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SummitTIMES

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O N T O P O F T H E N E W S

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CHHATH PUJA IN SINGTAM

A large number of devotees were seen along the banks of the Teesta today for a special Chhath Puja celebration organised by the Bihar Jagran Manch, Singtam brach. The occasion was also attended by the president and Councillor of Singtam Nagar Panchayat accompanied by Zilla Upadhaksha (East) Sharmila Chettri among others. [from YOGEN THATAL]

Teacher arrested on charges of molesting minor

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 Nov:** Anong Mallik, a 29-year-old teacher, was taken into custody yesterday on charges of molesting a six-year-old minor.

The accused had allegedly been sexually molesting the minor for the past many months. She was staying in a hostel of which the accused the in-charge, police sources inform.

After receiving the complaint from the parents of the minor, Pakyong police picked up the accused who was sent to judicial custody for 14 days on Monday.

The Pakyong police sources inform that the case is under investigation as the condition of the girl child is now stable.

The accused has been employed as teacher here since 2017, it is informed.

SKM suspends working president Navin Karki

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 Nov:** Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has suspended its working president, Navin Karki for allegedly engaging in anti-party activities. In a letter addressed to Mr Karki, the party has said that the disciplinary committee has placed him under suspension after examining his anti-party activities. The letter also states that the post of working president shall cease to exist.

Chhath Puja will be public holiday under SKM: Golay

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 Nov:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha president PS Tamang [Golay] today said that when his party comes to power Chhath Puja will be declared a public holiday instead of a restricted holiday. He said this while greeting the people of Sikkim on the occasion of Chhath Puja, an SKM release informs.

Mr Tamang also attended the Chhath Puja Celebrations at Jorethang Bazaar where he was invited as the chief guest of the celebration by the business community of Jorethang, the release mentions.

He was welcomed with miniature table lamps, the party's election symbol, at the event.

This is for the first time that the business community has open-



ly invited an opposition leader, the release states.

Another press release from the party informs that Mr Tamang also visited Rangrang-Yangang constituency in South Sikkim today.

While addressing the party cadre, he criticized the Chief Minister for humiliating temporary employees by not turn-

ing up at the programme organized by them on 11 Nov at Saramsa even after having agreed to attend it.

He said that this has deeply hurt the sentiments of government employees across the state, the release adds.

Mr Tamang also accused the CM of neglecting Rangrang Yangang

constituency despite being born there.

He said that the people have made up their minds to vote for SKM this time to uproot the 25-year rule of Sikkim Democratic Front. He called for united efforts from all and directed the party workers to follow party directives sincerely, the release informs.

Karate coaching and championship in Gyalshing

**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 13 Nov:**

Shito-Ryu Seiko Karate-Do India, Gyalshing, is organising a two-day Coaching Camp and Open Karate Championship on 17 and 18 November at Gyalshing Girls Senior Secondary School, Kyongsa, in West Sikkim. Around 100 participants from different parts of Sikkim and Darjeeling are expected to participate in this event being held on the theme, 'Yes to Sports & Say No to Drugs'.

The camp has an experienced Second Dan Black Belt, Tshering Yanki Bhutia of Gyalshing, who is also an international judge/referee in Karate among other trainers.

It is informed that Shito-Ryu Seiko Karate-Do India has appointed Ms Bhutia as its official representative for Gyalshing and authorized her to run the Seiko Kai Karate classes.

Addressing a press conference here today, the organising commit-



tee president, Amar Subba, mentioned that the main objective behind the event was to encourage youngsters towards sporting activities and to keep them away from unhealthy distractions and substance abuse.

He added that such activities would also provide a good platform to talented sportspersons and their skills could then be honed through

proper training and grooming.

Ms Bhutia, in turn, mentioned that another objective of the event was to create awareness about Karate, especially among girls, and to encourage them to take self-defence training.

She is presently training around 70 young children in Karate at Gyalshing apart from offering self-defence training to girl students at different schools.

Likewise, another organising committee member, Madhu Limboo, mentioned that this event was just the start and that other activities, especially for the girl child and for women's empowerment, would be taken up in the near future.

She stated that another objective of the event was to encourage girls towards different creative fields and sports.

Janta Melas in Jan-2019 to cover 17,000 households

REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 12 Nov:

RM&DD Minister, SB Subedi, today announced that Janta Melas will be held in different parts of the State starting next January.

In West Sikkim, the Janta Melas will be held at Soreng, Dentam, Gyalshing and Yuksam while in South Sikkim, the venues are Rabongla, Namchi, Jorethang and Yangyang.

In North Sikkim, Janta Melas will be held at Kabi, Mangan and Chungthang while in East Sikkim, the places are Rangpo, Rongli, Pakyong and Gangtok.

The RM&DD Minister informed that while the dates have not yet been fixed, it has been decided that the Janta Melas will be held in January 2019. The Janta Mela will begin from Soreng Sub division in West Sikkim.

"We are distributing benefits like CMRHM in this Janta Mela. A total of 100 CMRHM, each of Rs 12 lakh, in every constituency. We will also be



distributing GCI sheets to 600 houses in each constituency," he said.

House upgradation schemes will also be extended to 1,500 houses in each constituency. This scheme has Rs. 30,000 as grant with Rs. 15,000 given to the beneficiaries in the first phase, informed Mr Subedi.

The other benefits to be given by RM&DD and other departments include water filters, pressure cookers along with grants to religious institutions.

The selection process and survey of beneficiaries is currently underway at each ward, he informed, while detailing that the State government officers, including the BDOs, are also involved in the selection process and were selecting beneficiaries who need assistance on a priority basis.

He informed that roughly 17,000 households will be covered under the Janta Melas this time.

India appeals to donors to enhance contributions to UN agency for Palestinian refugees

YOSHITA SINGH

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 13 (PTI):

India has voiced concern over the financial crunch at the UN agency for Palestinian refugees and appealed to nations to enhance contributions to it, saying this support will be a practical way of expressing continued solidarity with millions of Palestine refugees.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which was established by the UN General Assembly seven decades ago, looks after the welfare of 5.4 million Palestine refugees.

"However, almost all of the UNRWA's resources come from voluntarily contributions, with a limited donor base. This arrangement is fraught with uncertainties," First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN Mahesh Kumar said here Monday.

Kumar, speaking at the UN General Assembly Fourth Committee meeting on the UNRWA, said even core services to the Pal-

estinian refugees, notably in the fields of education, health, and assistance to the most vulnerable refugees are susceptible to interruption. He said provision of adequate, sustainable and predictable funding would have to be made and additional resource allocation from the regular budget could be considered.

He noted that the UN Board of Auditors in their latest report pointed out that as a result of suspended contributions amounting to 400 million dollars in respect of the years 2017 and 2018, the agency's projected overall deficit is around 450 million dollars.

"This is unsustainable and a cause of concern," he said. "We appeal to other traditional donors of the UNRWA to consider enhancing their contributions and non donor member states to consider contributing to the UNRWA. This is perhaps the practical way of expressing continued solidarity with Palestine refugees," Kumar said.

The Trump administration had in August

said that the US will not make additional contributions to the UNRWA.

Kumar said against the backdrop of the serious resource constraints faced by the UNRWA, India increased its annual financial contribution five-fold to the agency's core budget, from one million dollars in 2016 to five million dollars in 2018. India is also committed to contribute five million dollars in 2019.

As part of its ongoing assistance programmes in Palestine to strengthen capacity-building efforts focused on institutions, services and training personnel, India provides 150 places for Palestinian professionals every year in its Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme.

During the last five years, under an India-Palestine development partnership, 17 agreements have been signed in the fields of agriculture, health care, information technology, youth affairs, consular affairs, women's empowerment and media.

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CM greets children on their Day



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 NOV:

Chief Minister Pawan Chamling and Mrs Tika Maya Chamling have extended warm greetings to the children of Sikkim on the occasion of Children's Day falling on 14 November.

In his message, the Chief Minister remarks that children constitute the greatest asset of a nation and a nation prospers or progresses only if the hidden potential lying in the children is tapped and utilized for the benefit of the State and the Nation.

Pandit Nehru believed that children must be provided with love and care as the future of a nation lies in their hands, the CM states, adding, "As we join the nation to pay rich tributes to our beloved 'Chacha Nehru', I urge the children to gear up for greater challenges that lie ahead. In a country like India, where children constitute a good percentage of the population, we need to give much more attention to their all-round development."

The Chief Ministers concludes saying, "On this special day dedicated to the children, let us pledge to always encourage them to be better human beings and let us give them an atmosphere where they can grow of their own free will and emerge as true leaders. We should encourage them to be responsible and able citizens so that they shine bright and take the State and the Country to greater heights and glory.

"It is also a day for us to rededicate ourselves to build a State and a Nation where child rights are guaranteed and secured so that every child rightfully grows up in an atmosphere of safety and comfort".

10-yr-old girl injured in toy car explosion

GUWAHATI, NOV 13 (PTI): A 10-year old girl was seriously injured on Tuesday when a toy car found on the road near her house at the Manipuri Basti here exploded when she played with it, the police said.

Her mother of the class three girl was also injured in the explosion, the police said.

Her neighbours said that a packet containing the toy car was found by a person on the road and the girl took it inside her home to play with it.

As she was pushing it around an explosion occurred grievously injuring

CNN sues White House over barring of reporter

WASHINGTON, Nov 13 (AFP): CNN sued Donald Trump's administration Tuesday, alleging the White House violated journalist Jim Acosta's rights under the constitution by revoking his press credentials following a heated exchange with the US president.

"The wrongful revocation of these credentials violates CNN and Acosta's First

Dzongu prepares for Namsoong at Namprikdang

WANGCHUK BHUTIA
DIKCHU, 13 NOV:

A meeting was held today at Namprikdang in Upper Dzongu to discuss the celebration of Namsoong in Dzongu. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Speaker, area MLA Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, along with DM North, Karma R Bonpo, Sr SP North, Kunzang Dorjee Sangdarpa, DFO Territorial, James Saring Lepcha, President NNCC, Nezing Lepcha, heads of the departments, panchayats and the celebration committee.

