



**BILLIE EILISH EXPLAINS HOW SHE
TURNED EVERYTHING UPSIDE DOWN
FOR STUNNING 'SNL' PERFORMANCE**
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WILL THEN FOLLOW**

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**JOKER REVIEW – THE
MOST DISAPPOINTING
FILM OF THE YEAR**

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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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*Here to be Gangtok's voice,
says Karma Yenten Chankapa*



**REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 03 OCT:**

At the age of 39, Karma Yenten Chankapa, has decided to make his political debut with the by-election for Gangtok constituency this year.

According to him, people of Gangtok have been let down by political parties and politicians, and he hopes to be their voice as an Independent candidate.

Mr Chankapa is among the six candidates contesting the Gangtok constituency by-election.

Speaking with media today, Mr Chankapa said that he has always been a social worker and being a Gangtok resident understands its problems.

lems.

"Ten MLAs from SDF joined BJP and then the SKM gave two seats to BJP without any consultation with the people. It is gross injustice and betrayal of people's trust. I could feel many others in Gangtok feeling the same. Hence I thought of taking a stand and become the voice of the voters of Gangtok," he said while talking to SummitTIMES.

He added that there are many youngsters in Gangtok who are confused and alarmed with the present political scenario.

"I want to come forward for them and be an example for them," says Mr Chankapa. Politicians at large have hurt the people, he adds. **turn to pg02**

After 2 withdrawals, 15 left in the fray for by-polls

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 OCT:**

After withdrawal of candidature, fifteen candidates are now in the fray for By-Elections in three Assembly Constituencies of the State. Today was the last day for withdrawal of candidatures and two candidates from Martam-Rumtek withdrew their nominations. Earlier, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's dummy candidate for Poklok-Kamrang, KB Rai's nomination was set aside after PS Tamang's nomination was accepted.

Today, Sonam Tashi Bhutia and Chewang Dadul Bhutia who had filed nomination papers as Independent candidates for Martam-Rumtek constituency withdrew their candidature in the office of Returning Officer, Raj Yadav.

The Returning Officer informed that six candidates are now in the fray for Martam-Rumtek Assembly constituency after the withdrawal of two candidates. The number of



Poklok-Kamrang

- Moses Rai [SDF]
- PS Tamang [SKM]
- Yadhu Kumar Rai [SRP]

Martam-Rumtek

- Nuk Tshering Bhutia [SDF]
- Sonam Tshering Venchungpa [BJP]
- Mingma Tshering Sherpa [SRP]
- Nima Lepcha [HSP]
- Passang G Sherpa [Ind]
- Dr Mechung Bhutia [Ind]

Gangtok

- Rinzing Ongmu [SDF]
- YT Lepcha [BJP]
- Bhaichung Bhutia [HSP]
- Song Tshering Lepcha [SRP]
- Delay Namgyal Barfungpa [SNPP]
- Karma Yenten Chankapa [Ind]

candidates for Gangtok Assembly constituency remains the same with six nominations and no withdrawal.

In Poklok-Kamrang there were no withdrawals so there are three candidates for the constituency. Also, a meeting of the Returning Officer [East] with the contest-

ing candidates has been scheduled at 11:00 AM at DAC Sichey on 04 Oct.

The Expenditure Observer, Naresh Kumar Bansal arrived in Gangtok today. Anyone interested to meet the Expenditure Observer may meet him at Railway Guest House from 9 AM to 11 AM.

BJP's politics in Sikkim forced HSP to contest: Bhaichung

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 OCT:**

Hamro Sikkim Party working president, Bhaichung Bhutia today said that his party was forced to contest by-elections in Sikkim due to the present political situation. Mr Bhutia is contesting the by-election from Gangtok.

Speaking to media here today, the HSP working president said that his party was not planning to contest by-elections.

"We were in the process of building the party organisation for the 2024 Assembly elections. People wanted Parivartan and that happened. So we wanted to give the SKM government five years to run," he said.

However, when SKM allied with BJP for the by-polls and gave two seats [Gangtok and Martam-Rumtek] to



BJP, we thought that is unacceptable and decided to fight the by-election, said Mr Bhutia.

"Sikkimese people had given their votes to SKM and SDF, not BJP. It is not the fault of the workers of SDF and SKM, it is their leaders who are only looking out for themselves and disrespecting the votes of the Sikkimese people," Mr Bhutia said.

He further said that

BJP is trying to come to power through the backdoor and are putting pressure on both the two leading regional parties in Sikkim.

"That is very dangerous for Sikkim. We have already seen what BJP has done in Jammu & Kashmir. The BJP ran a coalition government and promised not to touch Article 370 but later they withdrew the support and implemented President's rule and

scrapped Article 370. Tomorrow if there is any pressure from the Centre which is not in the interest of Sikkim, the political leaders can sign and agree to anything," said Mr Bhutia.

He added that Hamro Sikkim Party will never be a party that will sell Sikkim.

"We are a clean party with no corruption baggage, we want to save Sikkim and its distinct identity," he said.

Sherpas from 24 countries to celebrate Global Sherpa Day in Gangtok

**SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 03 OCT:**

Representatives of the Sherpa community from across the world will be in Gangtok for the 2nd Global Sherpa Day being observed on the theme 'Save Himalaya Save Earth' here on 08 October.

Global Sherpa Forum [Jambuling Sherwi Tshokpa] and Denzong Sherpa Association [DSA] are also jointly organising the "Vishwa Sherpa Sammelan" from 08 to 10 October in the State.

The three-day event will host members of the Sherpa community from over 24 countries along

with Sherpas from Sikkim and the neighbouring hills.

Addressing a press conference here today, DSA publicity secretary, Phurba Tshering Sherpa, informed that the summit was held for the first time from 08 to 10 October 2017 in Kathmandu. He added that historic decisions in the interest of the Sherpa community were taken at the time.

The Global Sherpa Forum was also formed during the Kathmandu meet and the practice of celebrating 08 October as Global Sherpa Day started last year. Mr Sherpa further informed that

the main objective of this event is to bring members of the Sherpa community together on the same platform to work for the community which is otherwise spread across the world pursuing educational and economic aims.

He expressed that the Sammelan will also discuss conservation and preservation of language, religion, traditions and cultural heritage of the Sherpa community.

Speaking on the theme for this year's Sherpa Day, he said, "We Sherpa people are very close to the Himalayas so on this day we will also take the pledge to work for the

preservation and conservation of the Himalayas."

It is informed that the event will start with a programme at Kabi in North Sikkim on the morning of 08 October followed by a meeting in the Mannan Kendra mini-hall in the evening. The organisers will take out a procession from MG Marg to Mannan Kendra on 09 October which will be followed by the main function at Mannan Kendra. Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] is scheduled to attend as the chief guest.

The last day of the programme will be held at Rabongla in South Sikkim on 10 October.

Sports Dept to organize Annual School Sports Competitions & Talent Hunt

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 OCT:**

The Department of Sports & Youth Affairs will be organizing the Annual School Sports Competitions during October-November 2019 in 33 Blocks, four Districts

and one State Level Competition in 8 disciplines; Athletics, Archery, Taekwondo, Football, Athletics, Badminton, Boxing and Table Tennis. The department has also decided to organize a Talent Hunt in 10 disciplines.

An IPR press release informs that a meeting regarding the same was conducted today at Paljor Stadium Conference Hall which was chaired by Minister Sports & Youth Affairs, Kunga Nima Lepcha.

420 school students from Junior High Schools to Senior Secondary Schools will be participating in these competitions. The selected players will participate at National Level Competitions, **turn to pg02**

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Agri Minister tours constituency

PECHREK, 03 OCT (IPR): Minister-cum-MLA Gyalshing Bermiok constituency, Lok Nath Sharma attended series of programmes in his constituency, today. After visiting Hee-Martam Block Administrative Centre Minister, Mr Sharma paid a visit to Government Primary School Hee-Pechrek and interacted with the headmaster, staff and students.

The Minister also took details of Mid Day Meal and encouraged staff to increase enrolment of students with improve educational standard.

Thereafter, Mr Sharma held a joint meeting with the officials of Directorate of Fisheries (West District) and beneficiaries of "Trout Culture in Raceway" at Hee Patal. Minister highlighted on the future scope of Trout Culture and urged the



beneficiaries including Pem Dorjee Bhutia, Anju Chettri, Hissey Lendup Bhutia, Phurba Tshering Bhutia, Passang Thendup Bhutia, Sonam Topden Bhutia and Savitri Chettri, to take up fisheries scheme seriously to earn their livelihood.

It may be mentioned here that the beneficiaries will be provided input cost for the construction of raceway tank along with the seeds of Trout Finger-

ling and Pelleted feed. The programme was also attended by the Assistant Director/Fisheries, Lobsang Tamang and RO, Naresh Sunar.

Afterwards, Minister Sharma visited the spot of fire incident at Hee-Patal where the house of Chong Gyaso Bhutia and Hissey Lendup Bhutia were burnt down to ashes last Saturday and interacted with the victims' family.

Later in the after-

noon Minister attended the Final Match of Gandhi Jayanti Football Tournament at Hee Patal Jr High School. Addressing the gathering Minister Sharma urged everyone to join hands together in the developmental process of locality. Articulating on Gandhian philosophy, he urged villagers to support and cooperate with one another to witness reformation and progress in the society.

FIT INDIA Plogging Run held across Sikkim on Gandhi Jayanti

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 OCT:

FIT INDIA Plogging Run was organized by Department of Sports & Youth Affairs at Block Level at all respective Block Administrative Centers (BAC); District Level at three districts Mangan, Gyalshing, Namchi and State Level at Gangtok on 02 Oct to commemorate the 150th Birth

Anniversary Mahatma Gandhi.

A press release informs that Minister Sports & Youth Affairs, Kunga Nima Lepcha flagged off the State Level 2 KM Run from Paljor Stadium.

Secretary Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kuber Bhandari, Director, Additional Director and other officers were pres-

ent during the programme.

The theme of the Programme was "Picking up Litters is good for Country's Health; Running & Jogging is good for Your Health".

More than 250 participants including officers, staff of Sports & Youth Affairs, students from different schools in and around Gangtok, NSS volunteers,

students from State Sports Academy, members and players from different Sports Associations participated at Gangtok.

On the other hand, thousands of people from all walks of life participated in the FIT INDIA Plogging Run held in the other three Districts and all Blocks Administrative Centres.

IRBn group contributes to CM's Relief Fund

GANGTOK, 02 OCT (IPR): Social Welfare Group of 2002 batch of IRBn contributed sum of Rs. 62,000 to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund in support of the Yuksam landslide victims.

The cheque was handed over to the Chief Minister, PS Tamang [Goly] by representatives of the welfare group. They also extended all support towards the cause.



Swachhta Hi Seva Diwas at Lower Rakdong



WANGCHUK BHUTIA

MANGAN, 03 OCT:

"Swachhta Hi Seva Diwas" was organized by Rakdong-Tintek Gram Panchayat Unit of East Sikkim at Lower Rakdong today.

The function was attended by BDO Tintek, Pema Wangchen Bhutia and public. BDO Tintek in his speech urged all to ban the use of plastics in the area by joining hands with shopkeepers by sensitizing them.

