



RANVEER SINGH 'STAPLED' HIS STOMACH DURING LOOTERA SHOOT
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HOW PRAVIND JUGNAUTH CLINCHED THE WIN IN MAURITIUS' ELECTIONS

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MEEZAAN JAAFERI TO PLAY THE LEAD ACTOR IN HUNGAMA 2

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Summit **TIMES**

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Lok Sabha takes up bill to ban e-cigarettes

NEW DELHI, NOV 26 (PTI): Cutting across party lines, members of the Lok Sabha on Tuesday supported the Bill to ban the production, import and sale of electronic cigarettes though the Congress questioned the government's decision to adopt the ordinance route for the legislation.

The Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (Production, Manufacture, Import, Export, Transport, Sale, Distribution, Storage and Advertisement) Bill, 2019, seeks to replace an ordinance issued on September 18. The Bill was moved for consideration and passage by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan. Moving a statutory resolution objecting to promulgation of the ordinance, Congress member Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said he has no fundamental objection to the contents of the bill but was against the adoption of ordinance route by the government for a subject which was not of urgent importance.

"The ordinance-addicted government," he said, cannot convey any strong message to the people.

He asked what the urgency was to come out with an ordinance at a time when 16 states have already banned e-cigarettes. Observing that one million people die because of consuming tobacco products, Chowdhury said the government needs to thoroughly discuss issues concerning both conventional cigarettes and e-cigarettes.

Participating in the discussion, Varun Gandhi (BJP) defended the ordinance saying "prevention is always better than cure". He also dismissed the reports which suggest that e-cigarettes were less harmful than conventional cigarettes saying nicotine is harmful for health and any suggestion to the contrary, as pointed out by some research reports, was unacceptable.

Gandhi further said that introduction of e-cigarettes in the US has brought down the average smoking age to 17 years from 30 years which was alarming. The Bill makes the manufacturing, production, import, export, distribution, transport, sale, storage or advertisements of such alternative smoking devices a cognisable offence, attracting a jail term and a fine. First-time violators will face a jail term of up to one year and a fine of Rs 1 lakh. For subsequent offences, a jail term of up to three years or a fine of Rs 5 lakh, or both, will be imposed, according to the ordinance.

The storage of e-cigarettes shall also be punishable with imprisonment of up to six months or a fine of up to Rs 50,000, or both, it said.

The bill authorised officials to conduct searches in premises, stating that where such searches were not permissible authorities might attach properties, stocks of e-cigarettes or records maintained by the manufacturer, producer exporter, transporter, importer, stockist against whom a complaint had been made.

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Parliament passes bill to protect rights of transgenders

NEW DELHI, NOV 26 (PTI): The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday passed a bill on protection of rights of transgenders after a motion to refer it to a select committee of the Upper House was defeated.

The Lok Sabha had passed the bill on August 5. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019, seeks to provide a mechanism for social, economic and educational empowerment of transgenders and was moved for consideration and passage in the Rajya Sabha by Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot on November 20. Replying to a discussion for further consideration of the bill, Gehlot said efforts will be made to incorporate the suggestions presented by members while framing the rules.

He said a clause related to medical examination by a panel for a district magistrate (DM) or collector to certify a person as a transgender which was earlier part of the bill, has been done away with, after reservations were expressed by members in this regard. However, in case of a child, his or her parents can file application for issuance of an identification certificate.

Elaborating on the provisions of the bill, the minister said it is aimed at eliminating discrimination against transgenders and the government will form a national council for its implementation after the legislation is brought into effect. Gehlot said a transgender person will be able to avail the benefits of schemes offered by states as well as the Centre. He informed that the recommendations and suggestions of the standing committee of the Lok Sabha have also been incorporated in the bill.

The motion to refer the bill to a select committee of the Rajya Sabha was moved by Tiruchi Siva of the DMK. However, it was defeated after voting took place. Gehlot appealed to the members to pass the bill saying it

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SIKKIM CELEBRATES CONSTITUTION DAY

Important to remember duties along with rights: CM

GANGTOK, 26 NOV (IPR): Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department, Government of Sikkim, organized a function in Chintan Bhawan today to celebrate the 70th Constitution Day marking the adoption of the Constitution of India on 26 Nov, 1949. The Constitution of India formally came into effect on 26 Jan, 1950 which is celebrated as Republic Day of India. The Indian Constitution is the longest written Constitution.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) said that Constitution Day is being celebrated in India as a tribute to all the great legends who worked tirelessly to give India its Constitution.

The Chief Minister spoke at length about



the Indian constitution which apart from the usual features like fundamental rights and the powers of distribution has shown foresight to include chapters which ensure pluralism, positive discrimination and fair opportunity to all

sections of society. India is a secular country and the Constitution of India guarantees freedom of conscience and the right to profess practice and propagate religion to all. He said that the Indian Constitution is for continuity of

democracy and integrity of nation. He remembered Dr BR Ambedkar, the Architect of the Indian Constitution, for his stellar contribution and socio-political understanding.

The Chief Minister called upon all to unite

with the goal of eliminating poverty, discrimination, exploitation, starvation, sickness and disease, and creating an atmosphere of simple and peaceful living.

He said that the Indian Constitution has given us our rights with our

responsibility and duties but we always seek for our rights and forget about duties so he urged every individual to first perform their duties and responsibilities which automatically provide their rights.

He further urged everyone to work towards preserving and protecting Article 371F of the Constitution which provides for special protection of the people of Sikkim.

The Chief Minister further said that Sikkim has the unique tendency of honoring one another, to respect all religions and communities, to be hospitable, to help the poor and miserable, and to provide a cordial environment for everyone to profess their religion and perform pilgrimage.

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ABYF Baptist Church in finals of Sikkim United Cup 2019



SAGAR CHHETRI GANGTOK, 26 NOV:

ABYF Baptist Church, Sikkim has entered the finals of the ongoing Sikkim United Cup 2019 here at Paljor Stadium. In the first semi-final match played on Tuesday afternoon,

ABYF Baptist Church outplayed Abad 7-1 to secure it berth in the finals of the tournament.

ABYF Baptist Church is the champion of the first edition of the tournament in 2012 and remained runners-up in the second edition in

2013. It has now entered the final of this tournament for the third time.

The first half of the match ended in a goal-less draw. In the early minutes of the second half, Ajay Subba scored the lead for ABYF and completed his brace

shortly after.