Tom Tshering Lepcha from Social Welfare Justice and Empowerment Department detailed the funds sanctioned from Welfare Department for the festival and informed that the Union Minister of Tribal Affairs is scheduled to attend.

He also suggested some changes in the cel-

ebrations this year with modification of the pandal and other aspects.

The Namsoong Celebration Committee general secretary, Samten Lepcha, presented the income and expenditure details of the last year's festival.

The DM North suggested that Namsoong celebrations at Namprikdang be continued like earlier with the Tribal Festival organised simultaneously.

The DM also directed the Road & Bridges Department to maintain the approach road to the ground and also directed the Power Department to ensure uninterrupted power supply. The panchayats were requested to ensure public participation.

It was also decided that the 4-day festival, scheduled to be held from 13 to 16 Decem-



ber, also include the Area MLA Football Tournament like previous years.

The Chairperson, SNT, Pinto Namgyal Lepcha, stressed for the protection of Namprikdang forest guest house which has been damaged by the Teesta.

Addressing the function, The Deputy Speaker urged all the committee members and the offi-

cials to put in their best efforts to make the festival a success.

He further urged all to maintain transparency and said that there should not be any alteration in the make-up of committee members. He invited the people to join the celebrations cutting across party lines.

He also urged the Namprikdang Namsoong

Committee to settle the land dispute with regard to the Namprikdang Ground. He also called on the DM North to supervise the preparations and informed that the Chief Minister will also be invited.

An interaction was also held where various suggestions were placed by the panchayats and other individuals.

ITBP Commandant sponsors Lachen girl's treatment



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 NOV:

11th BN, ITBP, Pegong Sikkim, under the leadership of Commandant Rajesh Kumar Tomar, had organized a medical camp under its civic action programme at Lachen on 08 Sept earlier this year.

During the camp a class II student Sonam Doma Lachenpa was diagnosed with a disease named Development Carriert in which the patient slowly starts losing her vision and

the treatment is very costly, informs a press release.

Since the family could not afford the treatment, Comdt, 11th Bn ITBP, Rajesh Kumar Tomar, assured them that he would sponsor the child's treatment.

The girl has since undergone treatment at STNM Hospital Gangtok and the doctors are going to conduct a surgery on 13 Nov.

The girl and her family have expressed gratitude to Comdt. Tomar for his kind gesture, the release mentions.

Milk in India largely safe, quality issue persist: FSSAI

NEW DELHI, NOV 13 (PTI): Milk in India is largely safe, even though quality issues persist, an interim report released by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said Tuesday.

The report of the National Milk Quality Survey, 2018, FSSAI said is by far the largest systematic study of milk, both in terms of sample size (6,432 samples) and number of parameters.

The study, found that, little less than 10 per cent samples (638) had contaminants (mainly from poor farm practices and quality of feed) that make milk unsafe for consumption, while over 90 per cent of samples were found safe, said FSSAI CEO Pawan Agarwal while releasing the interim survey.

"Milk in India is largely free from adulterants which render it unsafe for consumption. Merely 12 out of total 6,432 samples had adulterants that affect the safety of milk," he said.

The occurrence of such adulterants is statistically insignificant considering the sample size in the survey, he

added.

The survey tested for 13 adulterants including vegetable oil, detergents, glucose, urea and ammonium sulphate.

Milk samples were also tested to check level of contaminants like antibiotic residue, pesticide residue and aflatoxin M1.

The FSSAI official, however did not specify samples from which part of the country contained adulterants.

He said the findings will be shared with stakeholders and state governments, and then preventive and corrective action would be taken to further improve the quality of milk in the country.

Agarwal said there is "no concern" at all due pesticides residues. Only 1.2 per cent of the samples failed on account of antibiotics residues above tolerance level and it was mainly due to oxy-tetracycline used to treat animals with bovine mastitis.

The survey found that non-compliance on fat and SNF (solid non fat) quality parameters is higher in raw milk (sourced directly from

milkman) than processed milk.

"Non-compliance on quality parameters in processed milk is quite large, even though it is lower than raw milk. This is a matter of concern and needs to be addressed through various measures," Agarwal said.

He, however added that high percentage of non-compliance samples does not suggest that proportionate volume of processed milk is non-compliant.

Agarwal said, the survey provides solid baseline data and a robust framework for continuous monitoring of safety and quality of milk.

"Whereas there should be zero-tolerance to adulteration in milk, concerns of quality due to contaminants need to be addressed over a period of time by taking large scale awareness drive and public education," he said.

In 2011, FSSAI had conducted a quick survey of adulteration of milk through its regional offices. Another milk survey was attempted in 2016 through state food authorities.

Milk in India largely safe, quality issue persist: FSSAI

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Namchi College street-play for election awareness at Kitam

SUMMIT REPORT
NAMCHI, 13 NOV:

In the series of Election Awareness Programmes organised by the Electoral Literacy Club (ELC) of Namchi Government College, the ELC students performed a street play at Kitam Bazar today.

The play was aimed to generate awareness among residents and students of classes XI and XII from Kitam Senior Secondary School, Namchi.

The programme was attended by Kitam Manpur GPU Panchayat President Savitri Chettri,

Panchayat members, members of Munal Club, Kitam, Teachers and Students of Kitam Sr. Sec. School and local residents, police personnel and other officials.

The Campus Ambassador, Dr Tsewang Gyatso Bhutia, from the college briefed the gathering on the theme of the play and its relevance as the entire nation prepares for General Elections 2019.

The play focussed on spreading awareness among differently-abled citizens since the theme of National Voters' Day 2018 is Accessible Elections.

Using the medium of street-play, the students encouraged women electors, young and future voters to exercise their right to vote with confidence and with a democratic spirit.

The play has been organised under the guidance of Namchi District Election Department as part of Mass Election Awareness of ECI.

Additionally, awareness was also generated on National Voters Service Portal (NVSP), Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) Form 6, 6A, 7, 8, 8A and on other relevant Electoral exercises.

SKM Nari Morcha to hold Nari Convention next month

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 NOV:

The Nari Morcha of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha conducted a State level Nari meet at its Lall Bazaar party office in Gangtok today. The meet was chaired by Nari chief convenor, Kala Rai, general secretary Nari Wing, Prabitra Bhandari were

among hundreds who attended the meeting, a press release informs. Thorough discussions were held on the Nari convention scheduled to be held next month. Representatives from all constituencies shared their ideas where it was decided that the main focus of the convention should be

on delivering awareness and education on present scenario and state of socio economic condition of the State where women have suffered the most, the release adds.

All members committed to make the upcoming convention a grand success.

SKM members meet in Dzongu



SUMMIT REPORT
DIKCHU, 13 NOV:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha convened a meeting for Dzongu constituency at Pentok, Tingvong, yesterday. The meeting was chaired by SKM general

secretary for North district, Chung Kipu Lepcha, and discussed party activities, inauguration of party office soon and inviting SKM president, PS Tamang [Golay] to the district soon.

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Number of Indians studying in US up by 5.4 per cent since last year: Report

NEW DELHI, Nov 13 (PTI): The number of Indians studying in the United States has increased by 5.4 per cent since last year, according to the 2018 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, released here on Tuesday.

According to the report, a total of 1,96,271 Indians are at present studying in the US and this is the fifth consecutive year during which their strength has grown. "Looking at the past 10 years of data, the number of Indians going to the United States has doubled. The reasons are clear, Indian students are looking for a great education and the United States continues to offer this," Joseph Pomper, Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs, said at the report launch.

The report noted that Indians make up nearly 18 per cent of all international students in the United States, surpassed only by China.

"India provided the second highest amount of graduate students and fourth-most undergraduates. Also of note, the number of American students studying in India increased to 4,704 12.5 percent more than the year before," it said, adding the top places of origin for international students studying in the US were China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Vietnam, Taiwan, Japan, Mexico, and Brazil.

The top host states are California, New York, Texas, Massachusetts, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Florida, Ohio and Michigan.

"We are thrilled to see a significant increase in the number of American university students choosing India as a study abroad destination. The student exchange programs are one of the best ways to foster meaningful relationships and promote mutual understanding between American and Indian citizens," said Adam Grotzky, Director of United States - India Educational Foundation (USIEF).

Open Doors Report is published by the Institute of International Education (IIE), which has conducted an annual statistical survey on international students in the United States since its founding in 1919 and in partnership with the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs since 1972.



CHHATH PUJA Members of the Bihari community in the State celebrated Chhath Puja in grand manner at different parts of Sikkim. The community in the capital also offered prayers at Thakurbari complex and in and around Gangtok.

Sikkim to host Bal Sahitya Puraskar ceremony for first time

*Sikkim's
Bhim
Pradhan
among
awardees*

**REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 13 Nov:**

Sahitya Akademi will be organising the award ceremony of Bal Sahitya Puraskar in Sikkim for the first time. The event will be held on Wednesday at Nar Bahadur Bhandari College, Tadong.

Addressing the media today, Secretary for Sahitya Akademi, K Sreenivasarao, informed that Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters under Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is presenting this prestigious award to 23 writers in different languages recognised by it. Bhim Pradhan from Sikkim is getting this award this year for his works in children's literature.

Sahitya Akademi's Vice President, Dr. Madhav Kaushik will present the prestigious award in the form of a casket containing an engraved cop-



per-plaque and a cheque of Rs. 50,000 each to the awardees at the special function. The said ceremony is expected to be attended by eminent Assamese writer, Dr. Nagen Saikia as the chief guest.

Dr Sreenivasarao informed that Sahitya Akademi is also organising Bal Sahitya Puraskar Awardees Meet and Symposium on the Evolution of Children's Literature on 15 November here at Janta Bhawan.

He mentioned that award winning authors will speak about their works and experiences during the programme and symposium will have eminent writers from different parts of the country.

Dr. Madhav Kaushik

will preside over the session. Thereafter symposium on "The Evolution of Children's Literature" will be inaugurated by Dr. K Sreenivasarao, who will welcome the guest of honor, eminent Nepali

writer Shanti Chhetri.

The organiser Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi have conducted the said award ceremony in other states in the North East, so this time they are organising it in Sikkim.