Likewise, the panchayat president appealed to all to keep the village clean and involve more people in cleanliness drives.

Surprise visit by Minister in Hee-Martam

GYALSHING, 03 OCT (IPR):

Minister-cum-Area MLA of Gyalshing Bermiok constituency, Lok Nath Sharma paid a surprise visit to Block Administrative Centre Hee-Martam, at exactly 10:00am in the morning.

He interacted with the Manager, State Bank of Sikkim, Ramesh Kr Pradhan, Assistant Director, Basant Kr Rai and took stock of various banking services being



provided to the public.

He stressed on ensuring convenience to the

public throughout office hours in every section of BAC. Earlier, he also

visited Ghaiyabari ward and interacted with the public.

SRP introduces party candidates in meeting at Singtam

YOGEN THATAL

SINGTAM, 03 OCT:

Sikkim Republican Party conducted a coordination meeting here at the Nepali Dharmasala in Singtam today.

The objective of the meeting was to introduce the party's candidates for the upcoming by-election.

Members and representatives from Gangtok, Rongli, Yaksom, Pakyong, Ra-



nipool, West Sikkim and surroundings areas of Namchi and South Sikkim were present during the

preparation cum coordination meeting.

The meeting was attended by some of the active members

and executives of the party. The meeting was also attended and addressed by the party president, KB Rai.

Mr Rai urged all to work hard and prepare for the upcoming by-election.

SRP had fielded Sonam Tshering Lepcha from Gangtok, Yadu Kr Rai from Poklok-Kamrang and Mingma Tshering Sherpa from Rumtek-Martam.

Shramdaan for plastic waste at Namchi

NAMCHI, 03 OCT (IPR):

A daylong programme was organised by Block Administrative Centre Namchi regarding the nation-wide Shramdaan for Plastic waste collection and segregation on 02 October.

The programme was monitored and guided by Nodal Officer, PM Gurung, and was attended by Superintendent Engineer, Zilla Panchayat, Block Development Officer Namchi, Assistant Engineer, Assistant Director Education Assistant Direc-



tor RDD and staff of BAC, Namchi.

The participants are undertaking plastic

waste collection from the BAC premises to DC office covering Zilla Panchayat Office Namchi.

The collected waste was brought to Namchi Municipal Council and segregated.

ICAR-NOFRI celebrates Gandhi Jayanti

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 OCT:

ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute, Tadong celebrated the 150th Birth Anniversary of Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi from 26 Sept to 02 Oct, 2019. The inaugural ceremony was held on 26 Sept under the Chairmanship of Joint Director, Dr RK Avasthe, ICAR-NOFRI, a press release informs.

In his inaugural address, he underlined that this year, the Institute is celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi by observing week-long programmes focusing on Mahatma Gandhi.

Extempore competition, debate competition, lecture series, painting competition and cleanliness drive was organized in the entire campus and its surroundings.

An awareness programme on "Single Use Plastic" was organized at Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Deorali on 30 Sept. The programme was attend-

ed by the Principal, Staff and students of the School. Certificates were distributed by the Joint Director to the winners of different competitions held during the week.



GO calls meeting with political party reps

NAMCHI, 03 OCT (IPR):

General Observer for By-Elections for Poklok Kamrang Assembly Constituency, Alak Kumar Saharia has expressed his desire to meet the representatives of political parties at PWD Dak

Bungalow, Namchi from 4:00 to 6:00pm on 04 Oct, 2019.

The representatives of political parties who are willing to meet the General Observer are requested to be present at the above mentioned venue and time.

Sports Dept to organize...

The department has also decided to organize a Talent Hunt in 10 disciplines; Athletics, Archery, Badminton, Boxing, Football, Karate, Table Tennis, Taekwondo, Whu-shu and Swimming.

Around 200 talented players will be selected at State Level after four District Level selection trials. A 10-day residential Special Coaching Camp will be organized at Gangtok for grooming their talents. The Coaches of the department will further groom them and the most talented will be inducted in the Sports Academies.

During the meeting, the Minister directed all the Officers and PETs of the Department to work very sincerely and with all dedication for the benefit of Sports persons and public at large.

SYA Secretary, Kuber Bhandari said that those aged between 7-12 years should be identified.

Director, Joint Directors, all officers from Head Quarter, four Districts, BACs and Physical Education Teachers were present during the meeting.

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Here to be Gangtok's voice..

"We had given them the right to represent us but now we have to re-evaluate the representation given to them. The politics of today must focus on the present generation. I am very concerned on where we are heading," he expresses.

Mr Chankapa started campaigning on Wednesday from Development Area. He has been allocated the 'torch' symbol by the Election Commission.

~ **SummitTIMES** ~
CLASSIFIEDS

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

Roadside plots for sale at Adampool, Ranipool-Rumtek highway.

For details contact: 9083826462

FLAT FOR RENT/LEASE

Fully furnished 3BHK flat available for rent/lease at Church Road near DPH. Roadside and five minutes walking distance from MG Marg.

For more details: 9083826462 /9832556698

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College.

Flat Land no cutting required. Price 30 Lakhs (negotiable).

Contact: 9800201335

SNG celebrates Gandhi Jayanti with Swachha Abhiyaan

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 OCT:

Different associate members (Sakhas) of Sikkim Newar Guthi observed 150th Gandhi Jayanti on Wednesday with the mission of Swachha Abhiyaan. The green mission programme was one of the important events of the silver jubilee celebration of Sikkim Newar Guthi that has just started, a press release informs.

The theme of the event was 'Make Sikkim Clean & Green' and was held in collaboration

with Sikkim Swachha Bharat Mission. The event was held at Rhenock, Kamerey (Duga), Ranipool, Sichey, Burtuk, Legship & other places.

Sikkim Newar Guthi is celebrating its Silver Jubilee this year in a grand manner on 09 and 10 November at Manan Kendra, Gangtok. Various programmes are organised across the state to mark the occasion.

All these Programmes will be "Plastic Free" and "Zero Waste" initiative during the entire Silver Jubilee Celebrations.



Modi-Xi meet: Madras HC nod to allow banners

CHENNAI, OCT 3 (PTI):

The Madras High Court on Thursday allowed the central and Tamil Nadu governments to install banners to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping for their informal meet here next week.

In its interim order, a division bench of Justices M Sathyanarayanan and N Seshasayee, however, made it clear that the Centre and the state have to follow all existing rules in connection with erection of such banners.

The court had banned hoardings along the road and it recently pulled up the government for not effectively implementing its order following the death of a woman techie.

"This court is of the prima facie view that in terms of section 278 Chennai City Municipal Corporation Act (CCMC), the central government or the state government need not seek license in respect of any place in occupation or under their control or in respect of any property belonging to government for erection of digital banners, placards," the bench said.

The bench, however, said the entities concerned are under obligation to comply with the Chennai City Municipal Act as well as the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies (Permission of Erection of Digital Banners and Placards) Rules, 2011.

It also made it clear that there was no necessity on part of the state government to file an affidavit or undertaking since the court had in December 2018 restrained only political parties from erecting flex boards in public places.

The state government had on Tuesday sought the court's permission to erect banners welcoming Modi and Xi Jinping, who are slated to meet at Mamallapuram, about 50 km from here, for their second informal meet from October 11-13.

The petition filed by commissioner of municipal administration said Modi and Jinping would be holding bilateral talks

in the tourist town.

The petitioner said it was customary for the Ministry of External Affairs to welcome a visiting dignitary using banners.

Stating that the state and central governments proposed to put up the banners at designated places to welcome the top dignitaries, the petitioner asked the court to pass suitable orders on the proposal.

Makkal Needhi Maiam founder Kamal Haasan had on Wednesday attacked the Tamil Nadu government for seeking the court's approval to erect banners to welcome Modi and Xi Jinping and appealed to Modi to "act as a pioneer" and put an end to the "banner culture."

Earlier, the court, while hearing a plea against setting up of illegal hoardings, had reprimanded the state government following the death of Subasri, 23.

Taking a tough stand against illegal hoardings, the court had questioned, "How many more litres of blood (does) the state government need to paint the roads with?"

The techie was killed after she fell on the road when an illegal hoarding, put up by a local AIADMK functionary, collapsed on her and she was run over by a lorry.

The functionary, Jaygopal, was nabbed by the police in the case on September 27 and booked on charges of attempt to commit culpable homicide. He had been evading arrest for two weeks.

The hoarding was put up for the wedding of Jaygopal's son at a hall near Pallikaranai here, without obtaining permission from corporation authorities.

Following outrage over her death, political parties asked their respective cadre to stop erecting hoardings and banners.

In 2017, a 32-year old engineer Raghunath died after he crashed into an illegal hoarding in Coimbatore, put up for the MGR Centenary celebrations.

They submitted a memorandum to Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio. The memorandum stated that the "Citizenship (Amendment) Bill (CAB) was like a Damocles sword hanging over the head of all the indigenous tribes of the northeast region"

The memorandum was signed by NEFIP vice

STCS arranges LPG supply during holidays

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 OCT:

To meet the requirement of LPG refills during Dasain Holidays, STCS has made arrangements to sell

the LPG refill cylinders between 10:00am to 2:00pm on 07 & 10 Oct, 2019 from the following outlets :-

1) STCS Godown

vicinity, Lumsey.

2) STCS Office, Deorali.

3) STCS Office, Jorethang.

4) STCS Godown vicinity, Baiguney.

PMC case: ICAI to check role of auditors

NEW DELHI, OCT 2

(PTI): Chartered accountants' apex body ICAI has sought information from the RBI and other authorities on the PMC Bank crisis to check whether any auditor was involved in the alleged financial irregularities at the lender.

Taking note of the "enormity of the matter", the ICAI on Wednesday said it has triggered its disciplinary mechanism and has written to the bank as well as regulatory agencies concerned.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has written to the Vigilance Department of the RBI and the Commissioner of Maharashtra Co-operative Societies.

In a statement, the in-

stitute said it has sought requisite details of their findings as well as that of any "member/firm alleged to be involved in the matter."

Information has also been sought from the statutory auditor of the bank "pertaining to financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19", it added.

"ICAI would be actively pursuing the issue with the concerned regulators so as to examine the matter in detail and would also take action through its proactive disciplinary process against any member, if so, found to be involved in the matter," the statement said.

The problems at the Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank came to light after a whistle blower complaint,

following which the Reserve Bank of India, on September 23, placed the lender under an administrator. The RBI has also barred the bank from carrying out regular banking activities.

The suspended managing director of PMC Bank, Joy Thomas, has blamed the auditors for the mess at the bank, accusing them of only "superficially auditing" the books of the now crippled lender due to "time constraints".

The Mumbai Police on Monday filed a case against the former bank management and promoters of HDIL in the Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank case and said a special investigation team will be probing the case.

Whither liberty, equality, fraternity, asks Chidambaram



NEW DELHI, OCT 3

(PTI): Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram, who is lodged in Tihar Jail in a corruption case, on Thursday claimed inequality is growing among Indians and wondered whether "weakly flickering" liberty will burn "brightly or die."

