up to take classes, new building develops cracks

**SHEKHAR KHAWAS**  
**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

While the school is elated with the State Government providing its principal a vehicle to address connectivity challenges posed by its remote location, what the school desperately requires instead are teachers.

A sturdier building would also help.

Rolep Secondary School under Gnathang-Machong constituency in East Sikkim was one of the schools provided a dedicated vehicle for the principal as part of a recent State Government initiative. While this will definitely help, what students there need more urgently are teachers.

The school is so unfairly staffed that a night guard and a peon are taking classes! In fact, an office assistant is also standing in as a class teacher.

Meanwhile, a building inaugurated barely a year back could not withstand a minor earthquake recently and has developed cracks which have rendered it unsafe. Students with classrooms there are now huddled into a kutchha alternative nearby.

The department must have surely been informed about the situation, but the file has clearly not been cleared by the required officers.



When contacted, Principal, Rolep Senior Secondary School, Loknath Sharma, confirmed the school was compelled to take the service of non-teaching staff due to shortage of teachers.

He confirmed that a Night Guard was teaching mathematics to classes VI and VII while an Office Assistant was the class teacher of class VIII.

The school management committee, panchayats and parents are understandably concerned.

SMC member Roshan Rai expressed deep concern over the shortage of teachers and demanded that the Education De-

partment look into the matter and resolve it immediately.

Local panchayat Bimala Gurung has also urged officials to address the issue at the earliest.

A class XII student, Sahil Gurung, clarified that while the non-teaching staff are taking the classes rather well, the fact that the required number of teachers have not been provided to their school was worrying.

And then there is the problem of inadequate infrastructure compounding the situation.

The school was provided a new three-storied building last year, but the structure has since

sustained major damage in a minor earthquake. Students are thus compelled to cram into the dilapidated [but structurally sound] older school building.

The Principal stated that all these issues have been brought to the notice of the Education Department and is confident that the problems will be redressed soon.

He underlined that the announcement of the CM to provide a vehicle to him shows that the government was aware of the challenges faced by the school and would thus definitely address its problems.

## Grand reception welcomes Sandhya Gurung home with Dronacharya award



**PRITAM LAMA**  
**GYALSHING, 15 NOV:**

Boxing coach Sandhya Gurung, who was recently conferred the prestigious Dronacharya award, was accorded a rousing reception at Rangpo upon her return on Sunday.

The welcome was organised by Sikkim Amateur Boxing Association vice president, KR Limboo, along with West District Boxing Association vice

president-I, Suman Subba, VP-II Lalita Gurung, members Purna Hang Limboo, boxing coach Vavya Gurung and board member Divya Gurung and other associations and well-wishers.

Ms Gurung is the first from Sikkim to receive the Dronacharya award, another feather added to her cap which already has her hold the honour of being the first international female boxer from Sikkim.

## IOA sees potential in Sikkim to give more athletes to India



**SAGAR CHETTRI**  
**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

Sikkim has potential to do even better in the field of sports and give the country many more athletes, Indian Olympic Association is convinced, and towards this end, has assured all possible support to help the State groom more sporting talent.

This observation and assurance was forwarded by IOA president, Dr Narindra Dhruv Batra, who arrived here on a two-day visit today.

Dr Batra is also a member of the International Olympic Committee and president of International Hockey Federation and led the Indian contingent to the Tokyo Olympics.

Addressing a press conference here this morning, Dr Batra explained that he was in Sikkim as part of IOA's tour of different states to ensure development of sports all over the country.

He shared that every State should play and support all Olympic dis-

ciplines. That said, every State has its strengths in particular disciplines so there was also need to focus on those sports and plan accordingly.

Sikkim, for instance, he remarked, has already displayed an innate talent for archery and boxing. That said, the State also has potential to do even better in long distance running if the natural strength and stamina of the people and the benefit of its terrain were leverage to groom talent.

Dr Batra also commented that Sikkim was at a very basic level of sports planning and support, and that once it started building up from here, it will excel.

He also underlined that nothing was going to happen overnight so everyone needs to sit together and focus diligently and make longterm plans.

He assured to provide all possible support from the IOA and added that he will take personal initiative to take athletes from Sikkim forward.

The IOA president

appreciated initiatives taken by the state government for the promotion and development of sports and betterment of sportspersons. He expressed that the initiative of the government to promote club culture at grassroot level was a good sign for the development of the state.

He mentioned a centre of excellence under Khelo India was also coming up at Reshithang along with other sports infrastructure in the State. He stated that every sports association in the state needs to support these initiatives.

"Good things are happening in sports and promotion of sports culture at the grassroot level in Sikkim taking sports in the right direction and we would definitely work to push it forward," Dr Batra said.

On his arrival in Sikkim, Dr Batra was received by Sikkim Olympic Association president, Kuber Bhandari, general secretary Jaslal Pradhan and other executive members.

## No new cases and one new Covid death in Sikkim

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

Sikkim recorded a daily test positivity rate of 0% on samples screened on Sunday, and while that might come as a relief, it needs to be tempered with the fact that the two VRD Labs in the State where RT-PCR tests can be carried out, work on much reduced capacities on Sundays. The zero-figure, for instance, comes from the screening of 138 samples yesterday, only 89 of which were put through RT-PCR yesterday. In comparison, 264 samples were screened

on Saturday, 181 of which were put through TRT-PCR testing.

To further temper the mood, the Daily Report of COVID-19 in Sikkim released by the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme of Health Department on Monday morning further informs that Sikkim's weeklong run of no Covid deaths ended on Sunday with the virus claiming a life here at CRH yesterday. The State's Covid toll now stands at 401.

The State's tally of confirmed cases of COVID-19 detected since

testing began on 28 Feb last year holds at 31,101.

There are currently 115 active cases of Covid in the State, only 17 of whom are with symptoms severe enough to require hospitalisation. Four of these patients are in ICU and one of the 17 is under 18 years of age.

Also in the past 24 hours, four more Covid patients made full recoveries and were discharged from home isolation. With this, the number of fully recovered cases has inched up to 31,251 giving the State a recovery rate of 98.4%.

## Six litterateurs and a bookshop to be felicitated at Sikkim Sahitya Utsav

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

Six litterateurs from the region and Gangtok's Rachna Books will be felicitated on 26 November as part of Sikkim Sahitya Utsav being hosted by Hamro Varta Television to mark its second foundation day. The felicitated litterateurs are KN Sharma, Binashree Kharel and Chetan Raj Shrestha from Gangtok; Dr Rajendra Bhandari from Kalimpong and Gupta Pradhan from Darjeeling. Each has rendered invaluable contributions for preservation and promotion of literature in the region,

an official communiqué from the organiser's informs.

Similarly, Rachna Books will be felicitated for its "immense service towards promotion of literature, especially those of local writers," the release adds.

The felicitations will be handed over by Chief Minister PS Tamang who has agreed to join the function at Mannan Bhawan on 26 Nov, the release informs. Other events being planned as part of Sikkim Sahitya Utsav include poetry, painting, elocution and book review contests.

## CHIEF MINISTER'S MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF NATIONAL PRESS DAY 2021

*"Govt committed to upholding the sanctity of the press"*

On the occasion of National Press Day, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to the entire media organization in Sikkim.

The day is incomplete without acknowledging the impact of the press, which is an essential feature of democracy and independent journalism is crucial in combatting misinformation and disinformation. Press is the cornerstone of a democratic nation and, our government is committed to upholding the sanctity of the press in the state. We thank them for their con-



tribution during the COVID-19 pandemic, where they constantly provided valuable information and data, exhibiting the highest standards of professionalism in their duties.

On the occasion of National Press Day, we thank them for their dedication in bringing us the news and keeping us updated, regardless of the circumstances. In addition, we also recognize their multiple contributions to society and wish them the best in all their endeavors.

## SKM Nari Morcha meets



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's women's wing convened a meeting here at its party office at Lal Bazaar on Monday.

The meeting was chaired by the party's women's wing convener and chairperson, Sikkim Labour Welfare Board, Ganga Parsai, and was attended by women's wing general

secretary and chairperson, Sikkim Film Promotion Board, Pooja Sharma, and women's wing zone-1 general secretary, Beena Gautam and members of different committees of women's wing.

An SKM press release informs that the meeting deliberated on various agendas and resolved to work towards better coordination.

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**

email us: [news@summittimes.Com](mailto:news@summittimes.Com)



# Child Rights awareness held in Mangan



**MANGAN, 15 NOV (IPR):** The District Child Protection Unit, North organized a “Street Play-cum-Sensitization Programme on Child Rights” for the Government officials and general public at District Administrative Centre, Mangan today. The programme was attended by Additional Political Secretary to CM, Tshering Wangyal Bhutia, as chief guest along with DC, North, ADC, North, SP, North and all the Government officials of the DAC, Mangan.

The DCPO, North, Wendy Lepcha highlighted on Child Rights, Child Protection structures in the district, Child related

legislations and the importance of community responsibility in Protection of Child rights. The students of North Sikkim Academy performed a Street play on the growing Cases of child sexual abuse in the district.

The Child-line Coordinator, Mrinalini Gurung, shared about the functions of CHILD-LINE and the details of Child-line, North District. The DC, North, Tenzing T Kaleon, urged the gathering to be involved in Protection of child rights and to report any such case relating to violation of child rights.

The SP, North, Tshering Gyatso Bhutia, emphasized on the important role of Education Department in curbing such cases and also the cases of dropouts, and educating children on their rights as well as in motivating them through career counseling.

Chief guest, Additional Political Secretary to CM, Tshering Wangyal Bhutia highlighted on the alarming rate of POCSO cases in the district and informed that statutory bodies and legislations have been implemented for Protection of children. The programme was concluded with Vote of Thanks by the Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee, North, Mingma Doma Bhutia.

## Winter vegetables seed kit distributed under SCSP of NRCO

**GANGTOK, 15 NOV (PIB):** The seeds of winter crops namely Cauliflower, Cabbage, Broccoli, Kale, Knol-Khol and Brussels were distributed to the Scheduled Caste farmers under SCSP of ICAR-NRC for Orchids, Pakyong.

Nodal Officer (SCSP), Kalaivanan, NS distributed the seeds to the beneficiaries and explained about the characters of

the varieties of these winter crops brought from the IARI-RS Katrain, Himachal Pradesh. The cultivation practices from nursery raising, management practices and market yield of these varieties are explained to the beneficiaries and asked them to cultivate the vegetables in coordinated manner with nearby farmers on sharing basis.

A total of 22 farmers including 5 farmers from Bering Tareything, 4 from Namcheybong, 5 from Lower Bhasmey and 8 from Upper Parakha received the kits. HI, Menuka, Pakyong, HO, Srijanan, Pakyong, OFA, Dawa Lhamu Bhutia and FA, Yogesh Chettri, Tareything coordinated and mobilized the beneficiaries for the event with ICAR-NRCO.

## Viewpoint

# Pride of India: Bhagwan Birsa Munda

**DR L MURUGAN**

As India is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, one great name stands tall among the galaxy of stars who fearlessly worked for freedom of motherland against oppressive British Raj. That is Bhagwan Birsa Munda. He lived a short but valiant life of just twenty five years, but his heroic actions and noble deeds made Bhagwan for his numerous followers. His life story, full of gallant efforts to fight against injustice and oppression, represents a strong voice of resistance against colonial British Raj.

Born on 15th November 1875, in Ulihatu village of a present day Jharkhand, Birsa spent his childhood in abject poverty in a tribal Munda family. This was the time when exploitative British Raj started penetrating into the deep jungles of Central and Eastern India, disrupting the tribals, living in harmony with nature and natural resources. The Britishers introduced a feudal zamindari in Chhota Nagpur region, destroying tribal ‘Khuntkatti’ agrarian system. The Raj brought in the outsiders-moneylenders and contractors, as well as feudal landlords, which aided the British in exploitation of tribals. The unrelenting missionary activities continued to operate with the active support of the Raj, insulting and interfering in the religio-cultural ethos of forest dwelling Adiwasis.