DASSH organizes health camp and TB awareness program at Lingding Monastery

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 12 Nov:**

A team comprising of Dr Chultin Lepcha (Chest Specialist-DHS), Dr Bishal Gurung (MO-Sang), Dr Tshering Choden Gurung (Dental surgeon-DHS) and the Mobile Medical Unit of District Hospital, Singtam, conducted a comprehensive health check-up of 80 monks here at Lingding Monastery on Monday.

Skin and respiratory tract disorders were detected and basic medicines were provided free of cost on the day, a press release informs.

A talk on Tuberculosis, including general health



& hygiene, was given by Dr Chultin Lepcha to generate awareness on common signs and symptoms of tuberculosis, sputum examination, X-Ray inves-

tigation & CBNET for early diagnosis. The monks were also informed about the availability of free medicines under DOTS programme.

Lingee School meets parents of students taking Board exams

**SUMMIT REPORT
LINGEE, 13 Nov:**

A pre-exam parent-teacher meeting was held in Lingee Government Senior Secondary School, South Sikkim, today.

The meeting was organized by the school for parents whose children are in Classes X and XII and such a meeting was felt advisable before the Board exams.

The meeting was also attended by SMC members, teachers and the students of Classes X and XII.

Principal Gyanu Pradhan said that the parent-teacher meeting was aimed encouraging parents to work with their children in preparing for the Board Exams.

"It is important for par-

ents to be involved in the academic progress of their children, focusing together towards the growth of students in their educational career paths," he stressed.

Parents were in-

formed about the strengths and weaknesses of their respective wards and suggested home exercises that parents and children could do together in preparation for the Board Exams.

ANTHYESTHI KRIYA

The Anthyesti Kriya of Late Tara Kumar Chettri of Debrung, Namchi who left for heavenly abode on 2nd November 2018 falls on 14th November 2018 (Wednesday).

All relatives, friend and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers for the departed soul at Debrung Namchi South Sikkim. We also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude towards all those who extended their support during the time of bereavement.

**Santi Chettri (wife) Kishore Chettri (son)
Bandhan, Jharna and Anju (daughters) and all family members.
Contact No: 9733151802**



SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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CAG 'deliberately delaying' report on Rafale deal, demonetisation: Former bureaucrats

NEW DELHI, Nov 13 (PTI): Sixty retired bureaucrats have written to the CAG expressing concern over audit reports on demonetisation and the Rafale deal being "deliberately" delayed to not "embarrass" the NDA government till next year's general elections.

In a letter, they said there was concern over the "unconscionable" and "unwarranted delay" in bringing out the audit reports on demonetisation and the Rafale fighter jet deal, and the reports should be tabled before Parliament in the Winter Session.

The CAG's failure to present the audit reports on note ban and the Rafale deal in time "may be seen as a partisan action" and could create a "crisis of credibility" for the institution, the letter said.

There was no immediate reaction from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

Quoting from media reports on demonetisation, the former bureaucrats said the then CAG

Shashi Kant Sharma had pointed out that the audit would cover the expenditure on printing of notes, RBI's dividend to the Consolidated Fund of India and the huge amount of data generated by banks.

They also said it was also stated that the effectiveness of the follow-up action taken by the Income Tax Department in identifying potential tax evaders and pursuing action against them, among others, would also be covered.

"It is more than 20 months since the previous CAG made the above statement but there is no sight of the promised audit report on demonetisation," the letter said.

The signatories of the letter included former IPS officer and ex-DGP of Punjab Julio Riberio, former IAS officer turned social activist Aruna Roy, former Pune Police commissioner Meeran Borwankar, former CEO of Prasar Bharati Jawahar Sircar, former envoy to Italy K P Fabian, and officers from Central and all India services.

SummitTIMES

Let the Young Explore

Sikkim needs to allow the young to dream and aim big

Take a look around, and you will be forced to notice that at least some of the young are beginning to think out of the box and explore options beyond the straitjacketed dictates of “security” that we would impose on them if we had our way. Maybe more of them are still hemmed in by the timidity that we project, but a brave number of them are stepping out, and that is welcome. This change reflects in the nature of people being felicitated by Sikkim. Where earlier generations had achievers from the established and secure professions, without taking anything away from their struggles and successes, one needs to remark that the younger achievers are from more off-the-beaten-path disciplines. The felicitation a couple of years ago of achievers from among the Nepali-speakers here for instance featured young success stories from the creative fields and celebrated brave decisions. Take Megha Nidhi Dahal for instance. When the then 28-year-old Megha Nidhi, who was already “settled” and “secure” as a software engineer in the software capital of India at Bangalore, discovered his passion for public service and decided to pursue his real calling, he reaffirmed the faith Sikkim needs to have in its youth. He may be the first Sikkimese to crack the UPSC exams in the general category, but his success is bound to inspire many more youth to many more successes in many more fields. He took a brave decision to switch tracks and pursue his passion. His family backed his decision and he has made all of the State proud. A similar respect and support is palpable in the stories of all other young “achievers” felicitated in recent years, the startup adventurers for instance, and that is the approach that Sikkim needs to take. Sikkim needs to ensure an environment which inspires more of its young to pursue more divergent dreams.

Every generation wants to leave its mark. They do not always know how when they are young, but what they are instinctively passionate about is their pursuit for excellence, a pursuit which the elder generation needs to learn to allow to breathe. Unfortunately, despite an astoundingly high percentage of Sikkim made up of the young in their most productive age-bracket, there does not appear to be a genuine environment which encourages youthful exuberance to take flight. The policy initiatives are in place, but the societal attitudes are still regressive.

Disenchantment, pessimism and opportunism are behavioural traits that one normally associates with those who have been around for slightly more time. It will be wrong on our part to infect the young with it before it is their time to be so practical. But we try, sucking them into our mechanizations of entitlement and contacts and are not satisfied until we have given them a jaded outlook as well. This is unfortunate. Take a look around, at the community level, what has the elder generation really done to either get noticed or make a difference. An entire generation was smothered by elders who extended privileges when they should have provided challenges. An entire section has matured with a worrying sense of entitlement and no sense of service. This age-group needs to be convinced to allow the next their own futures and not the one imposed by us.

Slightly over a quarter of Sikkim's population is in the age-group with the most potential. As per the Census 2011 data, 22% of Sikkim's population was aged between 15 to 24 six years ago. Although learning is a process which begins with birth and continues till death, it is this slot from 15 to 24 which can benefit the most from opportunities. This one-fourth of Sikkim's population should be indulged by the remaining 78% with the best of opportunities and the most of resources. If this section excels, they will ensure a better future for the larger majority in coming years. Indulging this section should not be too difficult a task because when expanded, the age-group from 15 to 59, recognised as the “working age group” constitutes 65% of the population. What is more, a staggering 70% of Sikkim's population is made up of adults – those aged above 18 years. This means that the percentage of dependents – the very young and very aged – is very low in Sikkim, hence, supporting the dreams and aspirations of the 15 to 24 year olds should not be an impossible burden for the State to bear. Given how much easier Sikkim has it compared to the statistics and ground realities of the other states, the working age section has no excuses to deny the age-group on the verge of finding itself even its most ambitious.

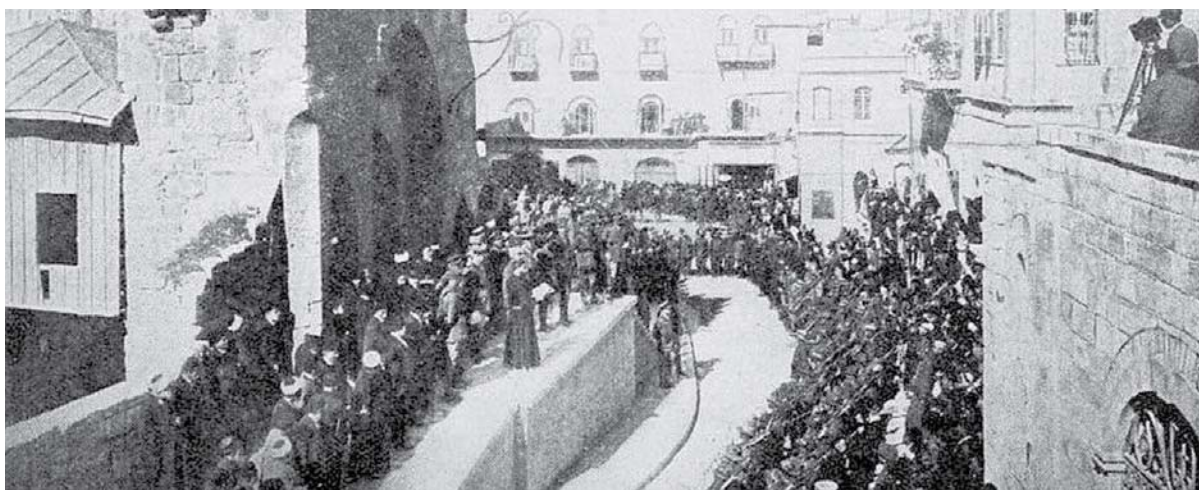
The young have more than proven that they are willing to experiment and explore. Now it is upon us to let them.

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Opinion



Palestine and Britain: forgotten legacy of World War I that devastated the Middle East

JAMES RODGERS
theconversation.com

For those of us of an age to have known only peace in Western Europe, the centenary of the end of World War I is an opportunity to learn something of the extreme consequences of the failure to solve political differences peacefully. And when the world marked the 100th anniversary of the Armistice, millions fell silent to remember the pain and sacrifice of that conflict.

But another anniversary that fell this year – that of the end of the British Mandate for Palestine in 1948, a seminal moment in a conflict that continues to this day – has been largely ignored. It should not be. Britain's role was pivotal – and, if it is forgotten in the UK, it is remembered in Middle East.

For one of the consequences of the end of World War I was the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The December before the Armistice in November 1918, troops under the command of General Sir Edmund Allenby (nicknamed “The Bull”) captured Jerusalem. After the end of the war, The League of Nations “mandated” (handed over) what was then Palestine to British rule. That rule lasted until 1948. Then the British withdrew. The region's Jewish and Arab populations were left to fight it out. The Jewish forces prevailed and, in May 1948, the State

of Israel was declared.

