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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Substitute Milan Chettri's brace in extra time takes Sikkim to T Ao finals



SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 27 JAN:

A brace by the substitute, Milan Chettri, in extra-time helped Sikkim enter the finals of the 9th T Ao North East Football Championship being played here at IG Stadium in Kohima, Nagaland.

um in Kohima, Nagaland.

This is for the third time that Sikkim has reached the finals of this prestigious tournament. It has not held aloft the champion's trophy so far.

In the nail-biting second semi-final match

played under floodlights this evening, Sikkim outplayed Arunachal Pradesh 3-1, edging past in the 30-minute extra-time of the match.

Sikkim will now take on Mizoram for the Cup on Tuesday.

Sikkim had topped group-B in the league round with seven points to reach the semis.

Today, Sikkim maintained constant pressure with an attacking game right from the start but the first half ended

goalless.

Sikkim continued with its attacking game in the second half and finally, Kintup Lachungpa won the breakthrough with a goal in the 59th minute.

However, Sikkim could not maintain the lead for long and Tapi Hakhe scored the equalizer for Arunachal Pradesh in the 78th minute to end full time of the match 1-1.

In the 30-minute extra-time, desperate for victory, both teams took each other head-on with constant attacks and counter-attacks. And then Sikkim's substitute player, Milan Chettri, came through for the team and scored in the 100th minute. Shortly after, he completed his brace in the 112th minute and sealed a 3-1 victory for Sikkim.

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CM lays foundation stone for State Civil Services Officers' Institute



GANGTOK, 27 JAN (IPR):

Chief Minister, P.S. Tamang (Golay) laid the foundation stone for the proposed State Civil Services Officers' Institute at Chintan Bhawan complex in the capital today in the presence of Minister of Buildings & Housing Department, Sanjit Kharel, Deputy Speaker/SLA, Cabinet Ministers, Chief Secretary to the State Government, Additional Chief Secretary, Director General of Police, GMC Mayor, DC/East, heads of departments of the State Government

and other dignitaries.

The foundation stone laying ceremony was followed by a short briefing session in the auditorium of Chintan Bhawan wherein Chief Engineer, Buildings & Housing Department, presented a technical report on the Civil Services Officers' Institute.

The State Civil Services Officers' Institute is a multipurpose building which has been conceived to provide an integrated physical environment which will serve as a binding force in

maintaining relationship among officers working in various organizations in the State and to imbibe within a spirit of cooperation in all aspects of civil services.

The proposed institute will provide banqueting services for all the State Civil Services officers and their family as well as guest room facilities for State guests and resource persons from outside the State for their comfortable stay in Sikkim. Additionally, the centre will also facilitate organizing

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DR Thapa not BJP president, clarifies Chauhan



ARPAN PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 27 JAN:

BJP Sikkim president, DB Chauhan, has condemned news circulating on social media of Upper Burtuk MLA, DR Thapa being appointed BJP Sikkim president.

Speaking to Summit Times, Mr Chauhan said that BJP State Unit president is nominated and appointed by the party's central committee but as of now no information or report has been received from the BJP high command.

"We totally condemn the news going viral on the internet in regard to the appointment of DR

Thapa as the president of Bhartiya Janata Party Sikkim Unit," he said.

According to Mr Chauhan, the BJP Central Committee is busy with the Assembly Elections in Delhi and the appointment of Sikkim unit president may be taken up and declared after the Delhi Assembly election after 10 February.

There are 13 other states where BJP is yet to appoint presidents, so it may take place probably after 10 Feb, he added.

If there is any such development, BJP Sikkim unit will officially declare and inform the Sikkimese through a press conference or through its official social media platforms.

It may be mentioned here that DR Thapa was elected on a Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) ticket in 2019. However, he along with nine other SDF MLAs joined BJP.

Indian and Chinese army personnel meet for R-Day and Chinese New Year celebrations



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 27 JAN:

A ceremonial Border Personnel Meeting [BPM] between Indian Army and People's Liberation Army was organised at Nathu La, Bum La and Kibithu on 26 Jan to jointly celebrate the 71st Republic Day and Chinese New Year, a press release informs.

A gift exchange ceremony was also hosted by the Indian Army for PLA at Kongra La in North Sikkim.

The BPM mechanism has evolved into an important interface where local issues get discussed

and are resolved thereby fostering confidence among the Border Guarding Troops, an Army press release explains. This ensures prevalence of peace & tranquillity along the LAC, the release adds.

The events commenced with the hoisting of the national flags and rendition of the national anthems of both nations which was followed by a ceremonial welcome address by the respective delegation leaders.

The function involved extension of greetings and display of cultural programmes.

The proceedings re-

flected a mutual desire to maintain an environment of Peace & Tranquillity along the LAC which is a prerequisite for good relations between both the nations, the release underlines.

The delegations interacted in an environment of amity and friendship, the release states, and reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen friendship and maintain peace along the LAC.

The delegations parted amidst feeling of friendship and commitment towards enhancing the existing cordial relations along the LAC.

New compound activates hiding HIV, may make drug treatment more effective: Study

WASHINGTON, JAN 26 (PTI): Researchers have found a novel compound that can trigger latent HIV residing in mice to come out of hiding, a major breakthrough in treating the infection since current drug treatment fails to completely cure the disease when some of the viruses become dormant. To combat HIV, which has infected nearly 38 million people around the world, patients currently take antiretroviral therapy (ART) -- drugs that suppress the virus to undetectable levels in blood, the study, published in the journal Nature, said.

However, it added that the virus still persists throughout the body in these patients in latently infected CD4+ T cells of the immune system.

According to the researchers, including those from the University of North Carolina (UNC) in the US, the immune system cannot recognise these dormant cells, and no current therapies can eliminate them.

When ART is stopped, they said, the virus levels spike in the blood.

Hence, the scientists explained that people with HIV must take ART continuously, and the latent reservoir of the virus is the greatest obstacle to a cure against the deadly disease. In the

current study, the researchers used a compound called AZD5582 to activate latently infected CD4+ T cells in blood and many different tissues with no, or very little toxicity. "Previously, no one had successfully tested a latency reversal molecule in humans, or in an animal model with human cells, demonstrating systemic HIV induction in peripheral blood, in resting CD4+ T cells from multiple tissues, and then replicated this success in a completely different species," said study co-author J. Victor Garcia from UNC.

The scientists tested AZD5582 on ART-suppressed mouse models which were genetically engineered to produce human CD4+ T cells in tissues throughout the body. They documented increases in viral genetic material expressed in the mice blood and nearly all tissues, including lymph nodes, thymus, bone marrow, liver, lung, and brain. According to the study, the viral genetic material, ribonucleic acid, increased by more than 20 fold after treating with the compound.

When the researchers tested AZD5582 in ART-suppressed macaques infected with the HIV-like virus SIV, they found similar results, but with multiple, weekly doses.

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West Bengal govt tables anti-CAA resolution in Assembly

KOLKATA, JAN 27 (PTI): The West Bengal government on Monday tabled a resolution against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in the Assembly.

The resolution appeals to the Union government to repeal the amended citizenship law and revoke plans to implement NRC and update NPR.

State Parliamentary Affairs Minister Partha

Chatterjee introduced the resolution in the House around 2 pm.

Three states - Kerala, Rajasthan and Punjab - have already passed resolutions against the new citizenship law.

The law has emerged as the latest flashpoint in the state, with the TMC opposing the contentious legislation tooth and nail, and the BJP pressing for its implementation.

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STATE-LEVEL REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION AT PALJOR STADIUM

Governor highlights achievements in health & women's rights in Sikkim

GANGTOK, 26 JAN (IPR): Sikkim joined the rest of the nation in celebrating the 71st Republic Day of India with patriotic fervour and enthusiasm. In the state level function organised at Paljor Stadium here in the State capital, the Governor of Sikkim, Mr Ganga Prasad unfurled the national flag, and received the National salute.

The Governor then reviewed the Republic Day parade put out by the smartly turned out personnel from ITBP, SSB, SAP, 2nd and 3rd IRBn, Sikkim Police (Male and Female Platoons), Sikkim Home Guards, NCC, Army Band, and Sikkim Police Pipe and Brass Bands. This was followed by an impressive march past by the contingents. J. Jaya Pandiyan [SDPO Namchi] led the contingents as the parade commander, and he



was supported by Parade 2 I/C, Police Inspector, SHO Chungthang, Pema Rana.

The state level function was attended by Chief Minister of Sikkim, Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) as the guest of

honour. The programme also had the attendance of Minister for Education & Sports & YA, Kunga Nima Lepcha, Minister for UD&HD, Arun Upreti, MLA, B.K. Khatiwara, MP Lok Sabha, Indra

Hang Subba, Political Secretary to CM, Jacob Khaling, Chief Secretary, S.C. Gupta, DGP, A. Shankar Rao, all Heads of Departments, and senior officers of the State administration.

The Governor, in his address, reminisced the efforts of freedom fighters who fought for the independence of India and said that India has come a long way since the adoption of the Constitution on 26 January, 1950.

Growth and development of health, women's rights in the State of Sikkim was the highlight of the Governor's address at the 71st Republic Day celebrations. Further, he talked about the benefits provided by the Government to employees such as Health Insurance policies and also touched upon the

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Republic Day Awards

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 JAN:

It was announced that Deputy Superintendent of Police, Home Guards & Civil Defence, Tshering Yangzom, has been awarded the Police Medal on the eve of Republic Day, 2020, for her outstanding service.

The President's Police Medal for 2018 was awarded to Additional Superintendent of Police, Eden Subba, for her selfless service towards the State.

The following Government employees were honoured with the Sikkim State Meritorious Service Awards on the occasion:

1. Rajendra Chhetri, Director, Information and Technology Department.
2. Smt. Arpita Rasaily, Private Secretary, Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom.
3. Chandra Bahadur Chhetri, Sub Inspector, Training Branch, Police Headquarters.
4. Smt. Meena Rasaily, Head Assistant, Excise Department.
5. Sonam Pintso Bhutia, Sub Inspector, Mangan, Food and Civil Supplies Department.
6. Surbir Rasaily, Senior Artiste (Musician), Culture Department.
7. Nar Bahadur Chhetri, Cameraperson, Information and Public Relations Department.
8. Dorjee Wangda Bhutia, Driver, Printing and Stationery Department.
9. Prem Kumar Rai, Office Attendant (Higher Education), Education Department.

Pemba Tshering Sherpa who won Bronze medal in weight-lifting at Khelo India Games 2020, and Ladorjee Tamang who won 1st position in Guitar Solo at 23rd National Youth Festival recently in Lucknow were also presented with appreciation awards for their accomplishment and for bringing laurels to the State.

North celebrates Republic Day

MANGAN, 26 JAN (IPR):

North Sikkim celebrated the 71st Republic Day in a grand manner with much patriotism, chief guest of the day Area MLA - cum - Minister for Roads & Bridges, Samdup Lepcha unfurled the national flag followed by national anthem and guard of honor at Zilla Panchayat Bhawan complex, Pentok, North Sikkim.

Second session of the day commenced at conference hall of NDZP Bhawan with lighting of lamp by the chief guest followed by patriotic song performed by the student of North Sikkim Academy.

The programme attended amongst other by the Up-adhakshya, North, Theney Bhutia, Sr. SP, North Sonam Gyatso Bhutia, ADC/N, Surat Gurung, ADC (Dev), Somnath Adhikari, ASP/N, Mahindra Subba, SDM, Mangan, Karma Thupden Bhutia, Head of offices of the district, officers & staff, Teachers & students, panchayat members and local dignitaries.