Young Birsa grew up watching all these unfolding before his eyes, and began to understand how these colonial forces and the dikus (outsiders-enemies of the Adiwasis) worked against the interests of the local people. This acted as a fuel to firm up his resolve to fight against this unholy nexus.

During 1880s, young Birsa closely witnessed the Sardari Larai movement in the region, which was demanding restoration of tribal rights, through non-violent methods of sending petitions to British Raj. However, the oppressive colonial regime paid no heed to these demands. The Zamindari system soon reduced the tribals from the status of the landowners to that of land labourer. The feudal set up intensified the forced labour (Vethbigari) in the forested tribal areas. The exploitation of

poor, innocent tribals now reached a breaking point.

It all culminated into Birsa taking up the cause of Adivasis. He showed a new light in matters of religious domain to the fellow tribals. He stood firm against missionaries who were belittling the tribal life and culture. At the same time, Birsa worked for refining and reforming the religious practices, discouraged many superstitious rites, brought in new tenets, new prayers, reformed many habits, and worked for restoring and reviving the tribal pride. Birsa impressed upon the adiwasis about “Sirmarefirun raja jai” or “victory to theancestral king” thus invoking sovereignty of the tribals’ ancestral autonomous control over the land. Birsa became a mass leader, and began to be considered as a Bhagwan and Dharati Aba for his followers.

He made the tribals aware of exploitative and atrocious nature of all vested interests. He knew who the real enemy were- alongwith the exploitative dikus, it was the oppressive British Rule. Birsa Munda had clearly identified that British Colonial Rule was the root cause of all the problems and oppressions. It was amply clear to him that “Abua raj setarjana, maharani raj tundujana (meaning:Let the Kingdom of the Queen be ended and our kingdom be established) Bhagwan Birsa ignited the spark in the minds of the masses. The Mundas, Oraons, other adivasis and non-adivasis responded to his call and joined ‘Ulgulan’ or revolt against the colonial masters and the exploitative dikus under the leadership of Birsa, for their social, economical, political and cultural emancipation. Birsa asked the people not to pay any rent, attacked the outposts of feudal, missionary and colonial British Raj authorities. With the traditional bows and arrows, the tribals of Central and eastern India waged an effective armed resistance against the British regime. In doing so, however, Birsa was careful that only the real exploiters were attacked, and the common people were not troubled. Birsa became an image of vitality and divinity. Soon he was captured by British police and

lodged in jail, where he died in captivity on 09 Jun, 1900. But Bhagwan Birsa Munda’s spirited struggle did not go in vain. It compelled the British Raj to take cognisance of plight and exploitation of tribals, and brought in ‘Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act of 1908’ for protection of Adiwasis. This important act restricted the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals, giving huge relief for the tribals, and became a landmark legislation for protection of tribal rights. The British regime also took steps to abolish Veth Bigari or forced labour.

Bhagwan Birsa Munda continues to inspire millions of Indians, even 121years after his death. He is an icon of valour, courage and leadership. He was a leader who took great pride in his rich culture and great traditions, but at the same time, did not shy away from reforming his own faith wherever necessary.

Bhagwan Birsa Munda is one of the tallest icons of our freedom movement. India’s freedom struggle was strengthened by several tribal communities such as Mundas, Oraons, Santhals, Tamars, Kols, Bhils, Khasis, Koyas and Mizos to name a few. The revolutionary movements and struggles organized by the tribal communities were marked by their immense courage and supreme sacrifice, and inspired Indians all over the country. However, for whatever reasons, established historians could not do justice to their immense contribution in India’s freedom struggle.

But our visionary Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed all Indians to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, and to study and understand the valour and sacrifice of many such unsung heroes in India’s freedom struggle. Under his dynamic leadership, now for the first time, the tribal pride and contribution is being given a fitting tribute, by celebrating a Jan Jatiya Gaurav Divas, on 15 November every year, on the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda.

On this Jan Jatiya Gaurav Divas, let us remember and recognise the efforts of India’s tribal people for preservation of cultural heritage and promotion of Indian values of valour, hospitality and national pride.

## Week-long Child Rights Week celebration begins in Namchi

**NAMCHI, 15 NOV (IPR):** As part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav activities, South District Child Protection Unit under Social Justice and Welfare Department commenced the week-long celebration of Child Rights Week at the Central Park, Namchi today.

The week-long celebration is a pan India awareness campaign to help the vulnerable children facing various issues and to ensure their safety and rights. The celebration started on 14 November and shall end on 20 Nov, 2021.

The program was graced by Chairman (NMC), Ganesh Rai as the chief guest. The program also had the presence of ADC (South), Anant Jain as the Guest of Honour and APS (South), Anjeeta Rajalim as the Special Guest. The program had the attendance of DCPO (South), Roshnita Gurung, CDPO (South), Laxman Tamang, members of Child Welfare Committee, Aganwadi workers, staff of DCPU and other public.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Guest underlined the importance of inclusive awareness to reach

out to safeguard as well as to get them to benefit from the children related schemes provided by the government. Hence, he also said that everyone can play an important role to strengthen child protection measures from any kind of abuse at the family and community level.

ChildLine Coordinator cum Resource Person, Zeba Ansari informed that 1098 is a 24/7 free emergency phone service available for children in need of aid and assistance which works for the protection of rights of all children aged from 0

to 18. The childline pan India service shall particularly focus on all children in need of care and protection, especially the more vulnerable sections such as child sexual abuse etc. Further, the childline caters helps and protects the children from child labour, provides shelter to threatened or harmed children and many other child abuse issues etc.

In addition, each district constitutes of Child Welfare Committee to look after any case involving children for their basic needs and protection of human rights. The Com-

mittee shall also take care of children for treatment and rehabilitation to special homes.

During the program, DCPO (South), Roshnita Gurung highlighted the aim of the week-long celebration of Child Rights Week.

The program also saw the presentation of a group song by the children of Mayal Lang Children Home.

A skit was performed by Khambu Theater depicting the understanding of victims of child sexual abuse.

## NAMGYAL INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY REMEMBERS ITS FORMER DIRECTOR, BERMIOK RINPOCHE TASHI DENSAPA

### A meaningful life lived in the service of others

## OBITUARY

**DIRECTOR and Staff of Namgyal Institute of Tibetology**

Our former Director, Bermiok Rinpoche Tashi Densapa passed away at Manipal Central Referral Hospital on the morning of November 13, 2021. With his passing, Sikkim and the Buddhist world lost a leading light and luminary.

Bermiok Rinpoche was born on January 10, 1942 to Bermiok Athing Tashi Dadul Densapa and Chamkusho Yonten Dolma, sister of Gyalum Dechen Dolma of Sakya Phuntsok Phodrang. At an early age, he was recognized as a reincarnation of his paternal uncle, Bermiok Kusho Karma Palden Choegyal who was the State Lama of Sikkim and through him as the third reincarnation of Simick Rechen Drubwang Wosel Dorjee by His Holiness the XVIth Gyalwa Karmapa.

However, Bermiok Athingla eschewed a monastic education for a western one for his son. Rinpoche got his schooling from Mount Hermon School, Darjeeling, majored in Political History from St. Stephens, Delhi University and subsequently went on to do his post-graduate studies at Washington University, Seattle, U.S.A. Upon his return from the States, he had a brief stint as the Assistant Director at the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology which he would return to helm later in his life. Rinpoche then joined government service and ably served in various departments such as Tourism and Culture and in capacities such as Managing Director, STCS and Resident Commissioner of Sikkim House in New Delhi before ultimately superannuating as Secretary to the Government of Sikkim.

Post retirement, Rinpoche took over the reins of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology (NIT) on March 14, 2002 as its new Director. This marked a definitive and most productive epoch for both Rinpoche and the NIT. He went on to dedicate almost two decades of his life to the NIT and distinguish himself during his stint- the longest ever by any incumbent- as a visionary leader of unwavering commitment and unsurpassable zeal; he infused fresh life into and lifted the institute out of the doldrums and steered it towards its acme. It was under his peerless guidance that the NIT went on to reclaim



its position as a premier institute for the preservation and promotion of Buddhist ethos in the trans-Himalayan region thus keeping alive the dream of our Founder President Chogyal Palden Thondup Namgyal.

Rinpoche expanded and revitalized the academic thrust areas by initiating the Sikkim Studies that focused on Sikkim-centric research, of particular note the Sikkim Ritual Video Archive and the Historic Photographs of Sikkim projects. Concurrently, he got on board Tibetan Buddhist scholars to spearhead research on various aspects of Buddhism with a special focus on Sikkim which resulted in a large number of important publications in both Tibetan and English to serve as a corpus of resources for the benefit of posterity. He was always keen that we research and document as much as we could before it was too late.

He used his strong networking skills and leveraged his many alumni and other contacts in various Ministries of the Central Government to get the requisite funding for the many new projects he implemented at the cash-strapped institute while simultaneously getting funding for the digitization of the existing resources of the NIT. With the help of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Government of India, he took great initiative in developing the digital Tibetan language and making the digitized wealth of Buddhist wisdom in the collection of the NIT easily accessible to the Buddhist world at large.

A progressive and able administrator, under his stewardship, the NIT infrastructure grew to include perimeter fencing against encroachment, the addition of the new Conference Hall and Library complex and new hostel and apartment accommodation; NIT concurrently grew in leaps and bounds in its organizational skills and was soon organizing and hosting international conferences as well as a series of workshops and lectures on topics as varied as Science, Spirituality and Education and Quantum Physics and Emptiness in Buddhist Philosophy.

However, Rinpoche always voiced his concern over the continued future of the NIT and felt that the way forward was to morph into a Buddhist university. Interestingly, in 2016, the State Government mooted the proposal for the establishment of the first Buddhist University in Sikkim, and NIT was entrusted with this huge responsibility. Rinpoche proved himself more than equal to embark on this ambitious project, and along with the new OSD Mr KN Bhutia, he actuated a plan of action that included the starting in 2017 of the Post Graduate programme in Buddhist and Tibetan Studies and the Faculty of Sowa Rigpa under the Sikkim University as per UGC norms and with the due approval of the State Government. The Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India sanctioned funding for the infrastructure development of the Faculty of Sowa Rigpa which today boasts its own academic block, hostel block, pharmacy, clinic and herbal garden and is on the verge of churning out the first batch of newly minted Amjilas of the BSRMS course equivalent to MBBS. The MA Buddhist and Tibetan Studies programme is in its third intake.

It was primarily to consolidate and see his passion project to successful completion that Rinpoche opted to serve from mid-2019 until his retirement in February, 2021 as an Honorary Director with only a nominal salary. He left on a high note with the Institute on a sustained growth trajectory and a legacy hard to match forget surpass.

Outside of his activities at NIT, Rinpoche was very active in the preservation and promotion of Tibetan Buddhism as well as the social, religious and cultural ethos of his native Sikkim. While possibly not an exhaustive list, some of the various positions he held are:

Founding Member of the International Buddhist Confederation, New Delhi  
Member of the Mahabodhi Society of India, Kolkata.  
Advisor to HH Gyalwa Karmapa Orgen Trinley Dorje and Chairman of one of his Charitable Trusts  
Advisor to Sakya Dolma Phodrang Foundation, Dehra Dun  
Advisor to Rumtek Labrang  
Advisor to Mingyur Rinpoche’s Labrang  
Chairman of Sakya Tashi Choeling Trust  
Member of the Executive Council of Sikkim University

Rinpoche was also a generous philanthropist and donated land at Alu Bari, South Sikkim to Sakya Tashi Choling and Mindroling Penam Rinpoche for the establishment of their monasteries. He also re-built the Simick Sangag Dudul Ling monastery of his predecessor at Simick Lingzey. This was the first monastery in Sikkim to incorporate earthquake-resistant engineering design. He also built the Nyama Lhakhang at Simick. Simick monks came on record to state that Rinpoche in his lifetime had expressly evinced his desire to be cremated at his monastery there, but this was sadly not to be.

