



**BANKING OPERATIONS
AFFECTED DUE TO TRADE
UNION STRIKE**
pg02

**FOOTBALL'S GENDER PROBLEM: FROM
THE PITCH TO THE BOARDROOM,
WOMEN ARE STILL BEING BLOCKED
FROM THE TOP JOBS**
pg04

**BHAICHUNG MEETS
AKHILESH HIGHLIGHTING
SIKKIM ISSUES**
pg03



Summit **TIMES**

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Pages 8 | ₹ 5

CBI Director has to be role model of independence & integrity, says SC

NEW DELHI, JAN 8 (PTI): CBI Director has to be a "role model of independence and integrity" and that can only be ensured by freedom from all kinds of control and interference, the Supreme Court said Tuesday.

The top court, which paved the way for comeback of Alok Kumar Verma as CBI Director by setting aside orders of the CVC and the Centre divesting him of his duties and sending him on leave, observed that the legislative intent is to ensure "complete insulation" of the office of CBI chief from all kind of "extraneous influences".

A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi said the long history of evolution has shown that institution of CBI has been perceived to be necessarily kept away from all kinds of extraneous influences so that it could perform its role as the premier investigating and prosecuting agency without any fear and favour and in the best public interest.

"The head of the institution, namely, the Director, naturally, therefore, has to be the role model of independence and integrity which can only be ensured by freedom from all kinds of control and interference except to the extent that Parliament may have intended," said the bench, also comprising Justices S K Kaul and K M Joseph.

It referred to section 4B (2) of the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, which said that CBI Director shall not be transferred except with the previous consent of the selection committee.

The high-powered committee, which selects the CBI chief, comprises of the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India and the Leader of Opposition or the leader of the single largest opposition party. "If the legislative intent would have been to confer in any authority of the state a power to take interim measures against the Director, CBI thereby affecting his functioning, surely, the legislation would have contained enabling provisions to that effect and consequently would have been differently worded and drafted," the bench noted.

It further said, "If the word 'transferred' has to be understood in its ordinary parlance and limited to a change from one post to another, as the word would normally convey and on that basis the requirement of 'previous consent of the committee' is understood to be only in such cases, i.e.

turn to pg02

Consultation meeting of MoTA Committee on inclusion of 11 left out communities as STs

Representatives of 11 left-out communities, EIECOS and SCBC submit memorandums



GANGTOK, 08 JAN (IPR): Day-long Consultation Meeting of the Committee constituted by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Government of India with the state government and eleven left out communities for inclusion as Scheduled Tribes was held at Chintan Bhawan today. The Committee was headed by Meera Ranjan Tshering, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs,

who is also Chairperson of Committee, Tribal Affairs, GoI, Director of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Gopal Sathwani, who is also Member Secretary, Prof. Soumendra Patnaik, Vice Chancellor of Utkal University as Member, Principal Secretary of Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare, K. Srinivasulu, Secretary of Social Welfare department,

Dhan Jyoti Mukhia, Secretary Scheduled Caste and Backward Class (SCBC), H.K Sharma, Chairman of Eleven Indigenous Ethnic Communities of Sikkim (EIECOS), Dr. S.K Rai and representatives of all 11 left out communities of Sikkim and its members.

Delivering key note address, Chairperson OBC Board, T. N Sharma said, "The reason of Committee's visit headed by Chairperson of Committee, Meera Ranjan Tshering to Sikkim and having meeting with us is a welcome step by the Centre government to reiterate the stand of the Sikkim government on this issue. The state government has already put forth a clear stand on this issue more than once. The state govern-

ment has ample reason with valid justification to recommend the demand of these left out communities to recognize them as tribal."

He informed the house about Sikkim Summit for Tribal Status to Eleven Left-out Communities of Sikkim, which was held last year in Gangtok.

He briefed about the report submitted by Sikkim government to Centre government.

He presented synopsis and the background of the demand of eleven left out ethnic communities of Sikkim, namely; Bhujel, Gurung, Manger, Jogi/Sanyasi, Chettri, Bahun, Newar, Rai, Sunuwar/Mukhia, Thami and Yakha (Dewan). And he

turn to pg02

Finish projects instead of just laying foundation stones, says SKM to SDF



**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 08 JAN:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha senior vice-president, TN Dhakal today alleged that laying the foundation stone of the statue of Nishani Kali Devi at Gadi, Central Pendum close to election time is an attempt to mislead people. He further alleged that there has been no progress in the projects of Statue of Lord Parshuram in Tumin-Lingee and Ashta-Chiranjeevi Dham in Nagi-Maneydara in South Sikkim after their foundation stones were laid last year and now the foundation stone of another statue being laid as elections approach is a clear attempt to deceive people.

The SDF government's rush to start projects is only to get funding for the party for upcoming elections in the State, Mr Dhakal alleged.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Dhakal stated that in 2011, during a grand Sri-

mad Bhagwat puran at Pendum, the Chief Minister made an announcement to make a shed of Rs 50 lakh at Gadi for the convenience of devotees coming there for prayers. He suggested that the CM should first build the shed that he had promised is an attempt to mislead people. He further alleged that there has been no progress in the projects of Statue of Lord Parshuram in Tumin-Lingee and Ashta-Chiranjeevi Dham in Nagi-Maneydara in South Sikkim after their foundation stones were laid last year and now the foundation stone of another statue being laid as elections approach is a clear attempt to deceive people.

He also alleged that the e-tender for this project has been made in such a way that only the contractor Kamlesh Agarwal is eligible for the project. On enquiring with the State Tourism Department, it was found that no money has been allocated for this project in the State budget and the Tourism Department has also not placed any proposal for the project in the budget and the Centre has also not committed for the project, said Mr Dhakal.

Further, he mentioned that the foundation stone of the Statue of

turn to pg02

Heavy demand and overload causing power cuts in Gangtok says Power Dept

**ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 08 JAN:**

"We don't have shortage of power and no load shedding is happening in Gangtok or other parts of Sikkim," clarified the Power Secretary, KB Kunwar while talking about frequent power cuts in Gangtok and surrounding areas in the past few days.

According to Mr Kunwar, the power outages have been caused by the huge increase in power consumption which is overloading the power stations.

The frequent power cuts are due to Power Station Tripping, that is automatic shutdown of the power station due to over load, he informed.

"Restoring power after a wide-area out-

turn to pg02



CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES IN GANGTOK

- Overloading of network components due to high demand
- Increase in demand of power supply
- Power stations tripping due to heavy use and power consumption
- Demand has increased to 36 mw from just 22 mw
- 50% increase in demand of power in Gangtok in last few weeks
- Distribution line problems
- Electricity demand exceeds the capacity of the substation
- Use of heavy-duty electrical appliances

Tis' the season for Oranges

**ALISHA BHAGAT &
LAYMIT LEPCHA
GANGTOK, 07 JAN:**

Finally, after a yearlong wait, oranges are available in every nook and corner of markets here in Gangtok. Currently oranges are in higher demand as compared to other fruits and most of Lal Bazaar is covered with oranges.

Oranges available in Gangtok are mostly from Pendum, Sang Martam and Khamdong, 32 No, East Sikkim.

Compared to previous seasons, this year the rate of oranges is high due to low production. Prices range from Rs 250 to Rs 60 per dozen. The pricing is done according to the size of

oranges. Last year, the highest price was Rs 150 per dozen.

Production is low this time because the orchards are aging and not producing as much fruit, it is learnt.

"I sell seasonal fruits and vegetables. Right now it's orange season, so I am selling oranges. They are selling for Rs 200 to Rs 250 due to low production this year. Still it is selling and consumers are happy with the quality so prices do not really seem to be affecting the demand," says Geeta Chettri, a resident of Tibet road.

She usually gets local customers as visitors from other states find the oranges costlier.

turn to pg03



Sabarimala meant for devotees, says Kerala HC

KOCHI, JAN 8 (PTI): The Kerala High Court Tuesday observed that Sabarimala was meant for devotees and that the state government should identify those who have an agenda to spoil the peaceful atmosphere at the Lord Ayyappa shrine.

Expressing concern over the situation prevailing in Sabarimala, the court said if the government was not able to control the situation, outside agencies could be brought in.

Sabarimala Special Commissioner, through his report, submitted that protesters opposing the entry of women in the menstruating age into the shrine have been

turn to pg02

Gangtok on Wednesday, 09 Jan

Temp: 15°C/08°C
Forecast: Sunny to partly cloudy with a little rain in the evening, then a shower in spots

Sunrise: 07:01 AM
Sunset: 03:49 PM

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Com



Plantation drive at ITBP unit

SUMMIT REPORT

PEGONG, 08 JAN:

The 11th Battalion of the ITBP stationed at Pegong is celebrating "Plantation week" under the guidance of Commandant Rajesh Kumar Tomar, a press

release informs. All the officers along with subordinate personnel and residents of nearby villages are participating in the initiative, it is informed. The Commandant stressed on the importance of plants and trees in a landslide-prone state like Sikkim.

Banking operations affected due to trade union strike

LAYMIT LEPCHA
GANGTOK, 08 JAN:

Banks remained shut in the State today on the first day of the two-day All India Bank Strike called by the All India Bank Employees Association [AIBEA] and Bank Employees Federation of India [BEFI].

The two unions called the strike in support of the National Trade Union Convention of Central Trade Unions and various Independent sector wise Trade Union Federation call observe a General Strike on 08 and 09 Jan to oppose anti-people economic policies and anti-workers labour policies of the Central Government, Banking reforms measures, privatization and mergers, non recovery of bad loans and outsourcing permanent jobs in Banks.

The all-India bank strike has also demanded the strengthening of public sector banks and adequate recruitments in Banks.

On the first day of the strike, many customers of different banks were



found returning from the closed gates of banks and general people have also been facing problem due to the shutting down of the ATMs.

Interestingly, across the country, operations at State Bank of India (SBI) and private sector banks remained unaffected, as the seven other unions in the banking sector are not part of the strike.

That said, since employees associated with these two banking sector

unions were on strike, counter activities such as cash deposit and withdrawal, cheque clearances were impacted at many branches. Officers at many branches were seen handling some of the activities, national media reports suggest.

On December 26, 2018, nine bank unions observed a one-day strike to protest the proposed amalgamation of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda. Prior to this, the All

India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC) went on strike on December 21.

AIBEA General Secretary CH Venkatachalam said the unions are against the merger of public sector banks (PSBs) as employees will lose their jobs and employment generation will be halted.

The unions are also against privatisation of PSBs as the government is doing in the case of IDBI Bank.

Heavy demand and...

age can be difficult, as power stations need to be brought back on-line. Some of the distribution transformers get overloaded due to extensive use of appliances, resulting in Power line tripping. Due to the stress, the transformer life reduces and premature failure also occurs," said Mr Kunwar.