Addressing the gathering on the 71st Republic Day Celebration the chief guest, Lepcha



extended his warmest Republic Day greeting to the gathering, simultaneously, he paid his rich tribute to the martyr of the country who sacrificed their lives for country and made India a republic country. He talked about the importance of the Republic Day and urged everyone to imbibe the significance of the republic day in their lives. Elucidating the meaning of the tri-color Lepcha called one and all to be honest, faithful, peaceful and courageous towards one's own country.

Speaking on overall developmental perspective of the state Govern-

ment he sought people cooperation to take Sikkim into new horizon of development and assured that the government shall work tirelessly for development of the state and for the benefit of public.

Lastly, Lepcha asked to the government employees of the district to work more efficiently and sincerely in the public interest.

The Message of Governor and Chief Minister of Sikkim were read out by ADC/N and SDM, Mangan respectively.

On the occasion, chief guest also handed over "Best District Employees Award" to Dawnu Lep-

cha, Data Operator, Education Department and Ramesh Chhettri, Plant Operator, Public Health Engineer Department.

Meanwhile, Nehru Yuva Kendra, Mangan also Felicitated 'Sikkim Lepcha Youth Association, Dzongu Branch, Passingdang, North Sikkim' in the area of social service with certificate of Appreciation and cash incentive of Rs. 25000.

Besides this, the day also witnessed a cultural show. Earlier, ADC/N, Gurung delivered welcome address while vote of thanks was proposed and presented by ADC (Dev) Adhikari.

R-Day at Singtam



YOGEN THATAL

SINGTAM, 26 JAN:

Republic Day was celebrated at Badminton Court, Near Rani Khola Walkway by Shantinagar Gaon Sudhar Samiti.

President SGSS, Krishna Chhetri along with the senior most member of the Samiti, Deo Kumari Pradhan, hoisted the flag. In his speech, Mr Chhetri

spoke of united India and proud India. Shital Pradhan, member SGSS, spoke about the importance of the day.

Tarundeep Rai, Jitu Rai and Nil Bahadur were congratulated for receiving the Padma Shri, fourth highest civilian award of India. Sishir Pradhan was the host of the day.

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CM lays...

and promoting conferences, seminars, lectures and trainings while also housing a food court for the public.

As guided and directed by the CM and the CS, various other services including library facilities, health wellness centre, recreational facilities and other provisions will also be introduced in order to make the institute a state-of-the-art infrastructure with in-built facilities.

It is further informed that since the structure will be built adjacent to Chintan Bhawan, the amenities provided by both the buildings can be exchanged and availed when required.

In his brief address, the Chief Minister said that the proposed institute is dedicated exclusively to the Civil Services officers who actively deliver diligent work for the development of the State. He added that the centre will also aid various departments and the State Government in reducing accommodation expenses on guests and resource persons from outside the State who otherwise are usually housed in hotels and lodges.

Reiterating that the State Government will remain steadfast in its support for the benefit of the people of Sikkim, the CM urged all to practice responsible leadership and work in tandem towards the growth and development of the State. Referring to all Civil Services officers and government employees as the backbone of the government, the CM extended gratitude to all for their consistent hard work and dedication towards the State and its people.

The State Civil Services officers have also extended deepest gratitude and appreciation to the CM and the State Government for sanctioning the long-overdue project.

Earlier, the welcome address was presented by PCE-cum-Secretary, Buildings & Housing Department while the vote of thanks was delivered by Additional Secretary of the department.

Winter sports coaching camp concludes in North

MANGAN, 27 JAN (IPR):

A month-long "Winter Coaching Camp 2020" jointly organized by the Sports and Youth Affairs Department, North District and Sikkim Krantikari Morcha North Sikkim Sports Wing successfully concluded today.

Minister for Roads & Bridges, Samdup Lepcha attended the closing day of the winter coaching camp as the chief guest.

Interacting with the children of the camp, Minister, Samdup Lepcha complimented the children for successfully completing the coaching camp in various disciplines.

He encouraged the children to excel in the field of sports to bring laurels to the state and perform well academically as well.

Lastly, Minister asked the children to take full advantage of such camp and to make positive use of the skills which they have learned during the month long camp.

In total 125 children



had participated in this winter coaching camp and underwent month long training in four different disciplines i.e. Taekwondo, Football, Archery and Table Tennis.

Winter coaching camp 2020, which started on 05 January, had five coaches; Michael Lepcha (football), Kunzang Kazi (football), Phurba Sher-

pa (Taekwondo), Dawa Zigden Lepcha (Archery) and Sonam Wangchuk Bhutia (Table Tennis).

The closing day also saw the felicitation of coaches, exhibition futsal match, Taekwondo demonstration, cultural show and distribution of winter coaching camp certification to the children.

Screening of SGAY beneficiaries in Rinchenpong



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 27 JAN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha Rinchenpong in-charge, Phurba Tshering Bhutia, has been touring

the constituency and identifying genuine beneficiaries in different blocks and wards for Sikkim Gareeb Awas Yojana, a press release informs.

The party needs support from all for the successful implementation of Sikkim Gareeb Awas Yojana in the State, the release mentions.

Govt to sell 100 pc stake in Air India; issues bid document

NEW DELHI, JAN 27 (PTI):

The government on Monday announced sale of 100 per cent stake in debt-laden Air India as it issued the preliminary bid document for the strategic disinvestment with the deadline for submitting expression of interest set as March 17

As part of the strategic disinvestment, Air India would also sell 100 per cent stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50 per cent shareholding in joint venture AISATS, as per bid document issued on Monday

Management control of the airline would also be transferred to the successful bidder

This is the second time in less than two years that the government has come out with proposal for selling stake in Air India, which has been in the red for long

The government has set March 17 as the deadline for submitting the expression of interest (EoI)

AISATS is an equal joint venture between Air India and Singapore Airlines. It offers ground handling services

Air India also has interests in Air India Engineering Services, Air India Air Transport Services, Airline Allied Services and Hotel Corporation of India

These entities are in the process of being transferred to a separate company -- Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL) -- and would not be a part of the proposed transaction, the document said

According to the document, debt of Rs 23,286.5 crore would remain with Air India and Air India Express at the time of closing of the disinvestment

The remaining debt would be allocated to AIAHL

Governor highlights...

prodigal work done by the State in terms of education, women's empowerment, rural and urban management, tourism, towards making efficient citizens who contribute for betterment of Sikkim and India.

The Governor enlightened everyone about the vision of State Government to solve issues such as road congestion, and continuous supply of electricity and water. He talked about transforming ourselves into responsible citizens towards our duty, our community and the State. He further said that the State Government despite of all its achievements should not rest on its laurels and must make bold steps to ensure sustainable development of our future generation. In the end, the Governor concluded by congratulating the Police medal winners and State awardees for bringing laurels to the State.

Customary to the Republic Day celebrations in the State of Sikkim, Police Personnel from the state were feted with the decorated Presidents Police Medal and exemplary employees of the Government of Sikkim were awarded the Sikkim State Meritorious Service Award in recognition of their admirable and dedicated services to the State.

Amidst loud cheers of encouragement, the Governor presented trophies to contingents based on their performance in the Republic Day parade. The Sikkim Police Female Platoon took the 'All Round Best Platoon Award' followed by Indo-Tibetan Border Police which won the 'Second Best Platoon Award'. The 'Best Band Contingent Award' was presented to Army Band while NCC walked away with the 'Consolation Prize'. The selections were made by a jury constituted for the purpose.

The Chief Minister and other dignitaries joined the Governor in releasing two publications namely:

1. Tourism & Travellers Outreach Handbook - by the Tourism & Civil Aviation Department, and
2. Sikkim's MSME Story (The journey of growing state and its enterprise) - by the Commerce & Industries Department

The Governor, Chief Minister, Cabinet Ministers, MP Lok Sabha, MLAs, and other dignitaries visited the army equipment display on one side of the ground, where they were extensively briefed about the various equipment and paraphernalia on display, by top officials of the army.

The programme also had colourful cultural presentations by the students of Kendriya Vidyalaya Gangtok, who performed an Integration Dance, while artists of the Culture Department presented a folk dance depicting the tradition of Sikkim. One of the highlights of the day was the Girls Self Defence Demonstration under the Beti Bachao Beti Padoo programme. An initiative of the Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Government of Sikkim, this programme is being taken to every school in the state to empower the girl child.

Earlier, the showering of flower petals by the Helicopter (organized by Tourism & Civil Aviation Department) added more colour to the day's proceedings.

The state level programme concluded with the tune of the National Anthem performed by Sikkim Police Brass Band.

New compound...

In this experiment, they observed a spike in RNA expression in lymph nodes and blood of the primates.

According to the scientists, this is the first time a latency reversal agent accomplished this feat with little toxicity in both animal models used to study HIV.

Based on these findings, the researchers believe HIV can be pushed out of hiding, opening a range of possibilities for the development of new therapies that may lead to a cure for the disease.

Substitute Milan...

Team manager, Arjun Rai appreciated the game displayed by Sikkim and beamed stated that every player delivered as expected and required for the strategy of the team coach, Mayal Dok Lepcha.

"We have entered the finals of the tournament for the third time and players are in high spirits and confidence to bring the champion's trophy home this time," he said.

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BBBP week concludes with felicitation of achievers in North Sikkim



MANGAN, 27 JAN [IPR]: The weeklong observation of “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” initiative in North Sikkim concluded on Sunday, 26 Jan.

The closing ceremony was organised by the District Task Force at the Zilla Panchayat Bhawan conference hall here in convergence with the Republic Day celebrations which had Roads &

Bridges Minister, Samdup Lepcha, as chief guest. During the weeklong BBBP celebration, the DTF conducted various events and nominated the best girl achievers in different fields who were felicitated on the day.

The chief guest handed over the incentives to the following achievers: Girl achievers in academics: Prena Gajmer

(class XII) of Mangan Sr. Sec. School for scoring 85% in science; Dawa Lhamu Lepcha (class XII) of Phodong Sr. Sec. School for scoring 59% in commerce; Tshering Ongmu Lepcha (class X) of Kalzang Gyatso Sr. Sec. School for 65%.

Best School Management Committee: Sonam Choda Lepcha Memorial Secondary

School, Lingdong, Dzongu, North Sikkim.

Best girl achiever in sports: Doma Lepcha, D/O Tashi Lepcha, Mangan Sr. Sec. School.

Best Supervisor: Chumi Sherpa, Chungthang; Diku Maya Pradha, Phensong; Aruna Rai, Dzongu.

Local Champions: Dichen Ongmu Lepcha (cricket); Dikcha Bishwakarma (Boxing); Dolma Lhamu Lachenpa (Academics)

Best CDPO: Lanzey Donka Denzongpa, CDPO, Mangan

Winners of painting competition: Wangdul Lachenpa, Mangan Sr. Sec. School; Ayush Sharma, Mangan Sr. Sec. School; Sangay Doma Bhutia, Kalzang Gyatso Sr. Sec. School

Essay writing competition: Manisha Rai, Kalzang Gyatso Sr. Sec. School; Hasim Akhtar, Mangan Sr. Sec. School; Phu Doma Sherpa, Kalzang Gyatso Sr. Sec. School.

Children’s talent show at Thakurbari

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 JAN: Gangtok-based Vivid Kala Academy [VKA] and Journalists Union of Sikkim [JUS] have come together to organize a talent show for children on the occasion of Saraswati Puja on 30 January here at Thakurbari complex.

Children can showcase their talent in singing, dance, poem recitation, painting, essay and other fields in the program.

This was announced together by VKA president, Kiran Rasaily and JUS president, Bhim Rawat during a press conference here today. They mentioned that the main objective of organizing the event is to encourage children to hone their talent.

On 30 January, various programmes will start at 8 AM, which will be followed by competitive events from 11 AM onwards.