"Fraternity is all but dead. Casteism and bigotry seem to have taken

over. Equality is a distant dream. All the evidence point to growing inequality among Indians. Liberty is the only flame flickering weakly. Will it burn brightly or die, only time can tell," he said on Twitter.

Chidambaram, who had asked his family to tweet on his behalf, also said, "As we begin the year long celebration of

Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary, we have to ask the question "Whither Liberty, Equality and Fraternity?"

The former finance minister has been lodged in Tihar Jail since September 5 in the INX Media case.

SUSA elects new executive committee

GANGTOK, 03 OCT (PIB):

Election to various posts of the Executive Committee of Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) was held at the Cauveri Hall of the University on 27 Sept, 2019 from 8.25am to 3.25pm.

Counting of votes was held on the same day from 4:00pm onwards. Chief Election Officer, Prof N Sathyanaraya-

na had made elaborate arrangements for the smooth conduct of polling and counting of votes.

Vice-Chancellor and Patron of SUSA, Prof Avinash Khare administered oath of secrecy to the newly elected members of the Executive Committee of SUSA on 01 Oct, 2019.

The new Executive Committee is led by Mahesh Rai as president, Sabitri Khatiwada as vice-president and Nishant Chhetri as general secretary.

The Vice-Chancellor congratulated all the newly elected members of the Executive Committee of SUSA after administering the oath of office.

3 Sikkimese students launch Wake Up Movement

#STANDUPFORISSUESGREATER THAN POLITICS



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 OCT:

Three students of Sikkim have started a social youth organization #WakeUpMovement to spread awareness among students, youths and adults of Sikkim on Climate Change, a press release informs.


The three students are Rishal Pandey Chettri, Ashwath Tamang and Chultim Dolma Bhutia from Delhi Public School, Siliguri;

Tashi Namgyal Academy and Paljor Namgyal Girls School respectively.

With their agenda as #Standupforissuesgreaterthanpolitics, the trio will be organising awareness rallies, competitions to join the Global Climate Change Movement.

"It's going to take a little while, but we are sure that there will be a way. Food prices are increasing, floods are sweeping away farmers' land, droughts are affecting

the yield of crops, glaciers' melting is a common episode, wildfires, hurricanes; name them! We as youths and young climate activists should use our moral authority as children, and being social-media savvy, it's our duty to surf a rising tide of adult concern. If not us then, who? If not now then, when?" the trio mentions. They have called for support from all Sikkimese in their endeavor.



Government of Sikkim
Office of the Director Pension, G.I.S. NPS
Finance Department
Gangtok.

Ref no: 282/PGIPF

Date: 12/09/2019

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all Pensioners including the Family pensioners that the Office (PGIPF) will be holding Pension Adalat in the District and Sub-Division of all the Districts in the month of January 2020. It is therefore requested that Grievances, if any, regarding their Pension should be submitted to the Nodal Officer, Pension on or before 15th November 2019. Only those grievances shall be entertained which is/are addressed to the Nodal Officer, Pension and as regards to their Pension only.

The date for the Pension Adalat shall be notified later.

Sd/
Nodal Officer, PGIPF.

R.O. No. 203/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20

Date 26.9.19

Naga tribes take out rally against Citizenship Bill

KOHIMA, OCT 3 (PTI):

Thousands of people representing different Naga tribes attired in their traditional dress on Thursday took out a protest rally here against the proposed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

The protest march was held under the aegis of Joint Committee on Protection of Indigenous People (JCPI), Nagaland and North East Forum of In-

digenous People (NEFIP).

They submitted a memorandum to Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio.

The memorandum stated that the "Citizenship (Amendment) Bill (CAB) was like a Damocles sword hanging over the head of all the indigenous tribes of the northeast region"

The memorandum was signed by NEFIP vice

president Theja Therieh and joint secretary Tia Longchar.

They requested the chief minister and the state government to take up with the Central leadership to respect the sentiment of the people in the region in general and the state of Nagaland in particular and not to pass the bill in the interest of peace and harmony in the region. Earlier, addressing

the gathering Theja Therieh claimed that once CAB is passed in the parliament and becomes a law, illegal immigrants will get full right to settle in Nagaland and will take over the indigenous inhabitants.

He said the Naga people wants the state government and the elected representatives of the state Assembly and Parliament, to join hands in protecting the indigenous people.

INVITATION

"Truth always prevails and it is always to the benefit of all. Falsehoods are always lies, the palm cannot block out the Sun."

➤ Guruhazur

Swami Bal-Tapaswi Sadhguru Om Nanda
Master Godangel will be presiding over a special heavenly ceremony

"Blessing (Wang)"
Spiritual Discourse and Meditation

Oct. 12, 2019 Saturday
Jorethang, South Sikkim

We heartily welcome all the people, youth, intellectuals and scholars to kindly attend this special ceremony.

Organizer: Heavenly Nirvana Path India / Sikkim
Contact: 9733286880/9733084983/9733029159



For Education

Figure out why... the how will then follow

The definition of literacy in India is grossly under-achieving. Anyone with an elementary knowledge to read and write is counted as literate; at times, even just being able to write and read their names is considered enough, and that is hardly what literacy should be about. If this were the yardstick to measure literacy, then handing over smartphones to the unlettered will get the job done. It is after all not rare to find preschool toddlers who have figured out how the play and pause commands on video games look different and work their way around it. So, aiming for literacy is really aiming too low. The aim has to be to deliver learning even if it does not include reading and writing so that quality of human resource is improved. Governments choose the easier option of literacy when the more productive and necessary approach should be to create better educated citizens. Do that, and one need not even worry too much about employable skills, because if education does its job well, it will infuse an inquisitiveness and a confidence which will make the “educated” ready for every job and every challenge. And this has to be approach with which the education policy is approached. Sikkim is thankfully on track since there are deep meditations and consultations already underway to understand what is missing from its schools, what works and what needs to be done to inject quality into the school system here.

Education has been held up as a thrust area of governmental engagement, with ‘quality’ as the watch word. It is heartening for Sikkim to learn that education is receiving a relook. The density of schools in Sikkim leaves no room for complaint and the free textbooks and uniform scheme of the government ensure that at least the tools required to remain in school are in place. Schemes like the mid-day meal are pegged as incentives to keep students in school, but the only effective incentive long-term will be the quality of education that is imparted in the classrooms, not the quality of food served during breaks or the quality of uniforms. That said, enrolment is handsome in Sikkim’s schools and kids here can complete education if they so desire. But what also needs to be accepted that nowadays, most kids are in school because their parents don’t know what else to do with them... because sending children to school is the done thing. Worryingly, most enroll in colleges for much the same reason (or rather, the lack of one). Not too many of us have really figured out why we send children to school. There are vague notions of “a better future” and employment, but come on, we should not be signing off the first two decades or more of our lives for pursuits without any clear idea of why. Hence, the first task for any enquiry into how schools can be improved should be to build consensus on why we have schools, and let’s scratch employment from the reasons because imparting “employable skills” does not require such a long time – you can prepare people for most jobs with a basic 3-month course and the rest they can learn on the job. Once Sikkim has figured out “why”, the how will be easy to work out.

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Democracy in crisis – unshackle schools from test results to give children the chance to form opinions

EDDA SANT

THECONVERSATION.COM

If political headlines globally are anything to go by, it seems democracy is at risk. Totalitarian views are on the rise. Far-right parties and leaders have gained voters in many countries. And decisions are being made by law courts or by technical experts from international economic organisations. And people, particularly young people, feel they do not have a say. So it’s not surprising then that governments are turning their attention to schools as a potential cure.

Promoting democracy has always been one of the tasks of schools within democratic systems. But this demand is now on the rise. Indeed, across the globe teachers in schools are expected to engage students as democratic citizens. It’s hoped such lessons about democracy and what it is to be a good citizen will help to combat growing support for totalitarian and radical views.

WANTED: DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

In my research, I have examined more than 370 academic articles about democratic education. My analysis shows there is much disagreement, even among academics, as to both what democracy means as well as how to educate children and young people into democratic values.

But even despite these disagreements, most researchers agree on something: when students discuss and evaluate viewpoints on topics such as globalisation or evolution not only do they learn more about geography or science but they also discover that their voice matters.

Indeed, when topics such as patriotism or historical conflicts are pre-



sented as ideas to be debated rather than facts to be learnt, students have time to form opinions and democracy benefits.

Schools can also help to promote democracy when students, parents and teachers are involved in making decisions. At some schools in Brazil, for example, members of the school community democratically agree on school rules, curriculum and procedures. But limited time and space for controversy and participatory decisions in schools restricts this process – and this needs to change.

TEACHING TO THE TEST

Part of the problem is that in recent decades, there has been an increasing insistence on standardised tests. Even four year olds in England now sit a test in the first ten weeks of school. Most teachers are against this. But as they want their students to do “well”, they end up teaching to the test. As a consequence, students learn there is a single correct an-

swer for everything, including politics and democracy.

At the same time as a move towards standardised tests, policymakers worldwide have also pushed for the constant evaluations of schools themselves. Parents, teachers and students do not discuss school rules, curriculum and procedures that better benefit their community. Instead, they discuss how to respond to national and international standards decided upon elsewhere – often by experts from economic organisations.

And these standards are the same for everybody – top-down. Meaning that there is no space, time and possibilities for participatory decision making – mainly because there is a more immediate need to be accountable to institutions and their experts.

A DEMOCRATIC CURE?

Education is not a universal solver. It cannot be seen as a cure all for society because it is part of society. But schools can also be good places

to begin the fights to “save” democracies from going into crisis.

Schools have the potential to educate new generations into democratic values. And they are secure places where children and young people can experiment what it is to be democratic. Schools can also allow children and young people to learn to agree and disagree – and to defend their views and reach solutions to everyday problems.

It’s clear then that if societies seriously want to promote democracy, the solution is not (only) to teach about democracy and about good citizenship. Governments and policymakers need to give schools the freedom, space and time needed for activities outside of tests, exams and evaluations, so children can see, experience and practice democracy for themselves.

[the writer is Senior Lecturer in Education Studies, Manchester Metropolitan University]

Turing Test: Why it still matters

HARRY COLLINS

THECONVERSATION.COM

We’re entering the age of artificial intelligence. And as AI programs gets better and better at acting like humans, we will increasingly be faced with the question of whether there’s really anything that special about our own intelligence, or if we are just machines of a different kind. Could everything we know and do one day be reproduced by a complicated enough computer program installed in a complicated enough robot?

In 1950, computer pioneer and wartime codebreaker Alan Turing made one of the most influential attempts to tackle this issue. In a landmark paper, he suggested that the vagueness could be taken out of the question of human and machine intelligence with a simple test. This “Turing Test” assesses the ability of a computer to mimic a human, as judged by another human who could not see the machine but could ask it written questions.

In the last few years, several pieces of AI software have been described as having beaten the Turing Test. This has led some to argue that the test is too easy to be a useful judge of artificial intelligence. But I would argue that the Turing Test hasn’t actually been passed at all. In fact, it won’t be passed in the foreseeable future. But if one day a properly designed Turing Test is passed, it will give us cause to worry about our unique status.