An overload occurs when you draw more electricity than any distribution line can safely handle. Power cuts which result from or result in power stations tripping are particularly difficult to recover from quickly, said officials of the department.

As per the department there has been a huge increase in demand and the consumption of electricity in Gangtok and its surroundings.

Normally the total power demand and consumption of Gangtok is around 20-22 megawatt but the total demand and consumption of power has increased to almost 35-36 megawatt. That is an in-

crease of almost 50%, informs the department.

As the power stations and power distribution line have been installed as per the normal demand of the particular area, greater demand and consumption cannot be met by the existing distribution line. However, in case of a surge in demand, power station tripping is a built in safety mechanism that helps to prevent any accident.

Principal Chief Engineer, PT Bhutia explains, "Protective relays and fuses are used to automatically detect overloads and to disconnect circuits at risk of damage. So automatic disconnect causes power cuts and can be restored after the use comes down to normal."

The department is working hard to upgrade the distribution line, power station and to install more dedicated power sub-station to meet the greater demand of increasing local population as well as tourist inflow, said Secretary, Mr Kunwar. "We are already working

on up-gradation work and by next four to five months there will be no such problems," he added.

Mr Kunwar further informed about the Central Scheme - IPDS (Integrated Power Development Scheme) which is in the pipeline and can improve power distribution in the State.

"We have a strict directions from the Government and the Chief Minister to provide quality and uninterrupted power supply but cooperation is also needed from each and every individual to maintain the demand and supply ratio which will help to prevent tripping of power station," he stated.

Mr Kunwar has urged people to use electricity judiciously and not to use all heating or heavy power consumption appliances at the same time but to use them turn wise. He also urged people to cut down unnecessary usage of power at home and turn off lights and switches whenever they are not needed.

Sabarimala...

come more vigilant and it will be difficult to provide them protection as every day one lakh devotees trek the hills to offer prayers. Considering a batch of pleas related to the Sabarimala issue, a division bench of Justices P R Ramachandra Menon and N Anilkumar wanted to know as to why police permitted a private vehicle carrying women from an activist group to Pamba from Nilackal recently.

The court also wanted to know whether the two women of reproductive age, who had entered the shrine on January 2, had any "agenda". It said the government should be able to identify those setting an agenda on Sabarimala.

Earlier in November, the court had ordered that no protests or demonstrations should be held at Sabarimala, holding that it was not a place for such activities. The hill shrine had become a centre of protests by devotees and right-wing groups against the Left-led government's decision to implement the September 28 Supreme Court verdict permitting women of all age groups to pray at the temple.

SKM distributes party calendar at Singtam

YOGEN THATAL

SINGTAM, 08 JAN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM), Singtam branch distributed the party calendar in Singtam bazaar today. A team of party workers led by Suresh Tamang (SKM member) carried out the distribution. However, the calendar could not reach every individual due to shortage so the distribution will be completed in the coming days, it is learnt.

CBI Director has to be...

purely of transfer, such an interpretation would be self-defeating and would clearly negate the legislative intent".

Referring to the legislative intent, the bench said it would require all authorities to keep away from "intermingling or interfering" in the functioning of the CBI Director.

"In a situation where such interference may at all be called for, public interest must be writ large against the backdrop of the necessity," the court said in its 44-page judgement.

It, however, added that relevance and adequacy of reasons giving rise to such a "compelling necessity" could only be tested by the opinion of the selection committee which has the power to make recommendations for appointment of CBI director.

"This alone can provide an adequate safeguard to ensure the independence of the office keeping in view the legislative intent, as found and held by us," the bench said.

The top court set aside the October 23 last year orders of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) divesting Verma of his powers and asking CBI's Joint Director M Nageshwar Rao to look after the duties and functions of the agency's Director.

Verma's two-year tenure as CBI Director ends on January 31. Verma had approached the top court challenging the orders of the CVC and the DoPT divesting him of his powers and sending him on leave.

Unfortunate that CM ignored Pendam's pressing problems: BJP

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 08 JAN:

Bharatiya Janata Party's Sikkim unit today alleged that instead of focussing on pertinent issues and problems of the people of Pendam in East Sikkim, the Chief Minister "wasted" time in addressing other issues in his recent speech on the plati-

num jubilee celebration of Tikalal Niraula School.

The party asserted that the area has been facing problems of bad roads from Rangpo to Pendam and Singtam to Pendam, acute drinking water and power supply shortage in the area and other problems.

A BJP press release

states that the people of the area were hoping that the CM would address these needs of the area but they returned home disappointed.

The release adds that instead, the CM delivered a speech laced with sarcasm over his party having lost from the constituency in 2014.

Phalidara JHS now under CCTV surveillance



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 08 JAN:

Phalidara Junior High School, South Sikkim is now under CCTV surveillance after the installation of 4 channel CCTV cameras was carried out today. This is mainly carried out to safeguard the

public property.

Namchi Block Development Officer, Bimal Rai donated the CCTV camera. The school is located in an isolated place where such surveillance would be beneficial. The installation process was completed today. The contractor of

newly constructed annexe building, Nim Tempa Sherpa (Bhaichung) also assured to donate solar panel for uninterrupted power supply. SMC members, panchayats, staffs and parents expressed gratitude to both the donors.

Employees file GD reporting attack on Kpg Municipality chairman



SUMMIT REPORT
KALIMPONG, 08 JAN:

Rabi Pradhan, the Chairman of Kalimpong Municipality, was attacked by Kunal Pradhan, the councilor of ward number 1, on 04 January at Dambar Chowk around 8 pm. Today, the employees along with the councilors registered a General Diary at the Police Station as Rabi Pradhan is the third person from the Municipality to get attacked.

According to the sources, Rabi Pradhan was attacked while re-

turning from a meeting at Shyama Devi Bhawan, Thakurbari.

When contacted today, he confirmed the incident and said, "He [Kunal Pradhan] first abused me and then attacked me. When I dodged, my security escort got injured. The police have filed an FIR but he, being in the board of Municipality, I have not filed an FIR myself and have brought this incident to the knowledge of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the GTA."

It was informed that

Anit Thapa, the Vice Chairman of the GTA, had visited Kalimpong yesterday in connection with this incident and asked the district committee of the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha to send the show-cause notice to the accused.

Many people, including the business community, have come forward in support of Mr Rabi Pradhan.

It was believed that Indra Badhr Gazmer, councilor of ward number 17, and Bhim Agrawal, the vice chairman of the civic body, were also attacked in the past.

Consultation meeting of...

said that the demand of Sikkimese Left-out ethnic communities of Sikkim is bonafide demand based on historical, sociological and constitutional justification.

Chairperson of Committee, Meera Ranjan Tshering in her address said, "When I came Sikkim this morning, my exposure and understanding was limited to paper and documents. But I have seen different perspective and I don't know whether that perspective, how far that would go further. We (team from MoTA) would like to take back all the findings with us and consider it properly."

During their two-day stay in Sikkim, the Committee will be visiting some of the places and meeting some of the communities and try to gather first-hand information about them to substantiate their reports.

Earlier, Chairperson of EECOS, Dr. S.K Rai presented brief report of EIECOS and how it has been trying for the Tribal status of the 11 left out communities of Sikkim for over one decade.

Assistant Professor of Nar Bahadur Bhandari Degree College, Dr. Rajen Upadhyaya gave power point presentation on historical aspect of 11 communities. In his submission, he mentioned about historical right, need right and justice right of left out communities and based on the aspiration of people for equal rights of man and true constitutional democratic value.

During the programme, representatives of all 11 left-out Communities, Chairperson of EIECOS and Chairperson of SCBC submitted their memorandums to the Chairperson of Committee, Meena R Tshering.

Finish projects...

Lord Parshuram in Tumin-Lingee was laid on 09 February last year and foundation stone of Ashta-Chiranjeevi Dham at Nagi on 20 February last year but not much progress has been made in both projects so far.

He also questioned the celebration of the platinum jubilee of Tikalal Niraula SSS, Central Pendam claiming that the school's platinum jubilee was in 2017.

He also alleged that the CM insulted the people of Pendam in his speech adding that Pendam has been facing acute shortage of drinking water but no action has been taken so far by the government. Constructing statues is alright but the government should first focus on basic needs and necessity of the people, Mr Dhakal added.

UNHCR examining Saudi woman's asylum bid as family due in Bangkok

BANGKOK, JAN 8 (AFP): The asylum claim of a Saudi woman who resisted deportation from Thailand will take several days to assess, the UN said Tuesday, as the 18-year-old's family, who she accuses of abusing her, was due to arrive in Bangkok.

Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun arrived at Bangkok's main airport on a flight from Kuwait after running away from her family, who she alleges subjected her to physical and psychological abuse. Qunun said she planned to seek asylum in Australia, fearing she would be killed if sent back by Thai immigration officials who stopped her at the airport on Sunday.

Saudi Arabia's human rights record has been under heavy scrutiny since the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year.

Initially, Thai authorities said Qunun would be sent back to Saudi Arabia. But as her plight pinballed across social media - including tweets about how she had barricaded herself in a hotel room - they abruptly changed course and allowed her to leave the airport Monday in the care of the UN's refugee agency.

The UNHCR said it was "very grateful" officials did not send Qunun back against her will.

"It could take several days to process the case and determine next steps," the UNHCR representative in Thailand, Giuseppe de Vicentiis, said in a statement.

Thailand is not a signatory to a UN convention on refugees, and asylum seekers are typically deported or wait years to be resettled in third countries.

The UNHCR insists anyone with an asylum claim should not be sent back to the country they fled under the principle of non-refoulement.

In a short press release distributed to media outside their embassy in Bangkok Tuesday, the Saudi government said it had not demanded her deportation, adding the case is a "family affair", but under the "care and attention" of the embassy. In an earlier and separate explanation released on Twitter, the embassy also denied sending officials to Suvarnabhumi airport to meet Qunun as she arrived via Kuwait or impounding her passport - as she alleged.

It also said the embassy had made contact with her father, a senior regional government official in the kingdom, "to inform him on her situation". Thai immigration chief Surachate Hakparn told reporters that Qunun's father and brother were due in Thailand later on Tuesday.

Tis' the season... Geeta adds that once the current supply ends later this month, oranges from North Sikkim will start coming in.

"I am happy with my business as I can earn a bit of profit and fulfill my family's daily needs", adds Geeta.

Annual Holy Convention of Diocesan Women's Fellowship for Christian Service begins



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 08 JAN:

Diocesan Women's Fellowship for Christian Service [DWFCS] began its Annual Holy Convention here at Martin Memorial Church on

PNG School Road on Tuesday evening.