“Troubled” to see Omar Abdullah’s picture, says Stalin

CHENNAI, JAN 27 (PTI): DMK President M K Stalin on Monday said he was deeply troubled to see a photograph of National Conference leader Omar Abdullah in which he sports an overgrown beard and demanded the Centre immediately release all leaders in detention in Jammu and Kashmir.

The top Dravidian party leader took to Twitter to demand his release and said “Deeply troubled to see this picture of @OmarAbdullah” and tagged three images of the Kashmiri leader.

While the first showed Omar Abdullah clean shaven, the next featured him with a medium beard and in the final one an overgrown beard was striking.

“Equally concerned about Farooq Abdullah, @MehboobaMufti & other Kashmiri leaders who are incarcerated without trial or due process. Union Govt must immediately release all political prisoners and restore normalcy in Valley,” he said.

Sikkimese entrepreneur speaks at Meghalaya Startup Summit 2020

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 JAN: Sikkimese entrepreneur, SKarma Bhutia, founder of iShippo and Demi Solutions, was recently invited to participate, speak and inspire young entrepreneurs at the Meghalaya Entrepreneurship & Start-up Summit 2020.

Meghalaya’s Chief Minister, Conrad K Sangma inaugurated the Start-up Summit on 21 Jan.

In his deliberation, Mr Bhutia advised local entrepreneurs to be diligent, stay hungry, be teachable & to never give up on their dreams.

Further, he added that the Government’s role in all this was to create a dynamic and collaborative ecosystem for entrepreneurship



support with easily available credit, relevant technology, skilling / mentoring support and access to markets.

The event was attended by CEO NITI Aayog, Amitabh Kant as the guest of honour.

The summit witnessed a line-up of speakers including Nagaraja Prakasam (Partner - Acumen Ventures), Sagar Daryani (CEO & co-founder, Wow!

Momo), Pradeep Gupta (Chairman & Managing Director - Cyber Media India Ltd), Rudy Wallang (musician), Pauline Warjri (pianist and director of Aroha Choir), Paul Mukhtieh (chairman, NEDFI) and other resource persons.

The finale of the summit was an awards ceremony followed by cultural extravaganza, live band performances & fashion show showcasing local talent from the state.



R-Day at SLSA

GANGTOK, 26 JAN [IPR]: The 71st Republic Day was celebrated at the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority premises on Sunday with Judge, High Court of Sikkim, Justice Meenakshi M. Rai, who is also the Executive Chairperson, Sikkim SLSA,

present as the chief guest.

Justice Rai hoisted the national flag and received the guard of honour in the presence of Judge, High Court of Sikkim, Justice Bhaskar Raj Pradhan, and retired Judge, Justice AP Subba.

Army displays weapons and equipments on R-Day

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JAN:

On the occasion of 71st Republic Day, the Black Cat Division organised a Weapon and Equipment Display at Paljor Stadium, Gangtok, on 26 Jan.

The Indian Army displayed variety of weapons, special clothing and medical equipment used in high altitude areas, which was witnessed by Governor, Ganga Prasad and a large number of senior state dignitaries, Army officials, school students and common people at large. Weapon and equipment display aimed at spread-



ing awareness among the masses regarding the Army, as also, showcased the pomp and pageantry of the Indian Army to the young generation.

An Indian Army band also took part in the Republic Day Celebrations at Gangtok and marched along with the state parade contingents.

High Court celebrates Republic Day



GANGTOK, 26 JAN [IPR]: The 71st Republic Day was celebrated at the High Court of Sikkim on Sunday.

Justice Arup Kumar Goswami, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim, hoisted the National Flag and received the guard of honour presented by Sikkim Armed Police personnel.

The function was also attended by Judge, High

Court of Sikkim, Justice Meenakshi M. Rai, and Judge, High Court of Sikkim, Justice Bhaskar Raj Pradhan.

Also present during the occasion were the ex-officio members of High Court of Sikkim, judicial officials, senior advocates, panel advocates, bar members and staffs and officials of High Court of Sikkim.

Month-long training on computer basics concludes at Duga



SUMMIT REPORT
RANGPO, 27 JAN:

The month-long Computer Basic Course organised by West Pandam Gram Panchayat Samiti at Duga Gram Prasashan Kendra concluded with a valedictory session today.

The training was taken by SHG members and drop-out students of the area, a press release informs. The trainees received computer

basics training and on accounts systems.

The valedictory function had Duga BDO, IB Chettri, as chief guest accompanied by Panchayat President Dronacharya Sapkota, Vice President Meera Darjee, Panchayat Members Nanda Devi Sharma, Laxmi Prasad Rasaily and representatives from different organisations, staff and officers from GPK Duga.

Govt to sell 100 pc stake in Air India; issues bid document

NEW DELHI, JAN 27 (PTI): The government on Monday announced sale of 100 per cent stake in debt-laden Air India as it issued the preliminary bid document for the strategic disinvestment with the deadline for submitting expression of interest set as March 17

As part of the strategic disinvestment, Air India would also sell 100

per cent stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50 per cent shareholding in joint venture AISATS, as per bid document issued on Monday

Management control of the airline would also be transferred to the successful bidder

This is the second time in less than two years that the government has come out with

proposal for selling stake in Air India, which has been in the red for long


The government has set March 17 as the deadline for submitting the expression of interest (EoI)

AISATS is an equal joint venture between Air India and Singapore Airlines. It offers ground handling services

Air India also has in-

terests in Air India Engineering Services, Air India Air Transport Services, Airline Allied Services and Hotel Corporation of India

These entities are in the process of being transferred to a separate company -- Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL) -- and would not be a part of the proposed transaction, the document said.



SIKKIM STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY
Development Area, Gangtok: Sikkim
Phone: 03592-207753, Fax : 03592-207753.

“MESSAGE”.

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority is organizing National Lok Adalat on Saturday the 08th February, 2020 for the following types of pre-litigation and pending cases viz:

<p>Pre-Litigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) N.I Act cases under Section 138; (ii) Money Recovery cases; (iii) Labour disputes cases; (iv) Electricity and Water Bills (excluding non-compoundable) (v) Maintenance Cases. (vi) Other (Criminal Compoundable and other Civil dispute). <p>Pending in the Courts (which are reflected on National Judicial Data Grid)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Criminal Compoundable Offences; (ii) N.I. Act cases under Section 138; (iii) Money Recovery cases; (iv) MACT cases; (v) Labour disputes cases; (vi) Electricity and Water Bills (excluding non-compoundable) (vii) Matrimonial disputes (except divorce); (viii) Land Acquisition cases; (ix) Service matters relating to pay and allowances and retiral benefits; (x) Revenue cases (pending in District Courts and High Courts only); (xi) Other civil cases (rent, easmentary rights, injunction suits, specific performance suits) etc. (please specify the category). 	<p>Any individual or any department having such matters either pending in Courts/Tribunals/Departments or in pre-litigation stage may approach directly before the Sikkim SLSA, District Lok Adalats or Taluk Lok Adalats for settlement on or before 29.01.2020 at the following address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Development Area, Gangtok, East Sikkim. E-mail: sikkim_slisa@live.com Phone No.03592-207753. High Court Legal Services Committee, Development Area, Gangtok, East Sikkim. E-mail: sikkim_slisa@live.com Phone No. 03592-207753. District Legal Services Authority (East) District Court’s Complex, Sichey Gangtok, East Sikkim. Phone No. 03592 284462. Taluk Legal Services Committee (East), District Court’s Complex, Sichey, Gangtok, East Sikkim. Phone No. 03592 284131. District Legal Services Authority (North) District Court Complex, Mangan, North Sikkim. Phone No . 03592 234502. Taluk Legal Services Committee (North), Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Pentok, Mangan, North Sikkim. Phone no.03592 234383/234514. District Legal Services Authority (South) District Court Complex, Namchi, South Sikkim. Phone No . 03595 264356. Taluk Legal Services Committee (South), Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, District Courts Complex, Namchi, South Sikkim. Phone no.03595 263145. District Legal Services Authority (West) District Court Complex, Kyongsa, Gyalshing, West Sikkim. Phone No. 03595 250061. Taluk Legal Services Committee (West), Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Kyongsa, Gyalshing, West Sikkim. Phone no.03595 250061. Taluk Legal Services Committee, Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Chungthang, Sub-Division, North Sikkim. Taluk Legal Services Committee (West), Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Soreng, Sub-Division, West Sikkim. Phone n o: 03592-253200. <p>(published by Sikkim State Legal Services Authority).</p>
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Chauvinism is Bad. Period.

but what are doing about it

The present is always challenging, the past rosy and the future uncertain. One grows up living and learning this and even as it becomes obvious that these are but tricks of perception, people tend to become obsessively celebratory about the past, and before even they have noticed, become untractably regressive. Being nostalgic about the past is natural, but to dwell in it is unhealthy; it blinds the future. To contend that the past was better than the present is to condemn the human race's ability to learn and adapt and improve. The present, after all, is structured from past events and if it is not good enough, then the foundation must have been poor. How could times that delivered such unsteady foundations have been good then? If the best things reside in the past, then what contribution has the present generation made? The worst thing a people can do to themselves is stop the clock on the progression of ideas, changes in mindsets, attitudes and approaches. A generation does this and soon the next one starts aspiring backwards while everyone else passes them by.

Agreed, this speaking from the pulpit approach might appear condescending and even offensive because of the obviousness of its premise. But that is the present that we have dragged ourselves into, as in-your-face chauvinism has taken over politics and public attitudes. Take a look around, from what the Donald is trumping down people's throats in his land and the world over to what most of the world is withdrawing into, we live in a time when it has become normal to be regressive, parochial and insular. Closer home, we have seen the gau-rakshaks get away with violent crimes, educational institutions of repute get attacked with infiltrations reminiscent of China's "cultural revolution", democratic expressions get convoluted into fascist endorsements and catastrophic undertakings like demonetization, in what appears a lifetime ago, and more recently the CAA and the refusal to listen get slipped through despite their weak legs with calls to national interest.

All these extreme situations powered through on the shoulders of chauvinistic call to arms. And the trend continues in how Court orders were first ignored when it came to river water sharing, then how the practice of Jallikattu was forced to continue despite court directives ordering otherwise, of how places of worship can still segregate on the basis of gender, in how Kashmir continues to be shut out and even demonized and of how women's reservation in urban local bodies continues to be stone-walled despite its obvious necessity. Even as the groups which pulled off all these affronts to basic decency and propriety congratulate each other, they fail to realize that they have opened the doors for anarchy, because that is what roils in once chauvinism has set roots.

Chauvinism can be simply explained as a prejudiced belief in the superiority of one's own gender, group, or kind. Obviously, because it is prejudiced, it is also untested and what this reflects on those who hold chauvinism close is not only unfortunate ignorance, but also an almost passionate refusal to get informed better. It is also obvious that the chauvinists lack empathy, and with this handicap added to the mix, we stare at a lot which is immature and perennially insecure. They try and make up for this with amplified claims to national superiority and glory. This also makes them intemperate, inconsiderate and finally, incompetent. Where is the glory in that?

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Nazis Murdered a Quarter of Europe's Roma, but History Still Overlooks This Genocide

BARBARA WARNOCK
theconversation.com

The murder of around 500,000 of Europe's Roma and Sinti by the Nazis and their collaborators during the second world war is a little-known aspect of the atrocities committed during this period.

In the immediate postwar period, war crimes against Roma were not prosecuted. Survivors struggled to get recognition and compensation for the persecution they experienced. Roma victims were also not acknowledged in monuments commemorating the Nazis' victims.

Although there is now a greater awareness of the atrocities committed against the Roma, the struggle for recognition continues. The genocide against the Roma is described by Professor Eve Rosenhaft, a historian of modern Germany, as "the forgotten Holocaust".