The Turing Test is really a test of linguistic fluency. Properly understood, it can reveal the thing that is arguably most distinctive about humans: our different cultures. These give rise to enormous variations in belief and behaviour that aren’t seen among animals or most machines. And the fact we can program this kind of variation into computers is what gives them the potential to mimic human abilities. In judging fluent mimicry, the Turing Test lets us look for the ability of computers to share in human culture by demonstrating their grasp of language in a social context.

Turing based his test on the “imitation game”, a party game in which a man pretended to be a woman and a judge tried to guess who was who by asking the concealed players questions. In the Turing Test, the judge would try to guess who was a computer and who was a real human.

Unsurprisingly, in 1950, Turing didn’t work out the necessary detailed protocol for us to judge today’s AI software. For one thing, he suggested the test could be done in just five minutes. But he also didn’t work out that the judge and the human player had to share a culture and that the computer would have to try to emulate it. That’s led to lots of people claiming that the test has been passed and others claiming that the test is too easy or should include emulation of physical abilities.

FIRST CLAIMED PASS

Some of this was made obvious nearly 50 years ago with the construction of the program known as ELIZA by computer scientist Joseph Weizenbaum. ELIZA was used to simulate a type of psychotherapist known as a Rogerian, or person-centred,



therapist. Several patients who interacted with it thought it was real, leading to the earliest claim that the Turing Test had been passed.

But Weizenbaum was clear that ELIZA was, in effect, a joke. The setup didn’t even follow what little protocol Turing did provide because patients didn’t know they were looking out for fraud and there were no simultaneous responses from a real psychotherapist. Also, culture wasn’t part of the test because Rogerian therapists say as little as possible. Any worthwhile Turing Test has to have the judge and the human player acting in as human-like a way as possible.

Given that this is a test of understanding text, computers need to be judged against the abilities of the top few percent of copy-editors. If the questions are right, they can indicate whether the computer has understood the material culture of the other participants.

WINOGRAD SCHEMAS

The right kind of question could be based on the 1975 idea of “Winograd schemas”, pairs of sentences that differ by just one or two words that require a knowledge of the world to understand. A test for AI based on these is known as a Winograd Schema Challenge and was first proposed in 2012 as an improvement on the Turing Test.

Consider the following sentence with two possible endings: “The trophy would not fit in the suitcase because it was too small/large.” If the final word is “small”, then “it” refers to the suitcase. If the final word is “large”, then “it” refers to the trophy.

To understand this, you have to understand the cultural and practical world of trophies and

suitcases. In English-speaking society, we use language in such a way that even though a small trophy doesn’t exactly “fit” a large suitcase that’s not what a normal English speaker would mean by “fit” in this context. That’s why in normal English, if the final word is “small”, “it” has to refer to the suitcase.

You also have to understand the physical world of trophies and suitcases as well as if you had actually handled them. So a Turing Test that took this kind of approach would make a test that included an assessment of an AI’s ability to emulate a human’s physical abilities redundant.

A HIGHER BAR

This means a Turing Test based on Winograd schemas is a much better way to assess a computer’s linguistic and cultural fluency than a simple five-minute conversation. It also sets a much higher bar. All the computers in one such competition in 2016 failed miserably, and no competitors were entered from the large AI-based firms because they knew they would fail.

None of the claims that the Turing Test has already been passed mean anything if it is set up as a serious test of humanity’s distinctive abilities to create and understand culture. With a proper protocol, the test is as demanding as it needs to be. Once more, Alan Turing got it right. And, as we stand, there is no obvious route to creating machines that can participate in human culture sufficiently deeply to pass the right kind of linguistic test.

[the writer is Professor of Social Science, Cardiff University]

TMC-BJP slugfest on Durga puja turf

PRADIPTA TAPADAR KOLKATA, OCT 3 (PTI): The BJP-TMC turf war in Bengal has intensified this festive season, with the two parties leaving no stone unturned to outsmart each other in controlling the city's big-ticket Durga pujas and reach out to as many people as possible during the five-day gala.

The saffron party has decided to set up more than 10,000 stalls outside puja pandals to display books on its ideologies and educate masses on the contentious issues of National Register of Citizens (NRC) and Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

Buoyed by its stupendous performance in the Lok Sabha polls, it is now at the forefront in challenging the decade-long hegemony of the Trinamool Congress in Bengal's annual extravaganza often compared to the Rio De Janeiro carnival.

The five-day fest in Bengal is no longer just about art, culture and celebrations, as parties race to stake claim over puja committees - considered a key factor in ensuring victory in local body elections.

In the last decade, several top ministers and leaders of the ruling TMC have been seen patronising the major puja pan-

dals across the state.

The BJP now is taking the same route to push its own agenda, albeit with moderate success.

According to sources, the party had targeted 14,000 out of 28,000 puja committees in the state, but managed to get hold of only 6000, mostly in semi-urban areas.

The Bharatiya Janata Party leaders have faced stiff resistance from the TMC, which continues to have an iron fist control over these puja committees.

"The TMC doesn't allow leaders of any other political parties to be part of the puja committees. The reason is both political and financial. But still we have managed to take part in several pujas as locals are keen on having BJP leaders in the committees," state BJP leader Pratap Banerjee told PTI.

Asked the reason that makes the Durga Puja committees so lucrative, TMC leaders, who did not wish to be named, said, the party, since coming to power in 2011, has been taking control of various unions, school panels, clubs, village committees, by filling the organisations with their own men.

"Although the Left Front never actively participated in Durga Puja,



its leaders had firm control over the committees. They functioned like local-level extensions of the party, which ensured connect with the masses.

"In order to increase our mass base, our first target was to get hold of all these committees. In this endeavour, doles by the state government to Durga Puja committees came handy," said a senior TMC leader.

The TMC government, which had initially doled out Rs 10,000 to each of the 28,000 committees in the state, has increased the amount to Rs 25,000 this year.

Local clubs also receive an annual sponsorship of Rs 2 lakh from the Mamata Banerjee government.

Presently, the TMC controls nearly 80 per cent of the puja committees.

"In order to ensure

they get the doles, most of the clubs have a local influential TMC leader in their committees.

If you don't have a TMC leader, you won't get Rs 2 lakh, the message is clear," a member of a local club in North 24 Parganas district said.

But the Lok Sabha polls results earlier this year have changed several equations.

According to state BJP sources, the saffron camp with its deep pockets and growing public support has been partially successful in denting TMC's influence on these committees.

Claiming that around 1,000 puja committees in Kolkata and other parts of the state are keen on having senior BJP leaders inaugurate their pujas, the party's state president, Dilip Ghosh, asserted that

the "TMC's grip over the festival is fast loosening and the day is not far when the BJP will be in full control..."

Union home minister and the BJP national president Amit Shah, who was here on Tuesday to address a seminar on NRC, also inaugurated a puja pandal in Salt Lake, on the eastern fringes of the city.

Apart from Ghosh, Union ministers Babul Supriyo and Debasree Chaudhuri, and other senior leaders such as Rahul Sinha and Mukul Roy have been invited for pandal inauguration across Bengal.

The TMC leadership, however, asserted that the BJP, being a "north Indian" party, hardly understands the culture of Bengalis and the emotions involved with Durga Puja.

"The BJP was trying

to use money power to make some inroads, but it failed to do so," TMC secretary general Partha Chatterjee said.

With not less than 10,000 invitations from Durga Puja organisers, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is far ahead of any other politician when it comes to popularity among the masses, Chatterjee said.

According to TMC sources, Banerjee is likely to inaugurate around 100 pujas.

Senior BJP leaders said the party, in its bid to counter the ruling dispensation in the state, will distribute five lakh pamphlets on the achievements of the Modi government, including Article 370 abrogation in Jammu and Kashmir and triple talaq ban.

"We will also have book stalls outside puja pandals, with locals leaders and workers manning it. We would propagate our ideology and educate the masses on NRC and Citizenship (Amendment) Bill," state BJP general secretary Sayantan Basu stated.

The party would set up tea stalls outside some of the major puja pandals and distribute the beverage for free as part of its public connect programme - 'Chai pe Charcha', Basu added.

Farmers protest against denail of irrigation facilities, demand refund of water tax



BHAWANIPATNA (ODISHA), OCT 3 (PTI): A large number of farmers of Odisha's backward Kalahandi district held protest on Thursday against alleged denial of irrigation facilities despite collection of water tax from them for the past 26 years.

They demanded refund of the water tax collected from them so far and immediate steps by Indravati project authorities to ensure water supply to their area through the canal system.

The farmers, mostly from Talmala and Atigaon gram panchayat areas, staged a road blockade on the Hati river bridge near Junagarh crippling traffic movement on NH 26, police said.

Farmers from over 15 villages under the two panchayats staged a sit-in alleging that irrigation water of Indravati Left canal was not reaching their area during Kharif as well as Rabi seasons.

However, the revenue officials have been

collecting water tax from them without fail, claimed the agitators.

Talmala and Atigaon panchayat sarpanchs, Dusila Majhi and Himadri Majhi respectively, said that the two areas are located in the tail-end of the canal system and water is not reaching these villages ever since its commissioning in 1993. Farmers in the area are deprived of irrigation facilities though water tax had been collected from them regularly by the revenue officials during the last 26 years, they alleged.

Vehicular movement on NH 26 was stalled for around six hours due to the road blockade, which was lifted by the protesters following assurances by officials.

Jungarh tehsildar Upendra Luha assured the farmers that the matter will be looked into and appropriate steps taken to address the farmers' grievances and ensure that they get canal water, he said.

Meghalaya Durga Puja committees urged to shun plastic



Shillong, Oct 3 (PTI): The Central Puja Committee (CPC) of Meghalaya has issued an advisory to all the Durga Puja committees in the state asking them to shun the use of plastic during the festivities.

More than 200 Durga Pujas are being organised across the state from October 4 to 8, officials said.

CPC President Naba Bhattacharjee said that responding to the call of Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, the committee will put efforts to prevent use of plastic during the upcoming Durga, Kali and Chhath pujas.

"The Durga Puja committees have been asked to prevent use of plastic cups, plates and bottles and encourage the use of biodegradable items. Also, they have been urged to use eco-friendly materials for decorating the pandals (marquee)," he said.

Bhattacharjee said they have also requested the Shillong Municipal Board to open plastic collection centres at all the puja marquees.

He said the committee has also decided to introduce 'dip and lift' of idols instead of immersing them into rivers from next year to prevent pollution of the water bodies.

The CPC president said the practice of using natural dyes for painting the idols has been followed this year too.

CPC General Secretary J L Das said there would

be a total of 242 community Durga Pujas across the state, including 66 in the state capital.

"A total of 118 marquees would be set up across the four districts of the Khasi Hills region, while there would be 110 community Durga Pujas in Garo Hills region and 14 in the Jaintia Hills," he said.

Nartiang in the Jaintia Hills is home to a century-old Durga temple.

All the puja pandals would be under CCTV surveillance and there would be maximum security to prevent any untoward incident during the festivities, Das said.

The festivities began on Wednesday, with the chief minister addressing an inter-religious meet here in the presence of Shillong MP Vincent Pala, he said.