The three-day long convention is being organised by the Women's Fellowship of Christian Service Diocese of Eastern Himalaya, Church of

North Sikkim, and was inaugurated with an opening prayer by Dean of Sikkim Deanery, Rev Jenus Lepcha.

The convention is being attended by women from Sikkim,

Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Dooars and other parts of the country.

The convention has Sister Ruby Lall from Delhi as the main speaker while the Bible Study is being led by Rev Nina

M from Darjeeling and Alice Das from Delhi. The convention also has Vijay Russel and Mavis Russel from Delhi as resource persons.

The opening ceremony included felicitation of guests, dance by WFCS Kalimpong and other activities.

Speaking to media persons, DWFCS president, Martha Rani Rai, informed that the convention is held every year and that Sikkim was hosting this annual convention after a long time.

She added that the convention mainly focuses on spiritual, social, intellectual and other areas and on the role of the women in the family and the society. The convention will conclude on 10 January.

Induction and In-Service Training of vocational teachers concludes



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 08 JAN:

The five-day Teacher Training Programme (Induction cum In-Service Teachers' Training) on Developing Vocational Teaching Skills for faculty members of vocational studies, organised by

SIBIN Group in collaboration with the Samagra Shiksha, Human Resource Development Department, under the Vocational Education Programme concluded yesterday.

282 teachers from 184 government schools attended the training held

at Modern Senior Secondary School and West Point Govt. Sr. Sec. School here.

Trade professionals from various industries participated as resource persons while trainers from PSSCIVE and SCERT spoke on the objectives of Vocational Education along with

methodology of teaching. State Project Director (SPD), Bhim Thatal, Samagra Shiksha, HRD Department, in his address, emphasized the importance of Vocational Education in shaping a meaningful career for students.

No major impact barring some stray incidents of violence in WB

KOLKATA, JAN 8 (PTI): Barring some stray incidents of violence on Tuesday, the two-day nationwide strike called by central trade unions protesting against 'anti-people' policies of the centre failed to evoke much response in West Bengal.

Elaborate security arrangements made by the Trinamool Congress government foiled the striking unions' bid to stall the normal life in the state.

Government offices, IT sector and port activities were normal, while banking sector experienced partial impact with some branches and ATMs closed. Workers in tea gardens also worked like normal days.

However, PSU insurance companies were closed. Several protesters were arrested as sporadic incidents of vandalism were reported from parts of the state on Tuesday during the strike.

Stones were pelted at a school bus in Champadali area of Barasat in North 24 Parganas district. The students were later deboarded from the bus, police said.

Strike supporters burnt effigies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi

and burnt tyres in various parts of the state including Kolkata.

In Howrah, Siliguri, Bardhaman, Birbhum, North and South 24 Parganas, clashes broke out between Trinamool Congress workers and strike supporters as TMC activists tried to stop them from forcibly imposing the strike.

Despite these scattered incidents of violence, normal life in and around Kolkata and other parts of the state remained more or less unaffected by the strike call except in a few pockets.

Buses and other modes of transport were seen on the roads although the number of passengers were less than in other week days.

Train services in the South Eastern railway were affected from 6.30 am due to blockades at different stations and several express and local trains were delayed, SER spokesman Sanjay Ghosh said. In Eastern Railway zone, train movement was obstructed by the strike supporters from 6.00 am, an ER spokesman said. Several trains, including Howrah-Puri Dhaul Express, Rupashi Bangla Express, Howrah-Bar-

bil Janshatbdi Express, Paradip-Santragachi Express, Puri-Howrah Jagannath Express and Thiruvananthapuram-Siliguri Express and several MEMU and EMU locals were delayed en route owing to the agitation.

Agitators blocked tracks at Bainchi, Mankundu, Mogra stations in Howrah-Bardhaman main line section, at Jadavpur, Dhamaah, Hutor in Sealdah-Diamond Harbour section, at Barasat, Madhyamgram and Ashoknagar in Sealdah-Bongaon section, the spokesman said.

Operation of flights by different airlines was normal at NSC Bose International Airport here, officials at the airport said.

Tyres were burnt in Central Avenue of Kolkata to stop buses from plying in the roads. The protesters had a scuffle with the police when they tried to stop them from squatting on the roads. A government bus was damaged by strike supporters at Champadali. Protesters also vandalised a bus at Jamuria in Paschim Bardhaman district. Scuffles were witnessed between police and strike supporters in some areas of the state.

IPL to stay in India but to have March start this year

NEW DELHI, JAN 8 (PTI):

The Indian Premier League (IPL) will stay in the country despite a speculated clash of dates with the general elections but the glitzy T20 extravaganza will start earlier than usual, from March 23, the Committee of Administrators announced Tuesday.

The two-member CoA, comprising chairman Vinod Rai and former women's captain Diana Edulji, met here Tuesday to discuss the venues and window for the league.

"We will have all the primary venues backed up by alternate venues in case there is a need to shift matches. This will be done in consultation with central and state government authorities as well as security agencies," Rai told PTI.

"The specific reason for having a back-up venue is to ensure that we don't have any issue if there is polling or recounting or PM's rally in any of the states once the election dates are announced," he added.

The last time the IPL started in March was back in 2010. After that, the league has always kicked off in the first half of April and ended in late May.

The early start this year is because of the ODI World Cup in England which will get underway from May 30. Rai said the specific venues and match dates will worked out later after due consultation with government agencies.

"It was a very close match. We played a very long game at 2-2 on my serve, I held. He also held his own but after the new balls came in I broke him. I served well and that helped. At big moments also, my serves came out well," explained Ramkumar. Prajesh Gunneswaran will open his campaign against Croatia's Viktor Galovic on Wednesday.

Appearing in her third Grand Slam Qualifiers, Ankit (ranked 205) got the better of Myrtille Georges (ranked 238) from France 6-2 6-2 in her opening round. "I have been working on my serve for the last six months and today I got some dividends from it. My first serve percentage was high and got me many points but most satisfying was winning points on my second serve.

Bhaichung meets Akhilesh highlighting Sikkim issues



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 08 JAN:

After the day-long Adharna in the national capital demanding CBI investigation into corruption in Sikkim, Hamro Sikkim Party vice president, Bhaichung Bhutia, called on former UP Chief Minister and Samajwadi Party president, Akhilesh Yadav, in Lucknow today.

Bhaichung, it is informed, was invited by Mr Yadav for an interac-

tion to discuss the current political scenario in the country.

"Looking into the long-term interests of Sikkim, I highlighted the present issues of Sikkim with Yadav. I think the Samajwadi Party would have a good representation in the Parliament after the 2019 elections. I sought his support to raise Sikkim issues in the Parliament in future," said Mr Bhutia.

St Xavier's College to set up finance lab for reserach, data collection

KOLKATA, JAN 8 (PTI): St Xavier's College in Kolkata will set up a finance laboratory over the next six months to help students undertake research in economics and accounting, Principal Rev Fr (Dr) Dominic Savio said Tuesday.

All major databases in finance and accounting will be available in the lab, the first-of-its kind in the country, Savio said at a press meet Tuesday. "The state-of-the-art lab will preempt the possibility of the students going anywhere else for collecting statistics.

They can have access to a wide range of information and can update themselves with stock exchange data," he said.

The principal also said the initiative will inspire students to visit libraries more often.

The college will give three awards to students who were found to have spent maximum number of hours at the library, he said. "While students can also access library contents on their smartphones, tablets or laptops, we want to encourage them to physically visit the library and spend hours by instituting such an award," he maintained.

The institute has installed an anti-plagiarism software to check unauthorised copying of dissertations, research papers, he added.

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2. Study Materials provided according to the standards of the board.
3. Mock Test and Pre Board examinations
4. Revision notes for the students to make them more effective
5. Doubt clearing Sessions held by respective teachers
6. Separate hostel facilities for boys and girls.

OUR COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To give clear concept of the chapters
2. To give the students proper guidance to excel in their examinations
3. To Prepare and deliver answers effectively and efficiently
4. Greater emphasis would be to excel.
5. Last minute suggestion tips as per board requirements

For further details please contact: 9002163719, 7319565616, 7432036651
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SummitTIMES

Build Organisational Muscle

Accept it, politics of allegations and defensive strategies do not inspire

There has been a noticeable spike in the activities of political parties in the State. This is expected given the nearness of elections. What is not so encouraging though is that there does not appear to be any change in the manner in how 'politics' is approached. All parties, from the ruling to those in the Opposition, continue to preach among the converted or remaining limited to tokenisms, leading one to surmise that the 'meetings' are aimed more to put together a press release and remain in news or get noticed than promote an ideology or expand constituencies.

Sikkim has repeatedly proven that political ambitions cannot come to fruition with this approach. Promotion, and the projection of popularity only take parties so far, almost there, but not quite as the last elections bore out. Only lazy politicians convince themselves that they can ride into relevance on the wings of anti-incumbency, refusing to realize that people have seen through such opportunism. Similarly, the ruling front too cannot rest easy on the lack of viable alternatives because it did see substantial encroachments the moment someone made a concerted attempt to win people's favour. While politicians, their parties and their sidekicks can pursue whatever strategy catches their whim, it would serve the people well if they changed tracks to engage with ideology instead of just soaking in claims or allegations. People deserve to know future plans, not past glories or past hurts or past denials and oversights. Lose the people's interest, and it will not take much for someone to steal away their votes too; at least this possibility should serve as a motivator for parties to get serious about their outreach programmes. Outreach should be about convincing the fence-sitters and then appealing to more constituents, not just playing to echo-chambers.

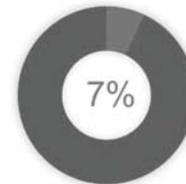
For further confirmation, take a look at what's happening around the world. The rise of right-wing nationalists in the wake of capitalism's failure should have made us wonder at the incongruity of the switch that transpired. Yes, when globalization failed, those who promoted parochial politics suddenly found themselves becoming more relevant. But it would not have been such a cakewalk for them had the established players and the other alternative – the Left, for instance – not become so distanced from the people. They had lost their grassroots organizational presence, and when resentment grew, the vacuum was filled by right-wing ideologues who had been working tirelessly through the years, fanning fears and stoking insecurities even as they were being ridiculed or demonized. Take Trump's arrival in USA, the recent change in Brazil or the sudden acceptance of rightwing in or country, and it becomes clear that it is not as simplistic as people wanting an outlier, and obviously owes a lot to the belligerence of the caucus which had set up the frustrations which he cashed in. At the Centre, Modi's staggering performance in 2014 is obviously not only because the people were fed-up with UPA-II, but thanks also largely to the nearly a decade of work put in by RSS shakhas across the country. Bengal's Mamata is another example of years of work on the field setting her up to seize the moment when one was offered.

All of the changes mentioned above were made possible by the organizational muscles which were exercised through the lean (non-election) years to be able to flex with such impressive results when required.