Sudesh Subba scored the third goal for ABYF in the 49th minute and his teammate, Binam Bhujel extended the lead of ABYF to 4-0 in the 52nd minute. Soon, Ajay Subba scored his hattrick goal in the 54th minute.

A goal by Depen Ranpal for Abad in the 63rd minute gave some hope to the team but two more goals by Ajay Subba in the 65th and 67th minute sealed the 7-1 victory of ABYF Baptist Church. John Khatri of ABYF Baptist Church was adjudged Man of the Match.

The second semi-final match of the tournament will be played between EPCS, Namchi and Gitang Dagbari, West Sikkim on Wednesday.

Another highlight of the day was a friendly match between Sikkim Christian Sports Committee

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Fadnavis now the CM with shortest tenure in Maha history



MUMBAI, NOV 26 (PTI): Once being the only second chief minister in Maharashtra to complete the full five-year term, BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis now holds the dubious distinction of being the CM with the shortest tenure of four days in the last 59 years, a downhill journey which underlines transient nature of politics.

On Tuesday afternoon, Devendra Gadgharao Fadnavis, 49, resigned from his post, only three days after he made a dramatic comeback as the chief minister for a second term with the support of NCP leader Ajit Pawar, who had broken ranks with his parent party to lend support to the BJP.

However, what was supposed to be a dream run for Fadnavis came to an abrupt end in afternoon after Ajit Pawar stepped down as deputy

CM, exposing the BJP's claim that it had majority in the 288-member Assembly.

Earlier PK Sawant held the record of being the Maharashtra CM with the shortest term-- from November 25 to December 4, 1963. He was made the caretaker chief minister after the death of his predecessor Marotrao Kannamwar.

Fadnavis' previous term as the chief minister lasted from October 31, 2014 to November 12, 2019, making him only the second CM after Vasant Naik of the Congress to last the full five-year term.

The second tenure of Fadnavis lasted from November 23 to November 26, 2019.

The four-day-old BJP-led government collapsed on the eve of the supreme court-ordered floor test in the Assembly.

State Level Science, Mathematics and Environment Exhibition

GANGTOK, 26 NOV (IPR): Three-day State Level Science, Mathematics and Environment Exhibition for Children 2019-20 (SLS-MEE-2019-20) was inaugurated at Deorali Girls' Senior Secondary School, Gangtok, East Sikkim today.

The chief guest for the occasion was Prof Dinesh Singh from NCERT. Also present were Bhim Thatal, SPD, Samagra Shiksha and Dr Rabin Chhetri Director, SCERT, Education Department, Government of Sikkim.

The event is being organized by SCERT, Education Department, Government of Sikkim with support from Samagra Shiksha, Education Department and NCERT, New Delhi. The main theme for



the State Level Science, Mathematics and Environment Exhibition 2019-20 is "Science and Technology for Sustainable Development".

The sub themes are: Sustainable Agricultural Practices; Clean-

liness and Health; Resource Management; Industrial Development; Future Transport and Communication; Educational Games and Mathematical Modeling.

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Dikchu School NSS observes Constitution Day



WANGCHUK BHUTIA MANGAN, 26 NOV:

The NSS Unit of Dikchu Senior Secondary School, East Sikkim observed the 70th Constitution Day by conducting a special assembly.

On the occasion, the objective of assembly was to commemorate the creation and signing of the supreme law of the land. Programme officer, Arjun Pradhan briefed about the Constitution of India and its importance to the citizens of India.

NSS Volunteer, Abishek Chettri delivered a short speech on the importance of the

Constitution while NSS Volunteer, Tikaram Sunwar, highlighted some important facts about the Constitution.

The Preamble of the Constitution was read out by Principal, Dr Saroz Pradhan followed by students and teachers. The NSS Volunteers also exhibited placards with fundamental rights and duties.

The programme concluded with full patriotism and singing of National Anthem. Similarly, the NSS Volunteers also organized Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat program on Monday at the school premises.

Gujarat team visits KVK South to study organic farming



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 26 NOV:

A team led by Principal and Dean, Dr MV Patel, BA College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat along with Assistant Professors visited KVK South Sikkim.

Today, on the second day of their visit, the team visited farmers'

fields. These officials are on tour to study the implementation of organic farming in the state and various technologies which can boost organic farming.

The team had interaction with officials of KVK South Sikkim and visited KVK farm. They were also taken to progressive farmers' fields at Perbing tar.

Parliament passes...

was drafted by late BJP leader Arun Jaitley when he was the Union Law Minister and argued that there was no need to send it to a select committee as it has already undergone the scrutiny of the standing committee of Lok Sabha.

He said the Supreme Court's direction in April 2014 regarding framing transgenders has also been kept in mind.

The Supreme Court had recognised the transgender community as a third gender along with male and female in April 2014.

Earlier, DMK leader Tiruchi Siva stressed that given the sensitivity of the issue and the insult, discrimination and atrocities inflicted on the transgender community, the bill should be sent to the select committee.

"We can wait for another six weeks till the next session for such a crucial bill's scrutiny for slow and steady legislation" to provide full justice to the community. The bill in the present form has several lacunae, Siva said.

The transgender community has been treated as "untouchables" and have been subjected to "ridicule" and "discrimination" which is the moral failure of the society, he said.

Citing how the private members' bill brought by him in the Rajya Sabha in 2014 was passed by the House but the BJP scuttled it in the Lok Sabha, Siva said such crucial bill this time was passed by the Lok Sabha without any discussion on August 5 as the House was busy discussing abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir.

V Vijaysai Reddy (YSRCP) said the transgenders should be allowed self-certification and added that the bill be sent to the Select Committee.

Derek O' Brien (Trinamool) also said that select committee should scrutinize it and added that the matter is not "politics".

He pointed out that it was an irony that the punishment for a person raping a transgender was barely six months to 2 years whereas the same in case of women was 10 years or life imprisonment and in case of girl up to 12 years, the minimum punishment was 20 years which could go up to death penalty.

K Keshava Rao (TRS) said there is a need to relook the legislation and added that the members should be given the right to self determination of the gender as confidentiality is lost in the present process.

He also expressed ire over the "miniscule budget" allotted by the Centre for transgenders.

Rupa Ganguly (BJP) said that the passage of the Bill will lead to a dignified life to the community members. A Navaneethkrishnan (AIADMK) also supported the bill.

Mamring School observes Constitution Day

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 26 NOV:

Mamring Senior Secondary School, East Sikkim, observed Constitution Day with the reading out of the Preamble by Principal, teachers, staff and students in the school assembly today, a press release informs.