As curator of The Wiener Holocaust Library's current exhibition, Forgotten Victims: The Nazi Genocide of the Roma and Sinti, I aimed to explore this often over-looked history.

The Library is the world's oldest archive of material on the Nazi era and the Holocaust, and has gathered evidence and information about the experiences of Roma Nazi oppression since the 1950s.

It includes materials collected by academic researcher Donald Kenrick and activist and researcher Grattan Puxon in the late 1960s as part of the first attempt to systematically document the genocide against the Roma.

FORCED LABOUR AND INCARCERATION

One story featured in the exhibition is that of Hans Braun, a German Sinti man.

Braun survived forced labour service and incarceration in Auschwitz. In the 1980s, he gave a testimony of his experiences, a copy of which is held by the Library.

Other documents in the archive show that Braun's first attempt to gain compensation failed, probably on the spurious grounds that he was held

by the Nazis because he was a criminal, rather than for "racial" reasons.

In the early years following the war, compensation was often denied to Roma and Sinti victims on this basis, despite extensive evidence that they were in fact persecuted as part of a campaign of targeted and ultimately genocidal racism.

NAZI RACIAL IDEOLOGY

By the late 1930s, Nazi racial ideology had been extended to encompass the notion that, like Jews, Roma were also of "alien blood" and a threat to the racial strength of the "Aryan master race".

As part of the development of these ideas, Roma were subject to a massive programme of pseudo-scientific investigation.

They were also targeted for forced sterilisation and forced medical experiments.

Margarete Kraus, (in the photograph to the left), a Czech Roma survivor of Auschwitz, was a victim of forced medical experiments.

In this post-war image, taken by German journalist Reimar Gilsenbach in the 1950s, her camp number tattoo is just visible on her left forearm.

THE "GYPSY" CAMP

The exhibition also features eyewitness accounts detailing the so-called "Gypsy" camp in Auschwitz. Julius Hodosi, a Roma man from Burgenland in Austria who survived Auschwitz, recounted his children's death from starvation in the camp. A number of Jewish survivors, including Hermann Langbein, described witnessing horrific conditions in the "Gypsy" camp. He said:

"The conditions were worse than in other camps ... the route between the huts was ankle deep in mud and dirt. The gypsies were still using the clothes that they had been given upon arrival ... footwear was missing ... The latrines were built in such a way that they were practically unusable for the gypsy children. The infirmary was a pathetic sight."

Another witness, Dr Max Benjamin, a Jewish man from Cologne who was a doctor at the "Gypsy" hospital in Auschwitz, gave an account to the

Library of the "liquidation" of the "Gypsy" camp in August 1944: "[In] one fell swoop every single one of the gypsies who represented the population of this camp was chased into the gas chambers."

Of the 23,000 people who passed through the "Gypsy" camp at Auschwitz, 21,000 died – of starvation, ill-health or were murdered in the gas chambers or by other means.

In the 1950s, Hermine Horvath, an Austrian Roma woman, gave the Library an extensive account of her experiences of persecution after the German takeover of Austria in 1938. She was forced into labour service and later survived the camps. She herself experienced sexual violence perpetrated by an SS man, and later witnessed sexual violence committed against Roma girls in Auschwitz by members of the SS.

But while the Library's collections on the persecution of and genocide against the Roma contain a great deal of valuable evidence and testimony, it does not tell the entire story. Most of these documents relate to events in Germany, Austria and central Europe, as well as the situation in the camps and ghettos in German-occupied Poland.

But both the Jewish Holocaust and the genocide against the Roma also involved mass shootings carried out by the Nazis and their collaborators in Eastern Europe and in Soviet territories. In other places, such as Croatia, regimes supportive of the Nazis, carried out their own atrocities against the Roma.

The genocide against the Roma and Sinti affected people across Europe from communities in France to those in Ukraine and Greece. Yet this terrible history is frequently overlooked and Europe's Roma continue to experience extensive discrimination and violence across the continent.

It is hoped this exhibition will help to shine a light on the history of the Roma in Europe, and warn where discrimination and prejudice can lead.

[the writer is Course Tutor at the Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge]



Holocaust Poetry and the Reclamation of Many Identities

MARIAN DE VOOGHT
theconversation.com

The first Holocaust poems were written 90 years ago, when the full extent of the horror was yet to be known. Starting in the 1930s, those first works foreshadowed the catastrophe that was soon to come. As the second world war erupted and the Nazi killings began, people continued to write poetry that recorded direct experiences of persecution and lamented the murder of loved ones.

While many writers of Holocaust poetry are Jewish, there are those who belong to other groups targeted by the Nazi regime. Including those who were perceived to have disabilities, Roma and Sinti people, political and religious opponents and homosexual men.

Writing poetry of the Holocaust has often been a way to reclaim identity, as writer and translator Lou Sarabadzic puts it:

"Victims of the Holocaust are not the Other in these lines, but rather the authors, the ones we listen to, the ones expressing emotions."

As such, they continue to be written today as people continue to reckon with the memories and impact of the Holocaust.

DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Published in 2019, Poetry of the Holocaust: An Anthology brings together poems from 19 languages that were previously unavailable in English. The translations in this book are followed by the original texts.

These include poems in languages not normally associated with the Holocaust, such as Norwegian and Japanese, and from places like Argentina, Denmark and South Africa.

Holocaust poetry in the 1930s and through the war wrestled with the incomprehensible reality its writers were facing. The earliest poems in Europe responded to the foreboding of the fascist regime and its politics of elimination.

In 1932, the German poet Eduard Saenger wrote in reaction to the sinister change of atmosphere that he was witnessing in his country:

"A silent wind sends fear through the land / with an edge like the howling of wolves."

Like Saenger, many wrote poems warning of the approaching dark times and also in reaction to specific events, like the book burnings of May 1933 and Kristallnacht in November 1938.

During the war, the poems documented life in ghettos, prisons and concentration camps. They spoke of mass shootings and of seeing neighbours deported.

Writing in the Terezín (Theresienstadt) ghetto in the early 1940s, the Czech teenager Dagmar Hilarová expressed the desire to die rather than undergo further humiliation and torture:

"Like a bird with wounded wings / To lie down, / And not to wait for morning."

Poems written in concentration camps were memorised or hidden, often later found by others. Sal-

lie Pinkhof wrote a poem in Bergen-Belsen in 1944, in which he mocked the state of his body:

"What a hoot / these loose-fitting tendons / and bones in my foot!"

Pinkhof did not survive but his poems were preserved by fellow camp inmates. An anonymous poem found in the Zigeunerlager (Gypsy Camp) of Auschwitz-Birkenau opens with the wish:

"Do not wake me from my dream, / so the world need never know / how they treat a Roma."

AFTER THE WAR

For many the horror of the Holocaust is both lifelong and unspeakable. As the memory and impact of the catastrophe continue to be felt by survivors, their children and people touched by its reverberations, poems continue to be written about the Holocaust to express what is almost beyond words. Dutch poet Chawwa Wijnberg (2001), whose father was executed by the Nazis:

"Always present is the unsaid / the unsaid / that rips the wound open"

Silence is a recurrent theme. Rita Gabbai-Simantov, a Sephardic-Turkish poet who lives in Greece and writes in Ladino, Judaeo-Spanish, about Thessaloniki – "old Saloniki" – and its wiped-out Jewish community (1992): "As you walk, your companion / will be silence."

After her visit to Auschwitz, the Lithuanian poet Janina Degutyte recorded in 1966 the enduring silence of the people who were deported from her country and murdered:

"Lips gasp for air ... / The only sound is the rustling of golden leaves, / The rustling flow of time: which was – is – will be ..."

Later poetry also gave voices to persecuted groups who were previously unrepresented. In 1995, French writer André Sarcq was the first to express the fate of gay men who for decades after the war, in France and elsewhere, could not speak about their experience in concentration camps. This was because homosexuality continued to be outlawed and they felt, in Sarcq's words, like "the rag of a pool of souls".

Poetry of the Holocaust continues to be written in our time. A striking example is the poem by Angela Fritzen, a journalist who has Down's syndrome. Written after visiting an exhibition in Bonn, Germany in 2016, the poem is about the fate of people with disabilities during the Nazi era. "To have strength" is how Fritzen ends her deeply felt poem.

Holocaust poetry is a rich and diverse genre that continues to be added to. Both the older and the contemporary poems need readers, because Holocaust poetry is about communication. The poets felt the need to share their pain and it is vital that readers take the chance to empathise with what they have been through. By way of reflecting on the experience of others we recognise what it means to be human.

[the writer is Visiting Fellow, Department of Government, University of Essex]

Waugh back at Eden, as a photographer

KOLKATA, JAN 27 (PTI): The day one proceedings of the Bengal-Delhi Ranji Trophy match on Monday saw a special visitor when former Australian captain Steve Waugh dropped in during the first session, albeit as a photographer.

Here on a two-day visit in connection with his upcoming book, the Australian great was seen in a shooting spree, taking shots of the Eden Gardens as well as those of the Bengal-Ranji fixture.

Later, he crossed the Gostha Paul Sarani and headed to the famous Kolkata Maidan. Eden Gardens was the venue of the memorable Test in 2001 when Australia lost to India after VVS Laxman and Rahul Dravid's epic stand after following on.

Clad in black shorts and blue T-shirt, Waugh



first went to the Police AC ground and then to the Calcutta Customs and was seen taking photos from different angles.

Waugh was seen lying flat to take ground level

shots of the bowlers' in action, as he also clicked the batsmen in action, looking like an expert photographer.

On Sunday, Waugh had spent time at the

Udayan Children's Home at Barrackpore on the outskirts of Kolkata.

Known for his philanthropy, Waugh has devoted much time to charity -- most notably through

his patronage of the Udayan Children's Home.

He also runs the Steve Waugh Foundation, supporting children fighting rare diseases in Australia.

Jinnah's idea winning in India: Shashi Tharoor on CAA

MERAJ BHAT

JAIPUR, JAN 27 (PTI): Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has said if the CAA leads to the implementation of the NPR and the NRC, it would be a complete victory for Pakistan's founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

He said Jinnah's idea of a country was already winning in India with the contentious Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) coming into effect, but asserted that there was still a choice available.

"I would not say Jinnah has completely won, but I would say Jinnah is winning. There is still a choice available to the nation between Jinnah's idea of a country and Gandhiji's idea of a country," he said on the sidelines of the Jaipur Literature Festival on Sunday.

The CAA came into force in India in December amid protests across the country and around the world.

The MP from Thiruvananthapuram said the amended Citizenship Act took Jinnah's logic by declaring that religion shall be the basis of nationhood, reaffirming that Gandhi's idea is that all religions are equal.

"The CAA is, if you are talking Tennis, you would say one set up or big first set lead for Jinnah. But the next step would be if the CAA would lead to the National Population Register (NPR) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC). If that happens, then you would consider that Jinnah's victory is complete," he said.

The CAA seeks to grant citizenship to migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist,

Christian, Jain and Parsi communities who came to India from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on or before December 31, 2014.

On the BJP's defence that the NPR was carried out during the UPA regime, Tharoor said the Congress government had utilised a decision of the NDA government led by former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

"It never asked where were your parents born. It never authorised the enumerators to note on the margin 'dubious citizenship', a term used in the NPR rules crafted by this government. That is purely BJP's invention," he said.

If we go around this country authorising people to interview all the citizens, or identify some who have 'dubious citizenship', you can be pretty sure which Indians are going to be found on the 'dubious citizenship', he said.

"That will principally be one community that is not mentioned in the CAA. And if that happens, then it is indeed Jinnah's victory.

"From wherever he is, he can point to this place and say, 'see I was right in the 1940. We are separate nations and Muslims deserved their own country because Hindus cannot be just'," Tharoor said.