Grassroots organization should hence be the main focus of all parties in Sikkim. They need to accept that defensive fears and strategies based on allegations will not work because these are not approaches which motivate people, and if anything, deflate optimism. To motivate, one needs to share a vision, and for a vision to inspire, it needs to reach a wider audience, something that only a strong organizational set-up can deliver.



Susanna Dinnage was due to become chief executive at the Premier League in 2019 but has now announced she will no longer be taking up the position.



Men's League Football



Women's Super League



The Football Association

Football's gender problem: from the pitch to the boardroom, women are still being blocked from the top jobs

AMÉE GILL
theconversation.com

Although the world of English football has long been considered a man's world, women now make up a sizeable proportion of football players and fans. But despite this, the football boardroom still remains a distinctly male domain.

The Football Association (FA) released its first gender pay gap report in March 2018, revealing a 23% gender pay gap in favour of men. The FA's explanation for this pay gap was that fewer women than men worked in senior leadership roles. The FA suggested that this disparity was the result of a "pipeline" problem, stating that they needed "a better pipeline of talented women" to fill leadership roles.

It's a similar story across club football, with men's professional clubs averaging a 66% gender pay gap. Although the gap decreases to 17% when clubs exclude their player wages, only 21 out of 48 clubs eligible to release their gender pay gap provided this additional data – meaning the average gender pay gap could be higher. While many clubs were keen to note the influence of high player wages on the data, others acknowledged that having a lack of women in senior roles contributed to their overall gender pay gap. Again, women's absence in the boardroom was largely explained by a shortage of women who are able or willing to do the job.

However, my doctoral research at Durham University and the National Football Museum offers an alternative theory. This research, which focuses on men's professional football in England, is challenging the pipeline theory by uncovering the true extent of women's leadership work in football.

It shows that nearly a third of workers in men's professional football are women, and that in the last 30 years, over 700 women (and counting) have held leadership roles in the men's game. The prob-

lem, it seems, is that women's route to the boardroom is blocked.

PIPELINE THEORY

In the 1970s, the pipeline theory emerged as a common explanation for gender inequality in the boardroom. Supporters of this theory argued that women's under-representation in leadership roles was the result of a shortage of qualified women workers at the lower levels of the organisation. The belief was that increasing the flow of women in the pipeline would, in time, lead to equity at the top.

But as women's participation in paid work and higher education increased towards the end of the 20th century, inequality at the top remained. As a result, the pipeline theory attracted substantial criticism. In recent decades, focus has instead shifted to cultural and structural barriers to women's progression. And yet, the pipeline theory is still being used to explain a lack of women in football leadership.

This is because the pipeline theory presents a convenient account of women's work in the men's game. Blaming gender imbalance on women's inability or willingness to work in football absolves organisations of responsibility for gender equality. In football, this account proves especially convincing given football's reputation as a male preserve. Arguably, the pipeline theory has endured in football because little empirical evidence has been offered to challenge it, until now.

WHAT'S THE TRUTH?

Although my research found that around 27% of workers in men's professional club football are women, the proportion of women drops to 14% in the top pay quartile – and falls even further to just 7% in the boardroom.

While there are significantly fewer women working in football than men, as the pipeline theory suggests, you would still expect to see proportional representation at all levels. But data shows

women's presence actually declines the further up the football ladder you climb.

There are some clubs that buck this trend. Tottenham Hotspur, for example, has proportionally more women on the board than in the overall workforce – as do Leicester City, Chelsea, Aston Villa, and Sheffield Wednesday. Sunderland AFC, Reading, and Scunthorpe United also have proportional representation on their board. Nevertheless, these clubs are in the minority.

TOUGH TO THE TOP

More than 700 women have held leadership roles in men's professional football since the late 1980s. These roles include directors, executives, and heads of department. Over 230 of these women currently work in a leadership capacity in football.

Many others have left football but continue to work in leadership in another industry. These women are a pool of seemingly qualified leaders who can contend for the most senior roles in football. Yet, despite this, women are still not making it to the top.

Occupational segregation could go some way to explain the block in the pipeline. Most of these women have occupied leadership roles in commercial, sales, ticketing, and retail. In contrast, few women have held leadership roles in operations, football administration, and business development. The problem is that certain roles provide clearer pathways to the boardroom than others – and these pathways are historically gendered.

My research with women who have worked in senior roles in men's football will help to understand how women experience leadership roles in football. And it is hoped that by tracing their routes into leadership roles, a better picture of why women are really absent from the boardroom can be discovered.

[the writer is Doctoral researcher in the Department of Sport & Exercise Sciences, Durham University]

TikTok: the world's most valuable startup that you've never heard of

MICHAEL WADE & JIALU SHAN
theconversation.com

Anticipation has long been building about the impending takeover of the tech world by Chinese digital giants like Alibaba, Tencent, Baidu, and JD. Efforts so far, however, have been largely disappointing. The most popular messaging app in the West is WhatsApp, not WeChat; people use PayPal, not Alipay, for digital payments; Google dominates the search market, not Baidu.

Indeed, Google, Facebook, Instagram, Snap, Spotify, and Amazon, have barely noticed the competitive impact of their Chinese equivalents. While China has found great success in global hardware markets, they have had much less success with software. That is, until now.

You may not have heard of it, but TikTok became one of 2018's most downloaded mobile apps for Apple and Android devices in the US and Europe, unseating the likes of YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat. TikTok has already been downloaded more than 80m times in the US, logging 4m downloads from the App Store in October alone. It is also one of the most popular apps on Google Play.

WHAT IS TIKTOK?

TikTok is a video sharing platform with a twist. Videos can be no longer than 15 seconds and they are based on various themes: music, cooking, travel, dance, fashion, and so on. Users create these short videos, use simple tools to add music and special effects, and share them on the site. The most popular clips are high on entertainment value, with a premium on instant gratification. Similar to Vine, which shut down in 2016, TikTok can be thought of as a video version of Instagram or Snapchat.

TikTok comes from China, but, interestingly, it is not owned by one of the Chinese tech giants. Despite massive investments in video platforms by the likes of Alibaba, Tencent, and Baidu, none of them dominates this area. TikTok – known locally as Dou-

yin – was launched in 2016 by ByteDance, a Beijing-based tech company traditionally focused on news. Its news app, called Toutiao, uses advanced AI algorithms that learn user preferences, then provides customised news feeds. ByteDance uses the same algorithms to provide relevant video feeds to TikTok users.

By the start of 2017, Douyin had become China's most popular mobile video app. In November of the same year, ByteDance spent US\$1 billion to acquire a competing video sharing site called Musical.ly. While Musical.ly was also founded in China, most of its users were based in the US. The combined global reach of TikTok and Musical.ly made for a powerful combination.

While many social media applications focus on global consistency and reach, TikTok focused on targeting specific local audiences. For example, in Japan, TikTok collaborated with a large artist management company to drive traffic from YouTube and Ins-

that the Chinese giants are closely studying TikTok's successful approach of simple design, active promotion, attention to different locales, and focused acquisition, with an eye to understanding and emulating the magic formula for succeeding in global markets.

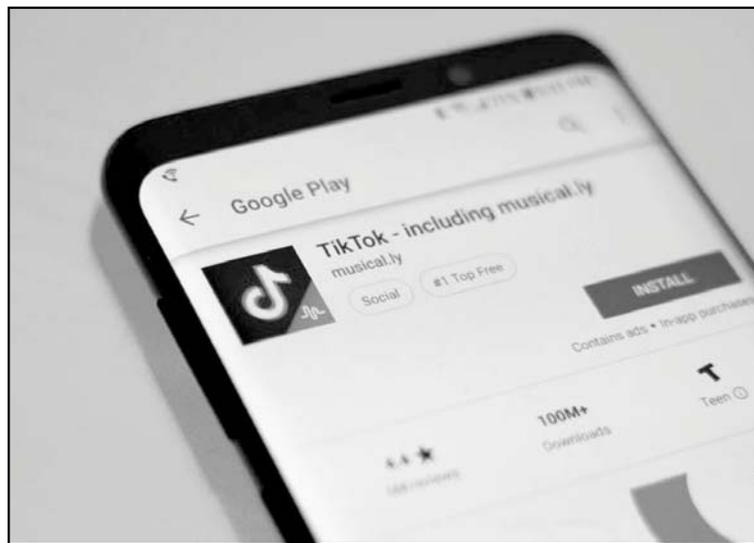
Tencent is already making a bet on the short-video streaming industry by investing in Kuaishou, TikTok's main local competitor, and reportedly giving out subsidies worth nearly US\$500m to promote its own platform Weishi. The giants of the West are also taking note, with Facebook quietly launching a TikTok competitor app called Lasso in November 2018.

Meanwhile, ByteDance recently completed a new round of funding led by major tech investor SoftBank. This valued the company behind TikTok at US\$75 billion, making it the world's most valuable start-

up, higher even than Uber.

ByteDance cannot rest on its laurels, however, if it wants TikTok to build on its position as the first globally successful "made in China" app. TikTok will need to massively expand from its base, while staving off attacks from well funded and ambitious Chinese and global competitors. Building a successful app is one thing. But, as Snapchat's fall from grace shows, sustaining that success is an entirely more challenging endeavour.

[Michael Wade is Professor of Innovation and Strategy, Cisco Chair in Digital Business Transformation, IMD Business School; Jialu Shan is Research Associate at Global Center for Digital Business Transformation, IMD Business School]



Bandh against Citizenship Bill hits normal life in Assam, other NE states



GUWAHATI, JAN 8 (PTI): Agitators clashed with the police, gheraoed Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal's house at his native place in Dibrugarh, blocked national highways and damaged vehicles in Assam during an 11-hour "bandh" called by the AASU to protest against the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) activists clashed with the police when they attempted to ransack a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) office in Dibrugarh, prompting the security forces to resort to

lathicharge and fire rubber bullets to disperse the protestors.

Nobody was injured in the incident, the police said. The AASU has called for a statewide "bandh" and it is being supported by the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), which withdrew support to the BJP-led government in Assam on Monday.

Opposition Congress, the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) and the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) are also supporting the bandh. The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 aims to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 to

grant Indian citizenship to those Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians who fled religious persecution in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan and entered India before December 31, 2014.

Normal life was hit in the Brahmaputra valley and was partially affected in the Barak valley due to a "north-east bandh" called separately by the North East Students' Organisation (NESO), an umbrella organisation of students' bodies in the region, of which the AASU is a constituent.

The "bandh" called by the NESO on the

same issue is being supported by over 100 organisations in Assam as well as in the other north-eastern states.

The agitators gheraoed Sonowal's house in his home town, Dibrugarh, to register their protest against the bill. They raised slogans that the chief minister had no reason to continue on his post as he could not protect the interests of the people of the state.