Rinpoche’s untimely demise has been a monumental loss not only to us here at NIT and Sikkim in particular but to the entire Buddhist world at large. His Dharma activities were diverse and innumerable, and his demise leaves a huge vacuum. But in the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, we take succour in the fact that he ‘lived a meaningful life in the service of others.’ We condole his family and share their grief in this darkest hour.

As a mark of respect for the departed soul, the Director, NIT has declared November 16, 2021 as a holiday for the institute. A huge prayer meeting was held on November 15, 2021 in the NIT Conference Hall with the full attendance of NIT staff as well as the Faculty of Sowa Rigpa and Buddhist and Tibetan studies. Tsogbhum and Tongchoe will also be offered by the NIT at the Chorten monastery on November 19, 2021. Monlom recitation and Gyamchod will be offered every morning henceforth at the NIT until the 49 th day for the swift rebirth of Rinpoche.

**Om Ami Dewa Hri!**



# Sikkim Univ seminar deliberates challenges of social exclusion



**GANGTOK, 15 Nov (PIB):**

The Department of English Sikkim University organized a two-day Interdisciplinary National Seminar on 'Rethinking Social Exclusion: Issues and Perspectives' on 15 and 16 Nov, 2021. The inaugural session of the programme was held at Cauveri Hall of the University on 15 Nov, 2021. Dr Rosy Chamling welcomed the Chief Guest Member of Parliament, Indra Hang Subba, Vice-Chancellor Prof Avinash Khare, Prof Avatthi Ramaiah, Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, Prof Sajal Nag, Department of History, Assam University, the faculty members, officers of the University, students and the participants from different colleges and Universities.

The Seminar is an attempt to rethink the

whole gamut of social exclusion amidst the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic since late December 2019. The pandemic caused forced social isolation due to the fear of transmission. The lockdown approach may have been one of the strategies to contain the pandemic by governments around the world, but it ended up isolating people. What has been revealed in the process is a whole gamut of social exclusion faced by migrants, the elderly, children, people of particular race and religion and those engaged in informal job sectors.

The discrimination and stigmatization of people with the disease has been a common sight. Against such a backdrop, the two-day Seminar aims to create awareness through intellectual discourse on the dynamics of social exclusion through interdisciplinary

and inter-sectionality of caste, class, gender, religion, region and ethnicity. It also aims to analyse the hidden barriers which seek to prevent social inclusion and discuss remedial measures through discussions of lived experiences and reality. It seeks to recognize the politics of difference and gradually move towards the politics of recognition and to ultimately instill respect towards plurality of cultures and respect differences bringing about a paradigm shift to foster social inclusion.

The keynote address was delivered by Prof Avatthi Ramaiah, Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, where he mentioned the need and importance to understand the different dimensions and trends of social exclusion where

everyone is trying to exclude the other in every way possible in a desperation to prove superior to the other.

Chief guest for the programme, Member of Parliament, Indra Hang Subba, in his address mentioned that there is less discrimination in the state of Sikkim as compared to the other parts of the country but there is geographical exclusion where people are forced to be cut-off from the mainland owing to difficult and mountainous terrains of the region.

He thanked the organisers for inviting him and looked forward to being part of such seminars to be organized by the University.

The Vice-Chancellor Prof Avinash Khare congratulated the Department of English for organizing a Seminar on such an important and relevant topic.

## Pan India Legal Awareness and Outreach Campaign concludes

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

The 45 days long "Pan India Awareness and Outreach Campaign from 02 Oct, 2021 to 14 Nov, 2021 as a part of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" and Legal Services Week from 08 to 14 Nov, 2021", concluded on 14 Nov with a Valedictory Ceremony held at the Plenary Hall of Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi with Chief Justice of India, Justice NV Ramanna, as the chief guest.

Also present were Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smriti Zubin Irani and Judge, Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, Supreme Court of India & Executive Chairman, NALSA as Guests of in the august presence of Judge, Justice AM Khanwilkar, Supreme Court of India & Chairman, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee and KK Venugopal, Attorney General for India.

Representing Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, the ceremony was attended by Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim & Patron-in-Chief, Sikkim SLISA, Justice Biswanath Somadder, and Judge High Court

of Sikkim & Executive Chairperson, Sikkim SLISA, Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, a press release informs.

The Valedictory Ceremony was also screened live by all the District Legal Services Authorities at their respective Districts, and, was also forwarded to the District Administration Centres and Police Stations for screening of the same.

During the 45 days, the Sikkim SLISA and the 04 District Legal Services Authorities conducted 269 successful legal awareness programmes and door-to-door campaigns covering 705 number of villages in Sikkim and on topics viz; Free Legal Aid and Assistance, Alternate Dispute Resolutions such as Mediation, LokAdalat, etc., Labour Act, Importance of Mental Health and necessity of seeking rehabilitation, substance abuse and importance of rehabilitation, Cyber & Legal issues, Role of Para Legal Volunteers in the villages, the differences between Compoundable and Non-Compoundable Offences, the importance of First Information Report, physical, economic,

social and mental abuse under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, avoidance of gender discrimination and efforts towards an egalitarian society from all aspects, Sikkim Anti Dugs Act, 2006 (as amended), Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012, the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, Motor Vehicle Act, 1988, Environmental Issues, etc.

The Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, working under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority, and, directions of Judge, Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, High Court of Sikkim & Executive Chairperson, also organized a Skit on the topic Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, by the students of the Sikkim Government Law College, Burtuk, East Sikkim in front of Tourism Information Centre, MG Marg, East Sikkim on 14 Oct, 2021 (Sunday).

The skit on the above subject matter was organized to generate awareness amongst people on important subjects such as child sexual abuse,

good touch and bad touch, and other pertinent issues. The skit also dealt with various provisions of POCSO Act, 2012, especially mandatory reporting of POCSO cases.

Also as concluding ceremony and as per the direction of NALSA, the District Legal Services Authorities of all the Districts conducted Prabhat Pheris in their respective Districts. A painting competition was also conducted by the DLSA (East) at Child Care Institution at Bojoghari, East Sikkim. Similarly, a painting competition was organized on by the DLSA, South at Mayallyang Children Home, Manjusha Short Stay Home, Juvenile Justice Board, Upper Ghurpisey, Kapinaz, Children Home, Ravangla, Turuk Children Home and Suraksha Shelter Home, South Sikkim, and, The DLSA (North) conducted a Sensitization Programme on Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 for the Para Legal Volunteers and Students present at the Alternate Dispute Resolution Centre, Pentok, North Sikkim.

## Sikkim Build Expo begins today

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

A four-day mega building and construction exhibition, Sikkim Build Expo 2021, begins here at Old Sukhani House complex on Tuesday. This, the second edition of the expo, is being organized by All Sikkim Heavy Earth Construction Equipment Owners' Association [ASHECEOA] in association with Siliguri-based Alpha Associates. Visitors can expect stalls for building & construction materials, heavy & light equipment, electronics and hardware

tools, furniture, real estate and other items displayed by different companies.

Eighteen companies from all over the country are taking part in the expo.

Addressing a press conference here this afternoon, ASHECEOA president, DB Chettri, said that a lot of construction was underway in but local youth were not adequately aware about opportunities for self-employment in this sector.

He added that the association was formed in 2019 mainly to generate awareness about these opportuni-

ties among local youth.

He also thanked the state government for providing Startup loans to beginners in this sector to buy industrial materials.

As for the expo, he informed that heads of several companies will be participating and this provided a good opportunity to local youth to negotiate and interact with industry leaders. Director, Alpha Associates, Ashok Singh, in turn mentioned that the company has been organizing construction and education fair and international fairs in Nepal, Bhutia and

North Bengal Region and has already held 12 editions of the building and construction fair in Bhutan.

He expressed that the main objective of the fair was to bring companies from different parts of the country under the same roof and present people here with an opportunity to get the latest information and technology in construction, materials and equipment in this sector. The press conference was also addressed by ASHECEOA treasurer Pushpa Raj Adhikari.

## Workshop on Sexual Harassment at Work Place by SJA

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

Sikkim Judicial Academy organised a two-day session on Sexual Harassment at Work Place through Video Conferencing on 12 and 13 Nov, a press release informs.

On the first day, employees of Sikkim Government attended the session and on the second day, staff of High Court of Sikkim, District Courts and Sikkim Judicial Academy were the participants.

The Resource Persons for the programmes were Director, Nandita Pradhan Bhat and Senior Programme Officer of Martha Farrel Foundation, Nitya Sriram, New Delhi.

On both the days the Resource Persons deliber-

ated on what constituted sexual harassment, unwelcome sexual behaviour and the types of sexual assault. It was informed that a person who experiences such behaviour should not be termed a "victim" but a "survivor". The history of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Protection and Redressal) Act, 2013 (Act) was discussed. The Bhanwari Devi case along with the Vishaka guidelines was also highlighted. It was informed that sexual harassment is a behaviour which is learnt, for example through movies. The important mandates of the Act were discussed such as the constitution of the Internal Committee, the local committee, etc.

## Workshop on Sentencing Policy for Judicial Officers by SJA

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 15 NOV:**

Sikkim Judicial Academy organised a session through video conferencing on Sentencing Policy with latest judgments for Judicial Officers on 13 Nov, a press release informs.

The Resource Person for the programme was Professor of Law, Dr Mrinal Satish, National Law School of India University, Bangalore, Karnataka.

During the programme the Resource Person discussed Section 235(2), Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC), in detail. The rationale, objective and the interpretation thereof as laid down in the various landmark judgments of the Apex Court was discussed. It was informed that compliance of Section 235(2), CrPC is mandatory and that evidence

can be adduced.

The conflict between Section 235(2) and Section 309(2), CrPC was discussed and that cases can be adjourned to the next date to hear on sentence were mentioned including every endeavour must be made to achieve the spirit of Section 235(2), CrPC.

The Resource Person highlighted the concerns on disparity in sentencing as well as the mitigating and aggravating circumstances. The UK sentencing guidelines were also shared along with the guidance of the Supreme Court and that of the Delhi High Court. It was informed that the Courts have to bear in mind "principle" when they are exercising the sentencing discretion. There was an interactive session at the end of the deliberation.


## TRI organizes blood donation camp on Janajatiya Gaurav Divas

**Gangtok, 15 Nov (PIB):**

The Tribal Research Institute under Social Justice & Welfare Department, Government of Sikkim organized a Blood Donation Camp at STNM Hospital, Sochaygang on the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda which is being celebrated as Janajatiya Gaurav Divas across India. Speaking on this occasion, Secretary, Social Justice & Welfare

Department, Tsewang Gyatso remembered contribution of Bhagwan Birsa Munda in India's freedom movement and said he was a revolutionary tribal freedom fighter, a folk hero, and a social reformer who inspired many at a young age to bravely stand against the exploitative British colonial rule. Organising the blood donation camp on his birthday is a tribute to his selfless contribu-

tion and to help mankind who are in need of blood. He also assured Sikkim Government's full cooperation in the weeklong celebration to mark the Janajatiya Gaurav Divas in the State. About 25 donors donated blood on this occasion. The Secretary, Social Justice & Welfare Department, Tsewang Gyatso and his colleagues also donated blood along with other donors.