Speaking about the Delhi election, the three-time MP said the maximum development in the national capital happened under the Congress government. "What Sheila Dikshit did in her 15 years as Chief Minister of Delhi, no other leader could do it before or after her," he said.

Coffee offer fails to thaw out Mamata-Dhankhar ties



SUDIPTO CHOWDHURY

KOLKATA, JAN 27 (PTI): West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar, who has had frequent run-ins with Mamata Banerjee, tried to call a truce with her and even requested for a seat for his wife in the chief minister's enclosure at the Republic Day event here which was declined by state authorities over "protocol" issues.

A highly placed official at the state secretariat said on Monday the government had received a request from the Raj Bhawan to accommodate the first lady in the enclosure meant for the chief minister at the main Republic Day function on the Red Road.

"There was a request to make arrangements so that the first lady's seat is near the CM's. But that could not be entertained due to certain protocol considerations," the IAS officer told PTI, wishing not to be named.

The Dhankhars were seen engaged in a brief conversation with Banerjee after the function

had ended on Sunday. The governor even posted some photographs of him and his wife Sudesh with Banerjee on Twitter. "Some glimpses just before leaving the parade for Raj Bhawan. Communication in any form can only lead to affirmative way forward," Dhankhar had tweeted after the event.

Later that evening, Banerjee attended the Raj Bhawan 'At Home', but cold vibes between them were in evidence again.

After the national anthem had been played at the beginning of the function, the Dhankhars and Banerjee took their seats at the table, but minutes later the chief minister shifted to a corner surrounded by top state government functionaries and their security detail.

The 'At Home' ended with the playing of the national anthem and Banerjee walked towards Dhankhar. As she was about to leave after exchanging pleasantries with him, Dhankhar requested the CM to come

over some day for a "dialogue over a cup of tea or coffee". Banerjee smiled broadly and looked at Chief Secretary Rajiva Sinha for some time, before leaving the venue without making a commitment.

"Moments while the Honble Chief Minister is leaving the Reception at Raj Bhawan. While parting indicated to her that we must soon engage in dialogue in larger interest.

Hopefully it should mature soon enough," Dhankhar tweeted. He also posted some photographs of the event that showed him and the chief minister together.

Dhankhar had a brief interaction with Banerjee during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to the city.

"Had impromptu interaction with Honble Chief Minister yesterday after PM Modi inaugurated sound and light show at Howrah Bridge. Renewed my offer of meeting over a cup of Tea or Coffee," he had then tweeted.

FIR lodged against Sharjeel Imam in Manipur

IMPHAL, JAN 27 (PTI): The Manipur police has lodged an FIR against former JNU student Sharjeel Imam for his "seditious" comment in the wake of the amended Citizenship Act.

Imam has been booked under IPC sections 121 A (conspiracy to wage war against India), 124 A (sedition), 120 B (criminal conspiracy) and 153 which relates to "promoting enmity between different

religious groups with an intent to create disharmony", the police said.

The FIR was lodged here against Imam on Saturday for a speech he delivered at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) on January 16.

"Taking cognisance of the objectionable video of Mr Sharjeel Imam, in which he threatened to sever Northeast from the rest of country, the Manipur Police has filed an FIR (No. 16(1)2020

IPS) under sections 121/121-A/124-A/ 120-B /153 IPC, tweeted Rajat Sethi, an advisor to Manipur CM.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh shared his tweet. Imam's alleged speeches went viral on social media wherein he was heard saying that Assam and other northeast states should be cut off from the rest of the country in the wake of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

Anti-CAA activist Sharjeel Imam's house raided in Bihar

JEHANABAD, JAN 27 (PTI): The police here carried out a raid at the ancestral house of anti-CAA activist Sharjeel Imam, who has been slapped with a sedition case in the national capital for alleged inflammatory speeches he gave at Shaheen Bagh and the Jamia Milia Islamia, a senior official said on Monday.

According to Superintendent of Police, Jehanabad, Manish Kumar, Imam's house in Kako police station area was raided late on Sunday night following "help sought by central agencies" which are investigating the cases lodged against the JNU research scholar.

Imam was not found at his house but two of his relatives and their driver were detained for interrogation and let off thereafter, the SP said.

A graduate in computer science from IIT-Mumbai, Sharjeel Imam had shifted to Delhi for pursuing research at the Centre for Histor-

ical Studies, JNU. He was slapped with a sedition case after his alleged speeches went viral on the social media wherein he was heard speaking about Assam's possible secession from the country in the wake of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

Earlier, he had been booked on similar charges at a police station in Aligarh for a speech he delivered on the AMU campus.

Besides, a case under the stringent anti-terror law UAPA has been registered against him in Assam.

Imam's late father Akbar Imam was a local JD(U) leader who had unsuccessfully contested an assembly election in his lifetime.

Reacting to the developments, his distraught mother Afshan Rahim told the media, "My son is innocent. He is a bright young man and not a thief or a pickpocket. I swear in the name of God that I do not know about

his whereabouts. "But I can guarantee that upon learning about the cases, he will appear before the investigating agencies and fully cooperate in the probe."

She said that it has been a long time since she met her son though she had a telephonic conversation with him a few weeks ago.

"He was obviously disturbed by the CAA and fears of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) about being implemented across the country which, he said, would affect not just Muslims but all poor people," she said.

In fact, after 15 days of Shaheen Bagh protest, he had asked the agitators there to withdraw and watch the situation for a month, and then decide on the further course of action, she said.

"But they refused to relent. He was calling for a 'chakkajam' (road blockade). He is just a kid and not capable of instigating people for secession," she added.

Mamata slams Vijayvargiya over his 'poha' remark

KOLKATA, JAN 27 (PTI): After BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya made the bizarre connection between food and nationality and drew flak for it, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday questioned the right of the saffron party leaders to comment on the eating habits of people or their attire.

Vijayvargiya, who is BJP's Bengal minder, had recently said at a seminar in Indore that he suspected there were Bangladeshis among the construction labourers at his house as they were eating pohla (flattened rice).

He also said the "strange" eating habits of the workers aroused his suspicion about their nationality.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had told a poll rally in Jharkhand last year that those indulging in arson over the citizenship legislation could be identified by their clothes.

Banerjee, who was addressing a workshop of the Trinamool Congress Chhatra Parishad (students' wing), said, "Who gave them (BJP) the right to make such remarks? Can you determine someone's nationality just by seeing him eat pohla? Will you dictate what someone should eat? Will you be able to determine someone's nationality based on the clothes he or she is wearing?"

She said, "They (BJP) should remember we are not their bonded labourers, the people of India are not their bonded labourers".

The TMC supremo who is a strident critic of the BJP, iterated that she will not allow the NPR exercise in Bengal unless necessary modifications were made in its form.

"Why is that people are being asked to furnish addresses and birth certificates of parents for NPR?" she questioned.

Charging the BJP of "doublespeak" and "hypocrisy", Banerjee said, "Some people want only one colour to stay ...

But our country is a beautiful mosaic of all colours."

Banerjee termed BJP's 'Abhinandan Yatra' in support of CAA across Bengal as 'Bisarjan Yatra' (immersion procession) and asked students to approach every

household to counter the saffron party's "misinformation campaign".

She claimed that BJP is asking people in few pockets of south Bengal to submit their Aadhaar card number to its local party unit for updating their names in the voter list.

"Why are they (BJP) asking for that? What is their motive? Please don't give them such details, they don't have the authority to ask for your Aadhaar details".

On the demonstration programme of different wings of the TMC, Banerjee said its trade union wing will hold a three-day protest at Rani Rasmoni Avenue from January 28 against the move by the BJP-led government at the Centre move to sell off stakes in AI, BSNL and other central PSUs.

The students' wing will launch their sit-in against CAA at the same place from January 31.

On February 1 and 2 the students and youth wings of TMC will hold sit-ins in every block of the state, while a human chain will be formed in every block on February 5 to "save the Constitution", she said.

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R-DAY AT SOREONG

Vinayaka Mission to come up at EIILM Univ site

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 JAN:
The 71st Republic Day was celebrated at Soreong in West Sikkim at the Sub Divisional Office premises on 26 Jan. The occasion had the Area MLA - cum - Chairman Public Accounts Committee, Aditya Golay (Tamang) as the chief guest. Press Advisor to the CM, CP Sharma was present as a special guest on the occasion.

Five employees working under the Soreong sub-division were handed Letters of Appreciation for rendering commendable services. They were Basu Tamang [Supervisor, Roads & Bridges], Lakpa Lepcha [Lineman, Power & Energy Department], Bijay Rai [Plumber, Soreong Gram Panchayat], Naktang Bhutia [Driver, S.D.M Office, Soreong] and Hari Prasad Shankar [Retired Deputy Director, Education Department, Soreong].



formed that this year the Red Panda Winter Festival shall be held at Soreong- Chakung constituency in the month of April.

He announced that the Soreong Community Health Centre (CHC) shall be upgraded to a district level hospital for which the works related to acquisition of land and other allied works are being undertaken.

Mr Golay also informed that the premises of the now closed EIILM University at Budang will very soon house another University by the name of Vinayaka Mission; so as to utilize the infrastructure appropriately and as per demand of the concerned public of the area.

He lauded the efforts of the team “Go Chakung” for their works related to promoting Chakung as an adventure tourist spot and that similar efforts may be thought of at Soreong too. For this, he has sought for participation of local educated youths and other stakeholders to come forward so that people do not have to depend on government jobs for livelihood.

TSP scheme event at Tek



NAMCHI, 27 JAN [IPR]: Minister for Buildings & Housing Department, Sanjeet Kharel, who is also the area MLA [Namthang Rateypani], visited Tek Gompa in his constituency today.

Thereafter, he attended the finals of the football tournament underway at Tek Playground

where he was also felicitated by the Tek Youth Club Namthang Committee.

During the programme, the also distributed seven pairs of bulls and ploughing tools to seven beneficiaries of Namthang Rateypani constituency - Sangay Dorjee Tamang, Bhakta

Bahadur Tamang, Bee Tshering Lepcha, Mar Tshering Lepcha, Phur Tshering Lepcha, Udai Kumar Tamang and Dharma Singh Tamang..

The programme was organised by the Social Justice Department, South, under Special Central Assistance Tribal Sub Plan Scheme.

Ashley Young makes rapid Inter impact as Serie A title race heats up

NICKY BANDINI
ROME, 27 JAN [THEGUARDIAN]: On his first weekend playing in Serie A, Ashley Young brought Inter back within touching distance of league leaders Juventus. OK, maybe that's oversimplifying things a smidge. There were twists and turns galore on a weekend when the top four sides picked up three points between them, scoring fewer goals collectively than Atalanta managed on their own.

Still, let's begin with Young, and Inter. They were first to act in the title race, with a Sunday lunchtime kick-off at home to Cagliari. It felt like an opportunity to put pressure on Juventus and Lazio before they played at Napoli and Roma, respectively, in the evening.

Young started at right wing-back in Inter's 3-5-2. Discussing the Englishman's arrival – as well as that of Victor Moses – at his press conference on the eve of the game, Antonio Conte stressed: “These are footballers who have not played much lately. It will take time to put them back on track.”

In fact, Young needed only 29 minutes to deliver his first Inter assist. Receiving a cross-field pass from Borja Valero outside the corner of the Cagliari penalty area, he drew two defenders before delivering a pinpoint centre to Lautaro Martínez, who headed home from six yards. Romelu Lukaku bounded over to celebrate, sporting a grin almost as broad as the one he wore while watching Young sing Bob Marley during a team initiation four nights before. Their bond can be an asset to Inter. In the 61st minute, Lukaku needed only a glance to recognise a familiar movement from his former Manchester United teammate. He released Young into the penalty area, but the run was crudely checked by Christian Oliva.