Principal of the school, Prahlad Sharma briefed the assembly about the importance of 26 Nov. He talked about India's Independence movement, Constituent Assembly, and the various stages involved in the making of the Constitution.

As part of the Constitution Day celebration, an essay writing competition, under the supervision of PGT Political Science, IP Khatiwara was also organized in two categories.



Classes IX to XII (Maximum 800 words) on Fundamental Duties and Fundamental Rights: A Comparative Analysis or Directive Principles of State Policy and Role of State in Governance.

Classes VI to VIII (Maximum 600 words) on The Making of Indian Constitution

Or Salient Features of the Constitution of India

The two best essays at each level from the school are sent to the HQ, Education Depart-

ment, Gangtok.

In the afternoon session, the NSS Unit conducted a program on Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat for the students. Since Delhi has been paired with Sikkim under Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, PGT Nepali, DN Sapkota delivered a speech on Language and Dress of the people of Delhi while PGT History, Puspa Devi Limboo presented on culture, history, tourist places, etc, of Delhi.

Principal of Mamring

School, Prahlad Sharma talked about the importance of the program and NSS PO, Bikash Bhattarai highlighted about unity in diversity.

In the evening assembly, Fit India Week was observed by conducting aerobic exercise, yogic postures, PT and drill for students. The trainers were LDC, Chuki Lepcha, TT faculty, Roselima Lepcha, ICT Faculty, Nargis Laila, NSS PO, Bikash Bhattarai and PET, Kashi Nath Luitel.

North observes Constitution Day



MANGAN, 26 NOV (IPR): North Sikkim observed the 70th Constitution Day here in front of District Administrative Centre, Mangan, today.

On this day in 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India which came into effect on 26 Jan, 1950. The day was later announced as the Constitution Day on 19 Nov, 2015 by the Government of India.

The Preamble of Constitution of India was read out by the District Collector, North, Tenzing T Kaleon and same was followed by the Government employees of various Departments assembled in front of the District Administrative Centre.

The DC/N, Mr Kaleon informed that there will be a National level campaign on creating aware-

ness regarding a very important feature of the Constitution-the Fundamental Duties. This campaign would start on 26 Nov, 2019 and culminate on 14 Apr, 2020 i.e. Dr BR Ambedkar's Birth Anniversary.

For the campaign, the Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs Department has been designated as the Nodal Department.

Number of activities will be scheduled from 26 Nov, 2019 upto 14 Apr, 2020 to sensitize the people regarding the exalted values and the precepts enshrined in the Constitution. In addition, Gram Panchayat and Urban Local Bodies will also organize meetings to sensitize the people about important feature of the Constitution as part of the campaign, he added.

Constitution Day observed in Namchi



NAMCHI, 26 NOV (IPR): District Administrative Centre, Namchi, observed Constitution Day at the Conference hall of DAC, today. The Constitution of India was adopted on 26 Nov, 1949 and later came into effect on 26 Jan, 1950.

District Collector (S), Ragul K read out the preamble of the Constitution of India to all the officials, staff and members from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) who were also present on the occasion.

The officials also highlighted the importance of the Constitution and shared the various ideas of

Dr Ambedkar, who is known as the architect of the Constitution of India.

Present on the occasion were ASP (S), Jayapandiyani J, SDM Namchi, Chiran Rizal, Joint Director Land Revenue, DK Rai, SDPO Namchi, Prakash Subba along with officials and staff from the various Departments and members of NGOs.

Similarly, South District Zilla Panchayat Office, Namchi also observed the day. ADC Development Namchi, CP Rai read out the preamble of the Constitution of India to all the officers and staff present.

Samvidhan Diwas observed at DAC Gyalshing



GYALSHING, 26 NOV (IPR): Constitution Day, also known as Samvidhan Diwas, was observed here at the District Administrative Centre in Gyalshing, West Sikkim, today.

The Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India on 26 Nov, 1949 which later came into effect on 26 Jan, 1950.

On the occasion, the Preamble was read out by the gathering under

the guidance of Superintendent of Police, West, Tenzing L Lepcha, accompanied by Additional District Magistrate, Karma L Lepcha, Additional Superintendent of Police, PVG Satish, and Sub Divisional Magistrate (HQ), Tushar G Nikhare.

It may be recalled the the Government of India declared 26 Nov as Constitution Day on 19 Nov, 2015 by a gazette notification.

Drug peddler escapes the noose twice

KOLKATA, NOV 26 (PTI): A drug peddler was lucky to escape the noose twice as the Calcutta High Court on Tuesday commuted his death sentence for the second time after having given him a similar reprieve in another case in 2012.

The 75-year-old drug peddler, who was arrested in 2002, was sentenced to 30 years in prison by a division bench comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Suvra Ghosh that commuted his death penalty.

Anisur Rahman, who was convicted of possessing a large quantity of drugs, will remain in prison for another 13 years to complete the sentence awarded to him on Tuesday.

He was arrested in 2002 from his Salt Lake residence with 3.5 kg of heroin by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and has been in prison since then.

Rahman was also charged in another case for possession of contraband drugs weighing over 2 kg.

The City Sessions Court awarded him the death penalty in connection with the second

case in 2006 under Section 31A of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

Rahman moved an appeal before the high court, which commuted his death sentence to 15 years of rigorous imprisonment.

Meanwhile, his trial in the first case was completed before the Barasat district and sessions court, which also awarded him the death penalty after finding him guilty in 2014 since he was a repeat offender.

Rahman again moved an appeal before the high court challenging the death penalty, his lawyer Indrajit De said.

Passing its order on Tuesday, the bench presided by Justice Bagchi observed that since the capital punishment has been made optional through an amendment, Rahman may be granted relief in the form of commutation of the death sentence.

Section 31A of NDPS Act was amended in 2014, which made it optional for the judge to award the death sentence instead of being compulsory punishment for commercial possession of narcotics.

Important to...

He also assured that the Government of Sikkim will always perform its duty efficiently and look into the problems faced by the Sikkimese people.

The program also saw Minister Health, Principal Secretary Health and team presenting award to the Chief Minister which was received by West Sikkim recently from Ministry of Health, Government of India for achieving 90% immunization. West Sikkim is among 16 other districts in the country to receive this award.