The conflict is remembered by Israelis as the War of Independence; by the Palestinians as “al-nakba” (the catastrophe). In Britain – whose retreat after a period during which “the purpose of the mandate was never entirely clear to most of those serving in Palestine”, as Naomi Shepherd put it in her 1999 book *Ploughing Sand: British Rule in Palestine* – it is barely remembered at all.

In a sense, this is all the more surprising because of the scale of British involvement. The numbers are staggering today. The National Army museum website gives a figure of 100,000 British troops in Palestine in 1947 – compared to a total of 78,000 fully trained troops in the entire British Army in 2017.

In another sense, it is not. The task faced by the mandate authorities was not easy. They left the region riven by conflict which continues to this day. Seeking international Jewish support during World War I, Britain had – in the words of the late historian Eric Hobsbawm – “incautiously and ambiguously promised to establish a ‘national home for the Jews’ in Palestine”.

The Balfour Declaration – as that pledge was known – was made in 1917. Its centenary in 2017 was barely noticeable compared to the attention the Armistice has generated. Like the end of the mandate, the Balfour Declaration is an anniversary

Britain has mostly preferred to forget. The same cannot be said in the land that was Mandate Palestine.

NO BRASS BANDS

As a correspondent newly arrived in Gaza to take up a posting during the second Palestinian intifada, or the uprising against Israel, I was soon welcomed by an elderly resident of a refugee camp – and then chastised by the same gentleman for the Balfour Declaration. The year was 2002, but he traced his wretched fate – his breeze-block house had just been demolished by the Israeli Army – to that document from 1917.

In his memoir, *Ever the Diplomat*, the former British ambassador to Israel, Sherard Cowper-Coles, recalled an encounter he witnessed between the then Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon and the British Middle East envoy, Lord Levy. An increasingly undiplomatic exchange ended when Sharon's “massive fist came thumping down on the desk”, as he shouted: “The British Mandate is over”.

It is hard to imagine now, but when the mandate did end in 1948, it was a huge story in the British press. Research for my book, *Headlines from the Holy Land: Reporting the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, led me to archived newspaper articles where the first draft of the history of that era was written. The morning that British rule ended, May 14 1948, the Daily Mirror did its best to rouse pa-

triotic pride:

“When British rule began, says the Colonial Office, Palestine was primitive and underdeveloped. The population of 750,000 were disease-ridden and poor. But new methods of farming were introduced, medical services provided, roads and railways built, water supplies improved, malaria wiped out.”

The next day's Daily Mail painted the stirring picture of the “weather-beaten, sun-dried Union Jack” which had flown over British Headquarters in Jerusalem being brought back to “the airways terminal building at Victoria” in central London.

Where the story has found its way into contemporary newspapers it has had a fraction of the attention granted to the end of World War I in Europe – a lack of public commemoration which suggests a combination of ignorance and shame.

“There were no brass bands playing when they came back. They were treated as if they'd been involved in something dirty”, the organiser of the Palestine Veterans Association told the Sunday Times recently.

Ignoring anniversaries such as these – especially at a time when the poppy appeal is given ever greater public prominence – amounts to selective commemoration, which acts against learning from military and diplomatic mistakes.

[The writer is Senior Lecturer in Journalism, City, University of London]

Feel younger than you are? Here's why you're on to something good

CATHERINE LOVEDAY
theconversation.com

Emile Ratelband made international headlines when he launched a controversial legal battle to change his official date of birth from March 1949 to March 1969, reflecting the fact that he feels 20 years younger. The story probably made some of us laugh, but who can blame him for wanting to share his year of birth with the likes of Jennifer Aniston, Jay-Z, Steffi Graf or even my good self?

The legal bid may be a first, but it is actually common to feel younger than we are. A 2018 study with 33,751 respondents showed that once people pass the pivotal age of 25, they typically rate their subjective age as younger than their chronological age. And this discrepancy grows as we get older – for every decade that passes, people tend to feel that have only gained five or six years. This is the equivalent to living Martian years as opposed to Earth years.

It turns out that this phenomenon may have rather important implications. A recent surge in research in this area has revealed that the extent to which people feel younger than they are is strongly associated with a whole range of health outcomes. People with a younger subjective age are less likely to suffer from diabetes, hypertension, depression, cognitive

impairment and dementia. These people also tend to report better sleep, stronger memory function and more fulfilling sex lives.

People with a younger subjective age also view their future selves in a more positive light and are more likely to walk faster. One group of researchers even found that people with a lower subjective age have a younger looking brain. Brain scans showed that they had more grey matter overall, with particular resilience in areas called the prefrontal cortex (involved in planning and complex cognitive behaviour) and superior temporal gyrus (responsible for processing sounds and emotions).

These findings are not trivial – new research shows that people who think of themselves as 13 years older are 25% more likely to die, even when education, race and marital status are taken into account. This study, by a team at the University of Grenoble, pooled together data from three large longitudinal studies, where 17,000 participants were assessed over a number of time points.

Overall, people reported feeling on average 16-17 years younger than they really were – not far off the difference described by Ratelband. But importantly, this research showed that the risk of mortality was almost twice as high in those people who felt older than their age compared to those who felt younger. This effect ap-

peared for both shorter time intervals (three years) and for longer ones (20 years).

CAUSE AND EFFECT

So it seems that to some extent, we really are as young as we feel. But how do we know which is the chicken and the egg? Are people who

enrolled a group of older participants in an exercise regime and found that their performance improved significantly if they were praised – but specifically if they were favourably compared to other people of the same age. Reducing age ste-

1959 environment and treated as 55-year-olds, these men showed increased physical strength, improved memory and better eyesight.

Ratelband's case centres on his claims that at 69, society does not allow him to do the same things that he could do



feel younger simply healthier to start with or are they so keen on being young that they actually take better care of themselves and therefore live longer?

Most scientists agree that it is a two-way street. We know that poor health makes people feel older, as indeed can stress and low mood. The real question is can we do anything to break this vicious cycle? If we could somehow feel younger – perhaps by ignoring societal and personal expectations about age – might this mean we can live longer, happier and healthier lives? Early indications suggest yes.

In one study research-

reotyping might also be helpful – another study showed that exposing people to photos and words that are typically associated with old age, such as “grumpy”, “wrinkled”, and “helpless” made them feel older. Interestingly, this was true even when positive associations like “wise” and “full of life” were used alongside a smiling older face.

Back in 1979, psychologist Ellen Langer – now the longest serving professor at the University of Harvard – showed that simply turning the clock back 20 years had an age-reversing effect on a group of 75-year-old men. After five days of being immersed in a mocked up

if he was 49. He does not have the same employment opportunities, cannot buy a new house and does not get replies when he advertises on the dating site Tinder. Only time will tell whether he can win his legal battle, but if nothing else, this case may highlight an opportunity for society to change its attitude to chronological age.

If we can learn to ignore the numbers on a birth certificate and cut down on the relentless societal references to getting old, then maybe we will lead healthier, happier and longer lives.

[The writer is Neuropsychologist, University of Westminster]

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**1984 anti-Sikh
riots probe:
Delegation
meets Prez
Kovind over
notifying
name of a SIT
member**

NEW DELHI, Nov 13 (PTI): A delegation of eminent citizens, including former Army chief J J Singh and BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi, met President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday and requested him to ask the Supreme Court to immediately notify the name of third member of the SIT formed to supervise probe into the 1984 anti-Sikh riots cases.

Besides Lekhi and Singh, the other members of the delegation included Supreme Court senior advocate Rupinder S Suri, Rajasthan additional advocate general Gurcharan S Gill and former MLA R P Singh.

"The SIT which was suppose to give its report within two to three months is not able to function in absence of a member and we have gone to give the representation to the President of India that there should be an immediate notification to name the member," Lekhi said.

It the letter, the delegation insisted that he asks the apex court to immediately notify the name of third member of the Special Investigation Team formed to monitor further probe into 186 anti-Sikh riots cases of 1984 mainly in Delhi and other states.

"We, the concerned citizens are making this fervent appeal to you for your urgent intervention as the things have indeed come to a very sorry pass," the letter, signed by Lekhi, Singh, Suri and Gill, said.

The SIT has been empowered to examine afresh evidence in cases which had even been closed. The constitution of the new SIT, however, was delayed as a former IPS officer refused to be its member.

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Mizoram: Where all parties have allied with BJP, all claim to be anti-BJP!

TRIDEEP LAHKAR

AIZAWL, Nov 12 (PTI): In this small hill state of just about 10 lakh people, parties' political equations appear as treacherous as its twisting and turning roads -- Both the ruling BJP and main opposition MNF are trying hard to prove their 'anti-BJP' credentials and both have had their own alliances with the saffron party.

The sudden prominence attained by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) for the November 28 elections for 40 assembly seats of this christian-majority state also contradicts a basic statistics of Mizoram's three-decade-old electoral history that the saffron party has never won an assembly seat so far.

But the BJP is now the main target of poll campaigns mounted by the Congress as well as the Mizo National Front (MNF) -- the two parties that have always ruled Mizoram one after another.

As the campaign gains momentum, both the Congress and the MNF are accusing each other of being the BJP's "real ally", by digging out old pictures, documents and meeting details from the past and splashing them all over before the voters.

While the Congress and the MNF are leaving no stones unturned to paint the BJP as "anti-Christian", the saffron party has launched a spirited campaign to get power in this strategically important north-eastern state sandwiched between Myanmar and Bangladesh, with the party president Amit Shah declar-

ing that Christmas would be celebrated in Mizoram under the BJP rule this December.

The counting of votes would take place on December 11.

Mizoram is been seen by the BJP leaders as the "final frontier" in its 'Congress-free North East' campaign, as the party has already secured power in Assam, Tripura, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, besides joining ruling coalition in Meghalaya and Nagaland.

Mizoram is significant for the Congress too, as it remains the only state under the party's rule as against as many as five just about two years ago, which included Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur.

The Congress has been in power in Mizoram since 2008 and is eyeing the third consecutive term. In the outgoing assembly, the Congress has 34 MLAs, while the MNF has five and Mizoram People's Conference has one.

The Congress improved its tally in 2013 elections, from 32 in 2008, but the BJP is making an all-out effort to snatch the power.