Four eminent personalities were presented with the Sarad Sanman Award, 2018 during the programme, Das said.

The CPC general secretary said the committee will undertake a cleaning drive at the immersion ghat at Polo on the banks of Wah Umkhrah river after the festivities are over on October 8.

He urged all the puja committees to immerse the idols only at the designated immersion spot.

Das said the CPC has held a series of meetings with the district administration to ensure peaceful celebration of the Durga Puja.

Kolkata Durga puja themed on refugees amid fear over NRC

KOLKATA, OCT 3 (PTI): At a time when panic over National Register of Citizens (NRC) has gripped several parts of West Bengal, a community Durga puja committee in the city has chosen "refugees" as its theme this year.

Rajdanga Naba Uday Sangha puja, one of the award winning community pujas in the city, has placed shuttlecocks and badminton rackets randomly in front of the marquee conveying the impression that "refugees are nothing but shuttlecocks lobbed to each other's side by two countries", said the puja committee's president Sushanta Ghosh.

Ghosh, a Trinamool Congress leader and chairman of Borough Number 13 of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, said that an iron fencing, erected at the marquee, symbolises "the bound-

ary which separates countries geographically but not its people".

"There will be a giant model of a bird to show that people are fettered by boundaries and can become refugees after partition but not other living beings who are far more liberated than human beings," theme artist Subrata Bandyopadhyay said.

The puja committee had started preparations since July and with 50 people working day and night at the place to recreate the effect with wood and fibreglass, Ghosh said.

Asked whether showcasing "refugees" as theme in a puja pandal will invite controversy, Ghosh said, "We have sought to protect refugees in the theme and certainly you can't ignore NRC if you take up the issue of displaced people these days."

Amidst fears that NRC could be implemented in West Bengal, large queues were seen outside Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) headquarters and other division offices in the city and BDO offices in other parts of the state as people waited for their turn in search of land and other necessary documents.

Last year, a Durga Puja committee at Haridevpur area in south Kolkata had made a theme relating to NRC and interpreted the plight of those affected by the exercise in a different way.

As Kolkata pujas have always themed their celebrations on contemporary issues, the Friends United Club in Burra bazar has, this year, attempted to recreate the Balakot air strike with its marquee displaying models of IAF personnel, a fighter aircraft and dead militants.

India, Bangladesh likely to sign MoU for new waterway



AGARTALA, OCT 3 (PTI): India and Bangladesh are likely to sign an MoU for a new waterway to connect Gomati river in Tripura and Meghna river in Bangladesh during the four-day trip of Bangladesh Premier Sheikh Hasina beginning from Thursday, Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb said.

Hasina will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi during her visit, he said.

Deb is leaving for New Delhi on Thursday to meet the Bangladesh prime minister, officials said.

Bangladesh Premier Sheikh Hasina will meet our Prime Minister Narendra Modi during her four-day trip beginning today and a wide range of bilateral issues would be discussed," Deb said at a function here.

If the MoU is signed by them a new protocol route between Bangladesh and India will be opened by connecting Gomati and Meghna rivers. It would facilitate

carriage of goods from Ashuganj port on Meghna river in Brahmanbaria district of Bangladesh to Sonamura in Sipahijala district of Tripura, he said.

Movement of vessels on Gomati river for providing waterway connectivity to Tripura would be possible only after the inclusion of the stretch between Sonamura in Tripura's Sepahijala district and Daudkandi in Comilla district of Bangladesh as part of the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route, Deb said.

The chief minister had in June sought the permission of the shipping ministry through an official letter for construction of a temporary jetty on Gomati river and declaration of the stretch of it from Sonamura in Tripura's Sepahijala district to Daudkandi in Comilla district of Bangladesh as waterway connectivity of the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route.

At present ships and

steamers ply from Haldia in West Bengal to Daudkandi in Bangladesh, which is only 80 km from Tripura's Sonamura sub-division in Sepahijala district.

"Chittagong port was constructed for better transportation in the entire eastern region. But due to partition of the country there is no access of us (India) to the port. The issue will be discussed in today's meeting," the Tripura chief minister said.

This meeting will bear fruits for Tripura. The state will get the maximum benefit if the access to Chittagong port is given. Not only Tripura the entire north eastern region will be benefitted if the access to the port can be obtained, he added.

Chittagong port is just 70 km from Sabroom, a town near the Indo-Bangladesh border in Tripura's South district and is well connected to Agraata by roads and railways now.

Earthquake of 4.8 magnitude hits Manipur, two injured

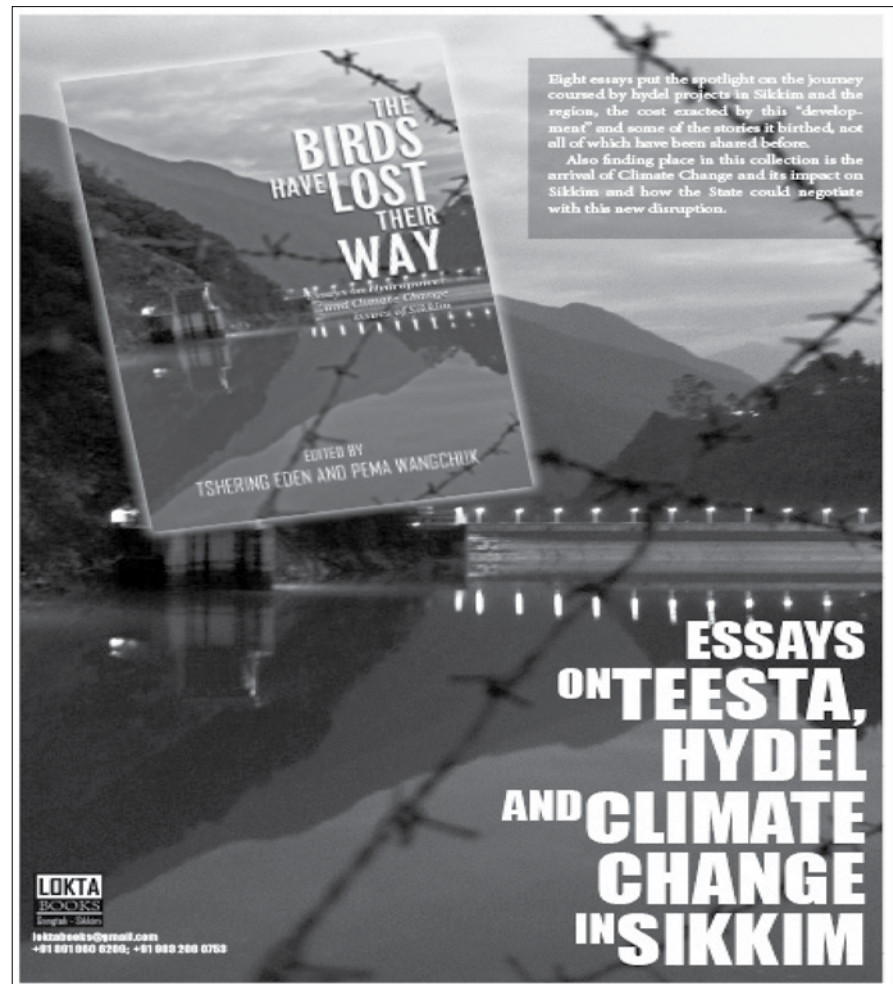
IMPHAL, OCT 3 (PTI): At least two persons were injured in Manipur after a 4.8-magnitude earthquake hit the state on Thursday morning, police said.

The quake that occurred at 11.54 am

had its epicentre at a depth of 40 km in Imphal district, said a report of the Meteorological Department.

Two persons were seriously injured after roof of a building collapsed at Wangkhei

Andro bus parking area in Imphal East district due to the earthquake, said an officer of Porompat police station. The injured persons were rushed to a nearby hospital, he added.



Mo Salah earns jittery Liverpool 4-3 win after RB Salzburg storm back

ANDY HUNTER
THEGUARDIAN
Jürgen Klopp had predicted a wild night and found little pleasure in being proved right. By the end, the victorious Liverpool manager sported a face like thunder while his beaten counterpart, Jesse Marsch, indulged in fist-pump celebrations in front of the Salzburg supporters. At least Mohamed Salah stuck to the script.

The Egypt international struck the 17th and 18th European goals of his Liverpool career as the European champions survived a stirring Salzburg comeback to kickstart the defence of their title. Salah's first of the night swept Liverpool into a three-goal lead after 36 minutes. Klopp's warning about the threat and adventure of the Austrian champions appeared the product of an overactive imagination at that stage. Liverpool were dominant, then unhinged

by Marsch's switch to a midfield diamond. Their defence was easily overrun by a visiting attack led with finesse and guile by Hwang Hee-chan. By the hour the lead had gone. Erling Haaland emerged from the bench to draw Salzburg level. Marsch cavorted down the touchline like a young José Mourinho at Old Trafford. Salah's second restored a sense of European order and Liverpool's superiority, though not Salzburg's exuberant post-match celebrations.

Klopp's introduction of James Milner for Jordan Henderson, and into a more defensive midfield role than the captain, helped Liverpool halt the recovery and the flow of Salzburg attacks. The mature reaction to blowing a three-goal cushion underlined the expertise of a European champion and the final stages passed without trouble. Salzburg's fightback and the unease it spread throughout the Liverpool defence, however, will have concerned the winning manager.

"It was far away from being a perfect game but it was a typical Liverpool game, very exciting and never over until the final whistle," said Klopp. "I thought after the final whistle that I was angry but then I realised I wasn't angry. I respect the performance of the opponent and we did



some good things in the game. We can do better and we will do better."

Liverpool looked confidently on course for a 23rd consecutive home game without defeat in Europe following their first incisive attack. Salzburg's four-man midfield was prised apart ruthlessly in the opening half hour with the hosts revelling in the space down both flanks. The appearance would prove deceptive but

there was no doubting the quality and control of the Liverpool performance as they sauntered into a commanding lead.

Sadio Mané began the scoring when Andy Robertson found him unmarked on the left, a recurring theme, and the striker drifted inside Rasmus Kristensen before exchanging passes with Roberto Firmino. The return ball from the Brazilian was, as usual, perfectly weighted and

the former Salzburg player slipped a confident finish past the advancing Cican Stankovic. Mané's celebrations were restrained against the club where he scored 45 goals in 87 appearances. Not so Robertson's when he scored for only the second time in a Liverpool shirt. The Scotland captain was the one Liverpool defender to meet his usual standards and rewarded with an excellent goal at the end of a move he instigated. Robertson, like Mané for the opener, drifted inside the Salzburg midfield without resistance. Henderson released Trent Alexander-Arnold and the left-back continued his run to the near post where he met the right-back's low delivery with a precise side-foot finish. It was his first Liverpool goal since May 2018 and the presence of a left-back inside Salzburg's six-yard box demonstrated the range of attacking threats unleashed by Klopp.

Liverpool were in the comfort zone when Salah made it three with just over a third of the game gone, converting from close range after Stankovic dealt weakly with Firmino's close-range header. Too comfortable for their own good, it transpired.