It ought to have been a penalty, but none was given. A quarter of an hour

later, Cagliari equalised. Lucas Castro's dummy bought Radja Nainggolan the space to shoot first-time from 25 yards, and a deflection off Alessandro Bastoni carried the ball in off the upright. A fortuitous goal, though the 1-1 final scoreline hardly felt undeserved. Inter should have scored more – Lukaku came inches away from restoring their lead at the end of a 40-yard run – but they had given up chances, too, including a Luca Pellegrini effort from Young's flank.

The 34-year-old had tired towards the end. Conte demands a lot of his wing-backs, expecting them to advance with his centre-forwards at times. It was not Young, though, who cost his team. Several players were guilty of mistakes, and Martínez especially merits criticism for losing his head in injury time – earning a second yellow for protests after a decision against him.

Yet the greatest culprit was Conte. Asked before the game whether the arrivals of Young, Moses and, imminently, Christian Eriksen, might lead him to adapt his tactics, he replied rhetorically: “Would you change something that is working?” Even at the time, it felt an odd response. Inter had only won two of their previous six Serie A matches, drawing the other four. Sunday's stalemate marked the third consecutive game in which they have blown a lead inside the final 15 minutes. An inability to close out matches already cost them dearly in the Champions League, where they produced spellbinding first-half performances, and accompanying leads, at Barcelona and Borussia Dortmund, only to lose both.

Previously, Conte has blamed a lack of experience in his squad. This month's additions are intended to address that perceived weakness, though we might remind ourselves that Nainggolan – all of two years removed from a Champions League semi-final – is on loan from Inter.



R-Day at Pakyong
SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 JAN:
Republic Day was celebrated in Pakyong Sub-Division, East Sikkim, on 26 Jan with Health Minister, Dr MK Sharma as the chief guest.

After Padma Vibhushan, Mary Kom dreams of winning Bharat Ratna

NEW DELHI, JAN 26 (PTI): The first woman sportsperson to be decorated with the Padma Vibhushan, celebrated boxer MC Mary Kom on Sunday said she hopes to win the Bharat Ratna by winning a gold at the Tokyo Olympics.

“It is a dream to win the Bharat Ratna. With this award (Padma Vibhushan) I will now be inspired to do even better with the thought that I can win the Bharat Ratna,” Mary Kom, a six-time world champion, told reporters here.

“Sachin Tendulkar is the only sportsperson to have won it and I hope to become the second one and the first woman. I want to emulate Tendulkar and I get inspiration from him.”



The 36-year-old Mary Kom, however, said her immediate target is to first qualify for the Olympics and then she would think about the “colour of the medal”.

“My immediate target is to first qualify for Olympics and

then I will think about the colour of the medal. If I qualify and win a gold in Tokyo I hope to get the Bharat Ratna. To be honoured with Bharat Ratna will be the pinnacle of achievement and recognition for not only a sportsperson but also for any Indian,” she said.

Bharat Ratna is the country's highest civilian award.

An emotional Mary Kom, who was named for Padma Vibhushan, the country's second highest civilian award on Saturday, thanked God for making

her an Indian and being able to bring laurels to the country.

“I am proud to be an Indian and I thank God for making me an Indian. Each time I go out to fight for the country, I feel something inside me and that motivates me to bring glory to the country. The kind of love the people of this country have given me, I want to give back with my performance,” said the 2012 London Bronze medallist.

“It is an emotional and touching moment for me to have won the country's second highest award. And that came when the country is celebrating the Republic Day. I will never forget this day. I thank sports minister for recommending me and also thank the Prime Minister for his

Mapping of Tribal Sports Talent in South

NAMCHI, 27 JAN (IPR): Tribal Research Institute in collaboration with Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Government of Sikkim, organised the 3rd edition of Mapping of Tribal Sports Talent at Namchi today.

Funded by Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India the department conducted various sports talent hunts viz. Volleyball, Karate, Tae-

kwondo, Football and Badminton.

The tribal children coming from different localities of South district actively participated in these events under careful guidance of the respective coaches. Best two talents from each category will be invited to showcase their skills at Gangtok later.

The department proposes to sponsor best 10 talents to visit Sports

Academy outside the state in next financial year. A similar kind of talent hunts activities will be conducted in West and East district very soon.

The program at Namchi today was attended by Joint Secretary to SJ&WD, Sunil K Mothey, ACF (Forest), Tsheten Lepcha, Dy Director (HQ), Jigmee Lepcha, Officials from TRI and the respective coaches.

Juventus shocked by Napoli while Real Madrid go clear in La Liga

PARIS, 27 JAN [AFP]: The Serie A leaders, Juventus, suffered a shock 2-1 defeat at Napoli, with the coach Maurizio Sarri returning to his former club for the first time, though Cristiano Ronaldo still managed to score for an eighth league game in a row for the visitors.

Juve's lead was cut to three points by Internazionale, who drew 1-1 at home to Cagliari earlier on Sunday. Piotr Zielinski, whom Sarri brought to Napoli during his three-year stint at the club, broke the deadlock in the 63rd minute and Lorenzo Insigne hooked in the home side's second goal with four minutes left.

An out-of-sorts Juve took more than an hour to manage a shot on target although Ronaldo pulled one back in the 90th min-

ute to continue his scoring run. Sarri, who led Napoli to second place in his final season in charge in 2017-18, was jeered by the crowd and insulting banners were placed in various parts of the city before the match.

Second-placed Inter were held to a third successive 1-1 draw after Radja Nainggolan, a player they loaned to Cagliari for this season, scored a second-half equaliser for the Sardinian side.

The Belgian, who was told by Inter's coach, Antonio Conte, that there was no place for him this season, stunned the San Siro with a 78th-minute goal to cancel out Lautaro Martínez's first-half opener.

Martínez was sent off in stoppage time for his furious reaction after being

Crystal Dogs lifts 1st Open Minister's Futsal Tournament

MANGAN, 27 JAN (IPR): Crystal Dogs lifted the 1st Open Minister's Futsal Tournament-2020 here at Mangan Futsal Arena, near DAC complex today. They defeated Renzong Football Club 6-4 in the final match of the tournament.

Minister, Roads & Bridges, Samdup Lepcha attended the final match of 1st Open Minister's Futsal Tournament-2020.

Mr Lepcha handed over the cash prize of Rs. 60,000 with trophy to the winner and cash prize of Rs. 30,000 to runners up team.

Best player of the match was conferred to Sahinshah Ansari of Renzong FC while Tshetenla Bhutia was adjudged Man of the tournament.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister, Mr Lepcha expressed his happiness to witness the final match of the 1st Open



Minister's Futsal Tournament and appreciated the effort put up by the organising committee.

Talking on basic amenities of the Futsal ground, he has assured to

the organising committee that he will place the matter before the state government.

It may be mentioned here that the 1st Open Minister's Futsal Tourna-

ment-2020 was organised by the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha North Sikkim Sports Wing in association with Sports & Youth Affairs Department, North District. Altogether, 38

teams had participated in this tourney.

During the prize distribution ceremony, the North Sikkim Sports Wing felicitated ace footballers of district.

'Inspired by KM': Mbappé takes aim at hitting his most creative target yet

PAUL DOYLE

LONDON, 27 JAN [THEGUARDIAN]: Last week, to a soundtrack of Michael Jackson's Heal The World, Kylian Mbappé walked on to a stage in a Paris hotel to unveil his new charity called Inspired by KM. Cheesy? If you insist, but even the most cynical onlooker would have found it hard to scoff at most of what followed. Mbappé, at the age of 21, is the football superstar the world needs right now.

On the pitch he showcases a rare amalgam of qualities: extraordinary speed, extreme technical prowess and preternatural awareness. Off the pitch he stands out for his simple decency despite the razzmatazz that could consume him. His father, Wilfrid, has a nice line about him. "Of course he's normal; most people are."

That gets to the heart of it: as a footballer Mbappé knows he is better than nearly everybody else; as a person he does not consider himself to be more special than anyone. He has exceptional wealth – with an annual income estimated at around £20m – but he does not keep it all for himself.

In football terms, the moment Mbappé made the jump from thrilling talent to bona fide great can be pinpointed to France's second-round victory over Argentina at the 2018 World Cup, when he blasted through Lionel Messi & co to drive France to a 4-3 win. Les Bleus went on to win the tournament and then Mbappé did something else remarkable, donating all his match fees and bonuses – around £275,000 – to charity. Before the tournament England's players took the collective decision to do the same; Mbappé's was a solo initiative.

So there was nothing surprising about Mbappé launching his own charity. And yet, it was still amazing to see how natural he made it all seem and how darn likeable this young man who has it all is. Inspired by KM – or, to be precise, by his mother, Fayza Lamari, who came up with the idea – has committed to helping 98 children from Paris to fulfil their dreams. What does that mean? Whatever they want it to mean, as Mbappé says he will help the children, now aged between nine and 14, to pursue whatever path they choose. "We will support them until their working lives begin," he says. The kids and their parents attended the presentation. "I would like to go into medicine," says one boy. "A career in singing would be amazing," ventures the girl beside him. "I would like to become the Kylian Mbappé of maths," says a boy of about 10. Many others say they did not yet know what they would like to do when they grow up. Which is fine, because over the next few years the charity will expose them to all kinds of activities, from language lessons and art and craft classes to sports events and foreign trips.

Auschwitz survivors to return after 75 years for memorial ceremony

KATE CONNOLLY

OŚWIĘCIM, 27 JAN [THEGUARDIAN]: More than 200 survivors are to gather at the former Nazi extermination camp of Auschwitz, many probably for the final time, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of its liberation.

As rows over the make-up of the international guest list at the memorial ceremony threatened to overshadow Monday's event, survivors who drew on harrowing memories of their incarceration warned the lessons from the atrocities sanctioned by Adolf Hitler's administration and carried out often by ordinary Germans were in danger of being forgotten.

"The Holocaust was sponsored and was okayed by a government. Not only did they allow it to happen but they enforced it and encouraged regular people to become killers," said Benjamin Lesser, a 92-year-old Polish-born Jew whose family was sent to Auschwitz in 1944. More than 1.1 million people were murdered at the camp, most of them Jews.

"I have returned so that I don't forget any of the details of what happened to me, so I can keep the memories alive, and stop the world from acquiring amnesia," he added, emphasising widespread concern over the rise in antisemitic attacks, in particular in Europe and North America, which is expected to be a major theme at Monday's ceremony.

Presidents, prime ministers and royalty from around the world will attend the commemorations, but not top world leaders, who visited



Yad Vashem in Jerusalem earlier this week for another high-profile anniversary event.

Ronald Lauder, the president of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), which has funded the return of more than 100 survivors and their families, said: "The emphasis here is on the survivors, as it should be, not on political leaders. There will probably not be another major anniversary as we're losing so many of them."

The survivors in attendance are aged between 75 – a woman who was born in the camp – and 101. They have travelled from all over the world, mainly North America and across Europe, Israel, South and Central America and Australia. Organisers said the precise number of attendees would not be confirmed

until the actual ceremony on Monday afternoon, due to their often fragile health conditions, and the psychological strain of returning, which had already led to some cancellations. A large team of 50 therapists and medics are on hand to attend to the survivors and their also often elderly offspring.

The survivors and their families were due to gather at an old indoor tram station in Kraków's Jewish quarter on Sunday night for a meal hosted by the WJC, at which they will be thanked for rebuilding their Jewish communities around the world after the Nazis' attempts to wipe them out.

David Lenga, 92, from Los Angeles, was among about 20 survivors to return to Auschwitz on Sunday,

walking silently through the notorious entrance gate bearing the words Arbeit macht frei (work sets you free) on a cold, sunny morning, taking his daughter Berta Kaplowitz with him for the first time on a tour of his former prison.

