



VINCE GILL IS STILL STUNNED BY HOW COUNTRY MUSIC 'BURIED' THE DIXIE CHICKS
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SHAME PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN POLITICAL LIFE – OR AT LEAST IT USED TO
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EDGAR RAMIREZ TO STAR IN 'THE WAR HAS ENDED'
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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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BJP-SKM alliance sweeps bypolls

Golay becomes elected CM after commanding win in SDF bastion; BJP wins its first constituencies in Sikkim

Expected defeat, but still campaigned because am in politics and this is my responsibility towards Sikkim: Chamling

GANGTOK

 Y.T. LEPCHA 2942 VOTES BJP	 B. BHUTIA 578 VOTES HSP	 K. Y. CHANKAPA 451 VOTES IND
 R. O. BHUTIA 872 VOTES SDF	 D. NAMGYAL 1494 VOTES BJP	 S.T. LEPCHA 149 VOTES SRP

TOTAL NO. OF VOTERS: 11752, VOTER TURNOUT: 6152

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:

In what in retrospect appears an obvious outcome, the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha-Bharatiya Janata Party seat-sharing alliance today swept the by-elections, comfortably

winning all three constituencies.

Sikkim Democratic Front president, former Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, while speaking to SummitTimes today, shared that he was expecting these results.

"Voters here tend to vote for the party already in office and also motivated by personal reasons and not the larger interest of the State. I was expecting this result, but we still contested the byelections and cam-

paigned hard because that is my responsibility as a politician and something I owe Sikkim and its people," he said.

The biggest victory belonged to SKM president, Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay], who garnered more than 80% of the votes polled at Poklok-Kamrang, breaking into the SDF bastion with a commanding share of more than 10,000 of the around 12,000 votes cast there. Mr Chamling had won this constituency by around 3,000 votes in April. Mr Tamang beat his SDF rival, Moses Rai, by a margin of 8,953 votes.







With this, a constituency which has voted

for SDF president Pawan Chamling for 35 years, including in the April elections, switched sides five months since he was voted into opposition.

Mr Chamling commented that the violent campaign of the SKM, the brazen threats issued by the Chief Minister and the pusillanimous manner in which the administration folded up left the people exposed and fearful and they voted the way they did.

"The SKM president received all the postal ballots. That is evidence of the kind of fear his party had whipped up," he said. 226 votes were cast via postal ballot at

MARTAM-RUMTEK

 S.T. VENCHUNGPA 8204 VOTES BJP	 NIMA LEPCHA 1235 VOTES HSP	 MECHUNG BHUTIA 439 VOTES IND
 P.G. SHERPA 272 VOTES IND	 N.T. BHUTIA 2054 VOTES SDF	 M.T. SHERPA 173 VOTES SRP

TOTAL NO. OF VOTERS: 15737, VOTER TURNOUT: 12306

Poklok Kamrang.

He, however, stressed that he does not hold any grudges against the voters, pointing out that they have been his family for nearly four decades now and had been scared into voting the way they did.

Expectedly, Mr Tamang looks at the mandate differently.

Speaking to media-persons shortly after his victory was announced, he said that the verdict was as much an endorsement of SKM's




performance in the barely five months it has been in government thus far and the expectations the people have from it.

While thanking people of the three constituencies for having supported the BJP-SKM seat-sharing alliance, he assured that his government will focus on changing the system for the better.

At Martam-Rumtek, where Sonam Tshering Venchungpa had unsuccessfully

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POKLOK KAMRANG

 P.S. TAMANG 10811 VOTES SKM	 MOSES RAI 1858 VOTES SDF	 YADU KR RAI 125 VOTES SRP
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TOTAL NO. OF VOTERS: 15737, VOTER TURNOUT: 12794

POKLOK-KAMRANG GETS ANOTHER CM

Golay sweeps by-election with 84% vote-share

Constituency will see real development now: Golay

ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:

"Now the people of this constituency will see real development. All the demands of the area will be fulfilled within the next 5 years," said SKM's winning candidate from Poklok-Kamrang and the Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang [Golay] today.

"This win is not PS Golay's victory or SKM's but it is the grand victory of all the people of Sikkim as they have voted for the betterment of Sikkim," he added.

He was addressing a huge public gathering after his victory in the by-election. The programme was organised as part of the victory celebration of SKM and its president.

Mr Tamang credited the victory to the work and initiatives of the SKM government.

Chief Minister and the SKM candidate from Poklok-Kamrang, Mr Tamang secured 10811 votes out of 12870 votes polled, that includes 10585 EVM votes and 226 Postal Ballot. This means Mr Tamang got around 82% of the votes cast, the highest in this by-election as well as



the last election held in April this year.

He swept all the postal ballots winning the election by a difference of 8953 votes.

SDF had not lost any election in Poklok-Kamrang in the last 25 years while former Chief Minister Pawan Chamling has never lost an election from this constituency in the last 35 years. He had earlier won elections from Poklok-Kamrang as a Sikkim Sangram Parishad candidate.

On the other hand, the young SDF candidate Moses Rai secured a total of 1858 EVM votes and Nil Postal Ballot with a voting percentage of 14.44 percent. SRP candidate Yadhu Kumar Rai secured 125 (0.97%) and Nota secured 76 votes (0.59%).

Total votes casts in Poklok-Kamrang constituency is 12870 including 12644 EVM votes and 226 Postal Ballot.

Mr. Tamang said that the SDF Government tried its best to bring him down and even sent him to jail but, he said, the punishment has turned into a blessing.

"I will use the power of the chair for the benefit of the people, not for my family's benefit," said Mr. Tamang.

He assured to work tirelessly for the next 5 years for the overall development and betterment of the people of Sikkim.

"SKM Government will try to fulfil all the promises made during the elections and included in the party manifesto. The state government will work

hard in coordination with the central Government," he added.

Responding to a query, Mr. Tamang said that he was never in the race of becoming a Chief Minister. "PS Golay can work as a coach or even a player in a team," he said.

However, he added that the Government has changed after 25 years and now a change has to be brought about in the working system of the Government.

"Our government will work more on that. To change the system is the slogan of the SKM party," he added.

Mr. Tamang has urged people not to fear anything now as SKM is a party for all religions and communities, and will work for the overall development of all.

turn to pg02

SDF concedes defeat, says contesting was more important



Difficult for opposition to win by-polls: Chamling

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK 24 OCT:

Sikkim Democratic Front president and former Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling has thanked the people of all three constituencies for their support in this by-election. He said that although the party has not been able to win any seat in the by-polls, SDF has delivered its responsibility by fielding candidates in all three seats. He also expressed his commitment to continuously work for Sikkim and its people as a con-

structive opposition.

Addressing a press conference here at SDF head-quarters this afternoon, the SDF president thanked all workers and supporters of the party for their support in the by-election. He also congratulated all three candidates of the BJP-SKM alliance on their victory in the by-poll.

"It is difficult for the opposition to win by-elections as people do not want to go against the ruling party," said Mr Chamling.

He alleged that the mandate of the people of Poklok-Kamrang has been forcefully taken and added that its consequences will become evident in the future.

Stating that people

of Sikkim brought SDF to power for five consecutive terms, he added that even in the last election more number of votes went to SDF than the ruling Sikkim Krantikari Morcha. This, he said, shows the love and trust of the people on SDF party.

However, the SDF president expressed that politics without principles and values is very dangerous for Sikkim. He rued the lack of independent viewpoints and opinions, and of how every engagement and public participation was politically motivated.

Mr Chamling stressed that the ruling party should protect democratic and fundamental rights

turn to pg02

BJP candidates celebrate

Will work on basic amenities, says Venchungpa; YT gets emotional

**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:**

Bharatiya Janata Party candidates have won both seats in the East District with a thumping victory in the by-polls. Sonam Tshering Venchungpa has won Martam-Rumtek constituency with 8204 votes, while Yong Tshering Lepcha emerged victorious from Gangtok constituency with 2508 votes. They were warmly received by their supporters, standing since morning in front of District Administration Centre [East] gate today.

Speaking to media persons after the victory, Sonam Tshering Venchungpa thanked the people of Martam-Rumtek constituency for their support and for electing him



as their representative.

"As Martam-Rumtek constituency is still lacking basic amenities and infrastructure so my primary focus will be to work towards providing basic amenities and infrastructures in the constituency," he said.

Responding to media queries, he said that this mandate of the people was the total acceptance of the seat sharing alliance of BJP-SKM. Mr Venchungpa thanked workers and supporters of SKM and BJP, and people of the constituency.

Likewise, Yong Tshering Lepcha got emotional on his victory from Gangtok constituency. He said that he will remain indebted to the people of Gangtok for their love and support in the by-poll and assured to serve the people till his last breath.

He also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP high command and state-unit for giving him a chance to serve the people. He also thanked workers and supporters of SKM and BJP party for their support.

Responding to media

queries, Mr Lepcha expressed that his struggle against corruption has led him to where he is today and that he will continue to fight against corruption. He also assured to work for the people of Gangtok irrespective of any party.



South holds District Level Inter School Energy Club Competition

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:**

The State Designated Agency, Sikkim organised District Level Inter School Energy Club Competition for South District on 23 Oct at Government Senior Secondary School Melli Gumpa.

Four Energy Clubs from Salghari, Sumbuk Sr. Sec School, Turuk and Melli Gumpa Sr. Sec. School participated in the competition, a press release informs.

On the occasion Pan-chayat President of Payong, Melli, South Sikkim, Kusum Dhakal, was the chief guest.

The winners of the competition are as under:

In the Power Point Presentation Competition, Pritika Rai, Government Sr. Sec. School Sumbuk, came first followed by Priya Tamang, Government Sr. Sec. School, Melli Gumpa in second position and Shahil Chettri, Government Sec. School, Turuk in third position.

In Essay Writing, Raheak Maji, Government Sr. Sec. School, Sumbuk came first followed by Sezal Pradhan, Government Sec. School, Turuk and Nirmal Chettri, Government Sr. Sec. School, Melli Gumpa in second and third positions respectively.

In Elocution, Simran Rai, Government Sec. School, Salghari, came first followed by Smiriti Chettri, Government Sec. School, Turuk and Soniya, G Gatraj, Government Sr. Sec. School, Sumbuk in second and third positions respectively.

In Skit, Government Sec. School, Salghari came first followed by Government Sr. Sec. School, Melli Gumpa and Government Sec. School, Turuk in second and third positions respectively.

The chief guest gave away cash prizes and certificates to the winners. The winning students and school will be participating in the state level competition on 14 Dec 2019 during Energy Conservation Day.

BJP thanks Sikkim for trusting its alliance with SKM



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:**

Bharatiya Janata Party's Sikkim Pradesh president, DB Chauhan, today thanked the people for showing faith in the political alliance between BJP and Sikkim Krantikari Morcha by delivering a resounding victory to the alliance in the by-elections.

He said that the alliance's victory in all three seats was a fitting answer to anti-people elements who had tried to create distrust about the alliance.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Chauhan thanked

voters of the three constituencies for ensuring a landslide victory for the BJP-SKM alliance.

He alleged that some elements had tried to create hatred and confusion about the alliance by spreading baseless and false rumours and misinformation.