Salzburg had threatened in flashes but unnerved the Liverpool defence and Joe Gomez in particular whenever they broke in numbers. The comeback commenced shortly before the interval when Henderson's pass was intercepted and Enock Mwepu released the highly impressive Hwang into the area. The striker's first touch took him away from Gomez, then he cut back inside Virgil van Dijk and beat Adrián with an emphatic finish. Liverpool, and Anfield, grew increasingly edgy.

They squandered several inviting openings before Hwang crossed for the equally

impressive Takumi Minamino to steer a fine volley past the Liverpool keeper. Salzburg's celebrations were enhanced by the introduction of Haaland, the prolific young striker who was left out of the starting lineup due to illness. Three minutes later, to the shock of Klopp and delight of the striker's father Alfie, looking on, he drew the Austrians level. Hwang and Mwepu combined to release Minamino and his low cross sailed beyond Van Dijk and Gomez. The unmarked Haaland tapped into an empty net.

It fell to Salah to dig Liverpool out of trouble. Dominik Szoboszlai, too hesitant throughout, was beaten to a clearance by Fabinho and Firmino teed up his fellow striker with an intelligent header into the area. Salah exploded on to the opportunity and gave Stankovic no chance with the finish. Liverpool departed relieved and reprieved.

ATK made me feel most wanted: Roy Krishna

Kolkata, Oct 3 (PTI): About 140 years after his ancestors sailed off from here to the south-pacific archipelago Fiji in search of better opportunities, Roy Krishna is back where it all began in his bid to reconnect the dots.

The 32-year-old, who won the Golden Boot (18 goals, four assists, 25 games) for Wellington Phoenix in the A-League last season, is the biggest signing of ATK this season.



When ATK contacted the Fiji captain earlier this year, Roy Krishna could not turn it down as it coincided with the 140th year of Girmityas (indentured labourers from India) landing in Fiji in search of better opportunities, his ancestors were also part of them.

"It marks the start of a similar journey to return to the same where it all began. This was my first time here during the Puja. The city is very good. Coming here, it feels at home," Krishna, who has 23 goals in 35 appearances, said in his first interaction here.

"ATK made me feel 'most wanted' and I could not turn it down. It kind of made me feel that my ancestors were asking me to come back. I want to reconnect with my roots," Krishna, who is the only player from 148th ranked Fiji to score a goal in the 2013 FIFA Club World Cup, said.

Despite the intense training sessions, Krishna has managed to visit a few pandals here.

"It's a blessing to be here during the Durga Puja festival. It was really good to go out there and see the pandals," he said.

"Training is very intense and so far it's been very good. The players are gelling well. It's great to be here," the Fijian's goal-scoring prowess said.

Asked about his opinion on Indian football, Krishna said: "In 2006, India came to Fiji and played a few games. I saw the team and got to know about the leagues. I also watched a few ISL games. The Indian players are very tough and play aggressive."

Roy Krishna began his career with Waitakere United in the New Zealand Football Championship as he also

trained with Wellington Phoenix, but wasn't offered a new contract.

During that time, it was also reported that PSV Eindhoven would sign him, but the move didn't materialise.

With United, Krishna scored 55 goals in 75 appearances.

For the 2013-14 season, Krishna moved to Auckland City, who played in ASB Premiership and were also rivals to his previous outfit.

In January 2013, Roy moved to Wellington as his value has gone up since then and he has scored 51 goals in 122 appearances.

Boxer Sarita Devi signed up by Fast&Up

MUMBAI, OCT 3 (PTI): Former World Champion boxer L Sarita Devi has signed up with Fast&Up, a company that produces nutrition supplements and drinks.

Sarita is currently participating at the World Championships in Russia, where a gold or silver will ensure her direct entry for the Olympic Qualifier in Wuhan, China.

"This is a very important phase in my career where everything depends on my qualification for 2020 Tokyo Olympics. At such an important juncture, support from Fast&Up surely means a lot to me," said the 37-year-old.

"Fast&Up helps me in enhancing my game by boosting my strength, stamina and overall fitness."

Sarita emphasised on



post-training recovery and rest to stay on top of her game.

"While experience is of great value in sports, as we get older a lot of emphasis needs to be given on post-training, post-match recovery. It is extremely important," she said.

"I am happy that we have access to good hydration and nutrition in India now. I am sure Fast&Up which is being

used by many international athletes will help me in my endeavour too."

She also expressed confidence of doing well at the World Championships in Russia.

"I am well-prepared mentally and physically to win a medal here in Russia. I have worked a lot on my speed, foot work, agility and faster punches," said the decorated boxer, who

will part part in 60kg category at the prestigious tournament.

Fast&Up recently announced the signing of long-distance runner Govindan Lakshmanan.

The company is in partnership with over 100 Indian athletes which include Indian Test opener Mayank Agarwal, table tennis player Sathiyann Gnanasekaran and footballer Iain Hume.

Double centurion Agarwal puts India on top in first Test



BHARAT SHARMA
VISAKHAPATNAM, OCT 3 (PTI): Mayank Agarwal showed insatiable appetite for runs, converting his maiden Test hundred into a brilliant double before the Indian spinners tightened the noose around the exhausted South Africans on the second day of the series opener here on Thursday.

Playing his first Test in India, Agarwal showed remarkable concentration and endurance for his monumental 215 off 371 balls that allowed the hosts to declare their first innings at 502 for seven in 136 overs.

In response, South Africa were staring down the barrel at close of play, losing Aiden Markram (5), Theunis de Bruyn (4) and night watchman Dane Piedt (0) under floodlights to be 39 for three for in 20 overs, trailing India by 463 runs.

Ravichandran Ashwin provided the breakthroughs by getting through the defences of Markram with a classical off-break that turned sharply. He then had De Bruyn caught behind before Ravindra Jadeja crashed through Piedt's defences.

While day one was all about Rohit Sharma

(176 off 244), the second day certainly belonged to Agarwal, who made full use of friendly batting conditions.

Barring lead pacer Vernon Philander, the South African bowling put up an ordinary show with their three specialist spinners failing to get much out of the dry and slow surface.

Rohit and Agarwal, who began the day on 115 and 84 respectively with India at 202 for no loss, converted their opening partnership into a record breaking one with a 317-run stand before lunch.

With their massive stand, they surpassed Virender Sehwag and Rahul Dravid to record India's highest partnership for any wicket against South Africa.

Agarwal stole the show after Rohit's departure and keeping the requirement of the team in mind, increased the intensity of his innings. His first hundred came off 204 balls and second off 154 balls.

The Bengaluru-based cricketer, whose previous four Tests were in Australia and West Indies, collected 23 fours and six maximums, most of them coming against the spinners.

He batted for the majority of the afternoon session, which was extended by 30 minutes to make up for overs lost due to rain on the first day.

Agarwal's memorable knock came to end when he smashed a full ball from Dean Elgar towards deep mid-wicket and a diving Piedt took a diving catch.

At tea, India coasted to 450 for five, scoring 126 runs in the session at the loss of four wickets.

South Africa struck through pacer Vernon Philander first ball after lunch, raising hopes of a South African fightback. Cheteshwar Pujara (6) was the man dismissed, bowled off a Philander beauty that moved away just enough to rattle his off-stump.

Captain Virat Kohli (20) joined Agarwal in the middle and looked in sublime touch during his short stay.

He was disappointed to get out after getting set. A regulation ball stopped on Kohli, who ended up offering a simple return catch to debutant Senuran Muthuswamy, giving the South African his first international wicket.

In the morning session, Agarwal completed his maiden Test hun-

dred while Rohit Sharma made 176 on his opening debut.

Rohit, who too hit 23 fours and half a dozen sixes like Agarwal, was eventually dismissed in the 83rd over. At lunch, India were 324 for one in 88 overs with the host scoring 122 runs in the session at 4.28 runs per over.

Like on day one, Philander created some discomfort for the batsmen in the opening hour but apart from that, it was smooth sailing for the home team.

Rohit was dropped on 125 off Philander when keeper Quinton de Kock, who was standing up to the stumps, fumbled to take a sharp catch.

Two balls from Philander kept low, taking both Rohit and Agarwal by surprise but after that they toyed with the opposition attack. They got the boundaries at will, especially against the spinners and with the surface not doing much, playing reverse sweep became less risky.

After reaching three figures with a single, Agarwal stepped up the offensive. He dispatched Dane Piedt for a massive six over deep mid-wicket before reverse sweeping him for a four in the same over.

Man held for targeting, kidnapping loan agents

NEW DELHI, OCT 3 (PTI): Delhi police arrested a 24-year-old man from Jaipur for allegedly running a racket that kidnapped loan agents and demanded ransom from their families, officials said on Thursday.

Shamim was also wanted for allegedly abducting and sexually assaulting a minor girl in his native Mewat district in Haryana, they said.

On September 3, the accused had called a Delhi-based loan commission agent to Gurgaon on the pretext of a loan query and kidnapped him. He then called the agent's family and demanded Rs 10 lakh for his release, a senior police officer said.

The ransom was later negotiated to Rs 50,000.

But the agent's family deposited only Rs 15,000 in his bank account and the money was withdrawn from an ATM in Mewat, police said. On getting the money, Shamim released the agent, they said. Following a complaint by the agent's

wife, a case was registered at Gulabi Bagh police station in Delhi. Shamim was arrested after an analysis of phone call records and CCTV camera footage of the area from where the agent was kidnapped, said Monika Bhardwaj, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North).

Death toll rises to 18 as Iraq protests spread across south

The death toll from mass rallies in Iraq against corruption and unemployment rose to 18 on Thursday, as the leaderless protest movement spread to virtually all of the south.

Braving live fire, tear gas and local curfews, Iraqis flooded the streets for a third day in the biggest challenge yet to Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi.

The embattled premier ordered a ban on all movement across the capital starting at 5:00 am (0200 GMT), but dozens of protesters defied the order and gathered in Baghdad's emblematic Tahrir (Liberation) Square.

"We slept here so the police don't take the place," one demonstrator told AFP before riot police fired into the air in a bid to disperse them.

The protests began in Baghdad on Tuesday but have since spread to cities across the mainly Shiite south.

On Thursday, medics and security sources told AFP that four protesters were shot dead in the southern city of Amarah and another in the province of Dhi Qar.

The new deaths bring the overall toll from three days of demonstrations to 18, including one police officer.

More than 600 protesters and security personnel have been wounded.

Tensions have been



exacerbated by a near-total internet blackout, the closure of government offices in Baghdad and calls by firebrand cleric Moqtada al-Sadr for "a general strike."

Before dawn twin explosions hit the Green Zone, where some ministries and embassies are located and which was struck by two rockets last week, a security source in the area told AFP.

The apparent attack came hours after security forces sealed off the compound "until further notice" just a few months after reopening it to the public, fearing angry protesters would overrun it.

- Iraq 'largely offline' -

In the city of Kut, two protesters were killed overnight after they tried to storm a local government office, medics and security sources told AFP. Another two demonstrators died further south in Nasiriyah, which has so far seen the deadliest rallies with a total of eight protesters and one police officer killed.