The protesters blocked roads and national highways by burning tyres and smashed the windshields of trucks, cars and autorickshaws at many places, in-

cluding in Guwahati, the police said.

The picketers squatted on the railway tracks at various places in Guwahati and Dibrugarh district, but the movement of trains, including that of the Delhi-bound Rajdhani Express and the Kolkata-bound Kamrup Express, resumed after the Government Railway Police (GRP) personnel removed them from the tracks, railway sources said. There was no movement of goods-laden trucks on all the national highways, following an economic blockade call issued by the KMSS, sources said.

Economic blockade to protest citizenship bill in Assam

GUWAHATI, JAN 8 (PTI): As many as 70 organisations, led by Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS), began an indefinite "economic blockade" in the state on Tuesday protesting against the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

The groups have affirmed that they would not allow locally produced oil, petroleum products, coal, forest products and limestone to be taken of the state.

It would also organise a state-wide protest on Wednesday against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, which is scheduled to be moved by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh for passage in Lok Sabha today.

Large sections of people in Assam and other northeastern states have been protesting against the bill, saying it will nullify the 1985 Assam Accord under which any foreign national, irrespective of religion, who had entered the state after March 24, 1971 should be deported.

"From today, we have started our indefinite economic blockade in protest of the bill. We will not allow to take our resources out of the state," KMSS Adviser Akhil Gogoi told PTI.

The supporters of the 70 organisations would hold protests in front of their offices and installations of Oil India Ltd and ONGC across the state, he added. Our aim is to prevent taking away oil, petroleum products, coal, forest products and limestone from the state," Gogoi said.

Chinese military equips troops in Tibet with mobile howitzers: Report



KJM VARMA

BEIJING, JAN 8 (PTI): After the recent induction of light weight battle tank in Lok Sabha today.

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The equipment was used in an artillery brigade in Tibet during the 2017 China-India standoff at Doklam, it said.

Song Zhongping, a military expert and TV commentator, told Global Times that the howitzer has a 52-caliber cannon with a range of over 50 kms and shoots laser-guided and satellite-guided projectiles.

It will boost the high-altitude combat capability of the PLA in Tibet, Song said.

The induction of the mobile howitzers followed the move by the PLA to put into service the light weight battle tank, which was tested by its military during exercises in Tibet held at the peak of the Doklam standoff.

The Type 15 has an engine capable of 1,000 horsepower and is significantly lighter than the PLA's other main battle tanks in service, weighing about 32 to 35 tonnes. The tank meant

for rugged and mountainous terrain of the Himalayan region.

The induction of the tank and the mobile howitzers highlighted the PLA's efforts to reinforce its troops with new equipment despite steady normalisation of the military relations since last year.

As part of the military training in 2019, an artillery brigade in the Tibet Military Command ordered soldiers to take part in a military skills competition at a training ground on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau 3,700 meters above sea level, the report said.

Last week, President Xi Jinping, who also heads the military, ordered the armed forces to enhance their combat readiness to make sure they are always ready for battle, saying risks and challenges for China are on the rise.

China's border issue has not been completely resolved, and was chal-

lenged by pro-Tibet independence forces and terrorists, the report quoted analyst as saying.

Zhao Gan Cheng, director of the Centre for Asia-Pacific Studies at the Shanghai Institute for International Studies, told the daily that the military investment in Tibet has been rising, but is primarily meant for defence and not to provoke conflict with neighbouring countries.

He said the PLA troops stationed in Tibet need to improve their combat capabilities in plateau areas and strengthen their willpower in extreme weather as they are primarily responsible for the border defence against terrorists and foreign invaders, he said.

To cope with altitude sickness, the PLA built oxygen stations for the soldiers in Tibet in 2015, which were used for medical purposes, but are now also being used in regularly training.

Crime Branch to investigate two fraud cases of 'Golden Baba'

CUTTACK, JAN 8 (PTI): The Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch has taken up investigation of two cases registered against fraudster Jyoti Ranjan Beura alias 'Golden Baba'.

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Crime Branch Santosh Upadhaya said on Monday that follow-

ing request from the Commissionerate Police, the EOW took up investigations into two fraud cases registered against Beura.

Arrested by the Odisha police last week in a cheque fraud case, Beura has four cases against him in Chandrasekharpur, Laxmisingar and Saheed Nagar

police stations in Bhubaneswar.

The Chandrasekharpur case pertains to encashment of cheques worth Rs 12.04 crore and the Laxmisingar case is related to duping of Rs 4.50 crore from different persons by Jyoti Ranjan have been taken up by the EOW for investigation, the ADGP said.

No major impact barring some stray incidents of violence in WB

KOLKATA, JAN 8 (PTI): Barring some stray incidents of violence on Tuesday, the two-day nationwide strike called by central trade unions protesting against 'anti-people' policies of the centre failed to evoke much response in West Bengal.

Elaborate security arrangements made by the Trinamool Congress government foiled the striking unions' bid to stall the normal life in the state.

Government offices, IT sector and port activities were normal, while banking sector experienced partial impact with some branches and ATMs closed. Workers in tea gardens also worked like normal days.

However, PSU insurance companies were closed. Several protesters were arrested as sporadic incidents of vandalism were reported from parts of the state on Tuesday during the strike.

Stones were pelted at a school bus in Champadali area of Barasat in North 24 Parganas district. The students were later deboarded from the bus, police said.

Strike supporters burnt effigies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and burnt tyres in various parts of the state including Kolkata.

In Howrah, Siliguri, Bardhaman, Birbhum, North and South 24 Parganas, clashes broke out between Trinamool Congress workers and strike supporters as TMC activists tried to stop them from forcibly imposing the strike. Despite these scattered incidents of violence, normal life in and around Kolkata and other parts of the state remained more or less unaffected by the strike call except in a few pockets.

Scuffles were witnessed between police and strike supporters in some areas of the state. At Jadavpur area in south Kolkata, senior CPI(M) leader Sujan Chakraborty along with several other strike supporters were detained by the police.

CPI(M) leaders have come out on the streets

in support of the strike. The Trinamool Congress government in the state has opposed the strike call.

Ten Central trade unions who have called the strike have placed a charter of demands that include minimum wage, universal social security, workers status and including pay and facilities for the scheme workers, against privatisation of public and government organisations. The state government had announced that its employees would be barred from availing casual leave or half day leave on Tuesday and Wednesday.

No leave will also be allowed on the day preceding the two-day strike or following it, a government notification said on Friday. The CITU state president Subhas Mukherjee claimed that the first day of general strike has been successful despite attempts by the Mamata Banerjee government to foil it.

"Despite attempts by the TMC government to foil the strike, it has been quite successful on the first day. The role played by TMC is shameful and it has been proved that both the BJP and TMC have a tacit understanding," he said.

Operation of flights by different airlines was normal at NSC Bose International Airport here, officials at the airport said. Tyres were burnt in Central Avenue of Kolkata to stop buses from plying in the roads. The protesters had a scuffle with the police when they tried to stop them from squatting on the roads. A government bus was damaged by strike supporters at Champadali. Protesters also vandalised a bus at Jamuria in Paschim Bardhaman district.

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CPI(M) leaders have come out on the streets



Klopp defends changes as Wolves dump Liverpool out of FA Cup

WOLVERHAMPTON, JAN 8 (AFP): Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp believes an early injury to defender Dejan Lovren highlighted why he chose to name a second-string side in bowing out of the FA Cup 2-1 to Wolves on Monday. Klopp made nine changes to the side that lost narrowly for the first time in the Premier League this season to Manchester City on Thursday, with Lovren one of only two players to retain their place.

However, the Croatian pulled up with a hamstring injury after just six minutes and was replaced by 16-year-old Ki-Jana Hoever.

"Hamstring, is what I heard - without any signs before," said Klopp on what forced Lovren off. "I asked everybody, no signs, nothing, just out of the blue, so that's the decision you have to make."

"I am not sure what you all would have said if immediately from the beginning if our centre-half situation was Fabinho and Ki-Jana; then probably a few very smart people would tell me that I don't respect the competition or whatever."

Goals from Raul Jimenez and Ruben Neves either side of half-time sent the hosts into round four, where they will face Shrewsbury or Stoke City, despite Divock Origi's fine strike briefly bringing Liverpool level after the break.

Hoever's introduction meant Liverpool fielded three teenagers for the majority of the match with Rafael Camacho and Curtis Jones also handed debuts.

However it was the visitors' most experienced player, Milner, who was at fault for the opening goal when Diogo Jota caught the former England international in possession in midfield and put Jimenez clean through for the Mexican to score his seventh goal of the season. Without Mohamed Salah, Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane, Liverpool were struggling to get any momentum going forward.

But the visitors were level out of nothing when Origi collected a loose ball on the edge of the area six minutes into the second period and smashed the ball high past John Ruddy.

Wolves, though, have made a habit of upsetting the Premier League's established top six in their first season back in the top flight.

After beating Chelsea and Tottenham and holding City, Manchester United and Arsenal in the Premier League, Liverpool can now be added to the list of scalps for Nuno Espirito Santo's side thanks to a wonder strike from Neves.

"He has talent, he has done it before and we encourage him to shoot from range," said Wolves boss Nuno Espirito Santo. "It was a good strike." Only a brilliant save from Ruddy denied Xherdan Shaqiri a stunning equaliser and Liverpool a replay as the Swiss's free-kick was touched onto the inside of the post by the Wolves goalkeeper.

Pujara moves up to third spot in ICC rankings, Pant jumps 21 places

DUBAI, JAN 8 (PTI): Cheteshwar Pujara has gained a spot to be third in the latest ICC batsmen rankings, following his man of the series performance in India's maiden Test series win in Australia. Wicket-keeper batsman Rishabh Pant has jumped as many as 21 places to be 17th, the joint-highest by a specialist India wicketkeeper along with Farokh Engineer, who did so in January 1973. M S Dhoni's highest Test ranking was 19th.

India captain Virat Kohli has maintained his number one position in the batsmen rankings.

Pant, a star at the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup in 2016 when he scored an 18-ball half-century against Nepal, has moved into the top-20 after only his ninth Test with an unbeaten 159. Pant had started the Australia tour in 59th place and made rapid progress, scoring 350 runs in a series that also saw him take 20 catches.

Pujara, who scored 521 runs to help beat



Australia 2-1, is another batsman to gain in the latest rankings update, which also takes into account performances in the second Test between South Africa and Pakistan in Cape Town.

Pujara has gained one slot to reach third position while all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja (up six places to 57th) and rookie opener Mayank Agarwal (up five places to 62nd) are the oth-

ers from his team to advance at the end of a historic series win. Spinner Kuldeep Yadav has gained seven slots to reach a career-best 45th position after his figures of five for 99 in Australia's first innings even as Jasprit Bumrah has held on to 16th position and Mohammed Shami has gained one place to take the 22nd slot. Jadeja has gained one place to reach fifth among bowlers and

has also leapfrogged Windies captain Jason Holder into second place among all-rounders.