Now that the people have shown their preference, Sikkim will receive a double-engine vehicle to lead the State towards unprecedented development.

Mr Chauhan assured that BJP was committed to all its promises made before the election and would work to further

strengthen Article 371F and protect the people and future generations of Sikkim.

He said that the party would work to fulfil all pending political and other demands of the State.

Responding to media queries on reports of a petition filed by BJP leader and lawyer, Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, in the Supreme Court, Mr Chauhan said, "I have personally spoken with the party high command and legal cell and even with Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay and have been informed that there was no such petition filed by anyone from BJP against the CM."

On the same, he alleged that the SDF was trying to deceive the people of Sikkim by referring to a petition filed by Mr Upadhyay on disqualification matters in 2017.

He remarked that BJP was committed to work with SKM in the interest of the people of Sikkim and deliver on the dharma of alliance.

Rastriya Kavi Sangam holds literary meet at Tiny Tots School



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:**

Rastriya Kavi Sangam Sikkim organised their monthly Literary Meet at Tiny Tots School Rangpo IBM today, a press release informs.

Managing Director, Sunrise Academy, Duga, DB Chettri attended the program as the chief guest along with Founder President Sikkim Tamang Youth Society, Suresh K Lama, president Marwadi Yuva Manch, Sunita Agarwal and Retd BO, CB Gurung as the special guest of the day.

The program started with the welcome speech by School Principal, Ajit Sharma, followed by RKS Sikkim State president, Sanjay Agarwal who highlighted the aims, objectives and mission of RKS.

Twenty students comprising of 17 students from Tiny Tots School and 03 from Sunrise Academy Duga participated in the poem writing and recitation competition.

Raja Sharma, Sabnam Khatun, Bikkhu Biswakarma, Mohammad Sadik Ali, Rukhsar Khatun, Jaanvi Singh, S Begam, Deepanjali Gurung, Je-

neses Rai, Sradha RAI, Sweta Thapa, Nafisha Khatun, Sneha Sharma, Tanisha Rasaily, Lucky Ali, Divya Rai and Sudikchha Darnal participated from Tiny Tots School.

Adikchha Chettri, Sudikchha Chhetri and Aakanchha Acharya from Sunrise Academy Duga participated in the poem recitation competition.

Judges Kavita Pariyar and Bhim Sharma declared Adikchha Chhetri of Sunrise Academy Duga as the winner followed by Janvi Singh and Bikkhu Biswakarma from Tiny Tots School in second and third positions, respectively.

Authors of top three poems were awarded with gift hampers and certificates along with participation certificate to all the participants of the program.

Ajeet Sharma and Kavita Pariyar also recited poems on the day. More than 10 students also recited poems in the non-competition category.

MD Sunrise Academy, Duga, DB Chettri addressing the program thanked and congratulated the entire team of Rastriya Kavi Sangam for organizing the program.

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BJP-SKM...

contested the April elections on an SKM ticket, registered a convincing victory in the by-elections wearing BJP colours. He had joined the BJP the day the seat-sharing arrangement had been announced. His 8,204 votes left SDF's Nuk Tshering Bhutia trailing way behind with 2,054 votes. SDF had won this constituency by barely 70 votes in April.

The presence of a former MLA in Dr Mechung Bhutia or candidates of some standing from other parties and independents in the race did not dent BJP's prospects, and SKM and Mr Venchungpa served BJP its first electoral victory, at any level, in Sikkim.

Gangtok, which had posted the lowest voter turnout for the by-elections at 52%, gave BJP its second elected MLA in Sikkim when the 2,492 of the 6,152 votes who exercised their ballot on 21 Oct did so in favour of BJP's YT Lepcha.

Interestingly, in Gangtok, SDF was pushed to third place with Sikkim Nationalist People's Party's Delay Namgyal Barfungpa coming second with 1,494 votes. SDF's Rinzing Ongmu Bhutia came third with 872 votes.

The low turnout in Gangtok was always expected to make the contest close and the number of candidates expected to work in BJP's favour. This proved true when BJP won here with barely 40% of the votes. The remaining 60% votes were spread out among the five other contenders.

Where slightly less than 2,500 voters chose BJP, 3,525 of the voters had other preferences.

With the latest results, SKM now has 19 MLAs in the Assembly, BJP has 12 and SDF one.

Golay sweeps...

"Today is the beginning of a new political journey for PS Golay and from today itself I am committed and dedicated to the service of the people of Sikkim," he added.

He also assured the people of Poklok-Kamrang that after the Diwali and the assembly session he will be visiting every ward of the constituency to thank the people. He informed that he will be visiting all 9 wards each day to meet and thank people of the constituency for making him victorious with a huge margin.

In the last election held on 11 April earlier this year, the SDF candidate and former Chief Minister Pawan Chamling had won the Poklok-Kamrang constituency with a vote margin of 2899 securing 7731 votes in total (7482 EVM and 249 Postal Ballot) and his vote percentage was 59.09%. Whereas SKM candidate Kharka Bahadur Rai secured 4823 votes (4708 EVM and 124 Postal) and his vote percentage was 36.93%.

In the April election, SRP candidate Yadhu Kumar Rai secured 197 votes (1.51%), Congress candidate Ishwar Prasad Rai secured 125 votes (0.96%) and NOTA got 108 votes.

SDF concedes...

of the people of Sikkim. Now that the election is over, the government should work for the protection of every person irrespective of party affiliations, he added.

Meanwhile, the party has also officially expressed gratitude towards voters of all three constituencies for their support and votes.

An SDF press release shares that election was a process and part of electoral democracy and to win or lose were part of this process.

Election results should however not affect the peace, unity, brotherhood and progress, the release adds.

The party has also appealed to all, especially the civil society not to get carried away by the election results and forget their responsibility towards the State and its people.

The release stresses that SDF accepts the decision of the people and congratulates the winning candidates.

The party has also congratulated candidates of other parties and independents for having participated in the elections.

Farewell program for Education Deputy Director

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:**

A farewell programme was organized at Yatri Niwasi, Soreng on Wednesday to bid farewell to retiring Education Department Deputy Director, HP Shanker.

Press Advisor to CM, CP Sharma was present as chief guest along with other dignitaries, HODs,

Teachers of different schools under Soreng, Chumbung & Kaluk BAC.

The welcome address was proposed by Assistant Director Soreng HRDD, Iching Subba. Cultural performances were also part of the day's programme.

On the special occasion, Mr Shanker was felicitated by Soreng Sub-Division (W) HRDD.



Nepali poem collection “Aljheka Ashaharu” released

**BIKASH CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 24 OCT:**

Poet, Mon Bahadur Rai's first Nepali poem collection titled with "Aljheka Ashaharu" was released at Kewzing Bazaar, South Sikkim on Wednesday. Mon Bahadur Rai is a resident of Mangbrue, Kewzing South Sikkim.

The programme was attended by the Principal of Kewzing Senior Secondary School, MP Koirala along with Retired Headmaster, KB Rai, teachers and others. Mon Bahadur Rai thanked all his well-wishers and supporters.

During the book release programme, Nepali PGT of VCGL Sr Sec School, NP Uprety, Ravangla briefly talked about the book. President Bhavtaranga Sahitya Samiti Namthang, Som Bahadur Rai, South Sikkim also talked about the book and poet, Mon Bahadur Rai.

Young literary figure Dhan 'Nirav' Pradhan, a resident of Turuk Ramabung was awarded a memento for his guidance and support in the publication of the book 'Aljheka Ashaharu'.

~ **SummitTIMES** ~
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Pre Deepawali celebration at Kewzing Bazaar



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 OCT:

Pre Deepawali Programme was organized by Government Senior Secondary School Kewzing sponsored by NSS Unit at Kewzing Bazaar, South Sikkim today, a press release informs. The programme was chaired by a Senior Citizen of Kewzing, Y Dorjee Bhutia accompanied by the Principal of Kewzing Senior Secondary School, MP Koirala, Teachers of Kewzing Senior Secondary School and local gentries.

The programme was especially arranged by

the students of Class XI and Class XII under the guidance of teachers. Principal of Kewzing Senior Secondary School, Mr Koirala said that this programme is organized under the regular programme of school.

He also informed that apart from class room teaching, students should also learn outside the classroom as well.

During the programme, students performed Dewsi, Bhaileni and Bhaitika along with many traditional dances. They also gave presentation on Laxmi puja and Gobardhan puja.

Workshop for Bank Sakhis and Business Correspondents by RBI



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 OCT:

RBI Gangtok in coordination with Sikkim Rural Livelihoods Mission (SRLM) organized a workshop for Bank Sakhis & Business Correspondents (BCs) at the office premises of Reserve Bank of India, Gangtok on 23 Oct, 2019, as per a press release.

About 30 Bank Sakhis and 10 State Coordinators from Corporate BCs participated in the workshop. The main objective of the workshop was to sensitize the participants about financial inclusion and RBI guidelines on Business Correspondent model and to serve as an interface between the Bank Sakhis and the Corporate BCs so that the Bank Sakhis could be appointed as BC agents thereby ensuring increased banking coverage in Sikkim since they represent the Self Help Groups (SHGs) who are based at rural and far-flung areas in a mountainous terrain where banks are reluctant to cater due to limited viability.

GM & O-i-C, Ravi Sangvai, RBI Gangtok in his inaugural address welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of the Business Correspondent model and their role in the promotion of financial inclusion across the state.

He also conveyed that since the Bank Sakhis are already involved in the credit linkage of SHGs, serving the role of BC agents would amplify their social and economic contribution to the community and the state. GM & O-i-C, Rosie Tshering, NABARD highlighted that despite the

restricted mobility, limited social circle, and low comfort with technology, the Bank Sakhis perform better than conventional agents.

She also highlighted NABARD's Financial Inclusion Fund (FIF) where they provide financial assistance in setting up infrastructure for BC operations as also reimbursement for registering in IIBF exams.

Deputy CEO, Tenzing Gelay, SRLM while thanking RBI Gangtok for this initiative advised the participants to take full advantage from this workshop and learn the nuances of BC operations such as eligibility criteria for recruitment, commission criteria, nodal officer details, etc. from the Corporate BCs present.

In the second session, Manager from RBI Gangtok made a brief presentation about the financial inclusion initiatives by RBI in India since 2006 and regulatory guidelines on BC Model. Thereafter, all the 7 Corporate BCs spoke to the participants regarding the enrolment procedure, investment required to serve as a BC agent, various banking products offered and remuneration structure.

The valediction was chaired by former Chief Secretary to Government of Sikkim, Alok Kumar Shrivastava who encouraged the SHGs to take up new and upcoming livelihood projects such as floriculture, horticulture and handicrafts. He mentioned that there was a need to think beyond conventional agriculture activities only and wished them all the success in their endeavour of being appointed as BC agents.