Earlier a talk on "Fundamental Duties" was presented by Narendra Rai [Senior Advocate, High Court of Sikkim and President of Bar Association of Sikkim]. Likewise, a talk on "Salient Features of the Indian Constitution" was delivered by Dr Dilip Pandey, Dean of Students, Government Law College, Burtuk, followed by a talk by student of Government Law College, Burtuk, Say Shay Hang Subba.

On the occasion, Chief Minister, Mr Tamang administered the Preamble to the Constitution to the audience.

During the programme, Information and Public Relations Department screened a documentary film on the Constitution of India to make the audience familiar with the constitution of India and its salient features.

Also, the Culture Department performed patriotic songs on the occasion.

The programme had the presence of Speaker Sikkim Legislative Assembly, LB Das, Law Minister, Kunga Nima Lepcha, Ministers, MLAs, Advisors, Mayor GMC, Chief Secretary, SC Gupta, Law Secretary, JB Rai, Heads of Departments, officers and students.

The welcome address was presented by the Chief Secretary of Sikkim, while the programme concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by LR-cum-Secretary Law.

Lok Sabha...

It said the owner or occupier of the place that stocks e-cigarettes should voluntarily prepare a list of such stock in his possession and without delay submit the stock to the nearest authorised officer.

However, trade bodies promoting e-cigarettes, users and other stakeholders have been opposing the government's move to ban the alternative smoking device, alleging that it was a draconian step taken in haste to protect the conventional cigarette industry.

State Level...

The judges for the exhibition are Dr Madan Mani Dhakal [Sr MO to Governor of Sikkim], Tempis Namgyal [Senior Technical Director, NIC], Kshitiz Chettri [Assistant Prof Nar Bahadur Bhandari Degree College], Dr J Panda [Associate Prof. College of Agricultural Engineering & Post Harvest Technology].

The exhibition will see participants from 36 schools from different districts. The top ten schools selected during this exhibition will be representing the State in the Eastern India Science Fair 2020 to be held in Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Kolkata from 14-18 Jan, 2020.

Apart from that, NCERT will go through the write-ups and video CD of models of winning ten schools and invite the shortlisted schools next year in the month of November 2020 for the 47th Jawahar Lal Nehru National Level Science, Mathematics and Environment Exhibition for Children 2020 to be held in one of the State capitals. This year three schools from Sikkim are participating in the 46th Jawahar Lal Nehru National Level Science, Mathematics and Environment Exhibition for children 2019 to be held in Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

ABYF Baptist...

[SCSC] and Press Club of Sikkim [PCS], in which the former defeated the latter 8-4. Interestingly, former Indian football team skipper, Bhairung Bhutia and national footballers, Shisil Karthak and Sagar Rai played for SCSC, while Indian international footballer, Nirmal Chettri played for PCS side.

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LAND FOR SALE

A land measuring an area for 50x32 1/2 at Roadside just below housing colony is for sale. It is just a one minute walking distance from Namchi bazaar taxi stand. Interested party may contact 9593373387 and 9434406761

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Teeta Rangeet MSME Utsav at DHH next week

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 Nov: The Dept of Commerce & Industries has announced plans to organize a 3-day trade fair, "Teeta Rangeet MSME Utsav," at the Directorate of Handloom & Handicrafts at Zero Point here from 03-05 Dec.

The trade fair is being supported by the National Small Industries Corporation, Ministry of MSME, and seeks to provide a marketing platform to the state's entrepreneurs.

The event will provide entrepreneurs here with access to buyers and the sellers through a B2B meet and conclave, an official communiqué informs.

The event will also be providing mentor support to entrepreneurs through the Startup India team. Investors and the agencies supporting the export credit cover will also be participating in the event, it is informed.

West District observes Constitution Day

GYALSHING, 26 Nov (IPR):

The Constitution Day (National Law Day), also known as Samvidhan Divas was observed here at the District Administrative Centre, West in a befitting manner to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India. The Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India on 26 Nov, 1949, and it came into effect on 26 Jan, 1950.

On the occasion, the Preamble was read out by the gathering under the guidance of the Superintendent of Police, Tenzing L Lepcha, accompanied by Additional District Magistrate, Karma L Lepcha, Additional Superintendent of Police, PVG Satish, and Tushar G Nihare, SDM/HQ.

The Government of India declared 26 November as Constitution Day on 19 November 2015 by a gazette notification. The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi made the declaration on 11 Oct, 2015 while laying the foundation stone of the BR Ambedkar's Statue of Equality memorial in Mumbai.

The year of 2015 was the 125th birth anniversary of Ambedkar, who had chaired the drafting committee of the Constituent Assembly and played a pivotal role in the drafting of the constitution. Previously this day was celebrated as National Law Day. 26 November was chosen to spread the importance of the constitution and to spread thoughts and ideas of Ambedkar.

Training on Farm Journalism gets underway

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 Nov: The Extension Education Institute (EEI-NE Region) under Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Govt. of India, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat in collaboration with State Agriculture Extension Management and Training Institute, (SAMETI Sikkim) is organizing a four-day training programme on "Farm Journalism and Production of Mass Media".

Around 30 Assistant Technology Managers (ATMs) from the entire district and ATMs under Agriculture Department are taking part in the training, a press release informs.

The Resource Persons for the training are



Dr AK Bhattacharyya (Professor EEI), H Das (Research Associate-EEI) and Diwaker Lamichaney (VLW-SAMETI).

The training was inaugurated today in the

presence of Director SAMETI, NC Tonyot, Deputy Director-SAMETI, Preeti Moktan, ADO-SAMETI, Praveen Rai, Inspector, Anjana Pradhan, Gender Coordinator-SAMETI,

Ushnata Priya Thapa and SAMETI Staff.

The Director SAMETI while welcoming the guests and the participants mentioned that in order to train the ATMA

Field Functionaries in Farm Journalism and Production of Mass Media and to update them with latest media technologies this training was proposed by SAMETI

to EEI Jorhat.

She encouraged the participants to take full advantage of the training and to implement the same in field to uplift the farming community of the

State. She also mentioned that after the training there will be an evaluation where all the participants have to prepare at least one success story of an achiever farmer.

Dr AK Bhattacharyya (Professor EEI), while addressing the participants and the officials presented a brief information on the training course where some major topics like concept and principles of journalism with special reference to farm journalism, Mass Media and its uses in agricultural extension, Basic techniques of photography, Tips for writing Success Stories, etc were shared.

The first day of the training had lectures by Dr AK Bhattacharyya and H Das on various aspects of Farm Journalism.

CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED FOR AMBA SCHOOL LIBRARY UPGRADATION

Wandering Souls of Sikkim is excited to announce our plan to upgrade the school library of Govt. Secondary School, Amba, East Sikkim. This will be fourth such upgradation of school libraries by WSOS.

We have successfully upgraded 3 school libraries so far with the support and contributions of our generous patrons and are looking forward to receive more such contributions.

We request all to kindly contribute books either old or new or cash for the upgradation of school library at Amba.

Our Library Initiative is aimed at upgrading School libraries specially in rural areas of the state and for laying a foundation for better future of our young minds studying in these schools.

To Contribute Contact WSOS at 7384639193.

SSLSA observes Constitution Day



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 Nov:

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority (SSLSA) observed Constitution Day on 26 Nov, 2019 in the office premises of SSLSA, Development Area, Gangtok, to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India.

As per a press release, the day was observed with reading of the 'Preamble', to the Constitution of India

by the Member Secretary, SSLSA, Staff of SSLSA and participants comprising of Students and Teacher-in-Charge of the Legal Literacy Clubs of Schools in East Sikkim namely Deorali Senior Secondary School, Modern Senior Secondary School, Enchey Senior Secondary School, Palzor Namgyal Girls Senior Secondary School, West Point Senior Secondary School, Tashi Namgyal Senior

Secondary School and Sikkim Government Law College, Burtuk.

On the occasion, the Member Secretary, SSLSA appraised the gathering of the significance of the Constitution Day and sensitized the participants on fundamental duties enshrined in the Constitution of India by a Power Point presentation. A ten-minute video on Fundamental Duties was also screened for the participants.

State Human Rights Commission observes Constitution Day

GANGTOK, 26 Nov (IPR):

Sikkim State Human Rights Commission observed Constitution Day in the office of the Commission today.

Chairperson, Sikkim Human Rights Commission, Justice Vijai Kumar Bist administered the Constitution Day pledge to the Members, Officers and staff of the Commission.

In his brief address, Justice Bist elucidated the significance of the day and also read out the Preamble of the Constitution.

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No: 40/SJ/WD/CPS/2019 Dated: 12/11/2019

NOTICE

Applications are invited from interested persons, preferably local, for appointment as members in the Sikkim Commission for Protection of Child Rights. The applicant should be a graduate degree holder having experience in the field of:

- i) Education
- ii) Child health, care, welfare or child development,
- iii) Juvenile justice or care of neglected or marginalized children or children with disabilities.
- iv) Elimination of child labour or children in distress.
- v) Child psychology or sociology and
- vi) Laws relating to children, as prescribed by section 17(2) (b) of the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005.

The applicant may submit their resume along with relevant documents and certificate in the above mentioned field(s). For further details, they may contact Dy. Secretary (CPS), Social Justice & Welfare Department on or before 11.12.2019 by 4.30 P.M.

Sd/-
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Children First

Use the winter break to appoint schools better

Another academic year is drawing to an end bringing the opportunity to celebrate another year of learning. More than that though, this should be taken as a pause to take stock, evaluate and improve.

Since this is the end of a school year, let us begin with school infrastructure. It is important for the concerned agencies to invite detailed updates from schools across the State about the health of the infrastructure provided to them. There continue to be schools here which still carry the scars of the 18 September 2011 earthquake and others which have still not received the level of upgradation that they require and deserve. The 18 September earthquake impacted school infrastructure extensively in Sikkim and not all the damage can be blamed exclusively to the intensity of the tremor; a lot of what was lost in schools was more due to poor workmanship and inexcusable disinterest towards ensuring safer campuses for the young. A clear commitment needs to be made to ensure that such compromises are neither allowed, nor tolerated, ever. From there, one can start working towards infrastructure creation which prioritises the needs and requirements of the young. A stronger resolve needs to be undertaken to ensure that the grooming of children is not sacrificed to opportunist profiteering. With this commitment in place, the winter break should be invested towards not just staffing Sikkim's government schools more adequately, but also to ensure that students receive not just basic infrastructure and are provided best quality facilities. Start with proper toilets in every school, provide reliable drinking water facilities, make the classrooms more inviting and the campuses better maintained and safer. Next, ensure that schools have computers, and ideally also internet, proper labs, enough desks and chairs and teaching aids. Libraries are necessary, and now, it is also possible to go in for digital libraries which can offer a much more voluminous collection at a fraction of the cost. The Department should seriously consider providing this facility at all schools.

When one is already discussing issues concerning the young, it is also necessary to address the confusion the elder generation is imposing on the young nowadays. Generation gap has always been a challenge, and has become even more pronounced in these middle of globalisation and identity-obsessed times. An important holiday gift in such times would be a commitment to help the next generation grow up without prejudices. Just look around, the world as we know it is turning into a global village, but even as WTO is fudging international boundaries as far as trade is concerned, people are becoming more and more parochial. Almost every district wants to express itself as a State and every community swears it has a unique identity independent of all others. While it would be ill-advised to deny anyone their right to self-expression, it would be criminal to ignore the fact that self expression in the present politically charged environment almost always comes at the cost of denying someone else the same right. Our generation has abused, with alacrity, this fundamental right and mindsets are already fixated on ideas which are prejudiced and illogical. There is little that can be for this lot, but if we accept that things need to change, we could try and do better with the generation still untrained in the biases which we have fomented. If Sikkim is to remain free of the communal ill-will which has already swept most of the country, it needs to address the issue more directly. The best places to start are the schools. It is time that classes were set aside to educate the younger generation on what makes their culture, their heritage and history. No attempts should be made to bring every community under one umbrella and students should be allowed the chance to celebrate each community's individuality. Once they know of other cultures and are also aware of their own, they will not feel threatened. There is no need to keep the future generation in the dark about differences which exist between different communities here. Perhaps, if they are well informed about the points of attrition, they will also be able to work out the solution that has failed others so far. They might even discard the whole concept of notional contradictions. Knowing was never a threat, and it is half-baked notions of identity that are the most susceptible to exploitation. Can we equip the next generation well enough to do be able to make the distinction?

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How Pravind Jugnauth clinched the win in Mauritius' elections

ROUKAYA KASENALLY
theconversation.com

Mauritius has elected the incumbent, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, as prime minister. His Militant Socialist Movement won a comfortable majority in the election on November 7, 2019. Moira Spooner from The Conversation Africa asked Roukaya Kasenally for insights into how Jugnauth clinched the win.