South Africa's Aiden Markram has moved back into the top 10 after his knock of 78 at Cape Town, gaining seven slots to reach 10th position. Temba Bavuma has moved into the top 30 for the first time (up five places to 26th) after his score of 75 while captain Faf du Plessis's first-innings

century has lifted him six places to 16th position.

Among the bowlers, Vernon Philander has gained one slot to reach third position while Duanne Olivier has continued his surge to move up to 32nd place from 36th. There has been no change in position or points for leaders India in the team rankings, while Australia have lost one point but remain in fifth position.

The greatest? Serena can end Court argument at Australian Open

MELBOURNE, JAN 8 (AFP): Serena Williams hopes to match Margaret Court's record of 24 singles majors at next week's Australian Open but many already regard her as the greatest women's player of all time -- though Court herself is not necessarily among them.

Over the years, Court has expressed admiration for Serena's achievements but the Australian also bristles when her own record is dismissed as largely irrelevant in the world of modern tennis. The 76-year-old won 13 of her 24 Grand Slams before 1968, when the women's game entered the Open era and became fully professional.

Court won 24 singles Grand Slams from 1960-73 -- 11 Australian Opens, five French Opens, three Wimbledon and five US Opens.

Serena's tally stands at 23 since 1998 -- seven Australian Opens, three French Opens, seven Wimbledon and six US Opens. Chris Evert, who won 18 singles Slams, believes the standard of today's game is so far above previous eras that comparisons are meaningless.

"Of course Serena is the best ever," she told CBS last year. "A case can be made (for others), but it's really ridiculous. We were the best in our era. Serena is the best in her era." For former Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek, Court isn't even in the conversation when it comes to the greatest of all time.

He regards Steffi Graf, with 22 Open-era singles majors, as Serena's only serious rival, pointing out that in 1988 the German won all four Slams and Olympic gold in a calendar year.

"Not to take anything away from Margaret Court, but Steffi Graf was the big record she beat... In amounts Serena is better, but in that one special year Graf has something maybe more special, but both are great champions," he said.

"Margaret Court is nice but for me... it's Steffi. I don't know who's one or two, but those two are the two big legends for me." - 'She'll deserve it' -

Court won all four Grand Slams in a calendar year in 1970 but it was still not enough for Krajicek to rank her alongside the greats of the modern era.

The Dutchman pointed out that 11 of Court's titles were earned in Australia at a time when the journey Down Under involved an arduous boat trip that many top players declined to make.

Other detractors point out that some of the Slams Court won involved only 32 competitors, rather than the 128-player draws Serena has faced throughout her career.

Court vigorously defends her record, disputing the argument that the best players never came to Australia and pointing out her career extended well into the Open era.

"It's a little bit sad that amateur tennis of those years is a little bit underestimated," she said. "They can't forget that I won 11 Slam titles in the Open era. I see that there are many awards for Rod Laver and Ken Rosewall, while for the women's tennis they want to speak only about the players who played in the Open era."

She also contends that Serena's serve would not have been as powerful using the wooden rackets of her era, saying the American can look "a little wobbly" without her major weapon.

"It's not easy to win Grand Slams, it's probably easier today than when we were playing," she told the BBC.

"We had wooden rackets, we had to travel 10 months of the year, we played every week, we couldn't take family with us, we couldn't take any masseurs, we didn't know any of that, we played with injuries."

Nadal says 'no pain' after Sydney tie as Slam looms

SYDNEY, JAN 8 (AFP): Injury-plagued world number two Rafael Nadal insists he is healthy and in no pain after coming through an exhibition game in Sydney, just days after pulling out of the Brisbane International. The Spaniard teamed up with Canadian Milos Raonic to defeat Australians Nick Kyrgios and John Millman in the FAST4 Showdown on Monday evening -- a shortened, quicker format of the game often described as the tennis equivalent of Twenty20 cricket.

Nadal said that he was "feeling better" after withdrawing from Brisbane, when an MRI revealed a slight strain of his left thigh, casting doubts over his fitness for next week's Australian Open.

"I did not feel the pain here," the 17-time Grand Slam champion said. "I think it was a good start for me, a good comeback to the action in front of a fantastic crowd in Sydney."

"I really enjoyed playing here. I'm happy to be back on



court and happy that I'm healthy again." Nadal has not played a main tour event since a knee problem forced him to retire during his US Open semi-final against Juan Martin del Potro in September.

The 32-year-old had surgery on his ankle in November to remove a loose intra-articular body and only resumed training a month ago.

He played the opening

round at an exhibition event in Abu Dhabi to start his season, where he lost to South African Kevin Anderson, and had a first round bye in Brisbane before withdrawing ahead of the second round.

Asked by reporters if he considered himself a genuine title contender in Melbourne despite his injury problems, he replied: "Why not?" "You can't predict that. Of course it would be better

if I had the chance to play a full tournament in Abu Dhabi and a full tournament in Brisbane, but the big importance is I am feeling good with the ball. The only thing is that I didn't play matches since a long time ago."

Nadal will now head to Melbourne, where he was the champion in 2009, to get in as much practice as possible before the opening Grand Slam of the year begins on Monday.

From Mughalsarai station to Allahabad: A renaming spree in 2018

KUNAL DUTT

NEW DELHI, JAN 8 (PTI): From the over 150-year-old Mughalsarai railway station to Allahabad and three iconic islands in Andaman and Nicobar to a World War-era memorial in Delhi, the year gone by witnessed a spate of renaming, many of which sparked public outcry.

Mughalsarai station, created as part of the Delhi-Howrah line laid by the British in the 1860s and one of the busiest railway stations of India, was rechristened to Deendayal Upadhyaya in June while Allahabad and Faizabad were renamed Prayagraj and Ayodhya respectively by the Yogi Adityanath government in the latter half of the year.

The rechristening of the station was also slammed by historians and rail experts, some of whom said it amounted to "erasing a landmark chapter" in the evolution of railways in the country and alleged it was done with a "political agenda".

Noted historian S Irfan Habib, lamented the spate of renaming of public places and cities, alleging that for powers that may be, first the British names were a problem and now anything that has a "Mughal or Islamic identity attached to it" from roads to parks.

"Allahabad and Faizabad are historic cities. One can go and see the condition of heritage sites and landmarks in these cities. Instead of investing in that direction, taxpay-



ers' money being wasted on renaming-related work," he said.

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet in October had approved a proposal to rename the historic city of Allahabad to Prayagraj, months ahead of the Kumbh Mela which begins mid-January. And close on the heels of renaming Allahabad, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced in November that Faizabad district would henceforth be known as Ayodhya.

"Ayodhya is a symbol of our 'aan, baan aur shaan' (honour, pride and prestige)," he had said at a grand "Deepotsav" event organised in the pilgrim town, about 120 km from state capital Lucknow.

S Chandnibi, associate profes-

or of history at the Aligarh Muslim University, says renaming a city or street or any public place is the "easiest way" for politicians to appease people, when they do not have "real work to show".

"Instead of focussing on real development metrics, like education, health and employment, many elected representatives are busy indulging in renaming bids, and the names are then, in many cases changed in a very undemocratic manner, with no public discussion or consultation," she said.

Emboldened by Adityanath's move to rename Allahabad and Faizabad, in November, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Jagan Prasad Garg

had sought the renaming of Agra either as Agravan or Agarwal.

Garg wrote to the chief minister stating that since the people belonging to Agarwal community use to reside in this region, the name of the city should be 'Agravan' or 'Agrawal', drawing mirth on social media.

The renaming exercise in 2018 had begun in January with 'The Teen Murti Chowk' rechristened to 'Teen Murti Haifa Chowk', in the centenary year of the Battle for Haifa (1918) as a symbol of friendship between the people of India and Israel, during the visit of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. And as the year drew to an end, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 30 announced renam-

ing of three islands of Andaman and Nicobar archipelago as a tribute to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

The Ross Island was renamed as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep, the Neil Island as Shaheed Dweep and the Havelock Island as Swaraj Dweep. The three islands are major tourist spots.

Among other renaming exercise, in October the then BJP government in Chhattisgarh had decided to name Naya Raipur, the upcoming capital city of the state, as 'Atal Nagar' in memory of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

In August, the Uttar Pradesh government had approached the Centre for its approval to rename the airports in Bareilly, Kanpur and Agra.

According to a proposal from the state civil aviation department, the Bareilly airport is to be named 'Nath Nagri', which is believed to be an ancient name of the city for its history of having ardent worshippers of Lord Shiva.

Kanpur's Chakeri airport is proposed to be named after freedom fighter Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. The proposal says that Kanpur was earlier known as Kanha Pur and was founded by Sachendi King Hindu Singh. The Agra airport is proposed to be named after RSS thinker Deendayal Upadhyaya.

Experts say with elections due in 2019, more renaming proposals might come up this year.

Human trafficking takes on 'horrific dimensions'; almost a third of victims are children: UN report

YOSHITA SINGH

UNITED NATIONS, JAN 8 (PTI): Trafficking victims from South Asian countries including India are detected in many parts of Europe, according to a new UN report that said human trafficking has taken "horrific dimensions" with children accounting for a third of those being trafficked.

The 'Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018' from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) draws on information from 142 countries, examining trafficking trends and patterns.

The report said human trafficking is taking on "horrific dimensions", with sexual exploitation of victims the main driver. Children now account for 30 per cent of those being trafficked, and far more girls are detected than boys.

Victims from South Asia (and South-West Asia) are also detected in many parts of Western and Southern Europe. They account for about 5 per cent of the total detected victims in this subregion.

"Victims are trafficked from most South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, and to a limited extent also from Nepal and Sri Lanka. Victims from Afghanistan have been detected in the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, it said.

The report further said that as an origin area for trafficking to the rest of the world, victims from South Asia have been detected in more



than 40 countries around the world. The main destinations appear to be the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council in the Middle East. To a lesser extent, victims from South Asia have been detected in Western and Southern Europe and in North America. Victims from South America - Bangladesh and India - have also been detected in South-East Asia.

Based on the limited information available for Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan, female victims in this sub-region account for 59 per cent of the total detected victims.

UNODC Executive Director said Yury Fedotov said that "human trafficking has taken on horrific dimensions as armed groups and terrorists use it to spread fear and gain victims to offer as incentives to recruit new fighters," citing child soldiers, forced labour and sexual

slavery as examples.

While the average numbers of reported victims had fluctuated during the earlier years for which UNODC had collected data, the global trend has shown a steady increase since 2010.