Ayurveda for Longevity



DR MP DASH

Ayurveda is more than a healing system; it is an ultimate science and art for an appropriate lifestyle, which helps us to achieve longevity. It is one of the world's oldest health care systems. It originated in India more than 5,000 years ago and called the "Mother of All Healing". In Sanskrit Ayurveda means the science of life. In addition to several Ayurvedic medicines for the prevention of various diseases, it also gave the principles of happy, unhappy, wholesome and unwholesome life, Purushaarth Chatushtaya. It stems from the ancient Vedic culture and was thought for many thousands of years in an oral tradition from accomplished masters who known as Sages. Ayurveda places great emphasis on the maintenance of health through close attention to balance in one's life, right thinking, diet, lifestyle, and the use of herbs. Ayurveda enables one to understand how to create this balance of body, mind, and consciousness, according to one's own individual constitution on how to make the lifestyle change to bring about good health.

Aging is a process of unfavourable progressive changes associated with decline in vigour and ending in death. The process of aging involves the coexistence of two opposing factors namely evolution (growth) and involution (atrophy). Aging in individuals is affected to a greater extent by genetic factors, diet, social conditions and the occurrence of age-related disorders.

Rasayana (anti-aging and rejuvenation), one of the most essential branches of Ayurveda, being practiced effectively and extensively since ages, is a group of medicinal preparations which are immune-stimulants and capable of preventing the causation of many ailments such as untimely aging. It is compared with the ambrosia of gods and is accepted as a tool to maintain psychosomatic health as well as salvation. The Sanskrit definition for a "Rasayana" is YatJara Vyadhi Nashanam Tat Rasayana — 'that which negates old age and disease'. Rasayana promotes nutrition by direct enrichment of the nutritional quality of Rasa (nutritional plasma), promoting nutrition through improving Agni (digestion and metabolism) and promote the competence of Srotas (microcirculatory channels in the body).

Ayurveda describes many anti-aging

supplements such as Satavari, milk, Ghee, Bhallataka, Pippali, and Ashwagandha, etc. Which are useful in different aspects such as Longevity, perfect health, and youthful age. It balances tridoshas, Cures slothness of muscles, stimulates digestion and metabolism. Medhya Rasayanas a specific class of drugs having an effect on psychological traits such as Brahmi (Bacopa monnieri) and Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica).

Ayurveda emphasise three basic components such as diet (Ahara), sleep (Nidra) and self-discipline (AtmaS-ayam) for good health and longevity.

- Diet (Ahara): Ayurveda advocates that every individual should select a proper diet (ahara) to restore the equilibrium of the body and mind. Ayurvedic pharmacopeia describes many dietary and anti-aging supplements like Amla, Tulsi (Ocimum Sanctum), Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera), Giloy (Tinospora cordifolia), Aloe Vera which help to improve the immune system.

- Sleep (Nidra): A person needs adequate sleep to combat the effects of aging because sleep is when the body works on repairing and healing itself every day. Ayurveda recommends six to eight hours of sleep for a healthy life.

- Self-discipline (Atma sayam): The philosophy of Ayurveda is based on solid concepts and principles of Swasthavritta (healthy living), Sad-vrittha (ethical living), Achara Rasayana (behavioral therapy) and Yoga that forms the basis for preventive health and anti-aging. It captures the principles laid through the Purusharthas - Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha in the pursuit of good health defining health as a state of complete physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

The major challenges faced today are an economic crisis, an increase in the aging population segment, the emergence of chronic diseases, environmental and climate-related changes, lack of access to quality health care in many areas. Natural healing, which is quite prominent in Ayurveda started giving a new life to the people of new age, combined with the goodness of natural bliss and healing principles. Ayurveda is the pre-historic medication cures the health ailments leading to optimal health and longevity.

EXPO JORETHANG

Diwali Shopping Festival

STARTING FROM 15th OCTOBER 2019

- Kolkata Leather
- Mumbai Jewellery
- Saharanpur Furniture
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- Bhagalpuri Silk
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- Handicraft Items
- Delhi Curtains
- Aurvedic Medicine
- Delicious Food Items

VENUE : JORETHANG PLAZA, JORETHANG BAZAR

Antyesti Kriya

The Antyesti Kriya of Late Punam Pradhan (sani) wife of Shri H.B. Pradhan, resident of Ranipool, Marchal near Keshang residency falls on 26th October 2019. All well wishers, relatives and friends are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Marchak, Ranipool.

FAMILY MEMBERS:-

1. H. B. Pradhan (husband) 9733237157
2. Bikash Pradhan (son) 8370999122
3. Vasker Pradhan (son) 9593979628
4. Biswash Pradhan (Son) 9614829929
5. Manju Pradhan (daughter) 7407848003

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OBITUARY NOTICE

LATE KAMAL PRASAD GURUNG

Born: 31 - 08 - 1937
&
Died: 18 - 10 - 2019



You have left us for heavenly abode, but you will always be in our hearts and minds. Your kindness and generosity, your jovial and amiable nature endeared you with one and all who knew you. Your absence will always be felt deeply. We miss you now and we will miss you forever. Your love and affection will always be cherished. May your soul rest in eternal peace.

The family expresses gratitude to all the relatives, friends and well wishers who offered their condolences, support and sympathy at our time of grief. We would like to inform that the 7th (seventh) day "Kriya" will be performed at at our residence near St. Francis School, Jorethang on 25th October 2019 and the "Shergu" will be held on 6th December 2019.

From:

Surja Gurung (Wife), Hiren, Saral, Subarna (sons), Tshering Yangchen and Elena (daughters-in-law), Grand Children, Brothers, Sisters, Cousins, In laws and host of Nieces and Nephews.

Anxiety is Trumping Potential Too Often

Open deliberations instead of slotting pigeonholes

The by-election if finally over and the spoils have been apportioned between sections, which, till five months ago were not even in contention. Such are the ways of politics, politicking, strategising and co-opting. What Sikkim has also acquired as a result is an elected Chief Minister and a shade of orange which has traditionally not carried any appeal here. The results are not without irony because the anxiety-inducing rhetoric which played out an exaggerated sense of persecution was reversed in Sikkim where obvious red flags were ignored to deliver the same results. Chalk up another victory for the persuasive powers of fear and the desire for access. It clearly is easy to manipulate voters with the right dose of threats, intimidation, promise and cajoling. Apparently, leaving the voters dejected also seems to work.

While these might be new developments for the mainstream, we in the margins are familiar with such manipulation which is almost standard fare for vote-bank driven politicking that constantly seeks to re-frame and rearrange identities and statuses. The North-East, a Region into which Sikkim is now clubbed, supports many political careers based on the complications of identifying locals and othering the outsiders. The more one learns of the “unique” situations that now beset the region, the more one realises that there is nothing very unique to any situation and that the conditions are common to every place with an identity-driven confrontation, only the protagonists differ. Following the Gujarat muddle [with reservation], and the Maratha chauvinism before that, it is also now confirmed that even the “mainstream” grapples with this problem. This then is clearly a human condition. So why should these be discussed almost exclusively at regional levels and not resolved through wider deliberations and collaborations?

May be the time will come for that as well, but for now, it will be within smaller circles that the issue is discussed. And such discussions should be encouraged because the sooner the issues of identity and belonging are discussed more openly, even if within sub-regions, the fewer, hopefully, will be the feelings of resentment.

The question of who is local being a sensitive one, emotional responses were expected, but the whole exercise is at risk of becoming a parody of itself with anyone wanting to have a say in the discussion, instead of engaging, forms an association/ organisation and begins issuing press releases expounding a fear or occupying a position. There is nothing wrong in holding an opinion, but before one foists it on the public, some basics have to be worked out. When something as sensitive as belonging are being debated, at least proper homework and due diligence to identify the fault lines need to be done. Instead, it is increasingly being seen that “leaders” take the easier option of stoking the generalised fear that inflicts every community and then fans this into (out)rage. The success rate of this approach is disturbingly high as is being proven with every electoral victory being reported from the around the world. All the more reason then to encourage engagement, even if uncomfortable to begin with, before things come to such a pass that confrontation becomes the only response that people find themselves equipped with. The casual arguments that consistently get played into the public domain nowadays have become a worrying strain that infect almost all the voices that one hears on the issue. The local-non local, insider-outsider, special-underprivileged, entitled-sidelined debate, because those who understand issues better are not speaking up, is flirtingly close to becoming a Frankenstein that could soon run amok.

But that is not what this piece opened with, is it? And yet it is somehow linked...

WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/ indecorous language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence. Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

Shame plays an important role in political life – or at least it used to

ANETA STĘPIEŃ
theconversation.com

Shame controls our lives in many powerful ways. And even though its rules are not written, we expect people to follow their sense of shame as a moral compass. And when it comes to public figures, such as political leaders, we have even greater expectations for their moral standards. Should we worry, then, if political leaders become shameless?

Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau recently apologised for wearing blackface make up at a 2001 party, apparently recognising that he must show a sense of shame for his actions.

But other world leaders don't appear to feel the same sense of obligation. Take US president Donald Trump's derogatory “grab them by the pussies” comments, and British prime minister Boris Johnson's decision to shut down the UK parliament. Even though the former was widely condemned and the latter was told his actions were downright unlawful, neither apologised. In fact, they doubled down.

While shameful behaviour, defined as a transgression of accepted social conduct, is part of everyday life, shamelessness is actually a threat to social order. That's because it involves refusing to abide by agreed-upon social rules. Ultimately, by disregarding the values on which we have built our societies, it leads to abuse of power.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WESTERN SHAME

Shame is at once a private and a social emotion. Internally, shame is a sense of our moral compass – an indication of what is appropriate in our interactions with others. But shame is also toxic when used to discipline, to oppress and to exclude others. It seems as though public figures are feeling less and less shame about their own behaviour and more willing than ever to use shame against others.

Since the late 19th century, shame has been

regulating behaviour in European societies. As shown in Norbert Elias' influential study, *The Civilizing Process* (1978), institutions across Europe produced educational books, which proposed introducing discipline through shaming rather than physical punishment.

Elias cites as an example Karl von Raumer's 1857 book on educating girls, in which he proposes how to answer their sexual questions. The answer – “You should take care not to listen to anything said about it” – should ignite shame in any well-brought up girl. As a result of implementing the principles of the Enlightenment (rationalism and tolerance) shame became the most powerful tool for self and social control in European societies.

But while the tide broadly turned on toxic shame in a personal context during the liberation movements of the mid-20th century, it continues to play a crucial role in politics and international relations. A sense of shame is supposed to prevent leaders from actions that hurt people. Shame also points to a failure to live up to our own or other people's expectations and values, so admitting to feeling ashamed is an attempt to repair relations broken by a disregard of those values.

In 1970, during his visit to communist Poland, the German chancellor, Willy Brandt, famously knelt down (Kniefall) in front of the Monument of the Ghetto Heroes in Warsaw. This powerful gesture was seen as an expression of Germany's humility and shame at the Nazi crimes committed against the Polish nation, including the millions of Jews killed in the Holocaust. Years later, a similar apology for “our shame” was issued by chancellor Gerhard Schröder. These were important steps in creating good diplomatic relations between both countries and in allowing the process of healing for the victims.

Psychologists and sociologists maintain that

embracing shame on a personal level allows us to grow by introducing positive changes. In international relations, publicly acknowledging wrongdoing has a powerful reparatory role, too. This is why it can be so powerful when a government issues a public apology for a past wrongdoing.