Who is Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and how did he come to power?

Pravind Kumar Jugnauth became Mauritius' prime minister in January 2017, when his father, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, stepped down. Sir Anerood held the post of prime minister three times, totalling more than 18 years. He was also appointed the president of Mauritius (a mostly ceremonial position) in 2003.

Even though the father-to-son transition is constitutionally allowed, it has raised concerns about dynastic politics. Pravind Jugnauth is now the fifth prime minister of independent Mauritius, however all but one prime minister have come from two families: the Ramgoolams or Jugnauths. The Ramgoolams have been at the helm of the Mauritius Labour Party; the Jugnauths founded and led the Militant Socialist Movement.

This concentration of power does not augur well for the often celebrated image of Mauritius as Africa's shining democratic model.

Anerood Jugnauth is often referred to as the father of the Mauritian economic miracle. Under his leadership the island experienced an unprecedented economic boom as a result of policies which supported export-oriented manufacturing (mainly textiles), sugar, and tourism.

But a number of concerns have been raised about the manner in which cronyism has been practised by successive regimes. This has had an often detrimental effect it has on the management of key institutions such as the state trading corporation, or the central electricity board. These are sometimes staffed with close kin or political backers, regardless of their skill base.

The party won the 2019 election by a comfortable majority. What could account for this?

It was a snap election and the campaign was short and intense. Jugnauth's Militant Socialist Movement is one of the three major political parties in Mauritius and is said to espouse centre left politics. Its electoral base is essentially from the Hindu community, which accounts for about half of the island's population.

The Militant Socialist Movement contested the election in coalition with smaller parties under the banner "Alliance Morisien". The coalition bagged

around 63% of the seats in parliament but scored 37% in the popular vote. The coalition led by the Mauritius Labour Party got 22% of the electable seats and 34% of the popular vote. The Mauritian Militant Movement won 13% of the seats and 20% of the popular vote.

The discrepancy between seats won and popular vote is due to the current electoral model: "first past the post". In this model a simple majority is required to be elected which means it can crowd out smaller parties and independent candidates.

What are the challenges Jugnauth faces in his next tenure?

The major and immediate challenge will be economic. The sugar and textile sectors are in the danger zone. Once the pillars of the Mauritian economy, they have dwindled in importance due to the phasing out of all forms of protected and preferential markets.

To deal with this, and improve its status to that of a high income economy, the country is already try-



The Militant Socialist Movement's win can be attributed to a combination of factors.

First, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth's government introduced key measures such as the minimum wage and increased pensions for the elderly. It also brought changes to the labour law (enacting the Workers' Rights Act) and made education in public universities free.

His government also oversaw some important infrastructure projects, such as the first phase of the Light Railway Project, which will pass through five towns. People could see and relate to such outcomes. Although Pravind Jugnauth was prime minister for only two years of the previous five year mandate, he is lauded for initiating the railway project, which the previous government failed to get moving.

Jugnauth's election win also owes something to the power of incumbency. For example, his party used the state media extensively.

But it should also be highlighted that, since the announcement of the results, the opposition and civil society organisations have voiced concerns over what they view as a number of irregularities. These range from a significant number of voters that were unable to vote, marked ballot papers discovered after voting outside counting centres and the inexperience of staff recruited to work during the election. The opposition is now filing a case on this in the Supreme Court. This is the first time election results in Mauritius have faced such grave contestation since the country's independence.

ing to promote other areas such as the knowledge economy, artificial intelligence and the ocean economy. These are entirely new areas which will require new sets of skills and knowledge and a new ecosystem. One of the major concerns of Pravind Jugnauth's government is to contain the public debt. It currently stands at 65%, driven by infrastructure projects and the injection of public capital into two faltering banks. And the election campaign contained promises that will add large costs. They included a 42% increase in pensions and a review of pay and grading conditions for public sector workers, who make up more than 45% of the Mauritian workforce.

In addition, the government needs to pay attention to rising inequality and the high (25%) level of unemployment among the youth.

Does dynastic politics have a future if it can't deliver on election promises?

The leaders of the Mauritian Militant Movement and the Mauritius Labour Party are ageing and there is no real competition for their positions. The only political leader who is relatively young is Pravind Jugnauth (57) and he is likely to remain the uncontested leader of the Militant Socialist Movement for years.

One must ask what is meant by electoral promises. Does it mean a catalogue list of populist measures or a serious discussion around the forging of a social contract with the citizens?

[the writer is Associate Professor in Media and Political Systems, University of Mauritius]

Cartel sieges leave Mexicans wondering if criminals run the country

ANGÉLICA DURÁN-MARTÍNEZ
theconversation.com

Recent deadly attacks by criminal organizations have instilled fear across Mexico.

In mid-October, shootouts between cartels and police in the states of Guerrero and Michoacán killed over 30 people. And a 12-hour criminal assault on Culiacán, Sinaloa, after Mexican security forces captured the son of drug kingpin Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán left 13 people dead, including at least three civilians.

On Nov. 4 the massacre of nine Mexican-American Mormon women and children in northern Mexico shocked both sides of the border.

The attacks, some carefully planned and executed, have made the Mexican government appear weak on organized crime. By early November, the hashtag #MexicoNoTienePresidente - Mexico has no president - was trending on Twitter.

MEXICO'S VIOLENT CYCLES

Security was a focus of Andrés Manuel López Obrador's winning campaign for the presidency last year.

He proposed novel strategies to "pacify" Mexico, including giving amnesty to low-level drug traffickers who leave the business, and legalizing marijuana to turn a lucrative criminal market into a regulated, commercial one.

López Obrador also promised to punish police and soldiers for human rights violations committed when battling cartels.

But 18 months into his six-year term, López Obrador's only concrete security policy was the creation in June 2019 of a controversial new military-style police force, the National Guard. So far, however, Mexico's 70,000 National Guardsmen have mostly been tasked with stopping Central American migration.

One initiative that looked promising - an independent commission of forensic experts and prosecutors established to investigate the unsolved 2014 disappearance of 43 students

in Ayotzinapa, Guerrero state - has had setbacks. In September, 24 police officers implicated in the students' disappearances were freed from jail for insufficient evidence, compelling López Obrador's government to file a judicial appeal.

Meanwhile, with 25,890 murders reported through September, 2019 looks to be another record-shattering violent year for Mexico.