Asia and the Americas are the regions which have seen the largest increase in the numbers of victims detected, which may be explained by improved methods of detecting, recording and reporting data on trafficking or a real increase in the number of victims.

Most victims of trafficking detected outside their region of origin are from East Asia, followed by sub-Saharan Africa: whilst there has been an increase in the number of convictions for trafficking in these regions, the study concluding that large areas of impunity still exist in many Asian and African countries, and conviction

rates for trafficking remain very low.

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most prevalent form in European countries, whilst in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, forced labour is the main factor driving the illicit trade.

Women and girls make up most trafficking victims worldwide: almost three-quarters of them are trafficked for sexual exploitation, and 35 per cent (women and girls) are trafficked for forced labour.

The main focus of the report is on the impact of armed conflict on trafficking. In conflict zones, where the rule of law is weak, and civilians have little protection from crime, armed groups and criminals may take the opportunity to traffic them. One example given in the study is the phenomenon of girls and young women in refugee camps in the Middle East

being "married off" without their consent and subjected to sexual exploitation in neighbouring countries.

Addressing human trafficking is a key part of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda, requiring Member States to monitor progress in tackling the problem, and report the number of victims by sex, age and form of exploitation.

However, significant gaps in knowledge remain, with many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and some parts of East Asia still lacking sufficient capacity to record and share data on trafficking in persons. "This report shows that we need to step up technical assistance and strengthen cooperation, to support all countries to protect victims and bring criminals to justice, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals," Fedotov said.

Trump heads to TV, border as fed workers face paycheck sting

WASHINGTON, JAN 8

(AP): With no breakthrough in sight, President Donald Trump will argue his case to the nation Tuesday night that a "crisis" at the US-Mexico border requires the long and invulnerable wall he's demanding before ending the partial government shutdown.

Hundreds of thousands of federal workers face missed paychecks Friday as the shutdown drags through a third week. Trump's Oval Office speech his first as president will be followed by his visit Thursday to the southern border to highlight his demand for a barrier.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders tweeted that he will use the visit to "meet with those on the front lines of the national security and humanitarian crisis."

The administration is also at least talking about the idea of declaring a national emergency to allow Trump to move forward on the wall without Congress approving the \$5.6 billion he wants.

Vice President Mike Pence said the White House counsel's office is looking at the idea. Such a move would certainly draw legal challenges, and Trump who told lawmakers he would be willing to keep the government closed for months or ever years has said he would like to continue negotiations for now.

As Trump's prime-time address and his border visit were announced, the newly empowered House Democrats and at least a few Republican senators stepped up pressure on GOP lawmakers to reopen the government without giving in to the president's demands. The closure, which has lasted 17 days, is already the second-longest in history and would become the longest this weekend.

Leaning on Senate Republicans, some of whom are growing anxious about the impact of the shutdown, House Speak-

er Nancy Pelosi said the House would begin passing individual bills this week that would reopen federal agencies, starting with the Treasury Department to ensure Americans receive their tax refunds.

The White House moved to pre-empt the Democrats, telling reporters Monday that tax refunds would be paid despite the shutdown. That shutdown exemption would break from the practice of earlier administrations and could be challenged.

"There is an indefinite appropriation to pay tax refunds. As a result... the refunds will go out as normal," said Russell Vought, acting director of the White House budget office. There were other signs that administration was working to control the damage from the shutdown, which has furloughed 380,000 federal workers and forced another 420,000 to work without pay.

The National Park Service said it was dipping into entrance fees to pay for staffing at some highly visited parks to maintain restrooms, clean up trash and patrol the grounds, after reports of human waste and garbage overflowing in some spots.

Over the weekend, the federal agency tasked with guaranteeing U.S. airport security acknowledged an increase in the number of its employees missing work or calling in sick.

But Trump and the Transportation Security Administration pushed back on any suggestion that the call-outs at the agency represented a "sickout" that was having a significant effect on U.S. air travel.

TSA said it screened more than 2.2 million passengers Sunday, a historically busy day due to holiday travel. Ninety percent waited less than 15 minutes, the agency said.

"We are grateful to the more than 51,000 agents

across the country who remain focused on the mission and are respectful to the traveling public," said TSA spokesman Michael Bilello.

The talks over ending the shutdown have been at an impasse over Trump's demand for the wall. He has offered to build the barrier with steel rather than concrete, billing that as a concession to Democrats' objections. They "don't like concrete, so we'll give them steel," he said. But Democrats have made clear that they object to the wall itself, not how it's constructed. They see it as immoral and ineffective and prefer other types of border security funded at already agreed-upon levels.

"Maybe he thinks he can bully us. But I'm from Brooklyn. You let a bully succeed, you'll be bullied again worse," Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer said at a breakfast with the Association for a Better New York.

At the White House, spokeswoman Mercedes Schlapp complained that Democratic leaders have yet to define what they mean when they say they are for enhancing border security.

"Democrats want to secure the border? Great. Come to the table," she said Monday. "We are willing to come to a deal to reopen the government." Trump has tasked Pence during the shutdown fight to negotiate with Democrats, including during talks over the weekend with Democratic staffers.

But the vice president is increasingly being called upon to prevent defections in the GOP ranks. Asked whether cracks were forming between the White House and Republicans eager for the shutdown to end, Pence told reporters, "We've been in touch with those members and others."

He said that he and Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen would be at the Capitol Tuesday and Wednesday to brief lawmakers.

Chinese military equips troops in Tibet with mobile howitzers: Report

KJM VARMA
BEIJING, JAN 8 (PTI): After the recent induction of light weight battle tank in Tibet bordering India, the Chinese military has equipped its troops stationed at the Himalayan plateau with new vehicle-mounted howitzers after reported on Tuesday.

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) stationed in Tibet Autonomous Region has been equipped with mobile howitzers which aims to boost the troops' high-altitude combat capability to improve border security, state-run Global Times reported.

It quoted Chinese military analysts as saying that the new equipment would be the PLC-181 vehicle mounted howitzer. The announcement was made in an article released by the WeChat account of the PLA Ground Force on Saturday, the report said.

The equipment was used in an artillery brigade in Tibet during the 2017 China-India standoff at Doklam, it said.

Song Zhongping, a military expert and TV commentator, told Global Times that the howitzer has a 52-caliber cannon with a range of over 50 kms and shoots laser-guided and satellite-guided projectiles.

It will boost the high-altitude combat capability of the PLA in Tibet, Song said.

Indian-American Gita Gopinath joins IMF as its first female chief economist

LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, JAN 8 (PTI): Prominent Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath has joined as the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, becoming the first woman to occupy the top post at the global lender.

Gopinath, 47, joined last week at a time, when she believes the world is experiencing a retreat from globalisation, posing challenges to multilateral institutions.

The John Zwaanstra professor of International Studies and Economics at Harvard University, Gopinath, a US citizen, succeeds Maurice (Maury) Obstfeld as Economic Counsellor and Director of the IMF's Research Department. Obstfeld retired December 31.

Announcing her appointment on October 1, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde described her as "one of the world's outstanding economists with impeccable academic credentials, a proven track record of intellectual leadership and extensive international experience."

The 11th chief economist of the IMF, Mysore-born Gopinath in a recent interview to The Harvard Gazette described her appointment at the IMF as a "tremendous honour" and said the appointment of the first ever woman for this position speaks highly of IMF's Managing Director Lagarde.

"She is phenomenal, not just in her leadership of the IMF but as a role model for women around the world," she said.

Identifying some of her top priorities at the IMF, Gopinath told The Harvard Gazette that she would like the IMF to continue to be a place that provides intellectual leadership on important policy questions.

Among the research issues that I would like to push, one would be understanding the role of domi-



nant currencies like the dollar in international trade and finance. We could do more on the empirical side to try to understand countries' dollar exposures and on the theoretical side in terms of the implications for international spillovers, consequences of dollar shortages, etc, she said.

Most countries invoice their trade in dollars and borrow internationally in dollars. This is a central part of the international price system and the international financial system and it will be exciting to explore its consequences in greater depth with the IMF, she said. Gopinath considers the perceived retreat from globalisation as one of the top challenges being faced by the IMF.

"The one (biggest issues being faced by the IMF) that is absolutely clear and present is that we are seeing the first serious retreat from globalisation. This has not happened in the past 50 or 60 years, when the world moved toward lower tariffs and increasing trade across countries, she told the prestigious Harvard publication.

"Over the past several months, we have the US-imposed tariffs and retaliation to them from China and other nations. There is in general growing uncertainty about trade policy, including the one arising

out of Brexit (the British move to leave the European Union).

"While the trade has reduced global poverty and raised livelihoods, its consequences for inequality, and on whether the rules of engagement are fair, are real concerns that need to be addressed, she said.

Gopinath said there is also a concern about whether there is the right multilateral institutions and frameworks in place to make sure everybody feels that there is fairness in trade. And the same goes for capital flows," she added.

"Foreign direct investment (FDI) was always viewed very favourably by countries. But because most of the FDI is now in tech-heavy firms, there are growing concerns about national security and international property theft. So I believe this retreat from globalisation and this retreat from multilateralism is quite unique to the times we are living in," Gopinath said. Another important concern, she said, is the health of emerging markets as the US continues to normalize its interest rates.

The capital flows to several markets have reversed, putting pressure on their exchange rates and consequently on inflation, and on balance sheets, given that several emerging markets borrow heavily in dollars, said the IMF chief economist.

Eight essays put the spotlight on the journey caused by hydro projects in Sikkim and the region, the cost exacted by this "development" and some of the stories it birthed, not all of which have been shared before.

Also finding place in this collection is the arrival of Climate Change and its impact on Sikkim and how the State could negotiate with this new disruption.

ESSAYS ON TEESTA, HYDEL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN SIKKIM

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Story about life of Jesus emerges as largest crowdfunded entertainment project in history

A new streaming series about the life of Jesus just became the No. 1 crowdfunded series in entertainment history.

"The Chosen," the first multi-season series of its kind about the life of Jesus—directed by Dallas Jenkins—has raised

nearly \$10.3 million in equity crowdfunding from 15,000 investors, unseating "Mystery Science Theater 3000", which raised \$5.7 million, as the No. 1 crowdfunded film or TV project in history. It's set to be released this Easter.

"When we started this whole thing I'd be impressed if we brought in \$800," Jenkins told Fox News. "The notion that we could start from scratch and shatter the all-time crowdfunding record was ludicrous, but this whole year has gone to show that there's a passion for something different."

Equity crowdfunding is rarely used in Hollywood.

In late 2017, The Chosen Productions, partnering with distributor VidAngel, released a concept pilot on social media to gauge potential public interest in The Chosen. The pilot episode was seen by 15 million people around the world, asking people if they wanted to fund a show like this, and that's when investors said yes.