Earlier in two other Christian-dominated north-eastern states, Meghalaya and Nagaland, the BJP went on to become part of the government after joining hands with the runners-up, while the parties with highest number of seats (including Congress in Meghalaya) could not get the power.

While the MNF has been party of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the

saffron party has decided to fight alone on all 40 seats. The Congress is, however, accusing the MNF, its traditional rival in the state, of being silently in league with the BJP for the upcoming polls, in which about 7.68 lakh voters including 3.93 women are eligible to exercise their franchise.

The Congress has published 50,000 copies of a leaflet in Mizo language depicting the relationship between the BJP and the MNF, while putting on front a picture of the two party chiefs -- Amit Shah and Zoramthanga -- sitting together.

It contains various pictures and details of the former Mizoram chief minister Zoramthanga of MNF attending NDA and North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) meetings with senior-BJP leaders.

On its part, the MNF is vehemently denying any relationship with the BJP for the polls and points out at the alliance the two national parties had in the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) in Mizoram.

Congress had to publicly announce that it is no longer an ally of the BJP in the Council, an autonomous council for ethnic Chakma people that exercises legislative, executive and judicial powers over allotted departments in its territory spread over 1500 sq km.

Election to the 20-member CADC on April 20 gave a fractured mandate -- the MNF got eight seats, the Congress won six, and the BJP got five. Poll to one seat was stayed by the

Gauhati High Court.

Traditional national rivals -- BJP and Congress -- later formed a coalition to stake claim to form the executive committee of the tribal council. The coalition, however, faced a setback after some Congress members withdrew support to the BJP-led CADC.

"The Congress's allegation that the BJP is behind MNF and is a secret ally has been reversed. It is having an adverse impact on the Congress itself and has exposed the party," said Robert Romawia Royte, a senior MNF leader and the party's candidate from Aizawl East-II constituency.

He said the MNF was planning to expose the "alliance" in a big way, but the Congress itself admitted it by saying they were breaking the alliance.

A Congress leader, however, said that the people are well aware of the fact that the MNF is part of the BJP-led NDA and NEDA.

"The NEDA Convenor and the BJP leader from Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma, has come here several times and worked with the MNF in selection of candidates," he alleged.

The Congress leader alleged the BJP is not liked by the people here as the party is seen as being anti-Christian and therefore it was banking on the MNF.

"We want to protect the dignity of the church, which is already at stake in Meghalaya and Nagaland," he said.

Bengal Congress for fighting Lok Sabha election alone

PRADIPTA TAPADAR

KOLKATA, Nov 13 (PTI): The Congress unit in West Bengal is in favour of fighting the coming Lok Sabha election "alone" in the state despite the party forging alliances with different regional outfits in other parts of the country in its bid to oust the BJP.

The view has been communicated to Congress President Rahul Gandhi and the final call on the issue would be taken by the AICC leadership, West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBP-CC) President Somen Mitra told PTI.

The Congress has already been hit with the exodus of its elected representatives to the Trinamool Congress.

The Bengal unit of the Congress feels that an alliance with either the CPI(M) or the Trinamool Congress will not serve the "long term" interests of the party. Such an eventuality will only further erode the party's base in the state though it had tasted success in Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh by forging alliances with regional parties the JD(S) and the Samajwadi Party, Congress leaders said.

"During my meeting with our party president Rahul Gandhi I had clearly said that it would be good if we fight the Lok Sabha election alone. We may not win many seats but our party will contin-

ue to exist in Bengal in the future," Mitra said.

"Forging an alliance with the Trinamool Congress might give us more seats, but it will also ensure that the Congress will cease to exist in Bengal as TMC is more keen on poaching our MLAs and elected representatives," Mitra said.

Senior Congress leaders like P Chidambaram have advocated state-wise alliances to defeat the BJP at the Centre.

According to state Congress leaders, aligning with the CPI(M)-led Left Front will not serve any purpose as it will not ensure winning seats as the Left itself is facing a rout in the state.

"So we have told the Congress president that it is better for the future of the party in Bengal that we fight the Lok Sabha election alone. Doing so may not ensure too many seats, but it will at least guarantee revival of our organisation in the long run," AICC member Subhankar Sarkar said.

Congress sources, who did not wish to be named, said one of main reasons behind the decision against aligning with the TMC is that the party is not very sure if it would be offered more than four LS seats, it presently has in the state, by the ruling party.

"Everyone aspires to contest the election on a ticket of the party he has

been working with. But due to alliances with the TMC in 2001, 2009 and 2011 and CPI(M) in 2016 our organisation has suffered badly. We could neither offer seats to our party leaders, nor could we put up our symbols in various seats. That has badly damaged our organisation," a senior state Congress leader said.

The argument against going for an alliance with the CPI(M) is lack of consistency on the part of the Left Front to remain in an alliance as it had unilaterally walked out of the alliance in 2016 after its defeat in the state assembly polls.

There are some leaders within the state unit like Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury, the Congress MP from Malda South and the brother of late party stalwart ABA Ghani Khan Chowdhury, his niece Mausam Benazir Noor, also an MP from the same district, who are strongly advocating Congress-TMC alliance to stop the march of BJP in West Bengal.

Former PCC president and MP Pradip Bhattacharya, who is also chairman of the party coordination committee, agreed that the mood of the state leadership is to go alone in the polls.

He said, the assembly election result in five states and the outcome of the all party meeting on November 22 in New

Delhi will be crucial and play a deciding factor while chalking out Congress strategy.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee during TMC's Martyrs Day rally on July 21 had set the target of winning all the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state.

"We don't need anybody in Bengal. We can fight and win on our own," a senior TMC leader said.

CPI(M) central committee member Sujana Chakraborty said all secular and democratic forces should come together in order to defeat the BJP and TMC.

Out of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in Bengal, the TMC had won 34 seats, Congress four and CPI(M) and BJP two each in 2014.

The four seats which elected Congress MPs are in Malda and Murshidabad districts, which were traditional strongholds of Congress but have been penetrated by TMC.

In the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, Congress had contested 14 seats in the state and TMC in 27 seats and SUCI in one seat. The Congress had then won six seats, the TMC had 19 seats and the SUCI(C) one. West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh has mocked Congress, saying that the Congress will not be able to win a single seat in the state this time whether it forges an alliance or not.

Government sabotaging BSNL, claim trade unions

KOLKATA, Nov 13 (PTI):

The government has sabotaged the state owned telecom major Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) by not offering level playing field and releasing its dues at the hours of crisis, BSNL trade unions said here on Tuesday.

The trade unions want the government release 4G spectrum to the BSNL to compete in the highly-competitive telecom market.

In protest, members of the trade unions will bring out a procession



across the country on November 14, All Unions & Association of BSNL West Bengal convenor Animesh Mitra said.

"BSNL was converted to a company 18 years before when the BJP was in power. Since then, consecutive governments have not done anything

to change its situation for the better, and continued to sabotage the BSNL," Mitra said.

"BSNL is not able to modernise due to lack of 4G spectrum and funds. The government has not even returned Rs 8000 crore for surrender of spectrum in 2013, another trade union leader Tapas Ghosh said.

Mitra said government had been asked to return Rs 2,000 crore deducted by the government on account of pension contribution for the employees.

NGT committee finds freshly dug coal in East Jaintia Hills

SHILLONG, Nov 13 (PTI):

A three-member committee of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Tuesday said it has found freshly dug coal in Meghalayas East Jaintia Hills district where mining and transportation has been banned by the tribunal.

The NGT in 2014 had imposed a blanket ban on mining and transportation of coal for its adverse environmental effect and the absence of safety measures for the miners.

"We found certain freshly mined coal there, certainly not the ones that are mined way back in 2014. We also found stacks of coal in one location in Sutnga area in East Jaintia Hills," committee chairman Justice (Retd) B P Katakey told PTI.

He said, "We went to Khliehriat area because there was an allegation in the National Green Tribunal. Also that though mining has been stopped

since 2014, it still going on." Kakatey and two other members of the committee - a mining specialist from Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad and a scientific officer from the Central Pollution Control Board visited Sutnga and Khliehriat area, where RTI activist and environmentalist Agnes Kharshiing and her partner were attacked by mining mafias on November 8 last.

Agnes is now battling for life at the super speciality North East Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences near here.

The chairman of the committee also observed that the movement of coal cannot be ruled out as there were seizures of coal-laden trucks.

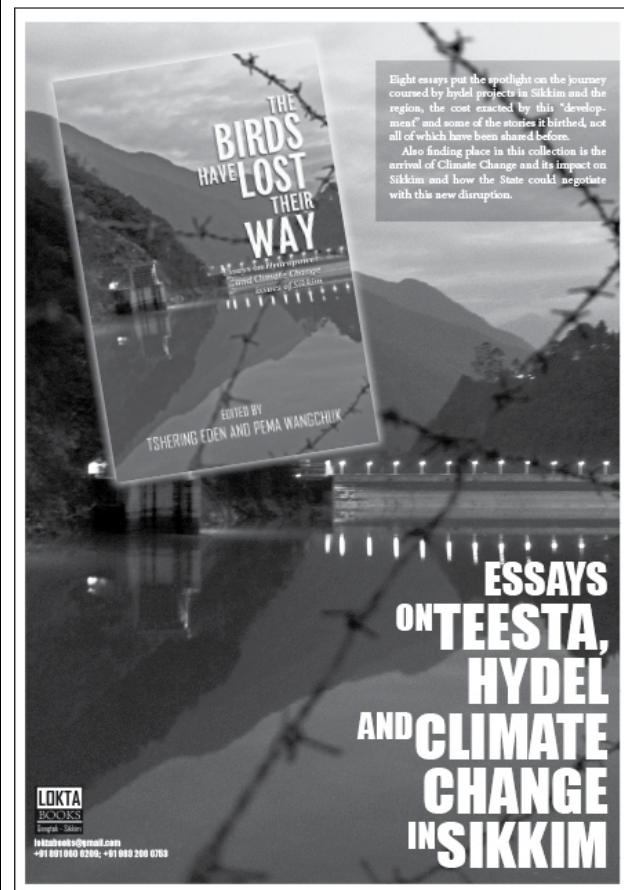
"Where are they carrying the coal from? There has to be an order from the NGT or the Supreme Court for this. The NGT and the Supreme Court had earlier

allowed transportation of coal but that was long back," he said.