NO NEW DRUG WAR

My research on Mexico's chronic criminal violence finds that sudden upticks in violence usually signal increased conflict between criminal cartels, like the current clashes between the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación and the Sinaloa Cartel.

I also find that showy, coordinated attacks like those seen recently typically occur during political transitions or because of intense electoral competition - times when the government cannot effectively coordinate law enforcement or maintain corrupt criminal arrangements.

Some in Mexico argue that the recent cartel offensives demand an extreme military response. President Donald Trump has even offered a U.S. intervention.

But President López Obrador insists that he will not restart the Mexican government's all-out war on cartels. Sending soldiers to fight crime, as consecutive governments have done since 2006, actually drove up violence in Mexico by creating more competition between organized crime groups and thus more retaliation. Thousands of civilians have also been killed in the cross-fire between cartels and soldiers.

The president's aversion to militarized security didn't stop him from creating the Mexican National Guard. But it was on display in Culiacán last month when Mexican soldiers were outpowered by cartel members. Rather than fight to keep El Chapo's son in custody, they released him.

"The capture of a criminal is not worth more than people's lives,"

López Obrador said.

The incident was widely seen as an embarrassment for the Mexican government. López Obrador's approval rating, while still high, has declined since the recent violence. But in times of war, deescalation is sometimes the only way to prevent more bloodshed. There is no easy fix for entrenched criminal violence. Every decision, every policy, has trade-offs.

INDIGENOUS RESISTANCE

That doesn't mean the cartels should be left alone.

The researchers Sandra Ley, Guillermo Trejo and Shannan Mattiace have studied how some indigenous communities in the dangerous southern state of Guerrero have managed to prevent criminal infiltration of the police and local judiciary. One strategy, they found, was quickly identifying and shaming officers and judges who collude with cartels.

Having trustworthy institutions has, in turn, enabled these communities to resist cartel pressures from within and react powerfully when cartels attack.

Because it draws on Mexican indigenous communities' unique, long tradition of social mobilization, this strategy is not easily replicable.

But that, too, is a lesson: All violence is local. The many illegal markets that fuel the criminal business in Mexico - from drugs and oil theft to extortion and avocado distribution - may be national and international, but the cartels' specific crime dynamics are not.

The way crime groups establish territorial control, gain power and carry out attacks varies from place to place. So do the criminals' political relationships and the ways different communities respond to violence.

A TEMPORARY TURNAROUND

Take Ciudad Juárez, for example - just across the border from El Paso, Texas. In 2010, Juárez was the most violent city in the world. By 2012, violence had dropped by 60%. Some analysts and politicians credited Todos

Somos Juárez - "We Are All Juárez" - a federal program that funded 160 short-term social improvement projects like new housing, sports programs and improved public security infrastructure.

But violence also decreased in Juárez, my research shows, because the federal security forces occupying the city, who were responsible for many abuses of power, largely withdrew in 2011. Plus, the Sinaloa Cartel eventually prevailed in its turf war with the Juárez Cartel.

Ciudad Juárez's turnaround was temporary. As a result of increased competition between cartels, new armed factions and local gangs, homicides in the city increased 700% last year.

U.S. immigration policy is hurting Ciudad Juárez, too. The thousands of migrants forced to await their U.S. asylum hearings in Mexico - many of them homeless - have become easy prey for organized crime, according to the U.S. Immigration Policy Center at the University of San Diego. Kidnapping and robbery are way up along the U.S.-Mexico border.

ALL CRIME IS LOCAL

The Juárez and Guerrero examples suggest that Mexico may have to tackle crime not only federally, with its new National Guard, but also city by city. That may mean federal financing and training of elite, reliable local civilian police forces, learning from indigenous towns in Guerrero. It could mean funding social programs like Juárez's, to get at the root causes of violence.

It will certainly require partnering with local political and civilian allies who understand how criminal gangs exert their power.

City-specific security strategies won't show immediate results. But they can help restore the Mexican government's legitimacy and control in a country besieged by cartels.

[the writer is Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Massachusetts Lowell]

Bru refugees seek subsistence allowance resumption as repatriation deadline nears

AGARTALA/AIZAWL, NOV 26 (PTI): Bru refugees lodged in relief camps in Tripura have urged the Centre to restart its subsistence allowances, days before the Tripura government puts an end to the free ration supply to the displaced people.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had discontinued its allowances, including ration supplies and cash dole, to the Bru refugees from September 30.

However, following claims of starvation deaths of six people in the refugee camps and over a week-long road blockade by the displaced families, the state government decided upon providing free ration to them earlier this month.

"The Tripura government would supply the free ration to the Brus till November 30 and it is unclear whether it will be continued beyond that date," official sources said.

Altogether 4,447 displaced Bru families, lodged in relief camps at Kanchanpur and Panisagar sub-divisions of



North Tripura district, are scheduled to return to neighbouring Mizoram from where they started fleeing since 1997 following ethnic clashes.

The ninth and "final" round of the repatriation process of the Bru refugees will come to an end on November 30.

The Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Forum (MBDPF), in a communication to the Centre on Monday, demanded resumption of the subsistence allowances.

The displaced Brus would not agree to be repatriated to Mizoram "until and unless their small and simple demands are fulfilled," the MBDPF said in a letter to A P Maheshwari, Special Secretary (Internal Security), Ministry of Home Affairs.

The MBDPF also said that the Bru refugees would "take initiatives with all their might" to meet the challenges for conclusion of the long-pend-

ing displacement issue.

"We strongly believed that the chapter of displaced Brus would be closed down as soon as possible in one way or the other," the letter said.

A total of 1,020 Bru refugees belonging to 252 families have returned to Mizoram during the ninth round of the repatriation process that commenced on October 3, officials said.

The vexed Bru issue started from September, 1997, following demands

of a separate autonomous district council by carving out areas of western Mizoram adjoining Bangladesh and Tripura.

The situation was aggravated by the murder of a forest guard in the Dampa Tiger Reserve in western Mizoram by Bru National Liberation Front insurgents on October 21 that year.

The first attempt to repatriate the Brus from Tripura was made in November 2009.

Bengal BJP president accused of violating poll code

KOLKATA, NOV 25 (PTI): West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Monday was accused of violating the model code of conduct (MCC) during the Kharagpur bypolls by the TMC and the Congress.

They alleged that the BJP leader was present in the Kharagpur Sadar assembly segment and made statements in the media, despite not being a voter of the constituency.

Ghosh has denied the allegations, terming these baseless.