**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
DIRECTORATE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
TASHILING, GANGTOK**

**No. GOS/DTE/2021/1681**

**Date :15/11/2021**

**NOTICE**

This is for information to all the students who have registered themselves for State quota seats or submitted offline applications in the Directorate of Technical Education for allotment of quota seat for the current academic year 2021. Now, it is hereby notified that the spot round counselling and allotment for vacant/surrendered/unutilised State quota seat is being conducted in the following date schedule. **The spot round counselling will be done on face to face mode and the physical presence of the candidate in the specified date and venue is mandatory.**

The allotment of seats will be done on the basis of the merit of the marks and the community wise vacancy. The preference would be given to the online registered candidates who were not able to secure seats during online allotment and thereafter offline candidates would be considered.

**(i) B.Tech/ Lateral Entry B.Tech**

**(ii) For BSc. Med. Biotech/ BMLT/BSc. Optometry**

For courses (i) and (ii) above the date and time proposed :19/11/2021 time 10: 00 a.m.  
Venue: Examination hall, Deorali Girls Sr. Sec. School, Gangtok.

**(iii) BBA LLB (Intg), BA LLB (Intg), LLB**

**(iv) MBA/MCA/MSc (PCM)/ MSc. (Botany/Zoology)/ MHA/ M.Tech/ MCom/ MA/MPH**

**(v) Diploma in Paramedical**

For courses (iii), (iv) and (v) above the date and time proposed : 22/11/2021 time 10: 00 a.m.  
Venue : Examination hall, Deorali Girls Sr. Sec. School, Gangtok.

**(vi) For BA/B.Com/BSc./BBA/BCA/Hospitality & Hotel Management/ BTM/BHTM**

**(vii) For MSc. Biotechnology, MSc. IT, Masters in Travel and Tourism, Masters in Hospitality and Tourism Management**

For courses (vi) and (vii) above the date and time proposed :23/11/2021 time 10: 00 a.m.  
Venue : Examination hall, Deorali Girls Sr. Sec. School, Gangtok.

**(viii) Medical Allied (Forestry/Horticulture/Agriculture/BSc. Fisheries/BSc. Community Science), B.Tech Agriculture/ B.Tech Food Technology**

For courses (viii) above the date and time proposed : 24/11/2021 time 10: 00 a.m. Venue : Examination hall, Deorali Girls Sr. Sec. School, Gangtok.

**Documents required :** All candidates are advised to bring the following documents for verification :-

1. Sikkim Subject Certificate or COI of father or of candidate.
2. Valid Community Certificate in the name of candidate.
3. Residential Certificate or Trade License in the name of father or Parent's employment certificate in case of applicants falling under the Others category.
4. Recent BPL certificate (issued by DESME), if any.
5. Date of Birth Certificate.
6. Class XII marksheet/ Degree certificate (whichever applicable).

**Online registration or offline application does not confer the applicant a right to quota seat. The allotment of seats will be purely on merit of the marks obtained in the qualifying examination vis a vis reservation and roster policy of the State Government.**

All candidates who have submitted their offline application for the above indicated courses are advised to be present in the spot round counselling. No separate counselling or allotment will be conducted hereafter.

Sd/-  
Special Secretary-cum-Director  
Higher & Tech. Education



# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

## Media Should Invite More Criticism

*There can, after all, be no improvement without analysis*

The news media is introduced as the fourth estate, the fourth pillar holding up the shelter of democracy.

Interestingly, while the other “estates” of democracy – the judiciary, the executive and the legislative – have a screening process to get where they do and are also occasionally held accountable for their actions in a formal way in the public domain, the news media is an equal opportunity sector where anyone can get in and appears to work unfettered and is technically answerable to no one. In a perfect world, this is how things should be with “open access” graduating to meritocracy and excellence in this estate. The watchdog in a true democratic system should not be subservient to anyone or anything if it is to deliver on its responsibilities properly. It is, however, not a perfect world that we live in, so checks and balances are required at every level. One could argue that the readers are the best agency to rein in the media when the power of the pen goes to their head. And, in a way they are. No matter how sensational its content, a newspaper, news channel or any other vehicle of information loses credibility in the reader’s mind if it keeps reporting rumours for facts and highlighting trivialities as issues. Readers might turn to them for entertainment, but will take the information with a pinch of salt. And, with so many other modes of entertainment available nowadays, even that USP becomes a liability very fast. So, yes, readership/ viewership (or followers if you are more SocialMedia inclined) is the one factor that fixes accountability on newspapers.

Obviously, sometimes, just this much is not enough. Readership is not respected to the extent it should be - neither in Sikkim nor in India as a whole. While simple numbers are enough to decide readership in Sikkim, at a national level it becomes slightly more complicated. The numbers game that media houses indulge in to inflate circulation is no secret and it is perhaps for this reason that an editorial post common in West is now being toyed by some newspapers in India too. The Hindu had started the ball rolling with the offer to appoint a Reader’s Editor, an Ombudsman of sorts. This was a brave decision as the Reader’s Editor, the in-house critic, is expected to be scathing in her/his analysis of the newspaper. That experiment has played out to mixed results, but is worth exploring on wider scale. A Reader’s/ Public Editor does not only question and challenge the veracity of news-reports, but also pulls up the intents and vested interests behind the highlighting, prominence and display of certain stories. That is not all, s/he is also allowed to question journalistic ethics of the newspaper and also air opinion when some stories are downplayed or dropped. S/he does all this not in internal memos, but in a space allotted in the newspaper. In the public domain. Reader’s Editors in the West have been known to be extremely sharp in their criticism. Their performance in India leaves a lot to be desired but is a necessary undertaking. It is also unlikely to happen with any significance because media criticism/ analysis is still a rare animal in media circles. Some online platforms are trying to correct this, but their reach is still limited.

The reason this is being shared here is to highlight the fact that there can be no improvement without criticism. And, there is no such thing as “positive criticism.” Criticism is criticism, its positivity or negativity depends on the target of the criticism and how it is used. Newspaper reports are not the final word. Everyone knows that, and since there is still a lot of room for improvement as far as our conduct is concerned, we, in the media, should invite more responses. To begin with, there will be crude and poorly informed outbursts, but if we give it time, discussions on newspapers in the public domain will soon become more coherent and, yes, “constructive”.

To book ad-space, contact

SummitTIMES at

**GANGTOK:**

For circulation details Contact: (Sandeep)

9734152451

& for Advertisement booking at 9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at [advertise@summittimes.com](mailto:advertise@summittimes.com)

**SILIGURI:**

Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor. Opp. Ganga Hotel. Hill Cart Road. Siliguri – 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail at [mani\\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mani_siliguri@yahoo.co.in).

**KOLKATA OFFICE:**

Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezine – 2, 2nd floor. Kolkata – 700072.

Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob.

9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: [contact.synapse@gmail.com](mailto:contact.synapse@gmail.com)/ [irshad\\_ali123@rediffmail.com](mailto:irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com)

## The ultimate guide to why the COP26 summit ended in failure and disappointment (despite a few bright spots)

ROBERT HALES & BRENDAN MACKEY  
THECONVERSATION.COM

After two hard-fought weeks of negotiations, the Glasgow climate change summit is, at last, over. All 197 participating countries adopted the so-called Glasgow Climate Pact, despite an 11th hour intervention by India in which the final agreement was watered down from “phasing out” coal to “phasing down”.

In an emotional final speech, COP26 president Alok Sharma apologised for this last-minute change. His apology goes to the heart of the goals of COP26 in Glasgow: the hope it would deliver outcomes matching the urgent “code red” action needed to achieve the Paris Agreement target.

At the summit’s outset, UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged countries to “keep the goal of 1.5°C alive”, to accelerate the decarbonisation of the global economy, and to phase out coal.

So, was COP26 a failure? If we evaluate this using the summits original stated goals, the answer is yes, it fell short. Two big ticket items weren’t realised: renewing targets for 2030 that align with limiting warming to 1.5°C, and an agreement on accelerating the phase-out of coal. But among the failures, there were important decisions and notable bright spots. So let’s take a look at the summit’s defining issues.

### WEAK 2030 TARGETS

The goal of the Paris Agreement is to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C this century, and to pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. Catastrophic impacts will be unleashed beyond this point, such as sea level rise and more intense and frequent natural disasters.

But new projections from Climate Action Tracker show even if all COP26 pledges are met, the planet is on track to warm by 2.1°C – or 2.4°C if only 2030 targets are met.

Despite the Australian government’s recent climate announcements, this nation’s 2030 target remains the same as in 2015. If all countries adopted such meagre near-term targets, global

temperature rise would be on track for up to 3°C.

Technically, the 1.5°C limit is still within reach because, under the Glasgow pact, countries are asked to update their 2030 targets in a year’s time. However, as Sharma said, “the pulse of 1.5 is weak”.

And as Australia’s experience shows, domestic politics rather than international pressure is often the force driving climate policy. So there are no guarantees Australia or other nations will deliver greater ambition in 2022.

### PHASE DOWN, NOT OUT

India’s intervention to change the final wording to “phase down” coal rather than “phase out” dampens the urgency to shift away from coal.

India is the world’s third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases, after China and the United States. The country relies heavily on coal, and coal-powered generation is expected to grow by 4.6% each year to 2024. India was the most prominent objector to the “phase out” wording, but also had support from China.

And US climate envoy John Kerry argued that carbon capture and storage technology could be developed further, to trap emissions at the source and store them underground.

Carbon capture and storage is a controversial proposition for climate action. It is not proven at scale, and we don’t yet know if captured emissions stored underground will eventually return to the atmosphere. And around the world, relatively few large-scale underground storage locations exist.

And it’s hard to see this expensive technology ever being cost-competitive with cheap renewable energy.

In a crucial outcome, COP26 also finalised rules for global carbon trading, known as Article 6 under the Paris Agreement. However under the rules, the fossil fuel industry will be allowed to “offset” its carbon emissions and carry on polluting. Combined with the “phasing down” change, this will see fossil fuel emissions continue.

### IT WASN’T ALL BAD

Despite the shortcomings, COP26 led to a number of important positive outcomes.

The world has taken an unambiguous turn away from fossil fuel as a source of energy. And the 1.5°C global warming target has taken centre stage, with the recognition that reaching this target will require rapid, deep and sustained emissions reductions of 45% by 2030, relative to 2010 levels.

What’s more, the pact emphasises the importance to mitigation of nature and ecosystems, including protecting forests and biodiversity. This comes on top of a side deal struck by Australia and 123 other countries promising to end deforestation by 2030.

The pact also urges countries to fully deliver on an outstanding promise to deliver US\$100 billion per year for five years to developing countries vulnerable to climate damage. It also emphasises the importance of transparency in implementing the pledges.

Nations are also invited to revisit and strengthen the 2030 targets as necessary to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal by the end of 2022. In support of this, it was agreed to hold a high-level ministerial roundtable meeting each year focused on raising ambition out to 2030.

The US and China climate agreement is also cause for cautious optimism.

Despite the world not being on track for the 1.5°C goal, momentum is headed in the right direction. And the mere fact that a reduction in coal use was directly addressed in the final text signals change may be possible. But whether it comes in the small window we have left to stop catastrophic climate change remains to be seen.

*[Robert Hales is Director Centre for Sustainable Enterprise, Griffith University; Brendan Mackey is Director of the Griffith Climate Change Response Program, Griffith University]*

## How to function in an increasingly polarized society

FIONA MACDONALD

THECONVERSATION.COM

Political polarization has been an increasing topic of concern for people in many areas of their lives, rearing its head in everything from family get-togethers to workplace relationships and election campaigns.

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that polarization — extremes in opinions and/or an erosion of a more moderate political centre — can have real life-and-death consequences. How to manage the stress of polarization and how to function when it surrounds us is now a necessary but underdeveloped skill for many of us.

To function in an increasingly polarized society, we first need to know the source of the division. In politics, we often assume that disagreement stems from conflicts over policy directions.