"The vast audience for high-quality, faith-based entertainment—all too often overlooked and underserved by Hollywood—made a loud and unmistakable statement that they're so eager for content that resonates, they are willing to fund it into existence...," Matthew Faraci, Executive Producer of The Chosen, told Fox News. "Backed by our army of 15,000 passionate investors, we're excited to see how far we can take this series."

The Chosen is not the first Christian production to rock Hollywood. The Passion of the Christ, directed by Mel Gibson,

is still the highest-grossing independent film of all time. The Bible series, produced by Mark Burnett and Roma Downey, is currently streaming on Netflix and was the highest-rated cable broadcast of 2013.



And now The Chosen is breaking ground on the streaming front. **AT PASSION 2019, STUDENTS RAISE \$400G TO TRANS-LATE BIBLE FOR DEAF PEOPLE ACROSS WORLD**

"Each time an opportunity like this has come up, Hollywood has failed to capitalize and follow up on the momentum, and we're not going to make that mistake," Faraci said.

The first four episodes of The Chosen will be available to watch this Easter. The entire series will be seven seasons long. **PENNSYLVANIA HIGH SCHOOL'S 'BIBLE BAN' IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL, STUDENTS SAY**

"I believe that the greatest story ever told should be binge-watched just as much as Stranger Things," Jenkins said, adding that he believes it will have a great impact on audiences. "We can dig deeper into the people who encountered Jesus, we can see their before," and if the audience can see Jesus through the eyes of those who met him, perhaps they can be changed in the same way."

Bihar court orders FIR against those associated with Accidental Prime Minister

MUZAFFARPUR (BIHAR), JAN 8 (PTI): A court here Tuesday ordered lodging of an FIR against Bollywood actors Anupam Kher, Akshaye Khanna and 15 others associated with the upcoming movie "The Accidental Prime Minister" based on the tenure of former prime minister Manmohan Singh.

Sub Divisional Judge (East), Gaurab Kamal directed the Kanti police station in the district to lodge the FIR based on a complaint of advocate Sudhir Kumar Ojha, who had moved the court on January 2 last with the complaint that the movie presented Singh and a number of other public figures in "bad light".

In his complaint, Ojha had named Kher, who plays the role of Singh, as well as Akshaye Khanna, who plays Singh's media advisor Sanjaya Baru, on whose book the movie is said to be based upon.

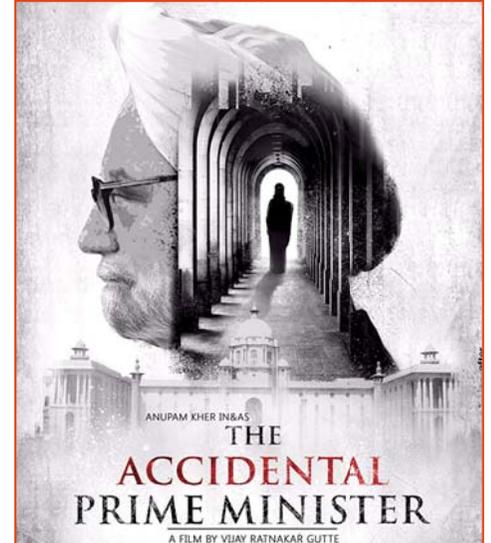
Others named in the complaint include actors essaying the roles of UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Congress president (then national general secretary) Rahul Gandhi, former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, his deputy Lal Krishna Advani and RJD supreme Lalu Prasad Yadav.

The movie's producer, director and other key persons associated with the project were

also named in the complaint.

The complainant had alleged that he felt hurt upon watching the promos of the movie, scheduled for release on January 11, wherein the public figures were portrayed in a manner that projected a poor image of the country.

The advocate had lodged his complaints



under IPC sections 295, 153, 153A, 293, 504 and 120B which relate to promoting enmity between different groups, sale of obscene objects, insult with intent to provoke breach of peace and criminal conspiracy.

Rakesh Roshan diagnosed with early stage cancer

MUMBAI, JAN 8 (PTI): Veteran filmmaker-actor Rakesh Roshan has been diagnosed with "early stage squamous cell carcinoma of the throat", his son, actor Hrithik Roshan said on Tuesday.

Hrithik made the revelation on Instagram, adding his father is set to undergo surgery.

"Asked my dad for a picture this morning. Knew he wouldn't miss gym on surgery day. He is probably the strongest man I know.

"Got diagnosed with early stage squamous cell carcinoma of the throat a few weeks ago, but he is in full spirits today as he proceeds to battle it. As a family we are fortunate and blessed to have a leader like him," the actor wrote. Hrithik also shared a

picture with his 69-year-old father standing side-by-side in a gym.

The father-son duo has worked together in Hrithik's launch vehicle "Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai", "Koi... Mil Gaya", "Krrish" series and "Kaabil".

Roshan's daughter Sunanina was diagnosed with cervical cancer a few years ago but emerged a survivor.

Roshan started out as an actor with films such as "Kaamchor" and "Khoobsurat", among others but later went to shift gears into filmmaking and sporadic guest appearances.

Some of his notable directorial works include "Khudgarz", "Khoon Bhari Maang", "Karan Arjun" and "Koyla".

Glenn Close receives standing ovation for Empowering 2019 Golden Globes Speech

Drum-roll please...

The winner for Best Actress in a Motion Picture—Drama for the 2019 Golden Globes is none other than Glenn Close from The Wife. On her way up to the stage, the actress paused to shake hands with fellow nominee Lady Gaga. The shocked actress then ascended the stage in a black, bejeweled cape, where she tearfully accepted the gold statue.

In her speech, the 71-year-old star spoke of the honor she feels to be with her "category sisters."

"We have gotten to know each other a little bit so far, and I can't wait to spend more time with you," the tearful star said. "I'm so — everything that you did this year, or what you are here for — we all should be up here together, that's all I can say. Oh, my god, I just don't



believe it." More importantly, her role in the dramatic film taught her that all women "have to find personal fulfillment" and "follow our dreams." And she feels like she was able to do that in her life. She shared, "Here I am today, I will have been 45 years in September that I

am a working actress. And I cannot imagine a more wonderful life."

Her fellow nominees included Lady Gaga for her role in A Star Is Born, Nicole Kidman from Destroyer, Melissa McCarthy for Can You Ever Forgive Me? and Rosamund Pike from A Private War.



GROUP HUG! The A Star is Born co-stars, Bradley Cooper, Sam Elliott & Lady Gaga, share a sweet moment during Sam Elliott's imprint ceremony.

ARIES: Today's planetary PSA: You can project confidence and competence without coming off as arrogant or uncaring. With your ruler, firebrand Mars, buzzing through your sign, you've got a hard-wired caffeine rush going 24/7—but for everyone's sake, Aries, slow down! Today, communicator Mercury is waving a warning flag, reminding you that being a "Ram of the people" will win more support than barking orders!

TAURUS: Go big, scale back—or just go back to bed? You may feel pulled in opposing directions today as buzzy Mars in your intuitive twelfth house squares off with randomizer Mercury in your expansive ninth house. When you put in 110 percent, you feel spread too thin, yet when you hold back to reconsider, you fear you'll miss an opportunity. The trick? Prioritize! Step out of the office—or away from your work—and clear your head. Rather than pushing for the right answer, stay open and allow it to come!

GEMINI: Go ahead and invite a couple extra colleagues to the brainstorming meeting or expand the guest list for an

upcoming gathering! Just make sure you're not opening the door to one too many high-maintenance types. With excitable Mars in your teamwork zone getting body-checked by quicksilver Mercury in your house of intense emotions, feelings could bubble up that no one's prepared for. Before you wave people in, make sure you have at least some idea of what their agenda is.

CANCER: Upgrade to the VIP tickets, Cancer. Shortly before the ball drops on 2019, uncompromising Mars rushes into Aries and your prestigious tenth house until February 14. You've got grand plans for the year ahead, and it all starts NOW. Tonight, you practically owe yourself an upscale celebration.

LEO: You may still be digesting Christmas cookies, but you can start burning off those holiday indulgences now. Today, as the life-giving Sun links up with disciplined Saturn in your sixth house of wellbeing, you may find sticking to an exercise routine or a healthy-eating plan easier than ever. Exploit this

planetary lift by diving in headfirst. Join a gym—or become a regular at yours—and find a class that will keep you pumped up. In the food department, experiment with cutting back on just one "evil," like sugar or processed food.

VIRGO: Simmer down! You want to tune out the outer world and listen for messages from your muse today, as the creative Sun winks at structured Saturn in Capricorn and your fifth house of self-expression. If you've been taking your talents for granted, it's time to get a little more about serious about them. Withhold judgment for now and just start devoting a few hours a week (and more on weekends) to pursuing your craft—whatever it may be. Romance could reach a passionate peak, but you need to know if the object of your affections is playing for keeps. Ask!

LIBRA: You'll be in your gracious, glamorous element this NYE as passionate Mars launches a six-week tour through Aries and your seventh house of relationships (aka "the Libra house").

SCORPIO: This might not be the NYE that

sees you dancing on the bar till dawn, but considering the year of wild growth that's behind you, a gentler pace is fine by you—isn't it, Scorpio? Thanks to your co-ruler Mars settling into Aries and your sixth house of self-care this evening, 2018 slinks out more like a kitten than a lion. You'll be just as happy (happier, probably) bidding adieu to the year in a meditation circle, candlelight yoga class or perhaps on some sandy beach

SAGITTARIUS: Party costume: Check. Crazy shoes and accessories: Check! Wild hair and makeup: Up to you, Archer, but why not? This NYE gets a turbo-charge from passionate Mars. Just before midnight, the red planet bursts into Aries and your festive, flamboyant fifth house until February 14. Since the fifth house also rules fame, this NYE (and the first six weeks of 2019) could turn into one giant photo op for you and your crew.

CAPRICORN: How's this for a perfect NYE gameplan: Get yourself suitably dressed up; have everyone stop by just as the bubbly reaches the perfect temperature; cue up your killer playlist; and let the

rest unfold spontaneously. With passionate Mars nestling into your domestic quarters shortly before the ball drops, you may relish the thought of staying home and turning your living room into "the club."

AQUARIUS: Wait a second there, Water Bearer. If you're about to hit Go on a team project without running your decisions up the flagpole, you need to do a rethink on that. Last we checked, democracy still rules. And with savvy Mercury in your collaborative zone connected with healer-feeler Chiron in Pisces, you have no business trying to be the whole voting committee!

PISCES: Look past the razzle-dazzle and the four-syllable words. Someone in your circle may be talking a big game, but they don't necessarily have the stuff to back it up. You tend to go with your gut anyway, but under today's skies, make sure people can live up to their promises. Convivial Mercury in your collaborative zone is squaring off with make-it-happen Mars. For your part, listen more than you speak; and when you do say something, be concise and get right to the point.