Riot police have used water cannons, tear gas,

rubber bullets and live rounds in an attempt to force protesters away from main squares or government buildings.

The worst violence has taken place at night and Iraqis have braced themselves for larger gatherings once darkness falls on Thursday.

The previous evening in Baghdad, marches from different neighbourhoods attempted to converge on Tahrir Square.

But with internet access virtually shut off, demonstrators have struggled to communicate with each other or post footage of the latest clashes.

Approximately 75 percent of Iraq is "offline" after major network operators "intentionally restricted" access, according to cybersecurity monitor NetBlocks.

In the Shiite holy city of Najaf and in Nasiriyah on Wednesday, security forces fired on protesters and announced curfews.

The protests appear to be largely spontaneous so far, with angry

crowds carrying Iraqi flags and shunning any involvement by the country's main political players.

Many traditional figures have expressed their support for the movement, with Sadr urging "peaceful demonstrations."

He was behind the last round of major protests in Baghdad in 2016, when his supporters stormed the Green Zone, but his involvement appears much more limited this time.

- 'De-escalation needed' -

On Wednesday night, the top United Nations official in Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with some protesters in Baghdad to call for "direct dialogue" between them and government officials.

"The ability to preserve the right to protest is a sign of political and democratic maturity. Moreover, the use of force only fuels the anger," she said in a statement.

"De-escalation is urgently needed."

The violence has drawn criticism from Iraqi President Barham Saleh, and parliament has demanded an investigation.

The protests follow months of simmering frustration over chronic power cuts, water shortages and state corruption.

But anger over youth unemployment, which stands at around 25 percent, or double the overall rate, according to the World Bank, appears to have set off this particular round of demonstrations.

"We want jobs and better public services. We've been demanding them for years and the government has never responded," said Abdallah Walid, a 27-year-old protester.

Demonstrations over similar issues engulfed the southern city of Basra last summer and effectively ended Abdel Mahdi's predecessor Haider al-Abadi's chances of a second term.

The incumbent now faces a similar challenge just weeks before his government completes a year in power.

He called for the curfew after convening his national security council for an emergency meeting on Wednesday.

Abdel Mahdi has blamed the violence on "aggressors who... deliberately created casualties," a statement that infuriated protesters.

Britain's Johnson sets out defence of new Brexit plan



British Prime Minister Boris Johnson met his senior ministers on Thursday before setting out on a delicate mission to convince sceptical EU leaders to back his new Brexit plan.

Johnson is racing against time and facing headwinds across European capitals as he tries to rally support for a new approach to settling the three-and-a-half-year crisis.

Failure to get both the EU and his own fractured parliament to back his plan will result in either a crash exit for Britain or a third Brexit delay this year.

If he succeeds, Johnson could embark on an even longer and more complex stage of the process, working to negotiate a new trade agreement with the EU.

UK Brexit Secretary Steve Barclay said all sides had to start real talks on Johnson's outline by the weekend to have any chance to get a deal in time for an October 17-18 EU leaders' summit in Brussels.

"We need to move forward at pace, intensively," he told BBC radio. "The response from the (EU) Commission is that they recognise that this was a serious proposal and I think all sides want to see a deal."

"All sides recognise that the alternative, no deal, is disruptive."

Johnson was due to set out his vision in parliament on Thursday morning after meeting cabinet ministers in Downing Street.

- 'Very good chance' -

Johnson's complicated proposals for preserving a free-flowing border across the island of Ireland after Brexit were met with a guarded reception in Brussels and Dublin. "There is progress, but to be frank a lot of work still needs to be done," the EU's lead Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier said.

European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker used a call with Johnson to share concerns about what he said were "problematic points".

In Dublin, Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said the documents "do not fully meet the agreed objectives" for keeping Ireland's border with British province Northern Ireland invisible.

But Johnson appeared to have won vital backing from some members of the UK parliament who had repeatedly rejected the deal former prime minister Theresa May struck with the EU in 2017.

These included more moderate members of the main opposition Labour Party and some of the most ardent eurosceptics among Johnson's own Conservatives.

"It's got a very good chance of getting through," Johnson's no-deal Brexit preparations point man Michael Gove told ITV television on Wednesday night.

"It seems to be a pretty solid majority, and it's one that the EU can take reassurance from as well because one of the concerns that the EU had in the past (was that) look, if we make a concession, will it get through parliament?"

Johnson was expected to continue phoning European leaders and possibly setting off on a few trips in the coming days to keep his proposals alive.

His strategy tackles the Irish border issue by taking Northern Ireland out of the EU customs union but keeping it aligned with Ireland's rules and regulations for goods.

This would effectively create two temporary economic borders -- including one in the Irish Sea between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland.

Malaysia threatens ride-hailing firm Grab with \$21 million fine

Malaysia's competition watchdog on Thursday threatened to hit Grab with a \$21 million fine for practices that allegedly reduce competition, the latest problem for the ride-hailing giant.

Grab is the biggest ride-hailing firm in Southeast Asia, and has strengthened its hold on the market since buying US rival Uber's operations in the region last year.

But the Singapore-headquartered firm has come under scrutiny from regulators in several countries due to concerns about its dominant position.

The Malaysia Competition Commission proposed fining Grab almost 87 million ringgit (\$21 million) for preventing its drivers from providing advertising services for the company's com-

petitors.

This had the effect of "distorting competition" by creating barriers to Grab's rivals, it said.

"It is important that barriers to entry for new players remain low, and for existing players to have the ability to grow and compete on merits to ensure that competition can remain healthy," said Iskandar Ismail, the watchdog's chief executive.

In addition, a daily penalty of 15,000 ringgit will be imposed should Grab fail to take action to address the competition concerns.

Grab has 30 days to respond to the watchdog, after which a final decision will be made.

The company said they had complied fully with competition laws and were "surprised" by the proposed fine.

Killer Japanese fungus found in Australia

One of the world's deadliest fungi has been discovered in Australia's far north for the first time -- thousands of miles from its native habitat in the mountains of Japan and Korea.

The Poison Fire Coral fungus was discovered in a suburb of Cairns by a local photographer and subsequently identified by scientists, James Cook University announced Thursday.

Several people have died in Japan and Korea after mistaking the bright red fungi for edible mushrooms that are used in traditional medicine, and brewing it into a tea.

James Cook University mycologist Matt Barrett, who confirmed the identity of the toxic mushroom found in Australia, said the discovery extends its known distri-



bution "considerably".

Poison Fire Coral is the only known mushroom with toxins that can be absorbed through the skin, and causes a "horrific" array of symptoms if eaten, including vomiting, diarrhoea, fever and numbness.

If left untreated, it can cause multiple organ failure or brain damage leading to death.

"The fact that we can find such a distinctive and medically important fungus like Poison Fire Coral right in our backyard shows we have much to learn about fun-

gi in northern Australia," Barrett said.

Ray Palmer, a self-described "fungi fanatic" who found the specimen told AFP he had spent the past decade photographing various fungi in the rainforest surrounding his home city of Cairns.

"It didn't surprise me because I have been finding quite a few things over the years," he said.

"No one traipses around the rainforest up here photographing fungi. There are quite a few (more) things to be found and they probably will be in the coming years."

Nike risks being burned by Salazar doping scandal

With Nike-backed athletics coach Alberto Salazar slapped with a four-year ban for doping, the US sports-wear giant risks being caught up in the scandal -- its CEO is even quoted in the suspension ruling.

The American anti-doping authority USADA -- citing experiments with testosterone, fat-burning amino acid injections, and falsified medical documents -- said in its report the highest-profile track and field coach in the world had attempted to use prohibited methods on multiple athletes.

Mentioned in the document -- prepared by an independent panel for USADA -- was Mark Parker, the CEO of

Nike, which has sponsored Salazar for decades.

Parker was copied on several emails about research done by Salazar and the Nike Oregon Project (NOP), a group created in 2001 by the three-time New York Marathon winner.

The alleged program was for athletes competing at 5,000 and 10,000 meters but not for sprint races, according to the agency.

In a 2011 email to Parker, Salazar explains he had given one of the NOP coaches a test injection of a liter of an amino acid and dextrose (glucose) mixture -- a dose clearly above what would be allowed under World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) regulations.

In another email to Parker two years later, Jeffrey Brown, a doctor who worked with the NOP, described experiments with testosterone gel.

Parker responded to Brown, "It will be interesting to determine the minimal amount of topical male hormone required to create a positive test."

In an email obtained by AFP after it was sent to employees on Tuesday, Parker wrote "I had no reason to believe the test was outside any rules," as the experiment was carried out with a medical doctor.

These tests were done in response to Salazar's concern that an athlete might be sabotaged by someone secretly contaminating

them with the gel, Parker said.

"As a runner, I was appalled and shocked that this could be the case," the CEO said.

"Nike did not participate in any effort to systematically dope any runners ever; the very idea makes me sick," Parker wrote.

USADA Chief Executive Travis Tygart was scathing, telling German broadcaster ZDF that Salazar had used athletes as "guinea pigs".

He added, "I hope Nike sees this as a wake-up call."

Salazar's best-known athlete is Britain's Mo Farah, who won four gold medals at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics at 5,000m and 10,000m.

Farah, who has nev-

er tested positive, said in response to Salazar's suspension he left the NOP in 2017 and that he has "no tolerance for anyone who breaks the rules or crosses the line".

- 'Swooshes on time-bombs' -

Nike stock was down 1.33 percent at \$91.05 midway through trading Wednesday, having hit its highest price ever on Monday. The Dow overall was down 1.85 percent.

The brand has posted glowing results for several quarters, bolstered by its reorientation towards online sales and its performance in China.

Could the Salazar slam the brakes on its upward movement?

"Nike's history is full

of supporting dopers, of doped federations," former runner Lauren Fleshman, a Nike-sponsored athlete for nine years until 2012, tweeted on Tuesday.

"They look the other way even when it's clear to everyone else that something is rotten," she said.

Nike continued to officially support cyclist Lance Armstrong in 2012 immediately after the publication of USADA's report showing damning evidence of doping against him and his team -- before dropping him a few days later.

In June 2016, Nike maintained its contract with tennis player Maria Sharapova, who was suspended for two years for doping.

The clothing brand also stood by basketball player Kobe Bryant, accused of rape in 2003, and golfer Tiger Woods, during an adultery scandal in 2009.

And it continued its association with US sprinter Justin Gatlin, who served a ban for doping before returning to win world titles.

In September 2018, Nike made waves when it released an advertising campaign featuring US football player and activist Colin Kaepernick, criticized for kneeling during the US national anthem at games in protest at racism.

"Nike is having a public reckoning right now," tweeted Fleshman, who competed at 5,000m in three world

championships.

She also recalled that Nike was revealed to have been penalising pregnant athletes, a policy it revised in May after coming under pressure from track veteran and new mother Allyson Felix.

And Fleshman criticized their ads, including one featuring Serena Williams and other female athletes in light of the recent scandal.

"If you make ads about moms kicking ass but you suspend pregnant women without pay while preventing them from making money elsewhere - If you make ads about the purity of sport while funding the underbelly that erodes it - that's a problem."