NOT SORRY ANYMORE

Despite all this, we seem to be entering an era in which we can no longer expect publicly elected officials to rely on a sense of shame to act with contrition and make amends. Criticism of Trump's crossing of moral standards seems to provoke even more brazen behaviour, testing the boundaries of what is considered acceptable.

The emergence of “white pride” groups is one example of shamelessly spreading an ideology of hatred towards historically oppressed groups – women, ethnic and sexual minorities. Instead of addressing the past wrongs that continue to hold minorities back, these groups revel in dismissing them as insignificant.

Becoming accustomed to the lack of apology and impudence from public figures has grave consequences. As writer Michiko Kakutani notes in her excellent analysis of Trump's America, *The Death of Truth*, people were slow to recognise the danger of Hitler because he unravelled his plans in small doses, carefully observing what people would tolerate along the way.

Although the rejection of shame can have positive effects, as was the case with the liberation movements in the 1970s, we need to think carefully about the complexity of shamelessness and its potential to either liberate or oppress. As history teaches us, it can also be abused solely for the purpose of narcissistic adulation or to hold on to power.

[the writer is Adjunct Assistant Professor, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, Trinity College Dublin]



The mystery of what makes a joke funny – but only to some people

SOPHIE SCOTT
theconversation.com

How do you like the following joke from Sumeria in about 1900BC? “Something which has never occurred since time immemorial; a young woman did not fart in her husband's lap.” Or this classic from Egypt, 1600BC? “How do you entertain a bored pharaoh? You sail a boatload of young women dressed only in fishing nets down the Nile and urge the pharaoh to go catch a fish.”

If not, maybe try this more modern joke from 1000AD Britain: “What hangs at a man's thigh and wants to poke the hole that it's often poked before? Answer: A key.” The chances are you could tell these were meant to be funny, but did they make you laugh or smile? Be it ancient or modern day humour, we all find different things funny – why is this? Is it down to our brains or to the ways that humour works?

One consistent finding in scientific studies is that laughter is universal and predates humans, while humour seems to appear alongside modern humans – wherever there is a record of modern humans, one finds jokes.

There is a whole book of Roman Jokes, *The Laughter Lover*, which contains zingers including this one: “An Abderite [people from a region now split between Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey that the Romans thought were stupid] saw a eunuch talking with a woman and asked him if she was his wife. When he replied that eunuchs can't have wives, the Abderite asked: ‘So is she your daughter?’”

It's extremely interesting that, although the Sumerian farting joke is slightly over my head, they are all structured as jokes would be now.

Even the topics seem modern – such as fart jokes and sex gags.

These themes also confirm some of the scientific theories of jokes and humour. For example, humour often involves the realisation of incongruity (mismatch) between a concept and a situation, violations of social taboos or expectations, the resolution of tension or mocking and a sense of superiority (here, over those stupid Abderites!).

SOCIAL CONTEXT

But, even if jokes tend to be structured in a certain way, over time and place no one thing is guaranteed to make everyone laugh. Some of this is because time and distance rob the jokes of their cultural meaning.

Similarly, a recent study of jokes told by medical doctors in France showed that these often relied on pretty broad sweeping (or down right offensive) stereotypes – for example that surgeons are megalomaniac tyrants, that anaesthetists are lazy and that psychiatrists are mentally ill.

Within the workplace, especially in stressful jobs, humour is often used to encourage cohesion within a group in order to deal with stress in an acceptable way. But it also works to exclude outsiders, who can find such humour to be unpalatably dark. This last point is important – exclusion of others can help boost group cohesion.

We are all part of different social groups, and that will affect our approach to humour. Because as well as reflecting culturally shared values, comedy reflects our aspirations and our sense of what we would like to find funny. Charlie Chaplin is still extremely popular in China, whereas in the West we can appreciate him artistically but we don't often find his

comedy makes us laugh – it seems old-fashioned and predictable.

Even worse, one of the most successful comedians inspired by Chaplin, Benny Hill, is considered cringe-worthy in the UK, despite him being one of the few UK comedians to break through in the USA. That's because Brits like to think that they are a bit more sophisticated in their humour than a man being chased around by naughtily-dressed ladies.

In this context, it's not at all unusual for older people to find the things that younger people find funny to be entirely inexplicable. When my colleagues and I ran an event at the Royal Society and the Big Bang fair in 2012-13, we asked attendees (mostly teenagers) what made them laugh and were mystified that a common response was “KSI”.

We had to google this to find out that he's an extremely popular YouTuber. And when I watched him I was frankly none the wiser, but I also strongly suspect that he's not going to be shedding any tears about this as he has more than 20m subscribers on YouTube. And I suspect that if my generation found KSI hilarious, he would be less funny to young people. My son (13) is currently obsessed with watching YouTube compilations of Vines (the now defunct short video social media site): he was horrified when I told him that I used to have a Vine account. Ugh, mum!

So all this variation in what we find funny has much less to do with Vines, KSI and me, and more to do with something that happens as we all get older: younger people come along and they can have radically different ideas about what is musical, what is fashionable, and – critically for this article – what is funny. They

are their own exclusive group.

BRAIN NETWORKS

The fact that humour is about social bonding and cohesion – whether this comes from relieving stress or bullying others – is supported by neuroscience. Humour in the brain rests on very similar networks to those that support human language comprehension in a more general sense. Common areas of activation for humorous material include the anterior temporal lobes, which are closely associated with the representation of semantic meaning, and the temporal-parietal junction and superior frontal lobes, which are often activated when we need to think about what things mean and how words can relate to each other.

One study argued that the superior frontal gyrus was critical to the appreciation of the humour in a joke and that stimulating this region with direct electrical currents makes jokes seem funnier. However, as shown, these regions are seen in other tasks too. So it may be hard to dissociate our sense of humour from our ability to process both linguistic meaning and social meaning. And it's not hard to see why evolution would have favoured this – humans who collaborate successfully using understanding of the world and other humans have better chances of survival.

So what does make a joke funny? We have made great strides in understanding the scientific bases on laughter and humour processing – but until we can incorporate the social and cultural complexities of humour fully, we will remain mystified by how people can enjoy comedy we find lame.

[the writer is Professor of Cognitive Psychology, UCL]

Green crackers hit market ahead of Diwali



SIVAKASI (TN), Oct 24 (PTI): This Diwali will see green crackers taking centre-stage with the country's fireworks hub here rolling out the eco-friendly varieties which have reduced emission of harmful chemicals and low sound in line with the Supreme Court order.

After a gloomy 2018 in the wake of the apex court banning conventional crackers on pollution grounds, the industry which provides livelihood to around eight lakh people in and around this arid town, over 550 km from Chennai, is hopeful of meeting the demand for green crackers in the coming season.

The changeover to green crackers after extensive experiments marks revival of the industry which has over 1,000 manufacturing units around Sivakasi and used to clock an annual turnover of over Rs 6,000 crore.

According to Tam-

il Nadu Fireworks and Amores Manufacturers' Association (TNFAMA), the apex body of the industry in the state, labourers had been trained in batches to produce green crackers and there would be no problem in meeting the market demand for Diwali season -- the festival of lights falls on October 27.

"The manufacture of fireworks was held up for a period of about four months (this year) due to the Supreme Court order banning conventional crackers in 2018... Then the Central and the Tamil Nadu governments helped us in skill training for manufacturing green crackers with 30 per cent less emission," TNFAMA President P Ganesan said.

The manufacture of green crackers started in March this year following successful experiments and training imparted in association with the Nagpur-based Council of Scientific and Industri-

al Research (CSIR) and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI).

Based on the experiments, it was found that green crackers could be made by using substitution chemical for barium nitrate to the tune of 20 per cent.

Green crackers, Ganesan claimed would bring down the emission of pollutants by around 30 per cent while the noise level would be around 125 decibel(dB), down from 160dB. Though it still exceeded the standard of 90dB, efforts were on to finetune it further.

He cited lack of sufficient time for being unable to print the green logo and put in place the Quick Response (QR) coding system.

"We hope that the Supreme Court would allow us to sell the green crackers without these," he said.

Laying down two-hour time frame for

bursting fireworks on festival days, the top court had in October last year ruled that only green crackers with reduced emission would be permitted to be manufactured and sold across the country.

The fireworks manufacturing units had gone on an indefinite strike last year demanding the lifting of the restrictions on bursting of crackers.

However, following the initiative of the state government, the industry in association with CSIR-NEERI started work on production of green crackers.

Ganesan said from next year green crackers would be available in the market with logo and QR barcode.

He assured that the reduction in chemical level will not have any impact on the variety of crackers that would be available.

The accidents in the fireworks units have come down due to im-

proved safety measures, Ganesan added.

Noting that about 40 varieties of crackers exceeded the decibel level limit, Arumugam, a local quality control official, said however, this year the noise level would be far less compared to previous years.

He also said CSIR and NEERI were helping around 230 manufacturers in producing green crackers by providing their expertise and training the employees in batches.

Mariappan, a labourer at a fireworks unit, who underwent one-month long training, said they were impressed with the process.

Kaliamoorthy, another employee of a local fireworks factory, said a variety of green crackers could be made with the new formulation of chemicals.

Ganesan said around 75 per cent of the manufacturers "are satisfied with the role of the NEERI and CSIR... They are convincing the other manufacturers also to follow suit."

The NEERI had set up test, research and training units here for green crackers.

He said depots here have started selling green crackers and the sales was picking up.

Voicing concern over import of Chinese fireworks, Ganesan said green crackers were cheaper to manufacture, caused less pollution, but they would make a mark in the market only if those from China were not imported and illegal cracker units were shut.

Siliguri exhibition commemorates Gandhiji's 150th Birth Anniv



GANGTOK, 24 OCT (PIB): Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Regional Outreach Bureau, Siliguri organized a five-day exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi. The exhibition was inaugurated at Railway Institution Ground, NJP in Siliguri on 23 Oct, 2019 and will conclude on 27 Oct, 2019.

The exhibition was inaugurated by MP Lok Sabha, Dr Jayanta Roy, Jalpaiguri. Also present were Inspector General, Ashwini Kumar Singh, BSF, North Bengal, Dy Inspector General, Anil Kumar Mishra, CRPF, Siliguri, Commandant, GC Pandey, SSB, North Bengal and Director, AKA Lakra, Regional Outreach Bureau, Siliguri/Kolkata. Director, AKA Lakra, Re-

gional Outreach Bureau, welcomed everyone and urged the people to take active part in the exhibition for a detailed information on the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Member of Parliament Dr Jayanta Roy inaugurated the exhibition by lighting the inaugural lamp. Addressing the session Dr Roy said that Mahatma Gandhi was a believer in the ideals of non-violence and he has followed that ideal all his life.

In his speech Inspector General, Ashwini Kumar Singh, BSF, North Bengal said that the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi's life is inspirational to the people of the world. He praised the exhibition on Gandhi

organised by MI&B. Dy Inspector General, Anil Kumar Mishra, CRPF, Siliguri speaking on the occasion said that present generation needs to be informed about Gandhiji.

A large number of the people attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition. Students and teachers from various schools and personnel from CRPF and BSF have attended the programme. Song & Drama presented a dance play on Mahatma Gandhi, which earned applaud from the visitors.