Political science literature, however, disputes this notion. In fact, it’s not disagreement over policy that drives polarization, but rather our emotional feelings and perceptions about the nature of the world around us.

This is the compelling argument behind the book *Prius or Pickup?* How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain America’s Great Divide, by American political scientists Marc Hetherington and Jonathan Weiler. Their work demonstrates how our emotional responses to ideas and events is deeply connected to our world views.

### FOUR QUESTIONS

We can gain significant insight into our own ideas on the nature of the world and how it relates to the views of others by answering some questions on childrearing:

Which of the following qualities are most important for children to have?

1. Independence versus respect for elders
2. Obedience versus self-reliance
3. Curiosity versus good manners
4. Being considerate versus being well-behaved

The more focused an individual is on respect, obedience, good manners and good behaviour, the more likely they are to hold what Hetherington and Weiler identify



as a “fixed” world view.

The more emphasis an individual places on independence, self-reliance, curiosity and being considerate, the more likely they are to hold a “fluid” world view.

The basis for these differences is emotional or “affective.” Those of us who gravitate to the fixed end of the spectrum tend to regard the world as a dangerous place full of threats, while people who gravitate to the fluid end tend to see the world as a safe place to explore.

Of course, many people in society are somewhere in the middle and our position on the spectrum may change with life experiences that influence our perceptions. What’s critical, however, is understanding that the differences stem from our emotional sense of the world rather than issues or political positions.

### GUT-LEVEL DISAGREEMENT

As Hetherington and Weiler explain: “Why is politics so polarized if people actually don’t care all that much on the issues? If people don’t really care very much about politics, maybe they’re not necessarily extreme on the issues. But here’s the thing: What if you just completely understand the world differently from those on the other side in your guts?”

This kind of gut-level disagreement poses much bigger challenges because not only is there disagreement on how to handle a problem like the COVID-19 response, but the nature of the problem itself is disputed.

The COVID-19 polarization we’re seeing illustrates this dynamic. Those against COVID-19 vaccination view government mandates, public health restrictions and the citizens who support them as the problem at hand. As a result, it’s these measures and individuals that become the target for their emotional response.

Those in favour of vaccine mandates and other public health measures, in turn, are likely to view anti-vaxxers and those who violate public health orders as the source of the problem.

How then do we function when we encounter these emotionally driven divides? There are no easy fixes, but there are a few strategies that can help manage the stress and can de-escalate the impact of this kind of conflict in our day-to-day lives.

### STRATEGIES FOR DE-ESCALATION

First, recognizing the emotional basis is key even when we consider our own views to be science-informed. Realizing that those with

whom we disagree are often coming from a place of fear and anxiety can help lower frustration and is one step towards developing empathy and/or compassion for their position. This does not mean agreeing with them, but simply creating space to validate their emotional experience.

Early in my previous training to be a social worker, I discounted the value of validation. Once practising in the “real world,” however, I quickly realized the value that comes from listening to someone’s emotional perception, recognizing it and reflecting it back.

Phrases like “that must be frustrating” or “that must be very difficult” might seem trite in the abstract, but they are invaluable tools when shared genuinely in various kinds of interactions, and they can immediately lower tension.

While this practice alone will not transform viewpoints, it’s an important skill we can employ to maintain relations with others who hold different world views — and can help prevent further alienation.

That’s a small but necessary step if we want to avoid functioning in echo chambers in which we only interact with those who already agree with us.

*[the writer is Assistant Professor, Political Science, University of Northern British Columbia]*



# Naxal commander killed in encounter in Chhattisgarh

**NARAYANPUR, NOV 15 (PTI):** A Naxal commander was killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district on Monday, a senior police official said.

The gunfight took place at around 11.30 am in the forest of Bahker under Chhotedongar police station limits when a team of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) was out on an area domination operation, Narayanpur Superintendent of Police Girija Shankar Jaiswal said.

When the patrolling team was cordoning off the forest in Bahker, located over 300 km from the state capital Raipur, a group of Naxals, positioned on a hill, opened fire at the security personnel leading to the gunfight, he said.

However, the ultras



soon fled the spot on finding the security personnel zeroing-in on them, he said.

"During a search of the encounter site, the body of a Naxal clad in 'uniform' was recovered along with an

AK-47 rifle," the official said.

The slain rebel has been identified as Saket, commander of the outlawed Peoples' Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA) company no. 6 of the Maoists, he said.

Narayanpur shares the border with Gadchiroli district in neighbouring Maharashtra, where 26 Naxals, including top rebel leader Milind Teltumbde, were killed in an encounter with police on Saturday.

# Champion race car driver, top instructor Bob Bondurant dies

**PARADISE VALLEY, ARIZ. (AP):** Bob Bondurant, a former champion race car driver who opened a high-performance driving school in 1968 and taught numerous A-list actors for their movie roles, has died. He was 88.

According to his family and the Bondurant Racing School website, Bondurant died Friday in the Phoenix suburb of Paradise Valley. No cause of death was released.

Bondurant taught stunt driving, competition driving, police pursuit driving, evasive driving for chauffeurs and bodyguards, plus other skills, according to the website. His school has

had over 500,000 graduates, it said.

Among the celebrities Bondurant instructed in road course driving for their movie roles were Paul Newman, Tom Cruise, Clint Eastwood, James Garner, Nicolas Cage, Robert Wagner, Tim Allen and Christian Bale, according to the website.

Born in Evanston, Illinois, Bondurant and his family moved to California when he was 2.

He raced motorcycles on dirt tracks as a teenager before switching to cars in 1958 and racing for the Shelby American, Ferrari and Eagle teams.

Bondurant won 30 of 32 races in Corvettes

from 1961-63, and he won the GT class at Le Mans in 1964, co-driving with fellow American Dan Gurney.

Badly injured in a 1967 crash at the race-track in Watkins Glen, New York, Bondurant drafted an idea for a high-performance driving school while recuperating.

He opened the school in early 1968 at California's Orange County International Raceway, then moved it to Ontario, California, and later Sonoma, north of San Francisco.

Bondurant relocated the driving school to Phoenix following the 1989 Loma Prieta earth-

quake in California.

He was inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America in 2003.

Bondurant is survived by his wife, Pat, who is president and CEO of the Bondurant Racing School. She vows to continue the legacy of the school.

"Bob Bondurant has had a worldwide impact on the motorsports industry, and his legacy will live on eternally as the Bondurant Racing School moves forward into the future," Phoenix Raceway President Julie Giese said in a statement.

Funeral plans were not immediately available Sunday.

# Passenger traffic doubles at Srinagar airport

**NEW DELHI, NOV 15 (PTI):** In signs of increased business in the valley, air passenger traffic at the Srinagar airport has more than doubled in October, with the number of flights and travellers going up.

According to data available from the government department, Srinagar airport handled 3.32 lakh passengers on 2,460 flights in October against 1.63 lakh travellers on 1,227 flights a year back.



Last week, an Icra report had said that domestic air passenger traffic in the country had grown by a whopping 67 per cent year-on-year at around 87-88 lakh in October, on the back of festive season demand amid a continuous fall in the number of COVID-19 infection cases.

And the trend was visible in Srinagar as well. Air traffic rose month-on-month and year-on-year.

Air travel from the airport in the valley has been on a steady rise since the second wave of

the coronavirus ebbed.

The Srinagar airport handled 2.54 passengers on 2,127 flights in April this year. This fell to 91,507 passengers on 1,042 flights in the following month.

However, the traffic started to grow thereafter. In June, the airport handled 1.65 lakh passengers on 1,437 flights, which further rose to 2.45 lakh travellers on 1,989 flights in July and 2.67 passengers on 2,144 flights in August.

In September, this further rose to 2.7 lakh passengers on 2,152 flights, the data showed.

The airport handled just 30 flights in April 2020 when the nation was under a complete lockdown to contain the spread of the pandemic.

Once the lockdown restrictions were eased, the flights increased to 723 in June, which carried 85,693 passengers. By September that year, the

number of flights rose to 1,093, carrying 1.4 lakh passengers.

According to Icra, domestic carriers nationwide operated 46 per cent more flights at 72,000 during October over 49,150 departures logged in a year back.

However, higher aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices continue to pose a near-term challenge, with price seeing a sequential increase of 13.9 per cent in November 2021, it said.

# Bengal: Man found dead in Bhagabanpur, BJP blames TMC

**KANTHI (WB), NOV 15 (PTI):** A 35-year-old man was found dead in West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district, police said on Monday.

The body of Bhaskar Bera was found on the side of a road in Bhagabanpur area of the district on Sunday morning, they said.

The BJP claimed him to be a party worker who was allegedly beaten to

death by TMC supporters, a charge rubbished by the ruling side.

Bera was last seen in a procession for the immersion of Jagaddhatri idol in the area on Saturday night, police said.

An investigation is underway to piece together the chain of events that led to the death, a police officer said.

BJP national vice-president Dilip

Ghosh alleged that Bera was beaten to death by TMC supporters.

"TMC is yet to come to terms with the BJP's win in the Bhagabanpur assembly seat. It wants to ensure that BJP stops its political activities in the area," he said.

Ghosh claimed that 80 BJP workers were killed in political violence after the results of the assembly elections

were declared on May 2.

TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh claimed that his party was in no way involved with the death.

"We want a thorough probe into the incident," he said.

A district TMC leader claimed Bera was drunk during the procession, and may have died due to complications arising out of consuming too much liquor.

# Ganja worth over Rs 2 crore seized in Hyd; three held

**HYDERABAD, NOV 15 (PTI):** A total of 1,240 kg ganja, worth over Rs 2.08 crore was seized from here on Monday and three drug peddlers have been nabbed, police said.

On specific information, police teams raided an automobile garage at Medipally here and seized the ganja that was brought from Sileru Agency area of Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh and kept for transporting to Mumbai, Rachakonda Commissioner of Police Mahesh M Bhagwat said.

Police took three drug peddlers into custo-



dy and seized 1,240 kg of the narcotic drugs along with three vehicles even as three other accused including the prime accused managed to escape after noticing the move-

ment of police during the raid.

The accused used to purchase ganja at Rs 8,000 per kg from the suppliers in Sileru agency area and dumped it in

the automobile garage. They later used to sell it to needy customers at Rs 15,000 per kg, police said adding they were running this illegal business for the last one year.

# 4 new COVID-19 cases in Andaman & Nicobar Islands

**PORT BLAIR, NOV 15 (PTI):** Four new COVID-19 cases were recorded in Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the last 24 hours, pushing the tally in the union territory to 7,674, a health department official said on Monday.

The four new cases were detected during contact tracing.

The archipelago now has 11 active COVID-19 cases and all the patients are in the South Andaman district while the other two districts - North and Middle Andaman and

Nicobar - are coronavirus free, he said.

A total of 7,534 have recovered from COVID-19 so far.

The COVID-19 death toll remained at 129 as no fresh fatality was reported in the last 24 hours.

The administration has so far tested over 6.15 lakh samples for COVID-19 and the cumulative test positivity rate is 1.24 per cent.

A total of 5,18,236 beneficiaries have been inoculated with COVID-19 vaccine so far, the official added.

# Ladakh reports 28 fresh coronavirus cases

**LEH, NOV 15 (PTI):** Ladakh has recorded 28 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the infection tally to 21,176, while the number of active cases in the union territory has gone up to 173, officials said on Monday.

All the 28 fresh cases were reported in Leh, they said, adding that there was no death reported due to the infection in Ladakh on Sunday.

Ladakh has registered 211 Covid-related deaths -- 153

in Leh and 58 in Kargil -- since the outbreak of the pandemic.

Nine patients were cured and discharged from hospital in Leh. The total number of cured patients stood at 20,792, they said.

A total of 357 samples in Ladakh were found negative, they said.

With the fresh cases, the total number of COVID-19 active cases in Ladakh has gone up to 173 -- 168 in Leh and five in Kargil district.