The committee also found certain mines with lubricated machines which the members suspect that mining is likely to take place soon until the monsoon comes again. Scientific tests have also been conducted on the water and soil samples to see the ill-effects of coal mining.

The committee will also be visiting coal mining sites in the Garo Hills region and in particular, a mine in South Garo Hills where 15 people were reported dead in 2012 after water surged in from an abandoned mine, drowning the labourers inside the mine.

Constituted in August this year, the committee will have to present its report to the NGT every two month until March 6 next year when the tribunal will meet again to consider the reports of the committee.



Brazil's Tite calls up Rafinha, Augusto and Sandro for friendlies



SAO PAULO NOV 13 (AFP): Brazil coach Tite was forced into some late changes to the squad that will face Uruguay and Cameroon in friendlies in England after Barcelona's Philippe Coutinho and Real Madrid pair Marcelo and Casemiro pulled out through injury.

Tite called up Barcelona midfielder Rafinha Alcantara on Monday to replace Casemiro, who is suffering from a sprained ankle that could sideline him for several weeks.

He also added Beijing Guoan midfielder Renato Augusto and Juventus full-back Alex Sandro.

Coutinho's absence was expected after Barca announced Thursday he had a hamstring problem that would keep him out for two weeks.

Tite had been hoping to call upon Marcelo but the Real left-back hasn't recovered yet from a thigh problem suffered two weeks ago in the clasico, which the Ma-

drig side lost 5-1 against their bitter rivals from Barcelona.

Brazil's football federation released a statement saying Tite had been "waiting to see if he would recover" but after Marcelo missed Real's 4-2 win over Celta Vigo at the weekend it was decided he wouldn't be fit.

Brazil will play Uruguay at Arsenal's Emirates stadium on Friday before taking on Cameroon in Milton Keynes four days later.

It will be their last two matches of the year having recorded four straight friendly victories since exiting the World Cup in Russia at the quarter-final stage, beaten 2-1 by Belgium.

Brazil beat the United States 2-0, El Salvador 5-0, Saudi Arabia 2-0 and Argentina 1-0 in their last four matches. The side is building towards the Copa America next year, which it will host from June 14 to July 7.

Celta appoint Cardoso after sacking Mohamed



MADRID, NOV 13 (AFP): Spanish league strugglers Celta Vigo sacked Argentinian coach Antonio Mohamed and replaced him with Portugal's Miguel Cardoso, the club said Monday.

Mohamed, 48, arrived at Celta in the summer but has registered three wins, five draws and four defeats so far, including a decisive 4-2 defeat to Real Madrid on last

weekend. Mohamed becomes the second Argentinian coach to face the chop from La Liga after Leo Franco was sacked by Huesca.

Cardoso, 46, takes the reins at Celta barely six weeks after being sacked by French Ligue 1 side Nantes, with whom he won just one game, drawing three and losing four in his opening eight games in charge.

Gold prices fall by Rs 100 on lacklustre demand



NEW DELHI, NOV 13 (PTI): Gold prices came down by Rs 100 to Rs 32,050 per 10 grams at the bullion market Tuesday owing to slackened demand from local jewellers despite a firm trend in overseas markets.

Silver followed suit and cracked below the Rs 38,000-mark by plunging Rs 700 to Rs 37,450 per kg due to reduced offtake by industrial units and coin makers. Marketmen attributed the slide in gold prices to easing demand from local jewellers and retailers at existing levels in domestic spot market but added that a firm trend overseas capped the fall. Globally, gold rose 0.22

per cent to USD 1,203.50 an ounce and silver by 0.68 per cent to USD 14.18 an ounce in Singapore.

In the national capital gold of 99.99 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity fell by Rs 100 each to Rs 32,050 and Rs 31,900 per 10 grams respectively.

Sovereign gold, however, remained flat at Rs 24,800 per piece of 8 grams. Silver ready slumped by Rs 700 to Rs 37,450 per kg and weekly-based delivery by Rs 453 to Rs 36,662 per kg.

Silver coins also dropped by Rs 1,000 to Rs 74,000 for buying and Rs 75,000 for selling of 100 pieces as demand eased post festive season.

Swedish striker Ibrahimovic named top MLS newcomer

NEW YORK, NOV 13 (AFP): Swedish forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic of the Los Angeles Galaxy was named Monday as Major League Soccer Newcomer of the Year, defeating England's Wayne Rooney among others for the award.

Ibrahimovic won in a balloting of MLS coaches and players plus a media panel with an average of 36.36 per cent support to 32.25 percent for DC United captain Rooney.

Mexico's Carlos Vela of Los Angeles FC was third on 13.47 percent.



Ibrahimovic scored 22 goals and added 10 assists in what was only the third 20-and-10 season

in MLS history. The Galaxy went 9-2 with four drawn when the Swedish icon scored a goal.

With a roundhouse volley kick to score against Toronto FC on September 15, Ibrahi-

movic netted his 500th career goal, joining Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo as only the third active player to reach that lofty milestone.

Ibrahimovic failed to lead the Galaxy into the play-offs but his career has already included titles with European giants FC Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain and Inter Milan.

He has also netted a record 62 goals for Sweden, with star turns in the 2002 and 2006 World Cups.

Rooney, who scored 12 goals in 21 appear-

ances for DC United after joining the club in July and lifting them from the cellar to the playoffs, won the nod in voting from club technical staff -- 34.31 percent to 28.43 percent over Zlatan.

But the Swede edged Rooney in player balloting 34.99 to 30.90 percent and decisively took media voting 45.65 percent to 31.53 percent.

Newcomer of the Year recognizes players in their first MLS season but with prior professional experience, making Rookie of the Year candidates ineligible.

Djokovic crushes Isner in ATP Finals opener

LONDON, NOV 13 (AFP): Novak Djokovic sent out a warning to his rivals at the ATP Finals on Monday, brushing aside big-serving John Isner 6-4 6-3 to launch his bid for a record-equalling sixth ATP Finals title in style.

Earlier, in the same Guga Kuerten group, Alexander Zverev made it six consecutive wins against Marin Cilic in a contest at London's O2 Arena featuring scores of unforced errors.

World number one Djokovic, though, was playing a different game, appearing little troubled by the howitzers coming off the giant Isner's racquet -- breaking his opponent three times and not conceding a single break point on his own serve.

In stark contrast to second seed Roger Federer, who produced an error-strewn performance in defeat to Kei Nishikori on Sunday, Djokovic hit just six unforced errors and won 86 per cent of points on his serve, making a mockery of the apparent challenging nature of the playing surface.

"The match was great, obviously," said the 31-year-old. "I had three breaks of serve of John which is sometimes mission impossible but I managed to be at the right place at the right time.

"I held serve well, I backed it up from the baseline, I played very solid and didn't give him many opportunities."

Speaking about the court conditions, he said: "It takes a little bit of time really to get



yourself adjusted to the surface... it takes a lot of rotation, takes a lot of spin. When you serve well, also it accelerates through the court."

With Cristiano Ronaldo watching on, the top seed broke Isner in the fifth game of the first set to establish a stranglehold and never looked like allowing the American eighth seed back into the contest, breaking twice more in the second set to win in 73 minutes.

The Serb is a red-hot favourite to draw level on six titles at the season finale with Federer, who faces an uphill task to reach the semi-finals after his loss in his first round-robin match.

Djokovic, who replaced the injured Rafael Nadal at the top

of the rankings last week, has stormed over the charts this year following elbow surgery and a period of indifferent form, winning Wimbledon and the US Open along the way.

Since the start of Wimbledon he has now won 32 out of 34 matches.

Earlier, Zverev kept his nerve at the key moments to beat Marin Cilic 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/1), recovering from a break down in each set.

The 30-year-old Cilic, who has a reputation for faltering under intense pressure, broke first but the German hit back, going on to edge the tie-break.

In the second set, the Croatian again drew first blood but third-seed Zverev, 21, respond-

ed immediately and dominated the tie-break to seal the match.

There were a total of 78 unforced errors in the contest -- with Australian Open finalist Cilic hitting 46 of those -- as both players struggled to adapt to the court conditions.

"The court is difficult," said Zverev. "The court is very fast. And it's very high-bouncing as well. So, it's more difficult than in other tournaments, so everybody has to kind of find their rhythm in the first match."

The ATP Finals are contested by the eight players who have accumulated the most ranking points over the season and is in a round-robin format, with the best four players reaching the semi-finals.

Former Olympics football gold medalists Cameroon among minnows

JOHANNESBURG, NOV 13 (AFP): Former Olympic Games football gold medalists Cameroon find themselves among minnows this week when African qualifying for the 2020 Tokyo tournament kicks off.

The central African country host Chad in Yaounde Friday with the second leg of the first round tie set for N'Djamena next Tuesday.

Cameroon and Chad are far apart when it comes to football achievements with the former qualifying seven times for the World Cup, a record for an African country. Chad are among the weakest football nations in the continent, never making an international impact at national team or club levels.

A Cameroon team including Samuel Eto'o won the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games gold medal match against Spain on penalties after a 2-2 draw.

However, poor results in the past two African qualifying compe-



titions have prevented the central Africans being among 13 countries given byes to the second round. In a 2012 London Olympics qualifier, Cameroon lost on penalties to Tanzania, and were ousted by Sierra Leone on away goals in a 2016 Rio de Janeiro eliminator.

With the Chad fixtures taking place during

an international window, Cameroon can pick young foreign-born professionals as the qualifiers are an under-23 competition.

Ghana, bronze medalists at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, are another country who must compete in the first round, facing fellow west Africans Togo in Kumasi and Lome. Like Camer-

oon, the fall from grace of Ghana can be traced to early exits from the last two qualifying competitions.

They were shocked by Sudan in a 2012 eliminator and eliminated by Congo Brazzaville after a penalty shootout in the last edition. Guinea were among the African contenders at the 1968

Mexico City Olympics, but have not qualified since. They set off on a journey they hope will lead to Japan by travelling to Nouakchott for a match against Mauritania, a rapidly improving football nation.