This digital exhibition depicted various periods of Gandhiji's life span. The inaugural ceremony was concluded with vote of thanks by Director, AKA Lakra, ROB.

UDP wins Shella seat in Meghalaya

SHILLONG, Oct 24 (PTI): United Democratic Party candidate Balajied Kuper Synrem won the by-poll to Shella Assembly constituency in Meghalaya by over 6000 votes, Election Commission officials said on Thursday.

UDP, which is part of the ruling alliance in the north eastern state, has retained the seat.

With this win, the UDP has now 9 MLAs in the 60-member Meghalaya house.

The bye-election was necessitated due to the death of UDP president Donkumar Roy, who had represented the seat for a record seven times, earlier this year. Synrem is the son of Donkumar Roy.

Roy had last won the seat in 2018 by a slim



margin of only 370 votes.

Synrem secured 12,002 votes while his nearest rival Independent candidate Grace Mary Kharpuri bagged 5,781 votes, chief electoral officer F R Kharkongor said.

The CEO said Mosjo R F Wanswett of the Peoples Democratic Front polled 4,327 votes, while Batyngshain Rynnga of the Congress secured 1,715 votes and Joshua Warjri of the BJP

got 742 votes.

UDP president Metbah Lyngdoh, who is also the assembly speaker, congratulated Synrem on winning the seat.

"I congratulate the people of Shella for choosing Balajied as their representative in the Assembly. I am optimistic that he will emulate his father while serving his people and to strive towards overall development," Lyngdoh said.

Former TMC leader Sovan Chatterjee questioned by CBI in Saradha scam

Kolkata, Oct 24 (PTI): Former TMC leader Sovan Chatterjee, who recently joined the BJP, was being questioned by CBI on Thursday in connection with the multi-crore Saradha scam, sources in the central agency said.

Chatterjee, a former Mayor of Kolkata, was accompanied by his friend Baisakhi Banerjee to the

CBI office at CGO Complex in Salt Lake. He arrived there at around 12.30 pm.

Chatterjee had earlier been questioned by sleuths of the investigating agency in connection with the scam.

The Supreme Court had ordered a probe into the scam and transferred the case to the CBI in 2014.

Met forecast heavy rain in Bengal till Saturday



KOLKATA, Oct 24 (PTI): With a low-pressure area over south Odisha headed towards north north-westwards, the Met department on Thursday forecast heavy rain in some places of West Bengal till Saturday morning.

Heavy to very heavy rain will occur at one or two places in East and West Midnapore, Jhargram, Birbhum, Bankura and Purulia districts of Gangetic West Bengal, the MeT said in its forecast.

It said that heavy rain is likely in Kolkata, North and South 24 Parganas, Murshidabad, East and West Burdwan, Nadia,

Howrah, Hooghly, Malda, North and South Dinajpur districts of the state till Friday.

The Met department said that heavy to very heavy rain will occur in the North Bengal districts of Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Kalimpong, Nadia, Birbhum and Murshidabad till Saturday morning.

The weather is likely to get better from Saturday, it said.

Rainfall occurred at most places over Gangetic West Bengal on Thursday, with heavy downpour at one or two places in Purulia, Bankura and Birbhum districts, it added.

Modi magic waning fast: Adhir Chowdhury



KOLKATA, Oct 24 (PTI): Elated over the party's performance in the assembly polls in Maharashtra and Haryana, the leader of Congress in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury Thursday said the so called "Modi magic" is fast waning.

The result of the assembly polls in the two states will help to rejuvenate Congress in the days to come, he said.

In the first assembly elections after BJP's triumph in the Lok Sabha polls in May, the saffron party's electoral juggernaut has met with some resistance in Maharashtra and Haryana with a resurgent Congress performing creditably in the northern state.

"The election results of Haryana and Maharashtra has shown that the Modi magic is waning too fast. The results are a reflection of the frustration of the people with the anti-people policies of the government and the economic slowdown," Chowdhury told PTI.

The results will boost the morale of the rank and file of the Congress. "The fighting spirit of the party in Haryana will help us to rejuvenate the party across the country," he said.

BJP-ruled Haryana now appears headed for a hung assembly and JJP chief Dushyant Chautala is set to become the kingmaker. BJP, however, is set to emerge as the single largest party in Haryana followed by Congress.

Chowdhury expressed his doubts whether BJP will play it "fair" during the government formation in Haryana. "Horse trading by BJP will now start

in Haryana to form the government. It is to be seen whether BJP respects the people's mandate or it goes against it and gets its hands dirty by using all sorts of unethical means to form the government," the five time MP from West Bengal, said.

In Haryana, the Congress, which failed to bag even one seat in the Lok Sabha polls, won or was ahead in 31 of the 90 seats at stake compared to its previous tally of 15. The BJP, which had 47 seats in the outgoing 90-member house, has won or is ahead in 40 seats. The half-way mark is 46.

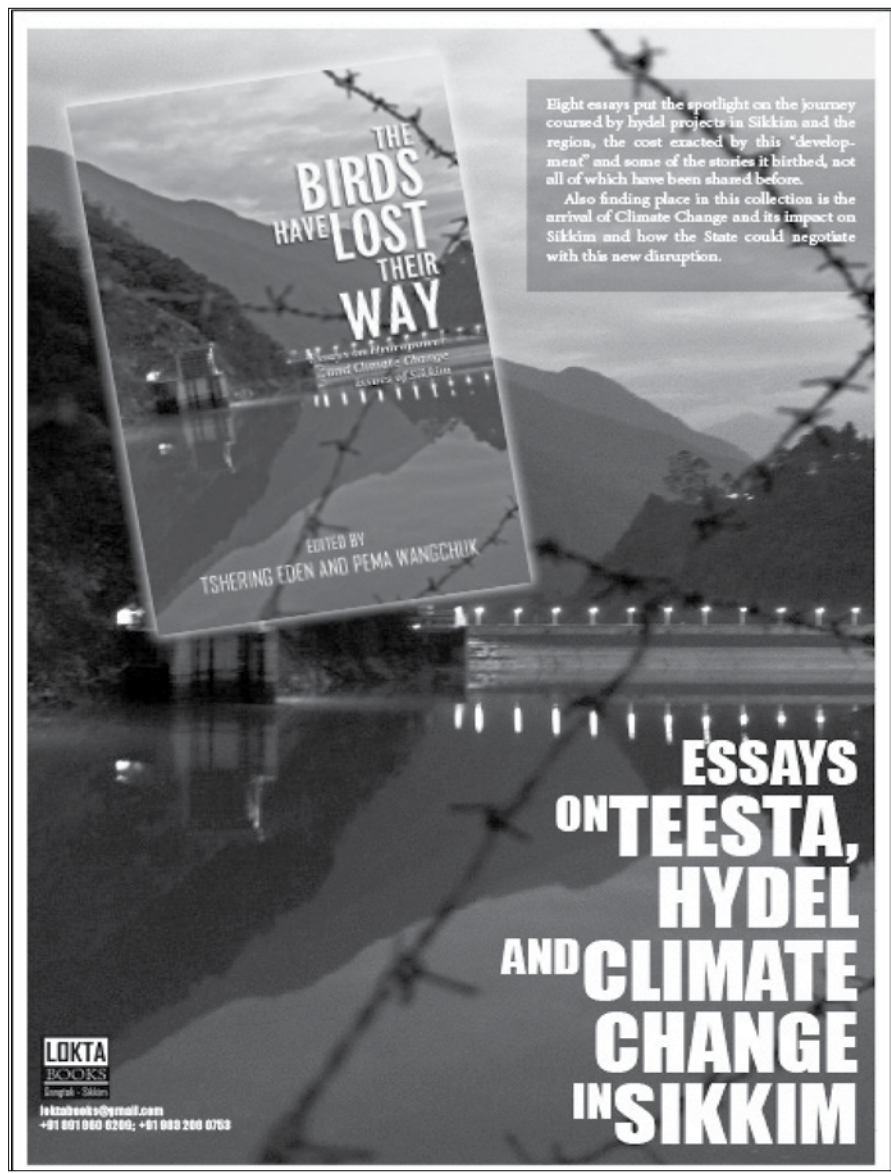
All eyes are on the fledgling Jannayak Janta Party (JJP), which was floated last year by Dushyant Chautala a former MP from Haryana, after a vertical split in the once powerful INLD.

As per the results and trends available in Maharashtra, The BJP-Shiv Sena coalition is on course to retain power in Maharashtra albeit with a reduced majority. The opposition Congress-NCP alliance has put up a good show.

BJP's tally in the 288-member assembly is 99 and 57 for Shiv Sena.

NCP has won or is ahead in 55 while the Congress' tally was 44. The NCP and the Congress bagged 41 and 42 seats respectively in the outgoing house.

In the 2014 polls, the BJP and the Sena had contested separately and won 122 and 63 seats respectively. Shiv Sena had joined the Fadnavis-led government more than a month after it was formed.



Kohli rested from T20s against Bangladesh, maiden call-up for Shivam Dube



MUMBAI, OCT 24 (PTI): India captain Virat Kohli was on Thursday rested from the upcoming three-match T20 series against Bangladesh while Mumbai all-rounder Shivam Dube was rewarded with a maiden call-up for his “phenomenal” exploits with the India A team.

The prolific Sanju Samson and leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal returned to the side for the T20 Internationals.

The 24-year-old Samson from Kerala has played his only T20I, against Zimbabwe in 2015. A regular in the India A set up, Samson has been rewarded for a good Vijay Hazare Trophy season, having amassed 410 runs in eight innings, including a double-century earlier this month.

Dashing all-rounder Hardik Pandya was not discussed in the selection meeting as he underwent a surgery in the UK for a back injury this month, paving the way for the 26-year-old rookie Dube's inclusion in the shortest format.

Dube pipped Vijay Shankar as the second choice all-rounder, primarily based on his big-hitting prowess.

Chairman of selection committee MSK Prasad said, “You can see, earlier we had Hardik Pandya, then we also tried Vijay Shankar. All of us agreed in unison that the role we have, he (Dube) fits in very well.

“He bats aggressively, his performances in the India A Series in West Indies and also against South Africa in the ODIs (for India A) was phenomenal. He has gone up by leaps and bounds, a notch higher and we are convinced about it.”

As has been the case in the past, Rohit Shar-

ma will lead the squad in Kohli's absence.

Apart from the three-match T20 series which starts in New Delhi on November 3, followed by matches at Rajkot and Nagpur on November 7 and 10 respectively, Bangladesh will also play two Tests as part of the World Championship, in Indore and Kolkata, from November 14-18 and November 22-26 respectively.

The upcoming tour was on Monday thrown into jeopardy after the Bangladesh players refused to participate in any cricketing activity until their demands, including a hike in salary, were met.

However, the tour was back on track after the cricketers, led by star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, on Wednesday called off their strike after getting assurance from the country's board that all their demands will be met.

The squad for the Test series against the neighbours remained unchanged after India's 3-0 whitewash of South Africa recently. Left-arm spinner Shahbaz Nadeem, who picked up four wickets on his Test debut against South Africa, was not considered for selection.

Shahbaz, though, was not part of the original squad against the Proteas, coming in as replacement for the injured Kuldeep Yadav ahead of the Ranchi Test.