# Arunachal Pradesh logs four fresh COVID-19 cases

**ITANAGAR, NOV 15 (PTI):** Arunachal Pradesh's COVID-19 tally rose to 55,220 on Monday as four more persons tested positive for the infection, a senior health official said here.

The coronavirus death toll remained at 280 as no fresh fatality was registered in the last 24 hours, State Surveillance Officer (SSO) Dr Lobsang Jampa said.



The northeastern state now has 44 active COVID-19 cases, while 54,896 people have recovered from the disease so far, including two on Sunday.

The COVID-19 recovery rate in the state now is 99.41 per cent.

West Kameng district has the highest number of active cases at 11, fol-

lowed by Tawang and Capital Complex region at seven each, Shi-Yomi and East Siang recorded five cases each.

The state has thus far

tested over 11,92,968 samples for COVID-19, including 223 on Sunday, the SSO said, adding that the positivity rate now is 1.79 per

cent.

State Immunisation Officer Dr Dimong Padung said that a total of 13,57,411 people have been inoculated so far.

# Poland arrests 3 in connection to antisemitic demonstration

**WARSAW, POLAND (AP):** Poland's Interior Minister said Monday three people have been arrested in connection with an antisemitic demonstration last week where far-right participants shouted "death to the Jews."

The demonstration took place last Thursday, on Poland's Independence Day, in the central Polish city of Kalisz. Participants at the gathering also burned a copy of a medieval document that offered Jews protection and rights in Polish lands.

Poland's Jewish com-

munity said in a statement Monday that Polish Jews "have not experienced such contempt and hatred expressed in public for years."

"Poland is our homeland. We are both Jews and Poles. We are asking, however, why our right to regard Poland as our home is being questioned ever more often and ever more openly," the Union of Jewish Religious Communities said.

Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski announced the arrest on Twitter, saying "there is

no consent to anti-Semitism and hatred based on nationality, religion or ethnicity."

"In the face of the organizers of the disgraceful event in Kalisz, the Polish state must show its ruthlessness and determination," Kaminski said.

Polish authorities have faced questions as to why it took so long to make the arrests given that the incident was widely reported in Poland.

The public expression of hatred occurred

on a holiday celebrating Poland's statehood, a day which in recent years has been overshadowed by events led by far-right groups.

The Jewish community statement noted that state and local governments have been "giving up their role as the main organizer of Independence Day celebrations, thus letting the initiative be taken over by extreme right-wing organizations that use public assemblies to preach antisemitic, xenophobic, and homophobic words."



## DeRozan, LaVine in double digits, Bulls end Clippers' streak

**LOS ANGELES (AP):** DeMar DeRozan scored 35 points and Zach LaVine added 29 to help the Chicago Bulls beat the Los Angeles Clippers 100-90 on Sunday night, ending the Clippers' seven-game winning streak. Lonzo Ball had 10 points for the Bulls, who used generous amounts of Los Angeles-area talent to earn the victory. DeRozan is a LA native who went to USC, while LaVine and Ball attended UCLA.

"We battled and fought," Bulls coach Billy Donovan said after his team held the Clippers to 35.8% from the field and 32.4% from 3-point range. "Everybody who went in there helped. It was a game where everyone went small. So yeah, I was happy with the way we played defense."

Paul George scored 27 points and had 11 rebounds for the Clippers, while Eric Bledsoe added 21 points. Los Angeles lost for the first time since Oct. 29 at Portland.



George and Reggie Jackson, who lead the Clippers with more than eight 3-point attempts per game, were a combined 5 of 21 from distance. Jackson scored 13 points while going 4 of 17 from the field.

"Couldn't make shots, couldn't get them to fall," George said. "A lot of in and outs, lot of good

looks, just wasn't my night shooting."

The Bulls' Alex Caruso, a former Laker who is in his first season in Chicago, scored just seven points but had nine rebounds and helped thwart the Clippers' long-distance shooters over a team-high 39 minutes.

"He's one of the high-

est IQ players I've played with," DeRozan said about Caruso. "It makes life so much easier for us when he's out there."

Chicago is 1-1 to open a five-game trip that includes a visit to the Lakers on Monday.

The Bulls had a double-digit lead less than five minutes into the game and had a 17-point

advantage and held on from there.

"Our guys got tired," Clippers coach Tyrone Lue said of the loss one day after a 129-102 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves. "I messed up and played them to many minutes. ... That was on me, so whatever. Start a new (winning) streak."

TIP-INS

Bulls: G Coby White has not played this season after shoulder surgery. That'll change this week: He was cleared to make his season debut Monday against the Lakers, Donovan said.

Clippers: F Marcus Morris, who has not played since Oct. 23, is making progress on a left knee injury, according to Lue. LA still doesn't know if Morris will be on a two-game road trip later this week.

UP NEXT

Bulls: At the Los Angeles Lakers on Monday.

Clippers: Host San Antonio on Tuesday.

## Joao Victor to lead Hyderabad FC in ISL 2021-22



**BAMBOLIM (GOA), Nov 15 (PTI):** Hyderabad FC on Monday announced midfielder Joao Victor as the club's captain for the upcoming 2021-22 Indian Super League season.

Joao, who served as one of the vice captains in the previous season, will be joined by goalkeeper Laxmikant Kattimani and striker Bartholomew Ogbeche to form the leadership group at the club. The duo will be the second and third in the hierarchy respectively.

"We had a really good captain in Aridane Santana last season and it is now my turn. But this will not change who I am and I will still be the same teammate," said the 33-year-old.

Joao joined Hyderabad FC in the club's second season in the Indian Super League and was a vital cog in Manolo Marquez's side who finished 5th in the previous ISL campaign. The midfielder signed a two-year extension till 2023 back in July this year.

The Brazilian star also added that the work of a captain is lot more than wearing the arm band on the field.

"Taking this role is about being a leader every day. It is all about how you respect players and how they respect you. They should feel that there is someone to help them no matter what," Joao said.

"Even last season, I think I was there supporting the youngsters and the whole team and this season as well, I will try my best to make them comfortable, to give them confidence but also push them when needed," he added.

On the field, the leadership group will follow the sequence, where in the absence of the first captain from action, the armband will be worn by the next captain in order.

Hyderabad FC kick off their campaign with a clash against southern neighbours Chennaiyin FC on November 23 at the Bambolim Stadium.

## Norwich hires Dean Smith a week after he was fired by Villa

**NORWICH, ENGLAND (AP):** Norwich appointed Dean Smith as manager of the Premier League's last-placed team on Monday, a week after he was fired by Aston Villa.

The 50-year-old Smith replaces Daniel Farke, who was dismissed last weekend despite overseeing Norwich's first win of the league season.

"It has been a whirlwind seven days, but I'm really pleased to be back and working for Norwich City in the Premier League," Smith said in a statement.

Now the aim is avoiding an instant relegation to the League Championship.

"Dean has an outstanding track record and as soon as he made it clear that he was ready to go straight back into a managerial role we contacted him immediately," Norwich sporting director Stuart Webber said. "He shares the same

values and vision as the club, has a proven track record of winning games in the Premier League as well as developing players and building a winning culture and mentality."

Norwich is bottom of the Premier League, five points from safety after 11 matches.

Smith's first game in charge will be against Southampton at Carrow Road on Saturday. Southampton was also the opponent for Smith's last match in charge of Villa, which led to a fifth successive loss and his departure from the club.

Norwich has scored five goals all season, including two in the win over Brentford last week which could not save Farke from losing his job. Providing a regular supply line for main striker Teemu Pukki will be crucial to Norwich's chances, as will finding goals from elsewhere on the field.

## Ohtani tells Japanese press he feels 'down' when Angels lose

**TOKYO (AP):** Even Shohei Ohtani, arguably the best player in the major leagues, feels down at times, particularly when his team isn't winning.

And that's been the case during each of the four seasons he's been with the Los Angeles Angels, all of which have ended with losing records.

Sharing his mental state was among the few small nuggets Ohtani revealed in an hour-long interview on Monday at the Japan National Press Club.

The Q-and-A session focused heavily on local matters about being back home, about local food and local baseball personalities, and even questions about when the 27-year-old might start a family.

"I think this is something you cannot force to happen, it just naturally happens," he said, speak-



ing in Japanese through an interpreter. "I think it's still well ahead of me."

Ohtani is under contract for next season at \$5.5 million, which will be his highest annual salary thus far. He remains under the Angels' control through 2023 and could become a free agent after that season.

Questions about free agency did not come

up in the interview, although he was asked about his taxes in the United States.

"Los Angeles has high tax rates," he said, indicating he was happy to pay them. "So slightly more than half of what I earn has to be paid in taxes. So I pay my taxes. It's not that I consume a lot. I really don't spend, so it just goes into my savings."

Almost every question began with a congratulatory message, often long ones. He was asked to comment on his memories of the 2011 tsunami, earthquake and meltdown of three nuclear reactors that killed almost 20,000 people in northeastern Japan — his home region.

And he was asked

several times about being "down" emotionally and getting through it.

"How do you overcome that?" he was asked.

"Of course I feel down," he said, indicating his emotions toward the end of the just-completed season.

"Since I joined the major leagues, the team has not been winning and we didn't have much

prospect of going beyond the regular season. So in the latter half of the season, psychologically it was more stressful. And of course I feel down occasionally when I can't hit — or when my pitches are hit."

However, Ohtani said that even suffering through a losing season was better than not playing at all, which he experienced in several stretches because of injury.

"So even feeling down included, it was a wonderful year," he said.

Ohtani is a leading candidate for the American League MVP award, which will be announced later this week.

He was asked where he would be when the award winner is revealed.

"I don't know where I will be," he said straightforwardly, which was typical of his responses.

## Muguruza beats Kontaveit to reach semifinals at WTA Finals

**GUADALAJARA, MEXICO (AP):** Garbiñe Muguruza ended Anett Kontaveit's 12-match winning streak with a 6-4, 6-4 victory Sunday that propelled her into the semifinals at the WTA Finals.

Muguruza, who will be playing in her first semifinals of this tournament since 2015, needed the win to advance to the semifinals at the expense of Wimbledon finalist Karolina Pliskova. Kontaveit was already assured of a spot in the semis before her last group-stage match.

Muguruza avenged a recent loss to Kontaveit, who beat her in just 48 minutes in the Kremlin Cup quarterfinals in Moscow last month.

"I have been improving and found myself, today I knew that it was a must win match and went out to get it," Muguruza said. "I

had to end Anett's streak, she was like invincible in the tour and fortunately I did it."

Muguruza had an early break and then saved two break points to take the first set against Kontaveit, who never appeared settled in the night match.

"She was not a the top of her game tonight, I could see it, maybe been already qualified to the semifinals had something to do with it," added Muguruza.

The WTA Finals are played in a round-robin format with the top two players from each group advancing.

The semifinals will be played on Tuesday and the final is set for Wednesday at the Centro Panamericano de Tennis in Zapopan.

Pliskova rallied from a set and a break down to beat Barbora Krejickova



0-6, 6-4, 6-4 in the earlier match to maintain a chance of reaching the semis, but was eliminated with the Muguruza win.

"Obviously horrible start, horrible first set. I think was combination of both me not playing really well and (her) playing just amazing," Pliskova said.

"I'm just proud that I was able to reset and start from zero and find a bit my game, although it was not great."

French Open champion Krejickova finished the singles tournament 0-3, but remains alive in the doubles along with Katerina Siniakova.

"I think I had amazing season. I was doing really well

throughout the season and right now it's very disappointing," Krejickova said. "I really want to do well in doubles with my partner. I'll just keep going, stay focused."

The WTA Finals are being played in Guadalajara for this year only, with the event scheduled to return in 2022 to Shenzhen, China.