THE TALK! The actress, Natalie Portman sat down with the talk show host, Jimmy Fallon and shared a few laughs during her interview.

Billie Eilish explains how she turned everything upside down for stunning 'SNL' performance

Billie Eilish has revealed how she managed to pull off her stunning Saturday Night Live performance in a new video.

The singer made her SNL debut on the first episode of the popular NBC comedy series' 45th season last Saturday (September 28). It saw Eilish perform her hit song 'bad guy' inside a small rotating set that made it appear as if she was walking on walls and dancing on the ceiling.

In a new behind-the-scenes video, Eilish explained how it was inspired by a scene from Fred Astaire's Royal Wedding where the dancer appears to walk on walls and ceilings. The clip also reveals how the singer was positioned in a mind-bending revolving rig, which continually moved as the singer performed inside it.

"I have two sprained ankles. So I have a boot and a brace and had to figure out how to be safe," she said. "It's pretty disorientating.

"It's never scary, but it's pretty fun."

The performance came after it



was confirmed that Eilish will head out on her 'Where Do We Go' arena tour next year, teaming up with non-profit eco organisation Reverb.

She told Jimmy Fallon: "We're actually bringing someone from Reverb, this company that basically specialises in the best and most

healthy and green ways to do everything. So there's no plastic straws allowed, the fans are going to bring their own water bottles, there's going to be recycle cans everywhere, because it's like, if something's recyclable, it doesn't matter unless there's a recycle bin."

Cardi B Says Her Next Album Will Be Named After Tiger Woods

Over the past month or so, Cardi B has been open about the status of her upcoming music. A couple weeks ago, she hopped on Instagram live to tell fans about her plans for the rest of 2019, and now she has again used Instagram to share more info about her upcoming work. The latest update: Her new album might have a title.

In an Instagram live video, Cardi said she wants to name her new album Tiger Woods and explained the meaning behind the title, saying, "I don't know if I'm even going

to drop music this year anymore, because everything that I'm working on right now is straight to my album, and I think I'm going to name my album Tiger Woods. I'm going to name my album, I think, Tiger Woods, because, remember when everybody was talking sh*t on Tiger Woods [...] and then he f*cking came and won that green jacket? That's what I'm going to name my album."

In Cardi's previous Instagram live dispatch, she shared an update about progress on her new al-



bum, saying she has at least a few songs from it ready to go: "My plan is to take a couple of months working on my album, and right after I finish my album, I'm going to rehearse for a tour. I'm already work-

ing on a tour deal. Point is that everything's been going good. I'm working on my album, I already have two songs. I actually got three, but I'm not sure about one of them. I'm working on it."

Joker review – the most disappointing film of the year



The year's biggest disappointment has arrived. It emerges with weirdly grownup self-importance from the tulip fever of festival awards season as an upscale spin on an established pop culture brand. Last year we had Luca Guadagnino's solemn version of Suspiria, and now it's Joker, from director and co-writer Todd Phillips: a new origin myth for Batman's most famous supervillain opponent.

Joaquin Phoenix plays Arthur Fleck, a pathetic loser and loner in Gotham City, some time in the early 1980s. Arthur is a former inpatient at a psychiatric facility but is now allowed to live with his elderly mother, Penny (Frances Conroy), in her scuzzy apartment. Poor Arthur has a neurological condition that means he is liable to break into screeching laughter at inopportune moments. He has a crush on his single-mom neighbour Sophie (Zazie Beetz) and pines to be a comedian, hero-worshipping cheesy TV host Murray Franklin (Robert De Niro). But he can only get a job as a clown in grinning makeup and floppy-toed shoes twirling an advertising banner outside a store, where he is bullied and beaten up by young thugs passing by. One day, after the humiliation and despair become too much to bear, Arthur gets hold of a gun and discovers that his talent is not for comedy but violence.

Phillips has already directed a film featuring a brilliant unfunny-funny figure with learning difficulties: Alan in The Hangover (2009), played by Zach Galifianakis, that strange dysfunctional figure who mispronounces the noun "retard". I wonder what Joker would be like with Galifianakis in the lead. Well, the casting of Phoenix indicates more clearly how sexy Joker is supposed to be.

There is great production design by Mark Friedberg, some tremendous period cityscape images by cinematographer Lawrence Sher, and a strong performance by Phoenix, though not his best – it is not as good as his appearance in Paul Thomas Anderson's The Master (2012). The film holds your attention up until Joker's terrible revenge bloodbath on the subway early on, perhaps intended to echo the notorious Bernhard Goetz shooting of 1984 – although Phillips prudently makes it a non-racist attack. After this, the film loses your interest, with tedious and forced material about Joker's supposed triggering of an anti-capitalist, anti-rich movement with protesters dressing as clowns. Joker's own crim-

inal and serial-killer career bafflingly fizzles.

The film references movies from around the drama's era, such as the Death Wish films, The French Connection and maybe even Star Wars, but it's more obviously a laborious and pointless homage to the Scorsese/De Niro classic The King of Comedy (1982) with a bit of Taxi Driver (1976), which means that at various moments it's a bit like The King of Comedy and Taxi Driver, only not as good.

The connection is signalled by the casting of De Niro himself, but it is nonetheless unearned and pedantic, especially compared to Lynne Ramsey's You Were Never Really Here (2017), also starring Phoenix as a loner living with his mom, which managed the connection more adroitly.

The whole idea of the malignant clown should be very relevant. We live in an era of trolling, incels and internet bullying. (The grisly Milo Yiannopoulos described himself as a "supervillain" on his now cancelled Twitter bio.) There's nothing wrong and everything right with engaging with all of this – and the "copycat" row is a red herring. But, perhaps because online aggression is difficult to dramatise, Phillips understandably wanted his film to be set in a pre-web age. Yet he cheats an anachronistic quasi-YouTube moment into his story when a video of Arthur's catastrophic attempt at standup comedy somehow emerges. (I wonder if there wasn't an earlier, contemporary-set draft of the script.)

This Joker's genesis is determinedly mature and uncanny, compared to, say, Jack Nicholson's low-level crook Jack Napier falling into a chemical vat in Tim Burton's Batman (1989), turning him into the Joker with white skin, green hair and a rictus grin. (The look of DC's Joker was originally inspired by Conrad Veidt in the 1928 silent classic The Man Who Laughs, a man whose face was disfigured into a grin by his father's political enemies.)

There is no reason why Phoenix's elaborately backstoried Joker shouldn't be as powerful as Heath Ledger's mysterious, motiveless, originless Joker in The Dark Knight (2008). But at some stage the comic-book world of supervillaindom has to be entered, and Ledger was more powerful because he wasn't weighed down with all this realist detail and overblown ironic noir grandeur, and he wasn't forced to carry an entire story on his own. This Joker has just one act in him: the first act. The film somehow manages to be desperately serious and very shallow.

DEAR READERS,
IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING YOUR COPY OF THE SUMMIT TIMES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD, PLEASE MESSAGE OR WHATSAPP US YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AT 9832556698 AND WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE NEWSPAPER REACHES YOU.

ARIES: Self-care is not just about sneaking in a blow-dry at lunch or making it for your spa appointment once a month. It's about understanding where you are energetically, and nurturing yourself on a mind, body and soul level. Remember, saying yes to yourself sometimes requires you to say no to the world. When it comes to your relationships, you are understanding the importance of interdependence. Learning to be self-reliant in every way promises to change your equation with the world.

Tip: Nurture yourself.

TAURUS:

While things on the professional front are looking up for you, matters at home may become a cause of distress. Don't let this set off a chain reaction, one that will eventually affect every area of your life. Instead, make a conscious effort to sit down with the family and resolve matters. Yes, despite your resistance. There's nothing mutual understanding cannot solve, Taurus.

GEMINI:

Gemini, you are a reservoir of wonderful ideas. It's time to give them a concrete form through

clarity of thought. Spend some time today building on an idea with major potential. Evaluate it from every possible angle and then start laying down its foundation. With the right strategy, you'll be ready to hit the jackpot.

Tip: Give your brilliant idea a concrete form.

CANCER:

Slow and steady, who? You're more of a fast and furious girl, one who is determined to win the race at all costs. The complacency and self-negating patterns that once held you back no longer have power over you. Your 'go forth and conquer' attitude is not only setting things in motion but also opening doors that have been closed. Stop and smell the roses. Or not. There will be plenty of time to do all that and more once you hit the finish line.

Tip: This is a time of movement and progression.

LEO:

Two words: creative destruction. If there's anything your path has taught you, it's that everything transpires for a reason, including the so-called bad stuff. This phase of your life is making you aware of the clutter you have been lugging around, and the negative beliefs that no longer fit

in the new narrative. Let the truth help you journey back to yourself. You are in the process of becoming the boldest, most empowered version of yourself.

Tip: Creative destruction.

VIRGO:

Virgo, you are that rare and precious soul who brings the qualities of love, kindness, and compassion into the workspace. But how much is too much and where does one draw the line? Don't let your emotions keep you from making wise decisions and living your boss babe potential. You have been given the throne for a reason.

Tip: Be fair and just in all your dealings.

LIBRA:

Some of you may be in the mood to slip out for a mid afternoon delight. Spoiler alert: so is boo. It's all good in the hood as long as the CCTV camera doesn't capture you. In the realm of work, you are experiencing a renewed sense of passion. Continue to move swiftly in the right direction. Your willpower is opening new doors for you.

Tip: Pursue that which sets your heart ablaze.

SCORPIO:

A new day begins every 24 hours, a new year

every 365 days. The sun rises and we call it day. When it sets it becomes night. Ergo, everything on this planet follows a set cycle. Look closer and you will realise your body follows a set cycle too. The reason you are feeling stuck is because something is interrupting the natural rhythm of your body. Let go of the idea of how things are supposed to be and allow them to flow. It is the only way to move through life rhythmically.

Tip: Understand what it means to flow.

SAGITTARIUS:

All suffering is self-created. Don't let conflict, inner or outer, come in the way of creating space for love in its most glorious form. Open yourself to what life has to offer and allow yourself to be transformed. Some of you may be at odds with a loved one. Have you made an effort to hear their side of the story? Something to think about before you play the blame game, Sagittarius.

Tip: Allow yourself to receive.

CAPRICORN:

Rock bottom. Also known as the solid foundation on which you are now building your life. If something is being taken away from you at the moment, trust that it is for your greater good. In

the days to come, focus on healing and letting go of past patterns. The further you move away from your situation, the more perspective you will gain.

Tip: Spending time alone will help you process the changes.

AQUARIUS:

It's okay to look in the rearview mirror and examine the past, as long as you engage in this exercise consciously. Stop giving yourself grief over the so-called damage. Instead, turn your attention towards self-improvement. What have your circumstances taught you? How can you evolve into a better person? One step at a time, Aquarius. Trust that you are on the right track.

PISCES:

Have you found comfort in your rage and despair? Be aware of the unhealthy emotions you are holding onto and how they are keeping you from finding bliss. Keep in mind that all suffering is self-created. Once again, the Universe is urging you to be more proactive, to take a leap of faith, and to allow yourself to be transferred. This is a new day after all! Tip: Find the courage you need to make monumental changes.