Also finding a place in the T20 squad was Mumbai seamer Shardul Thakur while all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was rested.

Rishabh Pant has been the natural heir to Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who hasn't featured in any international fixture

since India's exit from the 50-over World Cup earlier this year, but Samson could now push him for a slot in the XI.

Delhi pacer Navdeep Saini was omitted on fitness grounds, paving the way for Shardul, who has played the last of his T20Is in March 2018.

“Experienced pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar could make a comeback from injury in the next series (against the West Indies),” chairman of selectors MSK Prasad said. “Navdeep Saini was not available, that is the reason we picked up Shardul Thakur,” he added. Injured pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah's return will take longer, he added.

Both Bumrah and Hardik underwent surgeries in the UK earlier this month for back injuries.

When asked about Chahal, he said, “With regards to him, we wanted to try out Chahal and that's the reason we are giving him so many opportunities.”

India's squad for T20I series against Bangladesh:

Rohit Sharma (capt), Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul, Sanju Samson, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant(wk), Washington Sundar, Krunal Pandya, Yuzvendra Chahal, Rahul Chahar, Deepak Chahar, Khaleel Ahmed, Shivam Dube, Shardul Thakur

Squad for Test series against Bangladesh:

Virat Kohli (capt), Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Hanuma Vihari, Saha (wk), R Jadeja, R Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Umesh Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Shubman Gill, Rishabh Pant.

ISL: ATK seek first points vs Hyderabad FC

KOLKATA, OCT 24 (PTI): Back home after suffering an away defeat, former champions ATK will look to regroup and pick their first points when they face Hyderabad FC in the sixth season of the Indian Super League (ISL) here on Friday.

For Hyderabad FC, who were formed after Pune FC were disbanded last season for financial irregularities, this will be the first match of the season.

Despite a sixth minute lead by Carl McHugh, ATK were left to rue some good opportunities as Kerala Blasters restored parity by converting a spotkick in the 30th minute and sealed the issue before half-time in the ISL opener in Kochi on Sunday.

The Kolkata franchise were also ‘unlucky’ with their appeals for penalties being turned down during the match and coach Antonio Lopez Habas will look for a fresh start for his team.

Former Spanish international goalkeeper Jose Molina took charge in the third season and the Kolkata franchise put up a dominant display to win their second title -- a record they jointly hold with Chennaiyin FC in the five-year-old history of the league.



But after the severed partnership with Atletico Madrid -- who looked after the technical affairs but did not invest anything in the club, ATK's performance nosedived, finishing ninth and sixth in the last two seasons.

To revive their fortunes, the Sanjiv Goenka-owned side finally decided to get back Habas and the Spaniard will be keen to return to winning ways.

Soosairaj was one of most influential players for Jamshedpur last year, netting four goals for them but the leftwinger

looked tentative against Kerala with Jayesh Rane in the central midfield.

“The duty to the team is like that. I think Soosairaj has a fantastic future but he needs to adapt to us tactically. Maybe one day he'll play as a full-back and other day he'll be a winger. He has the condition for playing in many sectors of the pitch,” Habas said of Soosairaj on the eve of the match.

Most of the players from the now-defunct Pune FC, who were disbanded at the end of last season following finan-

cial troubles, have been retained by the Hyderabad side.

Englishman Phil Brown, who joined Pune last season in January and guided the club to a seventh-place finish, will continue to guide Hyderabad as they play their first match.

Representing the historical city of Hyderabad, the franchise have brought in several key foreigners, including Nestor Gordillo, Deyvison Rogerio da Silva and Giles Barnes.

The domestic recruits include Gani Nigam, Sahil

Tavora and Laldanmawia Ralte while FC Goa's Laxmikant Kattimani has replaced Vishal Kaith.

The defence also looks sturdy with high-profile signings of Matthew Kilgallon and Rafa Lopez Gomes adding a bit of their experience from the European top tiers.

Youngsters Deependra Negi, Ashish Rai and Tarif Akhand are also part of the main squad.

Under Habas, then Atletico de Kolkata won the inaugural title in 2014 and made the last-four the following year.

Vijay Hazare final: Battle of heavyweights



BENGALURU, OCT 24 (PTI): The spotlight will be on India players Mayank Agarwal, R Ashwin and KL Rahul when the evenly-matched Karnataka and Tamil Nadu lock horns in the title clash of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Friday.

The Manish Pandey-led Karnataka were convincing in their victories in the knockout games but Tamil Nadu, who dominated the league phase, were a tad lucky as the rain rule allowed them to go past Punjab in the quarter-finals before young M Shahrulkh Khan guided them home in the semifinal against Gujarat.

The two sides are equally matched, with a formidable batting line-up and a set of quality bowlers, though the presence of R Ashwin gives the TN attack more experience and variety.

The Friday's clash will be decided by how the two bowling attacks perform given that both teams have a lot of depth in batting.

The home side has been well served by out-of-favour Test opener K L Rahul (546 runs in 10 games), who has come into his own in the quarter-finals and semis and his opening partner Devdutt Padikkal (598 runs from 10 matches).

Captain Manish Pandey has been in good touch too and he will look to pull his weight in the summit clash as would Mayank and Test discard Karun Nair.

Tamil Nadu have an equally formidable batting unit with Baba Aparajith (480 runs), southpaw Abhinav Mukund (440 runs) and the stylish Murali Vijay at the forefront.

Skipper Dinesh Karthik has donned the finisher role with some telling knocks and would be expected to lead from the front in the final.

All-rounder Vijay Shankar and young Shahrulkh Khan have made crucial contributions with the latter putting his hand up in a tricky chase on Wednesday.

The Karnataka bowling has seen an unlikely hero emerge with V Koushik picking up four wickets in the semifinal demolition of Chhattisgarh while the pacers -- experienced Abhimanyu Mithun and Prasidh Krishna -- and the spinners K Gowtham, Shreyas Gopal and Praveen Dube among the wickets.

The host bowlers will be up against a confident Tamil Nadu batting line-up and stopping it will hold the key to success.

Off-spinner R Ashwin and leg spinner Murugan Ashwin will be aware

that the Chinnaswamy stadium with its small boundaries can be tough on the bowlers and have a huge task of containing the likes of Rahul, Mayank and others.

The role of the Tamil Nadu medium-pacers T Natarajan, M Mohammed and K Vignesh would be crucial as getting early wickets can have a huge impact on the game.

The final offers Tamil Nadu a chance for redemption after the horror run in the previous two seasons while Karnataka which hasn't had a great 2018-19 season will also look to start with a bang with a title win.

Teams (from) Karnataka: Manish Pandey (C), K L Rahul, Devdutt Padikkal, Mayank Agarwal, Karun Nair, Pavan Deshpande, K Gowtham, Shreyas Gopal, S Sharath (wk), Abhimanyu Mithun, V Koushik, Prasidh Krishna, Ronit More, Praveen Dube, J Suchith, Abhishek Reddy.

Tamil Nadu: Dinesh Karthik (C), Abhinav Mukund, Murali Vijay, B Aparajith, Vijay Shankar, M S Washington Sundar, M Shahrulkh Khan, R Ashwin, M Mohammed, T Natarajan, K Vignesh, M Ashwin, N Jagadeesan (wk), Abhishek Tanwar, C Hari Nishaanth, J Kousik. Match starts at 9am.

Hyderabad FC to miss Nestor Gordillo until December

NEW DELHI, OCT 24 (PTI): Indian Super League (ISL) debutants Hyderabad FC will be without the services of Spanish midfielder Nestor Gordillo for their first eight matches of the sixth season.

Hyderabad will make their ISL debut against former champions ATK at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Kriangan here on Friday.

Gordillo will be ineligible for selection until

December after he was handed a four-month ban by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) Players' Status Committee on August 13 this year for signing a “pre-contract” with the now-dissolved FC Pune City despite having a year left in his contract with Chennai City FC.

Latest the 30-year-old can be available for current ISL season is in the reverse fixture when Hyderabad FC host ATK on December 21.

India drop two spots to 106th in FIFA rankings

NEW DELHI, OCT 24 (PTI): The Indian football team dropped two places to 106th position in the latest FIFA rankings issued on Thursday.

The downward slid came following the Blue Tigers' 1-1 draw against lower-ranked Bangladesh in the FIFA World Cup qualifier earlier this month.

The draw against Bangladesh came after India's impressive 0-0 stalemate against Asian champions Qatar in Sep-

tember. Bangladesh, however, benefitted from the draw, jumping three rungs to 184th spot.

Belgium has managed to hold on to the top spot, followed by France and Brazil. Top-ten rivals Uruguay (5th, up 1), Croatia (7th, up 1), Argentina (9th, up 1) have edged closer to the summit, according to the FIFA website.

England are placed fourth ahead of Uruguay, Portugal, Croatia, Spain, Argentina and Colombia.

Inter Milan interested in Bayern star Muller - report

BERLIN, OCT 24 (AFP): Inter Milan are interested in signing former Germany star Thomas Muller, who has lost his starting place at Bayern Munich, magazine Kicker reported on Thursday.

The 30-year-old has often found himself on the bench this season behind Philippe Coutinho, who Bayern coach Niko Kovac prefers in the attacking midfield role.

According to Kicker, Inter's “interest is intensifying” and the Italian giants could bring Muller to Milan in the January transfer window.

Mueller made a rare start, only his fifth of the

season, in Tuesday's 3-2 win at Olympiakos in the Champions League on the right wing, helping set up two goals for Robert Lewandowski.

“I'm trying to concentrate on playing football. Slowly all the discussions will come to an end,” Mueller told reporters in Athens when asked about his future at Bayern.

He has spent his entire career at Bayern, who he joined as a schoolboy in 2000, and club president Uli Hoeness has made it clear that no one at the club wants to see Mueller leave.

Italian legend Rossi hits 400th Grand Prix

PHILLIP ISLAND (AUSTRALIA), OCT 24 (AFP): The most experienced motorcycle rider in history marks another milestone in Australia this weekend, with veteran Valentino Rossi gearing up for his 400th Grand Prix.

The Italian, still arguably the sport's biggest draw despite winning the last of his seven premier class world titles in 2009, conceded it was a “great achievement”.

“It's been a long, long time,” admitted the 40-year-old, who made his debut in 1996 in the 125cc class.



to go with two from his 250cc days.

“It's something that you don't expect. Especially when I was younger, and through my career, I never ever had a clear idea how long I want to race.

“Now I'm 40! Imagine. But yes, it's a good achievement.” Rossi has long been the most experienced rider on the grid and his career statistics are stunning -- he's

won 115 races across all classes and scored points in 353 of them.

Known as “The Doctor”, he signed a two-year contract with Yamaha in 2018, which means he will remain in the sport until at least 2020. He said the motivation remained to win races.

“When you get good results out there everything is easier because you enjoy it more,” he said.

Louvre blockbuster spotlights Leonardo da Vinci 500 years on

Leonardo da Vinci is the star in a blockbuster retrospective opening Thursday at the Louvre museum in Paris to mark 500 years since the death of the Renaissance master.

Some 240,000 people have already reserved their place in line for the exhibition, the biggest ever organised to showcase the Tuscan polymath's indelible contributions to humanity -- with an emphasis on his painting.