It was also a long time ago that Sudan made their sole appearance, at the 1972 Munich Games, and their 2020 campaign begins away to the Seychelles. Mauritius, the other Indian Ocean island state competing, visit Kenya, and there are also a number of matchups between neighbouring countries.

Violence-torn Somalia make a rare international appearance, but the security situation in capital Mogadishu means the home fixture against Ethiopia has been moved to Djibouti.

First legs are scheduled for Wednesday, Friday and Saturday with the return matches on Sunday and Tuesday.

NASA probe beams back image of Jupiter's swirling clouds

WASHINGTON, NOV 13 (PTI): NASA's Juno spacecraft has beamed back a stunning image of Jupiter, showing the gas giant's multitude of colourful, swirling clouds.

The image captures a several bright-white 'pop-up' clouds as well as an anticyclonic storm, known as a white oval, in Jupiter's dynamic North Temperate Belt.

The image was taken on October 29 as the spacecraft performed its 16th close flyby of Jupiter.

At the time, Juno was about 7,000 kilometers from the planet's cloud tops, at a latitude of approximately 40 degrees north.

Citizen scientists Gerald Eichstadt and Sean Doran used data from the spacecraft's JunoCam imager to create a colour-enhanced image of the planet's cloud, NASA said in a statement.

JunoCam's raw images are available online for the public to peruse and process into image products.

Juno's principal goal is to understand the origin and evolution of Jupiter. Underneath its dense cloud cover, Jupiter safeguards secrets to the fundamental processes and conditions that governed our solar system during its formation.

As the primary example of a giant planet in the solar system, Jupiter can also provide critical knowledge for understanding the planetary systems being discovered around other stars. With its suite of science instruments, Juno will investigate the existence of a solid planetary core, map Jupiter's intense magnetic field, measure the amount of water and ammonia in the deep atmosphere, and observe the planet's auroras.

Data from Juno will help us understand how giant planets form and the role these titans played in putting together the rest of the solar system.

Senator Kamala Harris among potential Democratic presidential aspirants

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, Nov 13 (PTI): Kamala Harris, the first Indian-origin US Senator also known as the “female Obama”, is considering to run for the White House in 2020, media reports said, days after a strong showing by the Democratic Party in the recent mid-term elections.

Harris, 54, the first time Senator from California, made her first trip to Iowa about a month ago, which media analysts here said was in preparation for her potential presidential run.

Born in Oakland, California, she is the daughter of an Indian mother who migrated to the US from Chennai in 1960 and a Jamaican-American father.

Her mother Shyamala Gopalan studied science, specifically endocrinology and complex mechanisms of cancer. Her father Donald Harris grew up in Jamaica, where he became a national scholar and earned the opportunity to study economics in the US.

The 2020 presidential



cycle would kick off on February 3, 2020 in Iowa, where the first primary is scheduled to be held.

Media reports indicated that Harris’ multiple stops in Iowa indicated an Obama-like energy in her meetings.

“I haven’t seen that kind of energy since Barack Obama,” Sean Bagniewski, the chair of the Polk County Democrats, told lake County Record-Bee after Harris addressed several hundred people at a downtown Des Moines ballroom in

Iowa last month. Harris has not announced her presidential bid yet.

In multiple media interviews, she has neither denied nor confirmed reports of her running for the White House in 2020.

During the Obama era, she was popularly called as the “female Obama”. A decade ago, journalist Gwen Ifill called Harris “the female Barack Obama” on the “Late Show With David Letterman”. Later, a small businessman from Willowby Tony Pinto called her “a

young, female version of the president”.

She is considered to be close to Obama, the first black American President, who endorsed her in her various elections including that of the US Senate in 2016.

Harris said her visit to Iowa was to campaign for party during mid-term elections. After a gap of eight years, the Democratic party wrestled from the Republicans the majority in the House of Representatives.

In the past two years,

she has emerged as the star performer of the party in the Senate and a leading Democratic voice against US President Donald Trump.

According to an on-line poll carried out by Axios, Harris would beat Trump most handily by a 10-point margin if the election were held now.

She polls well with African-American and white suburban women, but not with “Never Hillary” independent registered voters, Axios said in its report last week.

Harris is among the two-dozen potential Democratic leaders who are eyeing the US presidency in 2020. However, none of them have made a formal announcement yet. Prominent among them include 2016 presidential candidates Senator Bernie Sanders and former secretary of state Hillary Clinton; and former US vice president Joe Biden.

Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu lawmaker from Hawaii in the US Congress, is also considering to run for the presidency, according to

sources close to her.

Several Democratic Senators in the potential race include Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker, Kirsten Gillibrand, Jeff Merkley, Sherrod Brown, Amy Klobuchar and Richard Blumenthal.

Former Attorney General Eric Holder, former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee are said to be in the race to take on President Trump in his re-election bid.

Former first lady Michelle Obama has ruled out entering the electoral fray.

In the recently-concluded crucial midterm elections, opposition Democrats captured the House of Representatives while Trump’s Republican Party retained its majority in the Senate, an outcome likely to intensify the political bitterness and fighting between the two major parties in the run up to the 2020 presidential poll.

3 civilians killed in attack on UN contractor in Mali

BAMAKO, Nov 13 (AFP): At least three Malian civilians were killed and four foreigners working for a UN-contracted mine-clearing operation wounded in a suicide attack Monday in the country’s violence-hit north, the security ministry and other official sources said.

The attack, claimed by a group linked to Al-Qaeda, took place in the city of Gao at around 8:00 pm (2000 GMT), according to a ministry statement.

“A loaded 4x4 vehicle exploded in the vicinity of a residential complex,” the ministry said, adding that two others were wounded in the blast, which also damaged surrounding homes.

Mali has been struggling to return to stability after Islamist extremists linked to Al-Qaeda jihadists took control of the north in early 2012, prompting a military intervention by France.

The extremists were routed in the French operation in 2013 but large stretches of the landlocked African state remain out of government control.

A local official said at least two Malian passers-by who lived close to the targeted building had died in the latest attack.

“Two Cambodians, a South African and a Zimbabwean working for an organisation subcontracted by UNMAS (the UN’s mine-clearing operation) were wounded on Monday in a terrorist attack in Gao,” a Western diplomatic source told AFP.

The assault was claimed by the Group to Support Islam and Muslims (GSIM), a fusion of three Malian jihadist groups allied with Al-Qaeda.

Malian and international security forces have been mobilised following the “tragic incident”, the security ministry said.

Deadliest fire in California history kills 42 people

Paradise (US), Nov 13 (AFP): The number of people killed by a massive blaze in northern California rose to 42 on Monday, making it the deadliest wildfire in the history of the state.

Thousands of firefighters spent a fifth day digging battle lines to contain the “Camp Fire” in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains north of Sacramento, while search teams were on a grim mission to recover the dead.

“As of today, an additional 13 human remains have been recovered, which brings the total number to 42,” Sheriff Kory Honea told a news conference. The blaze is “the deadliest wild-land fire in California history,” Honea said.

Although it is difficult to be certain due to inconsistencies in record keeping and categoriza-



tion, the Camp Fire appears to deadliest American wildfire in a century -- since the Cloquet Fire killed an estimated 1,000 people in Minnesota in 1918.

The Camp Fire is the largest of several infernos that have sent a quarter of a million people fleeing from their homes across the tinder-dry state, with winds of up to 60 miles (100 kilome-

ters) per hour fanning the fast-moving flames.

In addition to the historic loss of life, the Camp Fire blaze is also more destructive than any other on record, having razed 6,500 homes in the town of Paradise, effectively wiping it off the map. More than 5,100 firefighters from as far as the states of Wash-

ington and Texas have been working to halt the advance of the inferno as “mass casualty” search teams backed by anthropologists and a DNA lab pick through the charred ruins to identify remains -- sometimes reduced to no more than shards of bone.

At least 44 people have died in fire zones in north and south California, where acrid smoke has blanketed the sky for miles, the sun barely visible.

On the ground, cars caught in the flames have been reduced to scorched metal skeletons, while piles of debris smolder where houses once stood, an occasional brick wall or chimney remaining.

The Camp Fire has reduced around 17 square miles (45 square kilometers) of Butte County’s forested hills mostly to charred wasteland -- an area which hasn’t seen rainfall of more than half an inch (one centimeter) in more than 30 weeks.

It is currently 25 percent contained, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) said.

Three firefighters have been injured in the effort to quell the blaze’s advance.

Chinese bank sets up USD 200 million fund for investing in Indian MSMEs

KJM VARMA
BEIJING, Nov 13 (PTI): The Indian unit of China’s largest bank, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China has set up USD 200 million fund for investing in the promising Indian micro, small and medium enterprises and ventures, its official said here.

Zheng Bin, CEO of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) India on Monday gave an overview of Indian start-up ecosystem and how to invest in them at the 2nd ‘Start-up India’ Investment Seminar organised by the Indian Embassy here.

“He also informed that the ICBC India has established a USD 200 million fund for investing in the promising Indian micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and ventures,” the Indian Embassy said in a statement on Tuesday.

The ICBC, a top state-run Chinese bank which is the country’s largest

lender by market value, has opened its branch in Mumbai in 2011.

More than 350 Chinese mostly representing Chinese Venture Capital (VC) funds, angel investors participated in a day long pitching session and seminar organised by the Indian Embassy in partnership with the Start-up India Association (SIA) and Venture Gurukul.

Forty-two Indian entrepreneurs representing 20 Indian start-ups took part in the event which was expected to fetch good investments for the Indian firms, Prashant Lokhande, Counsellor Economic and Commerce of the Indian Embassy who addressed the event said.

Four out of the 12 Indian firms which took part in the first start-up India investment seminar held here last year got funding from the Chinese VCs to the tune of USD 15 million, the press release said.

In the current round,

7-8 start-ups out of 20 participants may get commitment to the tune of USD 30 million, it said.

The event was planned to expose the Chinese VCs and investors to the promising Indian start-ups on one hand and help Indian start-ups to reach out to the huge Chinese investors community for receiving investment for growth of their companies, it said.