Lenga, who was 17 when he entered the camp in summer 1944, survived in part by making woollen jackets for SS guards out of camp blankets, for which he received extra food rations. He later went on to become a successful tailor in Beverly Hills. He said he had refused to let the Holocaust define his life, despite the fact it claimed 98 members of his family, with him and his father the only two to survive.

"I wanted to be better than that," he said. "I've let my past go and con-

centrated instead on being a role model for my family, and have been helped by being blessed with a wonderful marriage, three beautiful daughters, seven grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren."

Angela Orosz, 75, from Montreal, stood in front of former red-brick barracks and recalled her mother's account of giving birth to her in secret on a top bunk in Auschwitz-Birkenau in December 1944.

"I have little choice but to come back, as the youngest survivor," she said, clutching a bright pink shawl around her shoulders. "I grew up looking at photographs of relatives, and when I asked about them was told "he's dead, she's dead". When I was older they told me the truth, that they had been murdered.

"I always claimed to my kids that I had suffered no trauma from having been here, until my daughter asked me why then, unlike other families, did I never throw potato peelings away? Because my mother had probably survived because of the peelings she had eaten and the goodness in them, she had been able to give birth to me and so I had survived, so of course the survival instinct I inherited from her made me always do the same."

The Polish president, Andrzej Duda, will be among the speakers on Monday. Last week he hit out at the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, for falsely claiming Poland had colluded with Hitler in starting the second world war. Duda refused to travel to Jerusalem, after being denied permission to speak there.

Emotional final week for British MEPs



BRUSSELS, JAN 27 (AFP): Some will walk away with bitter regret. Others will march off with their flag held high. But British MEPs of every stripe face an emotional final week in Brussels.

Those who believed in the European project were defeated by what they see as the "blatant lies" of the eurosceptics.

Those who came to Brussels to undermine the European Union are triumphant and keen to celebrate Britain's "escape".

The leader of the Labour Party delegation, Richard Corbett, has been a member of the European Parliament (MEP) since 1996.

"You get many MEPs coming up to you, giving you hugs, saying very kind words, about what we've done, how much they will miss us," he told AFP.

Corbett was in a park behind the parliament's modern headquarters, sitting on the same bench where he gave his first interview, just next to an appropriately named museum.

"To come back here in a way to end it off is a very special moment. We're next to the House of European History and this is of course a historical moment," he said.

On the 65-year-old's scarf are the UK and EU flags, and the dates of the beginning and end of Britain's EU membership, like the headline of an obituary: "1973-2020".

Along with another 71 British members he will leave office on Friday, at midnight Brussels time, the moment of Brexit.

Is Corbett bitter?

"Yes. Because the Leave campaign that won the referendum nearly four years ago now was

one of the most mendacious campaigns in political history," he said of the 2016 vote that put Britain in the exit lane.

Corbett's opponents in Britain's Brexit Party, who campaigned in European elections on a platform that put themselves out of a job, are far more cheerful.

Brexit Party leader and long-standing MEP Nigel Farage will give a farewell "Brexodus" news conference on Wednesday and be gone by 8:00 pm (1900 GMT) that evening.

Other party members will stay on until Friday, led by Anne Widdecombe MEP, a former British minister who left the Conservative Party and retirement to join Farage in Brussels.

They plan to march away from the parliament in formation, carrying the Union Jack, to take a Eurostar train to London in time to join Farage there for a "party to celebrate Brexit".

The pro-Brexit brigade are not all former Tories like Widdecombe. Claire Fox was a Revolutionary Communist before joining Farage's revolution and was only elected in May last year.

"I'm here at a moment of history," she told AFP, arguing the European Parliament's inability to generate its own legislation, which is drafted by the unelected European Commission, is undemocratic.

"I'm not intending to be triumphalist about it. I'm not wanting to kind of be overly rubbing people's noses in it or anything of that nature," she said.

But she is pleased "to have taught the people who are in the establishment a lesson, because they really did treat people with

contempt". For Fox, the future for Britain looks bright, even if she does not support Prime Minister Boris Johnson's efforts to negotiate a post-Brexit trade deal with Europe.

"I'm very optimistic, I'm excited about the possibilities," she said.

"I'm not optimistic that the negotiations between the EU and the UK will go well over the next years. That's different. But at least we now know that we have a chance of bringing democracy home."

Whereas MEPs like Corbett are leaving long careers in European politics, the passion surrounding Britain's Brexit debate has also thrown up newcomers who ended up having short parliamentary shelf lives.

Green MEP Magid Magid, 30, dares hope that his adoptive country of Britain -- he was born in Somalia -- will one day return to the European Union.

"As Britain we need to figure out what we want to be," he told AFP.

"Do we want to be like a small island, Little Britain, where we're just trying to be in the pocket of Donald Trump and the United States?"

"You know what? I still think that maybe in the future we'll be back in the European Union. Maybe I'll have a little bit more grey hair in my beard, but I'm quite hopeful," he declared.

For the time being, perhaps, his battle is at home.

Pro-Europe MEPs fear that without Brussels' rules, Britain will water down environmental protections and workers' rights.

Another MEP, Liberal Democrat Shaffaq Mohammed, is also thinking of future generations.

"My daughter is 13 years old," he said. "I would love for her to have the opportunities that people have had for the last 40 years of being able to live, study and work in Europe. I hope she still can." But for this generation, the adventure is over.

"The next few days, I'm packing up my boxes. I'm sadly making staff redundant. I'm beginning to think what I might do for the future but I've not decided yet," Corbett told AFP.

"I'm saving up to buy a horse to ride away into the sunset.

German military resumes training troops in northern Iraq



BERLIN, JAN 26 (AP):

The German military resumed training Iraqi troops in the country's Kurdish north on Sunday, about three weeks after it was suspended following the US killing of a top Iranian general in Baghdad.

The military said the commander of the international operation fighting the Islamic State group lifted the suspension. Germany resumed

training in Irbil on Sunday morning together with its partners.

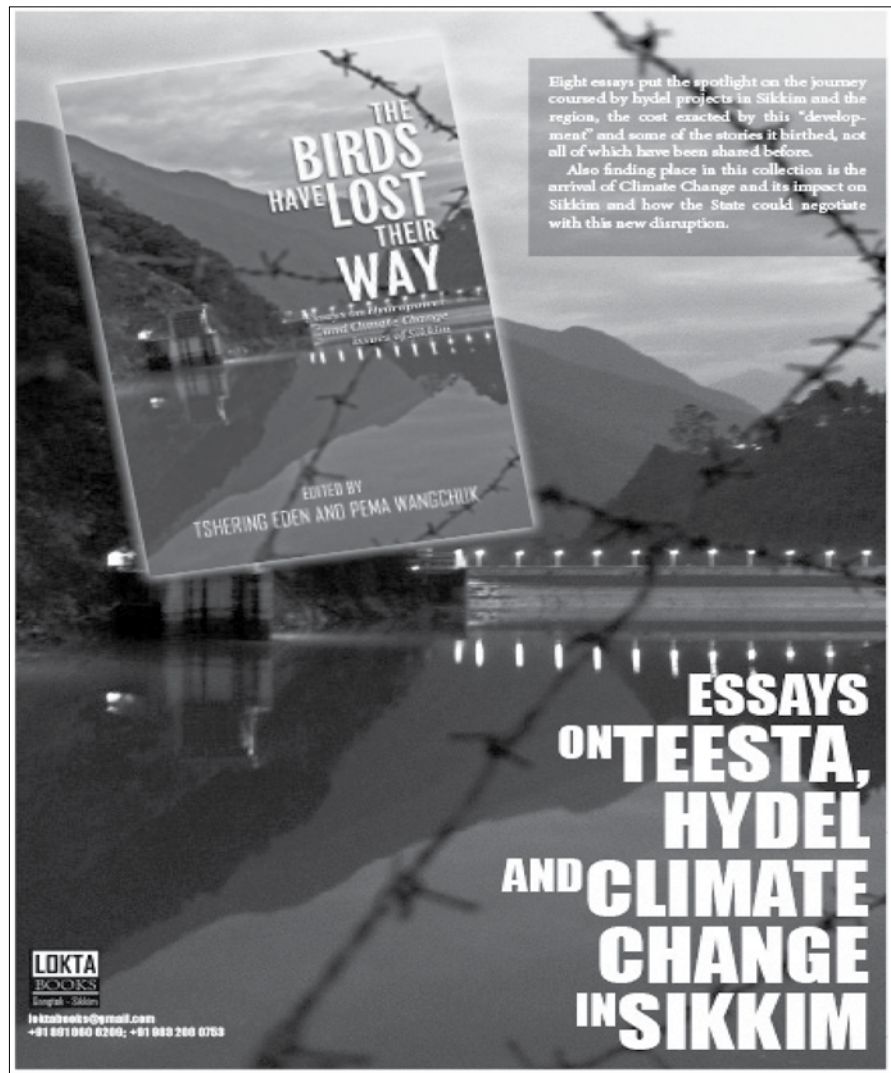
The Bundeswehr has about 90 soldiers in Irbil.

However, Germany's training mission in central Iraq is still suspended and there was no immediate word on whether or when it might resume.

Germany flew 35 soldiers out of Iraq from bases in Taji and Bagh-

dad on January 7, most of them to neighbouring Jordan. That was described as a temporary measure.

The decision was made after the January 3 killing by the United States of Iranian Revolutionary Guard commander Qassem Soleimani drastically raised regional tensions and escalated a crisis between Washington and Tehran.





BEST DRESSED AT 2020 GRAMMYS! Ariana Grande wears a grey custom gown from Giambattista Valli gown that just needs to be seen to be believed. The singer once again proves “God Is a Woman” in this show-stopping ensemble.

He was a marvel to witness: ‘Aladdin’ directors on Robin Williams

LOS ANGELES, JAN 26 (PTI): Robin Williams as gold-hearted Genie in Disney’s 1992 ‘Aladdin’ was “jaw-droppingly awesome”, say directing duo Ron Clements and John Musker.

The veteran actor-comedian brought to life one of the most loved animated characters and for the directors, watching him create magic with his “mercurial” improvisations, was a treat. “One of the great joys in all my years at Disney was getting to watch Robin Williams at work on ‘Aladdin’... He recorded in four-hour sessions and hardly ever stopped... He was like a tremendous athlete at the top of his game.

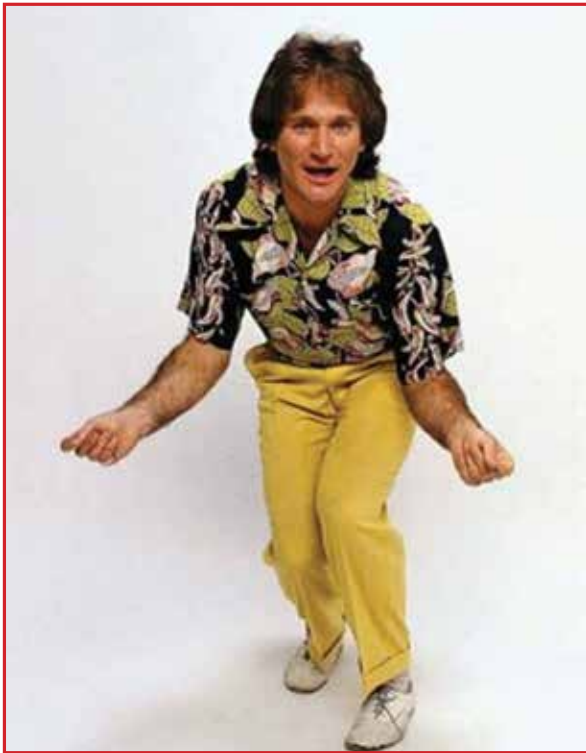
“Almost everything he did was great, but there were times when he was especially ‘in the zone’ on another level and the stuff he was coming up with was jaw-droppingly awesome. He was a marvel to witness,” Clements told The Hollywood Reporter.