A decade in the planning, the show simply titled "Leonardo da Vinci" groups 162 works, including 24 drawings loaned by Queen Elizabeth II of Britain from the Royal Collection.

The British Museum, the Hermitage of Saint Petersburg and the Vatican have also contributed, as well as, of course, Italy -- after a sometimes acrimonious tug-of-war between Rome and Paris over the loans.

The exhibition in the Hall Napoleon, which runs until February 24, features 10 of the fewer than 20 paintings definitively attributed to the Renaissance master, as well as drawings, man-



uscripts, sculptures and other objets d'art.

The show walks the visitor through the timeline of the master's peripatetic career under the tutelage of dukes, princes and kings, from Florence to Milan, Venice and Rome, and finally France, where he spent the last three years of his life.

He died in the histor-

ic town of Amboise in the Loire Valley on May 2, 1519.

- Two no-shows -

Two standout works are missing from the show, starting with the Mona Lisa.

Organisers decided the world's most famous painting should remain in the Louvre's Salle des Etats -- its normal home -- to help avoid overcrowding.

As it is, the masterpiece attracts nearly 30,000 people a day.

The Mona Lisa's ineffable smile will however beguile visitors in a virtual reality experience at the end of the show.

The other notable no-show is the Salvator Mundi, the work that became the most expensive painting ever sold when

it fetched \$450 million (400 million euros) at a Christie's auction in 2017. Mystery now surrounds the painting -- whose authenticity is disputed by some experts -- as it has not been seen in public ever since the record-shattering sale.

The Louvre has said the museum's request to borrow the work is still pending, but a last-minute appearance would be a stunning surprise.

- The Vitruvian Man - The final act in the row between Paris and Rome over Italy's contributions to the show came with a legal effort to halt the loan of the iconic Vitruvian Man drawing.

The Vitruvian Man -- which Italian media say is insured for at least one billion euros -- joined the Louvre show with just days to spare before the opening. It will stay only eight weeks rather than the full four months.

The exhibition curated by the Louvre's Vincent Delieuvin and Louis Frank, the heads of the museum's painting and graphic arts departments, includes infrared reflectographs that offer an insight into the master painter's techniques.

Trump lifts Turkey sanctions, quits 'blood-stained' Syria



WASHINGTON, Oct 24 (AFP): President Donald Trump ended sanctions against Turkey on Wednesday, drawing a line under American involvement in "blood-stained" Syria, as Turkish and Russian troops seized territory previously held by US troops and their beleaguered Kurdish allies.

"Let someone else fight over this long blood-stained sand," Trump said in a White House speech that formalized the ceding of power in northern Syria to Ankara and increasingly influential Moscow.

Trump said he was lifting the sanctions because a ceasefire was holding in the area, which Turkey invaded to drive Kurdish military groups from their strongholds.

Trump called the ceasefire, which allowed the Turkish takeover to proceed largely unopposed, a "major breakthrough." Rejecting accusations that he betrayed the Syrian Kurds -- who suffered thousands of casualties fighting alongside US troops against the Islamic State (IS) jihadist group -- Trump said they were happy.

The president said the Kurdish commander in the country, Mazloum Abdi, had just told him he was "extremely thankful." Ankara ordered a cross-border operation into Syria on October 9 because it said it wanted to create a security cordon free of Kurdish armed groups that it considers to be terrorists, linked to Kurdish rebels inside Turkey.

The long-planned operation started after Trump announced the exit of the small, but politically significant US military force which had until then been closely allied with the Kurds.

Trump said he didn't want the US troops caught in the middle of a Turkish-Kurdish war.

Accused both by Re-

publicans and Democrats of abandoning the Kurds, Trump imposed sanctions on Turkey on October 14 and sent a delegation to persuade Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to order a brief ceasefire.

In a tweet from a spokesman on Wednesday, Abdi thanked Trump "for his tireless efforts that stopped the brutal Turkish attack and jihadist groups on our people." A group of US senators called in a Wednesday letter for US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to expedite a visa for Abdi so the government could "hear directly... about the situation on the ground and the fight" against IS.

As US soldiers and the Kurds exited areas near Turkey's border, Turkish troops and Russian troops, who have propped up Syrian President Bashar al-Assad through his country's multi-sided civil war, moved in.

The first Russian patrol in northern Syria got underway on Wednesday, the defense ministry in Moscow announced.

Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu talked with Abdi and reassured him that civilians would not have to leave their homes, a spokesman said -- apparently addressing allegations that Turkey will seek ethnic cleansing in the region.

Critics of Trump say he has caved in to Turkey and been outplayed by Russia. "It is unthinkable that Turkey would not suffer consequences for malevolent behaviour which was contrary to the interests of the United States and our friends," tweeted Republican Senator Mitt Romney.

But Trump insisted that the power shift is a win for Washington, because he is fulfilling a campaign promise to step away from "ancient sectarian and tribal conflicts."

Trump said there was

no risk that the turmoil in the area could lead to a reconstitution of the Islamic State, which has lost its once sizeable territories and has thousands of members and their relatives kept in camps controlled by the Kurds.

With concerns that the Kurds may no longer be able to monitor Islamic State prisoners, Trump said he expects Turkey to "abide by its commitment" to act as a "back-up to the Kurds." "Should something happen, Turkey is there to grab them," he said.

He was speaking shortly after a US State Department official, James Jeffrey, testified in Congress that "over 100" Islamic State prisoners had escaped so far and "we do not know where they are." Trump said that a "small number" of US soldiers would remain nearby, but purely to guard oil facilities.

His central message was clear: that the United States has no business in Syria and that there was never any question of trying to stop NATO member Turkey from carrying out its invasion.

"We have spent USD 8 trillion on wars in the Middle East, never really wanting to win those wars," Trump said.

However, the isolationist policy grates on many Republicans, whom he is depending upon to save him from a Democratic push to impeach and remove him from office over allegations that he abused his office.

Immediately after the speech, powerful Republican Senator Lindsey Graham said the United States had to stay engaged.

The US air power must "continue to control the skies over Syria" he said, adding that the military should "have a small -- but capable -- military partnership" with the Kurds to prevent Islamic State from reemerging.

Lost their way: Chinese orienteering team caught cheating

A cheating Chinese orienteering team was disqualified after losing its moral compass and using secret paths and markings during the Military World Games in China.

The home team bagged some of the top spots in a middle-distance competition, which sees runners navigating their way across unknown countryside using little more than a map. But organisers later discovered the mixed-gender team -- all of whom were serving soldiers -- had strayed from the straight and narrow.

Spectators had helped them by pointing the way and a number of "markings and small paths (were) prepared for them, which only they were aware of" the International Orienteering Federation (IOF) said.

The Military World Games bring together military athletes from around the world every four years. China built an athletes' village to host around 10,000 participating soldiers, coaches and officials for the games, which kicked off in Wuhan on October 18 with a ceremony attended by President Xi Jinping.

China's Ministry of Defence, whose People's Liberation Army are joint organisers of the games, did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment. Orienteering is not the only sport to have been embroiled in scandal in China, with marathons also tainted by instances of cheating.

At one event in March a woman was caught using a bicycle for part of the course, while dozens of participants took shortcuts at the Shenzhen half-marathon in November.

Spain begins exhuming Franco's remains from opulent tomb

Spain on Thursday began exhuming the embalmed body of Francisco Franco from a grandiose state mausoleum in order to relocate it to a more discreet grave in a country still conflicted over the dictator's decades-long regime.

"The exhumation process at the tomb of Francisco Franco has begun," a government spokesman said, indicating that members of Franco's family were on hand to witness the opening of the grave at the Valley of the Fallen site near Madrid.

Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has made moving the remains of "El Caudillo" (The Leader) a priority since coming to power in June 2018, saying Spain should not "continue to glorify" a man who ruled with an iron fist after the bloody 1936-39 civil war that his Nationalist forces won. "It is a great victory for dignity, memory, justice and reparation -- and thus for Spanish democracy," Sanchez said of the historic moment, which comes just over a fortnight before a general election.

Since his death 44 years ago, Franco's body has reposited inside a vast, imposing basilica in the Valley of the Fallen, some 50 kilometres (30 miles) northwest of Madrid, which has long attracted both tourists and right-wing sympathisers.

Ahead of the operation, 22 members of the late dictator's family arrived at the site carrying wreaths to witness the exhumation, which began shortly before 11 am (0900 GMT).

Justice Minister Dolores Delgado was also on hand to represent the government, but no journalists were allowed in.

Four relatives will



carry the coffin bearing his remains from the grave and out into a square where it will be placed in a hearse that will take it to one of two waiting helicopters.

From there, the Franco's body will be flown to El Pardo where it will be reburied alongside that of his wife in Mingorrubio state cemetery just north of the Spanish capital.

In the event of inclement weather, the coffin will be driven to El Pardo by hearse.

Initially scheduled for June 2018, the operation was delayed by more than a year due to a string of legal challenges filed by Franco's descendants.

Critics on both the left and the right have accused Sanchez of electioneering, with Pablo Iglesias who heads the radical leftwing Podemos saying the Socialist premier was unearthing "Franco's mummy" to win votes.

Spaniards are divided over the exhumation, with 43 percent in favour of the move, 32.5 percent against and the rest undecided, according to a poll published this month in El Mundo daily.

- Franco's 'glorious crusade' - Ordered by Franco

in 1940 to celebrate his "glorious (Catholic) crusade" against the "godless" Republicans, construction of the Valley of the Fallen lasted for almost 20 years.

Partly built by the forced labour of political prisoners, the site is one of Europe's largest mass graves, housing the remains of over 30,000 dead from both sides of a civil war that was triggered by Franco's rebellion against an elected Republican government.

Most had fought for Franco but the monument also contains the bones of many Republican opponents who were moved there from cemeteries and mass graves across the country without their families being informed.

A 150-metre (500-foot) cross towers over the site which Franco dedicated to "all the fallen" of the conflict in what he called a gesture of reconciliation.

Since Franco was buried there after his death in 1975, flowers have been placed daily on his tomb.

Franco's descendants have battled to stop the exhumation, or failing that, to have his remains moved to a crypt at the Almudena cathedral in

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Vince Gill is still stunned by how country music 'buried' the Dixie Chicks

It has been more than 16 years since the country music industry effectively shunned the Dixie Chicks because of lead singer Natalie Maines's criticism of President George W. Bush during the invasion of Iraq, but the incident still provokes strong feelings.

That's why many viewers were surprised when the controversy wasn't covered in Ken Burns's "Country Music" documentary, a 16-hour deep dive into the genre. (Producers said they deliberately narrowed the scope to the 20th century.) And the topic came up this week during a webinar hosted by the Country Radio Seminar (CRS) in Nashville, which featured "Country Music" writer and producer Dayton Duncan, as well as country superstar Vince Gill, who made multiple appearances in the documentary. At one point, Gill was asked about an episode in the film that addressed country music artists who tackled polarizing social issues in the 1960s. Why, moderator and CRS executive director RJ Curtis asked, do many modern country singers frequently refuse to discuss politics today?