Addressing the event Acqino Vimal, Deputy Chief of Mission said Chinese investors should take part in the development process of India growth story through investing in Indian start-ups.

He said India’s young demography, rapid economic growth and fast pace urbanisation and its challenges work as hotbed for growth of Indian entrepreneurs and start-up ecosystem, as well as provide them opportunity for offering unique, innovative, and affordable solutions for these challenges. During the sem-

inar, a report “India China: Start-ups & Beyond” by KPMG giving detailed account of Indian start-

up ecosystem and why it is right place for making venture investments, was unveiled.

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES

DEAR FAITHFUL MORNING				DEAR EAGLE EVENING			
Draw No:48 DrawDate on:31/10/18				Draw No:6 DrawDate on:31/10/18			
1st Prize Rs.26.02 Lakhs/- 790 96137				1st Prize Rs.26.02 Lakhs/- 72G 46462			
Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 96137 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)				Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 46462 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)			
2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 07260				2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 10486			
3rd Prize Rs.500/- 62507				3rd Prize Rs.500/- 61176			
4th Prize Rs.250/- 0037				4th Prize Rs.250/- 0298			
5th Prize Rs.120/- 0020				5th Prize Rs.120/- 0203			
6th Prize Rs.100/- 0010				6th Prize Rs.100/- 0203			
7th Prize Rs.80/- 0010				7th Prize Rs.80/- 0010			
8th Prize Rs.60/- 0010				8th Prize Rs.60/- 0010			
9th Prize Rs.40/- 0010				9th Prize Rs.40/- 0010			
10th Prize Rs.20/- 0010				10th Prize Rs.20/- 0010			
11th Prize Rs.10/- 0010				11th Prize Rs.10/- 0010			
12th Prize Rs.5/- 0010				12th Prize Rs.5/- 0010			
13th Prize Rs.2/- 0010				13th Prize Rs.2/- 0010			
14th Prize Rs.1/- 0010				14th Prize Rs.1/- 0010			
15th Prize Rs.0.50/- 0010				15th Prize Rs.0.50/- 0010			
16th Prize Rs.0.25/- 0010				16th Prize Rs.0.25/- 0010			
17th Prize Rs.0.10/- 0010				17th Prize Rs.0.10/- 0010			
18th Prize Rs.0.05/- 0010				18th Prize Rs.0.05/- 0010			
19th Prize Rs.0.02/- 0010				19th Prize Rs.0.02/- 0010			
20th Prize Rs.0.01/- 0010				20th Prize Rs.0.01/- 0010			

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15th Prize Rs.0.50/- 0010				15th Prize Rs.0.50/- 0010			
16th Prize Rs.0.25/- 0010				16th Prize Rs.0.25/- 0010			
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20th Prize Rs.0.01/- 0010				20th Prize Rs.0.01/- 0010			

Marvel Comics legend Stan Lee dead at 95: US media



LOS ANGELES, NOV 12 (AFP): Marvel legend Stan Lee, who revolutionized pop culture as the co-creator of iconic superheroes like Spider-Man and The Hulk who now dominate the world's movie screens, has died. He was 95 years old.

Lee, the face of comic book culture in the United States, died early Monday in Los Angeles, according to US entertainment outlets including The Hollywood Reporter. He had suffered a number of illnesses in recent years.

"My father loved all of his fans," his daughter told Hollywood monitor TMZ. "He was the greatest, most decent man." The New Yorker, known for his distinctive tinted glasses and impish grin, frequently appeared at fan events where he was revered.

Lee ended up in the comics business by accident, thanks to an uncle who got him a job when he was a teenager filling artists' inkwells and fetching coffee.

"I felt someday I'd write the 'Great American Novel' and I didn't want to use my real name on these silly little comics," he once said, explaining why he had forsaken his given name, Stanley Lieber.

Lee rose through the

ranks to become a comics writer, making millions of superhero fans dream of his fantastic universes and humans with extraordinary powers, and eventually led the Marvel empire for decades as its publisher. From Spidey to Black Panther to the X-Men and the Fantastic Four, Lee collaborated with other authors and illustrators to put his lively imagination on the page.

Iron Man, Thor and Doctor Strange would follow -- and today, all three heroes have multi-film franchises that rake in hundreds of millions of dollars.

Lee has appeared in cameo roles in nearly every Marvel movie -- including as a bus driver in "Avengers: Infinity War," a film that united many of the indelible characters he brought to life.

"Awww man, heart-breaking. R.I.P. to a true pioneer and legend," tweeted Australian filmmaker James Wan, who directed many of the "Saw" and "Insidious" movies as well as helming "Aquaman," an upcoming superhero film based on the character by Marvel rival DC Comics.

"My youth wouldn't have been the same without him. So grateful to have met the guy, and told him how thankful I was for his work."

Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt's 'Brahmastra' to release on Christmas 2019



MUMBAI, NOV 13 (PTI): Director-producer Karan Johar on Tuesday announced the first part of Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt-starrer "Brahmastra" will hit the theatres in India on Christmas next year.

Directed by Ayan Mukerji, the fantasy adventure franchise is being produced by Johar through his banner, Dharma Productions.

The film will also feature Amitabh Bachchan, Dimple Kapadia, Akkineni Nagarjuna and Mouni Roy in pivotal roles.

The movie will see Ranbir playing a character with special powers. The team recently completed a shooting schedule in Bulgaria.

Want to imbibe Kareena's professionalism: Sara Ali Khan

MUMBAI, NOV 12 (PTI): Actor Sara Ali Khan says she is in awe of Kareena Kapoor's professionalism and going forward wants to imbibe the same.

Daughter of Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh, Sara says the way Kareena, who married Saif in 2012, carries herself is amazing.

"I think Kareena is extremely professional. The way she does her work, it's amazing. So I would want to imbibe her professionalism,"

Sara told reporters.

The actor was speaking at the trailer launch of her debut film "Kedarnath". The romantic-drama is directed by Abhishek Kapoor and features Sushant Singh Rajput as male lead.

The actor already has her second film, Rohit Shetty's "Simmba", lined up for release.


"Kedarnath" is scheduled to release on December 7.

Grab the Kleenex!


John Legend and Chrissy Teigen just cemented their status as the Hollywood power couple.


At Glamour's 2018 Women of the Year Awards John Legend and Chrissy's "trophy husband" explained all the reasons why he, and the rest of the world, can't help but adore Chrissy. "I have a career in the music business, but we all know who the star of the family is. She's the heart and soul of the family too... But I'm not the only one who loves her. Many millions of people who aren't married or related to her love her too."

In fact, he said they love her so much that "the number one comment I get from people who USED to be MY fans is how much they LOVE Chrissy." He joked, "She gets bigger cheers than I do at my own concerts. They love her!"



INDIAN CUSTOMS






Sustained Policy Reforms bearing fruit

Indian Customs has taken a series of measures to simplify Customs processes and procedures during the last few years.

Reforms undertaken since April, 2017

- An online paperless processing application, e-Sanchit, allowing trader to submit all supporting documents for clearance of consignments electronically has been introduced. There is no need to approach different regulatory agencies with hard copy of documents.
- Enhanced facilitation through Risk Management System has resulted in lesser time taken for clearances.
- Direct Port Delivery (DPD) allows registered importers to complete Customs clearances at the terminal itself and containers can be taken directly to factories without going to CFSs.
- Direct Port Entry (DPE) allows direct entry of export cargo into port terminal without any need for going to CFSs.
- Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Scheme provides faster Customs clearances and simplified Customs procedures to business entities. Already more than 1700 entities are getting benefits under it.
- Mandatory filling of Bill of Entry within specified times has resulted in discipline among the trade and resulted in reduced time in case of imports.
- E-sealing of containers has been introduced replacing earlier practice of supervised sealing by departmental officers. It has enhanced the integrity of cargo as RFID tamper-proof e-seals are being used to seal containers now.



Reforms undertaken prior to April, 2017

- Single Window Interface for Facilitating Trade (SWIFT) eases the NOC issuance procedures for 6 main Governmental Agencies and allows importers & exporters, the facility to lodge their clearance documents online at only a single point.
- Only 3 mandatory documents now required for import/export which includes Bill of Lading/Airway Bill, Commercial Invoice-cum-Packing List and Shipping Bill/Bill of Entry from the earlier obligatory 10 documents.
- Based on the principle of 'Clear first-Pay later', facility of deferred payment of Customs duty is available. This helps to achieve seamless Wharf to Warehouse transit in order to facilitate just-in-time manufacturing. Currently being extended to importers holding AEO T-2 or T-3 status.
- 24x7 Customs Clearance facility extended to goods covered by facilitated Bills of Entry and goods shipped under Free Shipping Bills at designated Seaports & Air Cargo Complexes.
- National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) is an effective deliberative and decision-making structure. With its three-tiered composition and with representatives from trade and various governmental agencies on board, NCTF helps to ease bottlenecks for faster and streamlined clearance of goods.
- Customs Clearance Facilitation Committees (CCFCs) have been set up under the chairmanship of Chief Commissioner of Customs/Commissioner of Customs. CCFCs expedite clearance of import and export goods and help resolve grievances of trade and industry at various seaports, airports, ICDS and LCSS.

The overall impact of above reforms carried out by Customs is reflected in the reduced time and cost, associated with imports and exports, which has been vindicated by recent report on Doing Business issued by the World Bank.

- At Mumbai, in case of Exports, the time taken by Customs for clearance has reduced by 34 hours to just 12 hours. And in case of imports, the reduction in time is equally impressive - from 71 hours to 24 hours.
- The time taken by Port/Border agencies has also reduced. Now the total overall clearance time in case of exports is 54 hours and in case of imports it is 102 hours (Mumbai)

Importers and Exporters can track their documents and containers on ICEGATE website.

- The location of container can be traced using facility "Track your Container" on www.icegate.gov.in for cargo moving to Nhava Sheva, Hazira and Mundra Ports only.
- The current status of Bill of Entry or Shipping Bill can be traced by logging into the ICEGATE website.
- Electronic tracking of Nepal-bound cargo has already been launched by Customs.

Indian Customs - Committed to Faster and Smoother Trade

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs

www.cbic.gov.in, www.icegate.gov.in