The actor, aged 67, passed away in August 2014, and Musker said he finds “our world a little dimmer without Robin”.

“We wrote ‘Aladdin’ with Robin Williams in mind... We felt that we could do things with Robin’s brilliant mercurial improves that live action couldn’t match. Animated and shaped by Eric Goldberg, I think we did just that. Robin was an

absolute joy to work with, indefatigable and generous with his time and unique talents,” he added.

Williams had a fallout with Disney after the



1992 film and Dan Castellana voiced the Genie throughout the direct-to-video feature “The Return of Jafar”, as well as the television series.

New Netflix special is my humble love letter to India: Vir Das

RAVI BANSAL

NEW DELHI, JAN 26 (PTI): Three years on the road and two Netflix stand-up specials later, actor-comic Vir Das is paying homage to India through his next project, which he says is a “love letter” to his country.

“Vir Das: For India” follows Das’ previous Netflix specials -- “A Broad Understanding” (2017) and “Losing It” (2018). But unlike these two, the new stand-up is shot in India and is all about the country.

The actor said he has been touring the US for long and felt it was about time he did something for his Indian audience.

“I have done two specials in abroad, one in New York and other in San Francisco. We have such a large audience here. It was time to come home. I’ve been travelling for three years. I figured I’d do one for us. I love my country and want to celebrate it.

“This special is a small and humble love letter to my country,” Das told PTI in an interview.

“Vir Das: For India” makes him the sixth artiste to have three stand-up specials with the streamer.

For a part of his act, which was recorded at Mehboob Studios in Mumbai late last year, the comedian went back to his growing up years in the country.

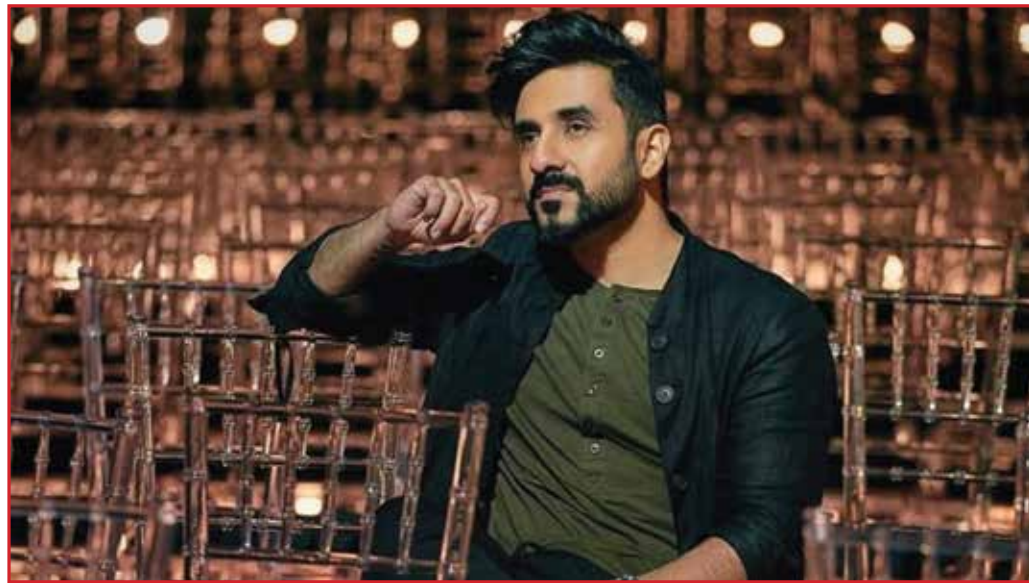
“On some level it is a dive into my childhood. I’m not a very smart man and so if I try and write an extremely intellectual special about India, I’m going to

fail because everybody has a different India. “So the best I could do was write about my small opinion about India and that is heavily influenced by my childhood. So the jokes about Parle G and Chyavanprash, my grandmother in Patna, at those levels it was deeply personal,” Das said.

At the same time, he also touched

“I think one out of every 20 jokes don’t evoke laughter for somebody and that is just the reality that you have to live with... Comedy is also subjective like any other art form, but at the same time one joke which isn’t funny for you, may click with other person.

“Every man’s funny is very different. So the idea is to try and throw as many



upon the sociopolitical situation of the country.

“To be very honest, I don’t do it very consciously. I just kind of write jokes and whatever is there in my mind, it finds its way into these jokes. An issue like gay marriage is very important to me. But I begin with writing a joke first and then they find their way into a joke. It’s always joke first, issue second.”

The 40-year-old actor has been doing stand-up for over a decade and said there are still days when people don’t laugh at his jokes.

jokes as you can at people that enough people find it fun.”

Das said he takes failure in his stride as it only motivates him to do better next time.

“The best thing I can do is fail as it sets you up to work harder for the next one. The art is just throwing stuff at the wall and seeing what sticks. I’m absolutely not ashamed of stumbling because that’s the healthiest thing in the world for an artiste.”

“Vir Das: For India” starts streaming on Netflix from Sunday.

Noah Mills joins ‘Falcon and Winter Soldier’



LOS ANGELES, JAN 26 (PTI): Actor Noah Mills is the latest name to join “The Falcon and the Winter Soldier”, the upcoming Disney Plus series.

The details of the character to be played by Mills, best known for “The Enemy Within” and “Sex and the City 2”, are yet to be revealed, reported Deadline.

The series, set post the events of “Avengers: Endgame”, will see Anthony Mackie and Sebastian Stan reprise their Marvel Cinematic Universe’s (MCU) roles as Falcon and Winter Soldier, respectively.

dier, respectively.

Actors Daniel Bruhl and Emily VanCamp are returning as villain Baron Zemo and Sharon Carter, respectively. Wyatt Russell will play John Walker who is also known in the comics as the fanatic Super Patriot.

Desmond Chiam and Miki Ishikawa are also part of the cast.

Kari Skogland is directing the six-part mini-series.

“The Falcon and the Winter Soldier” is set to make its debut in August.

Tom Holland’s ‘Uncharted’ delayed

LOS ANGELES, JAN 26 (PTI): Sony has pushed back the release of “Uncharted” adaptation starring Mark Wahlberg and Tom Holland.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the debut of the long-gestating videogame version has moved back three months and the film will now hit the screens on March 5, 2021.

The development came after the exit of Travis Knight as director late last year.

It was recently reported that “Zombieland” filmmaker Ruben Fleischer was the studio’s top choice to take over the reins.

The game is about the adventures of a hunter named Nathan Drake.

The film is a prequel to the game series and it will establish how Nathan (Holland) became the hunter and it will also introduce his dear friend Sully (Wahlberg).

Madonna cancels London gig due to injuries

LOS ANGELES, JAN 26 (PTI): Pop star Madonna has cancelled a London concert of her Madame X Tour because of an injury.

The singer was scheduled to perform the first of 15 shows on Monday at the London Palladium.

In an Instagram post on Saturday, Madonna said she has been “plagued” by injuries since the tour started and has been advised by doctors to take rest.

“I am deeply sorry that I have to cancel my concert scheduled for Monday, January 27th in London. Under doctors’ guidance I have been told to rest for a few days.

“As you all know, I have injuries that have plagued me since the beginning of the tour but I must always listen to my body and put my health first. The last thing I want to do is disappoint my fans or compromise the integrity of my show,” she wrote. The 61-year-old singer added that she hopes the show on Wednesday, January 29, will go on as planned.

“Please know that it hurts me more than you can imagine to have to cancel any shows. Thank you again for your understanding.”

The cancellation comes just few days after Madonna called off a concert in Lisbon, Portugal. In December, she also cancelled a show in Miami, citing “indescribable pain” from an undisclosed injury.

Aries: Aren’t you tired of all this burden and responsibility? Spirit is asking you to take a deep breath and brew a cup of serenity-tea, Aries. Take each sip with awareness. Allow yourself to be uplifted by the fragrance and the flavours. It really is the small things that make a big difference. Want to up the mindfulness game? Journal your thoughts as they come to you. This will not just help you ease the burden but also give you perspective on what you are struggling with.

Taurus: Transformation is seldom easy. But you knew you had to push through in order to strip away the false layers and get in touch with your most authentic self. The Universe is giving you a gold star for showing up even on the days when you were tempted to give it all up. Continue to rise to your power, Taurus. This will help you restore the balance in your relationships. Revelation, revelation: you are no longer obligated to play the role of the giver and the nurturer in every relationship.

Gemini: It doesn’t matter what the final chapter of this love story revealed. The love you felt—and perhaps still do—for them is real. Don’t doubt yourself for a second. In your darkest moments, know that Spirit has a plan for you which will be revealed to you in due course of time. For now, focus on reconnecting with your roots; grounding your energy.

Cancer: What ignites your inner fire, Cancer? What are the things you feel passionate about? This weekend isn’t about drastic changes. It’s about finding your True North, realigning with your path, and serving the world in a manner that feels authentic to you. Your intuition will be stronger than ever before. Trust the guidance that is coming through. As an empath and a sensitive soul, you’ve always had a way with children.

Leo: Working through your abundance blocks is going to be an important theme for you in the coming days. While your income has been steadily increasing, your insecurities about mon-

ey haven’t left your side. What could be the reason behind your deep-seated fear? Let the light of awareness help you help you bring about a deep, inner transformation.

Virgo: Virgo, keep your eyes on that vision board as you make bold moves that you would have never dreamed of before. Embrace what makes you different. Embrace what makes you, you. What if your authenticity is your greatest gift to the world? On the downside, you may find that you have to deal with people who do not share the same values as you. Remember, karma is the great balancer.

Libra: Moment of truth: you have more on your plate than you signed up for. How do you keep coming back to this point, Libra? Could your need to micromanage be the reason you are overworked? Spirit is reminding you that there is an easy way around this. Seek the support of like-minded individuals. Open yourself to help. Spend some time building (and training) the right team so you can delegate the tasks at hand. Remember, it takes an orchestra to deliver a

wonderful performance!

Scorpio: You’re no longer the person you used to be, but you haven’t transformed into the butterfly you envisioned either. Think of this as an incubation process—one that’s preparing you for your show-stopping moment. There are things that will be taken away from you on this journey. Word of warning: this will feel painful in the beginning, as loss often does.

Sagittarius: A powerful affirmation by Danielle LaPorte to give you the strength you need to break past limiting beliefs and achieve your wildest dreams. “I call all of my power back to me now. I am whole and complete.” Send yourself a postcard with the given words or put up a sign board on your desk. You have that look of invincibility about you—one that reiterates you cannot be messed with. Remember, clarity is your gift, Sagittarius.

Capricorn: Take a good look at what you are putting on your plate. It’s not about consuming three meals a day. It’s about tuning into the needs of your body and giving it exactly what it deserves.

Working with a health expert will prove to be the real game changer here. But before you add new things to your diet, be sure to eliminate the harmful substances.

Aquarius: Today, you’re being called to step back and reassess your personal space. Are you carrying the regret of offering help to someone? Do you often find yourself saying ‘yes’ when your head is screaming ‘no’? Your time and energy are your sacred, Aquarius. Accept that there is only so much you can do as you rid yourself of unnecessary guilt.

Pisces: You are not defined by where you come from, where you grew up or where you choose to live now. What a wonderful feeling to be able to strip away the layers of conditioning and see yourself in a brand new light! This is a period of metamorphosis for you, Pisces, one that will redefine your relationship with the world. Trust that your interpersonal relationships will also undergo a drastic shift as a result. Don’t apologise for wearing your heart on your sleeve or for saying the three magic words first.