After hailing Johnny Cash as one of country's few truly outspoken artists, Gill added, "I stuck up for the Dixie Chicks 20 years ago when they buried them." By "they," he clearly meant the industry response after Maines, during a March 2003 concert in London, famously said, "Just so you know, we're on the good side with y'all. We do not want this war, this violence, and we're ashamed that the president of the United States is from Texas."

Maines's quote went viral, and there was a furious response from the country music world. Even though the trio (also made up of Emily Robison and Martie Maguire) was one of

the most successful acts in the genre's history, country radio stopped playing their songs; fans destroyed their CDs; they got death threats.

As for Gill, he was indeed one of the few high-profile figures who came to their defense.

"There's political leaders that said a lot worse things about George Bush

Entertainment Weekly. "You know who gets blessed when you forgive: you."

Gill said that Natalie's father, steel guitar player Lloyd Maines, saw him a few years ago and told him, "I've been meaning to tell you this for many, many years, but you and Roseanne [Cash] were the only two people that stuck up for my kid. And as a father, I just wanted



than Natalie did. Nobody rips them for it, you know?" Gill said in April 2003 at the CMT Flameworthy Awards in Nashville, according to TheBoot.com. "I kind of feel like she's been bashed enough."

The next week, Gill clarified to the Tennessean that he held "the completely opposite view of Natalie Maines" because "the troops and the president don't have a bigger supporter than me." Still, he believed in freedom of speech. A month later at the Academy of Country Music Awards, the audience booed when the Dixie Chicks were mentioned. While on-stage presenting the entertainer of the year prize, Gill admonished the crowd. "Stop it, stop it," he said, according to

to thank you."

(In 2003, Cash told Salon she was concerned about Maines: "What can we do to help this poor girl? I could not believe when I was in Nashville last week what they are doing to her: tractors running over the records, insisting that she go on TV to recant.")

Gill is still struck by how the situation unfolded. "I found it pretty astounding that they kind of buried them for just making a probably not-so-polite comment," he continued. "But all I said was, 'Man, I hear people say a lot worse things about him every day up on Capitol Hill and nobody gets barbecued for that. Why are you going to take their career away from them?'"

Damian Chazelle, Olivia Hamilton expecting first child

LOS ANGELES, OCT 24 (PTI): Filmmaker Damian Chazelle and wife Olivia Hamilton are set to welcome their first child together. The news was shared by Hamilton, 32, on Instagram where she recently posted photos from her trip to Rattlesnake Canyon with Chazelle.

On Tuesday, Hamilton shared a photo with friends Lauren Rodman and Yas Yeganegi placing their hands over her growing baby bump.

"Magic hour with magic humans," she captioned

the image. Chazelle, 34, and Hamilton got married in September 2018. They had gotten engaged in October 2017.

The director is best known for films such as "Whiplash", "La La Land" and "First Man". Hamilton has made guest appearances in his films -- as an annoyed cafe customer in "La La Land" and as wife of actor Jason Clarke's character in "First Man".

Chazelle was previously married to Jasmine McGlade, an executive producer on "La La Land". They parted ways in 2014.

Disney moving ahead with 'Hocus Pocus' sequel

LOS ANGELES, OCT 24 (PTI): Disney is working on a sequel to 1993 fantasy comedy "Hocus Pocus" for its upcoming streaming service Disney+. Based on story by Garris and David Kirschner, the original film followed a comedic trio of witches -- played by Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Kathy Najimy -- who are inadvertently resurrected 300 years later by a boy whose family has moved from Los Angeles to Salem.

According to Variety, the studio has roped in Jen D'Angelo, the scribe of popular sitcom "Workaholics", to pen the script.

However, there is no news whether Midler, Parker and Najimy will be reprising their roles in the sequel.

The 1993 film was a moderate success upon its release, raking in just USD 39 million against its USD 28 million budget. But the movie has since attracted a cult following ever since it premiered on Disney Channel.

Elton John: Madonna Was "Ungracious and Nasty" to Lady Gaga

Elton John's new memoir, Me, is full of all kinds of revelations, not just about the legendary rock star's glamorous life but about his fellow musicians, too. In one chapter, the musician revisits Madonna and Lady Gaga's infamous feud, which eventually lead to the Rocketman's own falling out with Madonna. "I used to make fun of [Madonna] for lip-synching on stage, but the problem really started when she ran Gaga down on an American chat show," he wrote, referencing a 2012 ABC News interview in which Madonna called Gaga's "Born This Way" "reductive," confirming that she thought it was derivative of her own 1989 hit "Express Yourself". (Madonna also said that she thought Gaga was "a very talented artist" and that she admired her songwriting, but apparently that's been lost to history.)

"I got that Gaga's single 'Born This Way' definitely sounded similar to 'Express Yourself,' but I couldn't see why she was so ungracious and nasty about it, rather than taking it as a compliment... particularly when she claims to be a champion for women," John writes. "I think it's just wrong -- an established artist shouldn't kick down a younger artist right at the start of their career."

Following Madonna's interview, John told a journalist in Australia that her career was over and called the pop star a "fairground stripper." He claims that he was unaware that his comments would make it to tv. "I was furious and I said some pretty horrible things about her to a TV interviewer in Australia, a guy I'd known since the seventies called Molly Meldrum," he wrote. "You can tell from the footage that it wasn't part of the interview, that I was just sounding off to an old friend between takes... They broadcast it anyway, which brought that particular old friendship to a very swift conclusion. Still, I shouldn't have said it. I apologized."

The story does have a happy ending, at least in part. Gaga and Madonna have apparently mended fences—they were photographed nuzzling together at an Academy Awards after-party earlier this year. And John is still close with Gaga, who serves as godmother to his two young sons. The musician "turned out to be a great godmother," John wrote.



DIAMOND LADY! The *Riverdale* actress, Camila Mendes looks stunning in a diamond studded mini dress while out in the Big Apple.

Edgar Ramirez to star in 'The War Has Ended'

LOS ANGELES, OCT 24 (PTI): Actor Edgar Ramirez will headline filmmaker Hagar Ben-Asher's new drama "The War Has Ended". Ramirez, best known for starring in series "American Crime Story: The Assassination of Gianni Versace" and film "Hands of Stone", will portray a man searching for his children, reported Variety.

Ben-Asher has critically-acclaimed films such as "Actress", "The Slut" and "Dead Women Walking" to her credits.

The film's story, set in Poland in 1945 at the end World War II, follows Joseph (Ramirez) who travels through battle-scarred towns with his horse, Oscar, and his enchanting puppet show to give local children a momentary escape from reality.

Joseph performs the story of "Frank and Tiny", about two elephants on the hunt for Frank's lost trunk, but his real mission is the perilous hunt for his two missing sons.

Along the way he finds an unlikely ally in Lily, an orphan who offers to help him in exchange for learning the secrets of puppeteering. The pair embark on a dangerous quest driven by hope, faith and a father's love.



The project will be produced by Dale Armin Johnson, Colleen Camp, Jill Littman and Marek Rozenbaum.

Ramirez will next be seen starring in the spy thriller "355" and Disney's "Jungle Cruise".

ARIES: This hot and cold behaviour is getting a little old, Aries. If you want to get to know them better, it's time to let them know. Fear and anxiety have a way of showing up unannounced, and that's okay. This is where communication comes in. If they are truly invested in your growth like they say they are, they'll be willing to meet you halfway. Trust that you can work through the turbulence together when you're playing on the same team. Tip: You will get through this.

TAURUS: Two words: conflict resolution. But you can only get to a place of peace and love when you do the inner work. Release the anger and resentment, Taurus. Tell your head to mind its own business. Your heart needs to reclaim the reins hereon. Have your words caused more pain than you anticipated? Own up to your mistakes, child of Venus. Tip: Let love prevail.

GEMINI: You're feeling like the most indulgent version of yourself, and with good reason. We're smack in the middle of the holiday season, after all. You don't have to exceed your credit card limit (in fact you shouldn't). But

you can allow yourself a pair of jhumkas or two. Self-sufficiency is going to be an important theme for you in the days to come. Learning that you are the creator of your own happiness will change the way you interact with the world around. Continue to make your life pleasurable in a number of ways. Tip: Allow yourself a few indulgences.

CANCER: Cancerians who are in the process of manifesting a soulmate can expect a breakthrough. Get ready to make space for somebody who is willing to work on things and eventually commit for the long haul. What you will realise in the process: that explosive, can't-live-without you love doesn't last very long. Keep things light initially. Tip: Things will be slow to build, and with good reason.

LEO: This week is about the most important person in your life aka you, you, you! But that doesn't mean you are not engaging with other people. It simply means that you are putting yourself first, setting boundaries, and protecting your sacred space. Not everybody deserves your time and energy—a Universal truth

you've come to acknowledge. Just be sure to not go into hermit mode. There are people who love you deeply and care about your well-being, and those are the people you want to spend time with.

Tip: Share your energy with those who matter. **VIRGO:** What if our physical vessel is a good indicator of our emotional and mental health? If you've been taking your body for granted, it's time to get back on the holistic bandwagon. Be mindful of what you're putting on your plate (think less processed food, more greens), and ensure you get an hour of physical activity every day.

Tip: It's time to nurture your body temple. **LIBRA:** Some days you want to put your snazziest suit on and be seen and heard at all the right places. On other days, you want to hide in bed all day dressed in your most comfortable PJs. Accept the yin like you do the yang, Libra. Give your body the time it needs to rest and rejuvenate. Remember, the healing is occurring on an emotional level too. Allow yourself to feel the pain, if any, completely. Tip: Take time off from your routine.

SCORPIO: Count your blessings, not your calories. It's that time of the year, Scorpio! Spend time in the company of those you love. Reconnect with friends both old and new. See how you can bring light to the underprivileged too. Given how transformative this year has been, it would be a shame to make tried-and-tested wardrobe choices.

Tip: Experiment with your sartorial choices. **SAGITTARIUS:** There's no doubt that your love is as deep as the ocean. But do they know that you have all the feels, Sagittarius? This season, don't just rely on actions. Turn to words of affirmation to express your affection. Remember, it's not just about repeating the three magic words. It's about letting them know they are appreciated and cared for. The key is to speak from an authentic space. Tip: Turn to words of affirmation to express your love.

CAPRICORN: You don't have all the answers, and that's okay. Turn to a mentor or guide for support. You will find that the divine masculine energies in your life are more than willing to offer help. In the realm of love and

romance, this is an especially blessed time for you. Allow yourself to receive what you have put into the Universe.

Tip: Open yourself to love.

AQUARIUS: You're leaving the old behind and stepping into the new. Get ready to usher in a beautiful phase of your relationship. Trust that things will flow seamlessly for the two of you once you surrender to the mysterious forces. But don't make it all about the other person, Aquarius. The quality of your life is determined by the work you put in. You are the creator of your happiness.

Tip: Trust that things will take place seamlessly. **PISCES:** If you want things to progress organically, get to know them outside the bedroom first. Let go of the masks and focus on building an authentic friendship. This is the secret to welcoming more joy into your existence! The holiday season also brings with itself the opportunity to connect with your soul tribe. That Diwali cards party is the perfect time to don that Benarasi sari and catch up with your best people.

Tip: Get to know them on an informal level first.