## Stephen Curry relishes Cam Newton's return to Panthers

**CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP):** Stephen Curry wasn't happy the Golden State Warriors lost in his home city of Charlotte to the Hornets on Sunday night.

But the two-time NBA Most Valuable Player was pretty excited that earlier in the day NFL quarterback Cam Newton returned in a big way to help the Carolina

Panthers beat the first-place Cardinals 34-10 in Arizona.

"In true Cam fashion his first touch he gets a score and his second touch he throws a touchdown," said Curry, a lifelong Panthers fan who was given the honor of hitting the team's Keep Pounding drum before the start

of Super Bowl 50 in 2016. "It was

kind of surreal watching it for sure, just knowing how much of a fan I am and how weird it was watching Panther football without him."

Newton helped spark the Panthers just three days after signing a one-year contract to return to the franchise that released him prior to the 2020 season. Newton

spent nine seasons in Carolina before signing with the New England Patriots last year.

The Patriots cut him on Aug. 31.

The Panthers chose to re-sign Newton after losing starting quarterback Sam Darnold to a shoulder injury. New-

ton didn't start on Sunday, but came off the bench to score the two TDs.

"Obviously I wish him the best and they got the win, so it's a little life that he breathed into the building," Curry said. "So I'm rooting for him. ... I love his vibe and his energy all the way around."

to book  
advertisements in Sum-  
mitTimes, call  
03592-208698  
9734152541



# Japan-US launch talks to resolve dispute over tariffs

TOKYO (AP): U.S. and Japanese officials agreed Monday to launch talks aimed at settling a dispute over American tariffs on imports of Japanese steel and aluminum. The agreement came in a meeting between visiting U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and Japan's minister of economy, trade and industry, Koichi Hagiuda, Japanese officials said.

Japan hopes to convince Washington to lift tariffs imposed during President Donald Trump's administration.

The U.S. recently resolved a similar dispute with the European Union in a deal officials said addresses excess capacity that can distort the steel market. It patched up a trans-Atlantic rift and is meant to create a framework for reducing the carbon-intensity of steel and aluminum production that contributes to the warming of the earth.

Trump ordered the extra tariffs, 25% on steel imports and 10% on aluminum, in March 2018, asserting they would protect U.S. jobs and national security.

Hagiuda made it clear in the meeting that Japan wants the tariff issue "completely" resolved,

in line with the World Trade Organization, trade and industry ministry officials said after the talks. Japan considers U.S. tariffs imposed on steel and aluminum imported from Japan as "problematic," they said.

Raimondo responded to a request by Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi during a meeting Monday to scrap the extra tariffs on Japanese steel and aluminum exports to the United States by saying she planned to tackle the issue as a priority, the Foreign Ministry said.

Late last week, the Commerce Department issued a statement announcing the start of consultations with Japan by Raimondo and United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai "to address global steel and aluminum excess capacity, take effective measures to ensure the long-term viability of our steel and aluminum industries, and find solutions to strengthen our democratic alliance."

Excess steel and aluminum capacity has worsened over the decades as China ramped up its output to levels that dwarf production by



other nations. China produced 1.06 billion tons of crude steel in 2020, according to the World Steel Association. The next largest producer, India, put out 100 million tons, while Japan produced 83.7 million tons and the U.S. nearly 73 million tons.

China also accounts for more than half of all world aluminum output.

The two sides also issued a statement saying they will set up the "Japan-U.S. Commercial

and Industrial Partnership." The Commerce Department and Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said they are "committed to working through JUCIP to strengthen the competitiveness, resiliency, and security of both economies."

"It is so important for both of our countries and coordination in these key areas is essential for our global economic recovery, and our ability to seize our opportunities in a post-pandemic

world," Raimondo said in opening remarks to the meeting.

She said "the Department of Commerce's commitment to Japan is unwavering, as is our desire to strengthen our economic partnerships with like-minded countries."

Raimondo is expected to visit Malaysia and Singapore after Tokyo. Tai is visiting Japan for several days beginning Tuesday.

Japanese officials said Raimondo stressed

the importance of strong Japan-U.S. ties and leadership in the Indo-Pacific region. The two officials also agreed to cooperate in coping with other challenges such as climate change.

"For Japan and the United States that lead the global economy and share values such as free and fair economic order, it is essential that we strengthen economic and technological cooperation including supply chain resilience," Hagiuda said.

# Sudan doctors say 2 more protesters die from gunshot wounds



**KHARTOUM, SUDAN (AP):** Two more Sudanese protesters died in hospital from wounds after being shot during mass protests against last month's military coup, a doctors union said Monday.

That raises the death toll from Saturday's protests to seven, all but one from gunshots, the Sudan Doctors Committee said. More than 200 others were wounded when security forces used live ammunition and tear gas to disperse protesters in the capital city of Khartoum and its twin city of Omdurman, the committee said.

Sudanese police denied using live ammunition, saying its forces only resorted to tear gas to disperse demonstrators allegedly attacking police stations and vehicles. They said at least 39 policemen were wounded in Saturday's clashes protests.

Thousands of pro-democracy protesters took to the streets against Sudan Saturday to rally against the military's takeover last month.

The Oct. 25 takeover upended a fragile planned transition to democratic rule, more than two years after a popular uprising forced the removal of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir and his Islamist government.

The coup has drawn international criticism and massive protests in the streets of the capital of Khartoum and elsewhere in the country. At

least 23 protesters were killed since Oct. 25, according to the doctors committee.

The committee said the new deaths include 13-year-old Remaaz Hatim al-Atta, who was shot in the head in front of her family's home in Khartoum, and Omar Adam who was shot in his neck during protests also in Khartoum. Both were shot on Oct. 25 and pronounced dead in the past 24 hours, it said.

Saturday's demonstrations came as the military has tightened its grip on power, appointing a new Sovereign Council. The council, chaired by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, held its first meeting Sunday, and said in a statement that a civilian government would be formed in the coming days.

Cracks, meanwhile, started to surface among the pro-democracy movement over a call by a group of political parties and movements to return to the pre-coup power-sharing deal between the protesters and the generals.

The Sudanese Professionals' Association, which spearheaded the uprising against al-Bashir, criticized the call, insisting on handing power over to civilians.

The SPA said it would work with the Resistance Committees and other groups to topple the military council and establish a civilian government to lead the transition to democracy.

# Austrian unvaccinated lockdown starts amid COVID resurgence

**BERLIN (AP):** Austria took what its leader called the "dramatic" step Monday of implementing a nationwide lockdown for unvaccinated people who haven't recently had COVID-19, perhaps the most drastic of a string of measures being taken by European governments to get a massive regional resurgence of the coronavirus under control.

The move, which took effect at midnight, prohibits people 12 years old and older who haven't been vaccinated or recently recovered from leaving their homes except for basic activities such as working, grocery shopping, going for a walk — or getting vaccinated.

The lockdown is initially being imposed until Nov. 24 in the Alpine country of 8.9 million. It doesn't apply to children under 12 because they cannot yet officially get vaccinated — though the capital, Vienna, on Monday opened up vaccinations for under-12s as part of a pilot, and reported high demand.

Officials have said that police patrols will be stepped up and unvaccinated people can be fined up to 1,450 euros (\$1,660) if they violate the lockdown.

"We really didn't take this step lightly and I don't think it should be talked down," Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg told Oe1 radio. "This a dramatic step — about 2 million people in this country are affected ... what we are trying is precisely to reduce contact between the unvaccinated and vaccinated to a minimum, and also contact between the unvaccinated."

"My aim is very



clearly to get the unvaccinated to get themselves vaccinated and not to lock down the vaccinated," Schallenberg added. "In the long term, the way out of this vicious circle we are in — and it is a vicious circle, we are stumbling from wave to lockdown, and that can't carry on ad infinitum — is only vaccination."

About 65% of the population is fully vaccinated, a rate that Schallenberg has described as "shamefully low."

Authorities are concerned about rising infections and increasing pressure on hospitals. Austria on Sunday recorded 849.2 new cases per 100,000 residents over the previous seven days. Its situation is far worse than that of neighboring Germany, where case rates on Monday hit the latest in a string of records, with 303 new cases per 100,000 residents over seven days.

Berlin on Monday became the latest of several German states to limit access to restaurants, cinemas, museums and concerts to people who have been vaccinated or recently recovered - shutting out unvaccinated people who have tested nega-

tive. Under-18s are exempted.

On Thursday, the German parliament is due to vote on a new legal framework for coronavirus restrictions drawn up by the parties that are expected to form the country's next government. Those plans are reportedly being beefed up to allow tougher contact restrictions than originally envisioned.

Germany has struggled to bring new momentum to its vaccination campaign, with just over two-thirds of the population fully vaccinated, and is trying to ramp up booster shots.

Outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel issued a new appeal on Saturday for holdouts to get vaccinated. "Think about it again," she said. The country's disease control center called last week for people to cancel or avoid large events.

To Germany's west, the Netherlands on Saturday night implemented a partial lockdown that is due to run for at least three weeks, forcing bars and restaurants to close at 8 p.m. In the northern city of Leeuwarden, hundreds of young people gathered in a central square, set-

ting off fireworks and holding flares, before riot police moved in to push protesters out.

In Austria, the leader of the far-right opposition Freedom Party vowed to combat the new restrictions by "all parliamentary and legal means we have available." Herbert Kickl said in a statement that "2 million people are being practically imprisoned without having done anything wrong."

The government's next move, however, may well be to tighten the screws.

Health Minister Wolfgang Mueckstein told ORF television that he wants to discuss further measures on Wednesday, and said that one proposal on the table is limits on going out at night that would also apply to the vaccinated.

Schallenberg sounded a more cautious note. "Of course I don't rule out sharpening" the measures, he said, but he indicated that he doesn't expect restrictions on bars and the like at present. He said further measures could include requiring full medical masks in more places, more working from home and requiring vaccinated people to get tested before going to events.

# Kuwaiti emir transfers some duties to crown prince

**DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (AP):** Kuwait has temporarily handed its crown prince some of the ruling emir's constitutional duties, the royal family's secretariat announced on Monday, without explaining why the transfer was necessary.

The brief statement published by the state-run KUNA news agency said only that the government had issued an order for the crown prince to assume some duties of the 84-year-old ruling emir Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah. In the past, the royal office has made the move due to a ruler's poor health.

Last year, when the late Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah underwent surgery, the oil-rich nation's crown prince took on some of his powers temporarily. Kuwait's Information Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Given Sheikh Nawaf's age, the move raises concerns about his health. State-run news previously reported that he traveled to the United States for unspecified medical checks in March. The health of Kuwait's leaders remains a sensitive matter in the tiny Middle East nation that has seen internal power struggles behind palace doors.

The decree comes at a delicate time for the sheikhdom. The government resigned last week as tensions escalated between the Parliament and Cabinet. The emir issued a long-awaited pardon for scores of self-exiled dissidents.

Kuwait, a nation home to 4.1 million people that's slightly smaller than the U.S. state of New Jersey, has the world's sixth-largest known oil reserves. It has been a staunch U.S. ally since the 1991 Gulf War expelled the occupying Iraqi forces of Saddam Hussein.

# Italy: Police move against violent anti-vaccine activists

**ROME (AP):** Police conducted searches across Italy on Monday against 17 anti-vaccine activists who were allegedly affiliated with a Telegram chat that espoused violence against government, medical and media figures for their perceived support of COVID-19 restrictions.

Police in Turin said the "Basta Dittatura" (Enough of the Dictatorship) chat had tens of thousands of members and was a prime forum for organizing protests against Italy's health pass.

Like many European countries, Italy requires people to show their so-called Green Pass to dine indoors, visit museums and cinemas and for long-distance public transport. The pass show proof of vaccination, a recent negative test or having been cured of



COVID-19.

Protests have grown more acute after Italy last month became the first Western country to also require the pass to access workplaces.

In a statement Monday, police said they monitored the now-shuttered Telegram chat for weeks and identified 17 extremists who threatened Premier Mario Draghi, among others.

"Other recurring targets were also the police, doctors, scientists, journalists and other public figures accused of 'enslavement' and 'col-

laboration' with the 'dictatorship' in place," the statement said.

Nearly ever weekend has featured anti-vaccine and anti-green pass protests in Italy, including one Oct. 9 in Rome in which extremists trashed the headquarters of Italy's main labor union. A protest this past weekend in Milan featured the American anti-vaccine activist, Robert F. Kennedy.

Last week, the Interior Ministry issued guidance to police departments nationwide advising them to restrict protests from being staged

in congested city centers. The ministry reaffirmed the right of protesters to gather, but cited the potential threat to public security and contagion in recommending protests be allowed only farther afield.

Italy, where the coronavirus outbreak first erupted in Europe in February 2020, is seeing a steady increase in its daily caseload amid a new wave of infections. Authorities registered 62 cases per 100,000 inhabitants last week, the third consecutive week of increased incidence.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

email us: [news@summittimes.com](mailto:news@summittimes.com)



The Big Pic



**FEELING THE LOVE!** The megastar, Lady Gaga enjoys her moment at the Italian premiere of House of Gucci in Milan.

## National Public Radio books editor Petra Mayer dies at 46



**WASHINGTON (AP):** Petra Mayer, books editor for National Public Radio, died Saturday of what's believed to be a pulmonary embolism, the news organization said. She was 46. Mayer is remembered for her reporting at Comic-Con and helping put together NPR's Book Concierge, an annual interactive guide that filters titles based on interest to recommend to readers. She was an occasional guest on "Pop Culture Happy Hour" podcast episodes, and her colleagues said she was a proud nerd who loved science fiction and comics.

NPR's senior vice president for news, Nancy Barnes, said in an email to staff that she died

suddenly at Holy Cross Hospital in Maryland.

"Petra was NPR through and through," Barnes wrote.

Mayer joined NPR Books team in 2012 after working as an associate producer and director for "All Things Considered" on the weekends, handling the show's books coverage.

Her biography on NPR's website said she first joined as an engineering assistant in 1994 while attending Amherst College, but left a few years later for a news writing job at Boston's WBUR and for a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University. She returned to NPR in 2000.

### ARIES:

The winds of change are blowing in your direction, Aries. Yes, that means things are likely to fall in place all of a sudden, after a period of stagnation. Prepare yourself to roll with it. It's best to be alert, focused, and quick witted at this point. However, here are some words of caution by Gary Basey to keep in mind when you find yourself thinking about the easy way out, "If you take shortcuts, you get cut short." Acting from a place of integrity is the best way to ensure long-term returns.

### TAURUS:

Have you ever stopped to wonder about the origin of the traditions and beliefs that we follow today? While some of them might seem ridiculous to the modern mind, they hold within them pearls of ancient wisdom. Instead of going down the skeptic route today, dig deeper. Turn to experts on the subject and refer to sacred texts.

### GEMINI:

The best thing about being a Gemini is the dynamic personality you've been

blessed with. The disadvantage? Feeling a little lost about which face to show the world today. Allow yourself to take a deep breath and look within. There is no need to hide behind the masks and the cloaks. By bringing the gift of authenticity to the table, you will find your true freedom.

### CANCER:

It's time to turn your knowledge into wisdom, Cancer. It's time to truly come into your own. This is the only way you will be able to guide others on your path. If you're already treading the path of light, consider working closely with children. Overheard at this cosmic conference: this is a part of your sacred purpose.

### LEO:

Deceit and betrayal are showing up as prominent themes in your cards, Leo. The bitter truth is that it is the people closest to your heart that have turned their back on you. The important thing to remember is that things are happening for and not to you. The Universe is teaching you a life lesson which is important

for your ascension.

### VIRGO:

A new day. A new dawn. A brand new beginning. Welcome to the land of infinite possibilities, Virgo! It's time to trust that feeling of hope and optimism that's emerging from deep within you. It's time to sing out loud the song that's been stuck in your head: "Morning is here, sunshine is here". Remember, it is when things begin to look good that paranoia tends to rear its ugly head.

### LIBRA:

Two halves don't make a full, Libra. It's time to put that old narrative to rest. It's time to show up for yourself, to do the work, and to come into a space of wholeness within yourself. This is the only way to attract a healthy relationship, one that will hold space for you to fly. As such, this is also a time of making choices. There is no right or wrong way to go from here, beautiful.

### SCORPIO:

The world can be a cold and harsh place, Scorpio. But, that doesn't mean you have

to shut down. That doesn't mean you have to build walls around your space. Allow yourself to feel the softness. Allow yourself to feel the grace. Know that your vulnerability is your greatest strength, beautiful. On the upside, there's good news coming your way on the work and career front.

### SAGITTARIUS:

Today, you're being asked to channel your inner starlet, dream big dreams, and dance your own dance. You're unique and different, Sagittarius, and that's what makes you, you. So stop playing by the rules set by other people. Stop trying to please those who will never understand your truth. Some of you may also be drawn towards the performing arts at this point.

### CAPRICORN:

Egyptian Goddess Maat is known to represent cosmic order and today she is bringing with herself the reminder that the scales will soon balance themselves. That's right, Capricorn. Justice will prevail and you will find a way to triumph

over the circumstances that are currently bringing you down. So, act conscientiously and keep adding to those good karma points.

### AQUARIUS:

The cards are warning you against addictive behavioral patterns. What are \*you\* addicted to, Aquarius, and how is this helping you fill the growing void within? Consider taking your demons out for tea and having an open and honest conversation with them. Confronting your patterns is the only way to transcend what no longer serves you, beautiful. Some of you are being warned against toxic relationships as well.

### PISCES:

Three words, Pisces: research, research, research. While you're on the right track, the plan needs to be finetuned. Digging deeper into the subject matter will help you add the missing link \*and\* give you an edge over your competition. Don't get too hung up on the idea of making a breakthrough, though.

# Actor Vikram Gokhale backs Kangana Ranaut on 1947 freedom being 'bheek'

Actor Vikram Gokhale said that many were just mute spectators when freedom fighters were hanged during the British Raj, and that these spectators didn't save the freedom fighters who were fighting against the British.

Pune: Veteran Marathi actor Vikram Gokhale on Sunday supported Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut's controversial remarks wherein she had said that what India achieved in 1947 was "bheek" (alms) but the country got the real freedom only in 2014 when Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister.

Speaking at a function here in Maharashtra, Vikram Gokhale said what Kangana Ranaut had said was true.

"I agree with Ranaut's statement. We were given freedom. Many people were just mute spectators when freedom fighters were hanged (during the British Raj). These mute spectators included many senior leaders. They didn't save the freedom fighters who were fighting against the British," said Vikram Gokhale, who is known for his roles in Marathi theatre, Bollywood and television.



Gokhale said every political party, including BJP, tries to derive a benefit from controversies.

Replying to a query on the purported communal violence in Tripura and its echo in Amravati and other cities in Maharashtra where incidents of stone-pelting had taken place, the actor said communal riots are a result of vote bank politics. "Every political party plays that (vote bank politics)," he claimed.

Speaking on the political scenario in Maharashtra, Gokhale said former allies Shiv Sena and BJP should

come together again for the betterment of the country.

"BJP and Shiv Sena should come together again. I had questioned (opposition leader and former Maharashtra chief minister) Devendra Fadnavis about the possible alliance between the two parties on the condition of sharing the post of CM for equal ears. Both the parties should try to win the people's confidence. I feel political parties should not deceive people because people can punish them," he said.

The Shiv Sena heads the tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi

(MVA) government whose other constituents are NCP and Congress.

Gokhale claimed politicians are responsible for the present condition of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) and Air India.

"I was the brand ambassador of the ST. It is a huge entity which operates over 18,000 buses in Maharashtra," he added.

Thousands of employees of the MSRTC have been on a strike demanding a merger of the cash-strapped undertaking with the Maharashtra government.

## 'Dil Bekaraar' to release on Disney+ Hotstar on Nov 26

**MUMBAI, Nov 15 (PTI):** Filmmaker Habib Faisal's series "Dil Bekaraar" is set to premiere on Disney+ Hotstar on November 26, the streamer announced on Monday.

The series features veteran actors Raj Babbar, Poonam Dhillon and Padmini Kolhapure. It is based on author Anuja Chauhan's bestseller novel "Those Pricey Thakur Girls".

According to the makers, the show is set in the 1980s and revolves around the Thakur family, their five daughters and "the many hurdles that surround them."

"A retired Supreme Court Judge's wife enforcing order in her family; a popular TV news reader; a South Delhi Diva; a black-sheep daughter who drags her father to the court for her hissa in the property; and a confused twelfth grader. 'Dil Bekaraar's story revolves around strong

female characters with very relatable goals and conflicts," the show's logline reads.

Babbar said his character, Lakshmi Narayan Thakur, is a self-righteous and principled man and playing the role was a "discovery" for him as an artiste.

"This script delves into the backstory of the characters and his journey through the 80s was a rewarding experience to portray. Added to this, simply reuniting with immensely talented actors like Padmini Kolhapure and Poonam Dhillon and working with new talent like Sahher Babbba and Akshay (Oberoi) added a revived vigour on set.

"With Disney+ Hotstar giving space for experimental content like 'Dil Bekaraar', actors have the chance to explore new characters," the 69-year-old actor said in a statement.

Dhillon, 59, said playing mother of five daughters at the "cusp of liberalisation and modernity influencing the Indian fabric" was an wholesome experience.

"This character of Mamta Thakur is special to me because it gave me the agency to see motherhood in a new light. Her will to save the honour of the family and provide an unshakeable foundation of the family is a characteristic that many mothers will relate to," she said.

Produced by Sobo Films, the series also stars Sahher Babbba, Akshay Oberoi, Medha Shankar and Sukhmani Sadana among others.

Babbba, who plays the lead role of Debjani Thakur on the series, said her character is from the 80s but there's a lot that women of today will relate to when they watch her.

"While playing this char-

acter, I was surprised by how progressive she was for the times she comes from. The character has been written beautifully such that her progressive attitude and balance shines through," she added.

Faisal, known for directing films like "Do Dooni Chaar" and "Ishaqzaade", said "Dil Bekaraar" will transport the viewers to the 80s with meticulous detailing in its production design, costume design, make-up and sound and music.

"Lot of research has gone into creating this nostalgic ride by using songs, TV shows, iconic TVCs and landmark news events of the times. The fashions, the furniture, the modes of communication and travel are of yesteryears, but the conflicts and emotions of the characters of 'Dil Bekaraar' are still very relatable and universal for the 2020s audience," the director added.

## 'Jhiri Mela' in Jammu cancelled due to Covid

**JAMMU, Nov 15 (PTI):** Authorities in Jammu on Monday announced the cancellation of the annual 'Jhiri Mela' at the Baba Jittooo temple here due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but said devotees can offer prayers at the shrine with strict adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour.

The nine-day-long mela (fair) is held during 'Karthik Purnima' in Jhiri village, 20 kms from here, on

the Jammu-Akhnour Highway.

Like previous year, Jhiri Mela stands cancelled in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, religious rituals like puja will take place as per tradition and devotees are also welcome but should follow the COVID-19 SOPs and guidelines strictly, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Marh, Nasir Ali said.

Over five lakh devotees from

across Jammu, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and other parts of the country visit the fair every year to commemorate the sacrifice of the Baba Jittooo, a farmer who gave up his life in protest against the oppressive demands of the 'zamindar' (landlords) about 500 years ago.

His daughter, according to the legend, also took her life by jumping on her father's funeral pyre.