The Trinamool Con-

gress and the Congress filed a complaint in this regard with the Election Commission Monday evening.

"Dilip Ghosh is no longer an MLA. He is an MP now and is not even a voter of Kharagpur. So what he was doing for the entire day managing party control room. Did he take permission of the EC for staying at Kharagpur? The answer is no. For the entire day he kept on giving bytes to television channels just to vitiate the poll atmosphere," TMC candidate Pradip Sarkar told reporters.

Views of Pradip Sarkar were echoed by senior state Congress leader Suvankar Sarkar, who too lodged a complaint against Ghosh and urged the Election Commission to take action against him. Ghosh denied the allegations and said he had all necessary permissions.

"I have not violated the model code of conduct and have all necessary permissions. The allegations are baseless," he said.

The Election Commission said they were looking into the complaint.

People should follow every word of Constitution: Mamata

KOLKATA, NOV 26 (PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday said people of the country should follow the ideals as enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

On the occasion of the Constitution Day, Banerjee also paid homage to Dr. B R Ambedkar remembering his contribution in drafting the

Constitution of India. On #ConstitutionDay, homage to Dr BR Ambedkar and the Constituent Assembly who gave shape to our great democracy.

Let us live every word of the Constitution: Sovereign, Socialist, Secular and Democratic Republic, Justice, Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, Banerjee tweeted.

The government is

celebrating November 26 as the Constitution Day as it was on this day in 1949 that the Constitution was adopted, and, thereafter, came into force on January 26, 1950, marking the beginning of India as a republic.

The Centre had in 2015 declared November 26 as the Constitution Day.

The post of constitutional head of Bengal is seriously compromised : Dhankhar



KOLKATA, NOV 26 (PTI): West Bengal governor Jagdeep Dhankhar, who has been loggerheads with the TMC government in the state, on Tuesday hit out at it saying the post of the constitutional head of the state has been "seriously compromised".

The situation is "unprecedented and challenging", he said and asked the lawmakers to listen to their conscience.

Dhankhar was speaking at the special session of West Bengal assembly on 'Constitution Day' to mark the 70th anniversary

of adoption of the Constitution by the Constituent Assembly.

"The post of the constitutional head of the state has been seriously compromised. This is unprecedented and challenging situation. I would call upon the lawmakers to ask their conscience," the governor said.

Dhankhar has been at loggerheads with the state government on a number of issues since assuming charge in July.

TMC lawmakers were heard shouting 'Jai Bangla, Jai Hind' as he left the house.

Mumbai City feel at home in NorthEast



GUWAHATI, NOV 26 (PTI): NorthEast United will look to consolidate their position in the top half of the Hero Indian Super League table when they take on Mumbai City FC in the Indian Super League here on Wednesday.

The Highlanders have started this season in style as they are one of the three sides yet to face a defeat. Coach Robert Jarni seems to have struck a chord with the players and the results are evident with the club amassing eight points from four matches.

The Croatian would be pleased with the form of Redeem Tlang who has been exceptional with two goals to his name. Star striker Asamoah Gyan should make it into the match-day squad after picking up an injury before the international break.

There is a concern for Jarni defensively with central defender Kai Heerings suspended following his involvement in an on-field tuss-

le against FC Goa early this month.

The Highlanders' assistant coach Khalid Jamil was quick to point out that NorthEast would be playing to their strengths against a strong Mumbai outfit.

"Three points against Mumbai is very important. There are no injuries, but Kai (Heerings) will be missing. We will play like we usually do, and we are up against a very good team. So, we can't take them lightly," said Jamil.

Mumbai City FC will be pleased to welcome most of their players who were injured. Rowlin Borges, Modou Sougou and Mato Grgic are back in the squad which will give coach Jorge Costa some relief ahead of a must-win match.

The Islanders are in a very familiar situation currently. Though they started the season with four points from two away matches, they were defeated 4-2 by both Odisha FC and FC Goa at home. They had the

same points tally after four games last season and were reeling after a heavy defeat to FC Goa. But they went on a nine-game unbeaten run after that result and Costa will hope for a similar response.

"We have started exactly like last year. Last season in the first four games we had four points. We started well and then we had some problems. I have full confidence in my players. They know what they have to do, and I know what I have to do. We have an important game and we want to get three points," Costa said.

"The conditions are perfect for my players to play. In Mumbai, it is too hot and too much humidity, but then again, we have to be prepared to play under all circumstances. But if you ask me I prefer to have this kind of weather," he added.

Costa will have to ensure that his defence is on their toes, having conceded four goals each in their last two games.

Strong quake hits Albania; at least 4 dead, 150 injured

TIRANA (ALBANIA), NOV 26 (AP): A strong earthquake shook Albania early Tuesday, killing at least four people, injuring 150 and collapsing buildings.

The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 6.4 quake was centered 30 kilometers northwest of the capital, Tirana. It had a depth of 20 kilometers.

The Defense Ministry said a man and a woman were killed when a building collapsed in Thumane, 36 kilometers north of Tirana.

It said another person died after jumping from his home to escape shaking from the quake in Kurbin, 50 kilometers north of the capital.

Another person was killed when a building collapsed in Durres, 33 kilometers west of Tirana, emergency officials said. Rescuers were working to take out other people from the building.

The quake was felt along the Albanian coast. Authorities reported scores of aftershocks and called on people in the

most affected areas to stay out of their homes.

People reported seeing cracks in their apartment walls. People were seen leaving homes to go to open areas.

Local media reported that a restaurant was destroyed in western Durres. At least three apartment buildings and the power distribution station were damaged in Thumane.

An earthquake in September in roughly the same area damaged hundreds of homes.

Rhinos to be reintroduced at Corbett



DEHRADUN, NOV 26 (PTI): Rhinos will be reintroduced at the Corbett Tiger Reserve on an experimental basis and a voluntary protection force will be set up in villages vulnerable to man-animal conflicts.

The decisions were among several others taken at the 14th meeting of the Uttarakhand Wildlife Board chaired by Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat at the secretariat here on Tuesday.

State Forest and Environment Minister Harak Singh Rawat and head of Forest Force Jairaj also attended the meeting.

In a presentation made on proposed reintroduction of rhinos at Corbett it was observed that the geographical and environmental conditions at the reserve are highly conducive to its habitation.

There is minimum possibility of man-animal conflicts due to rhinos and its presence can also help other animals at the reserve, the board members said.

They were of the opinion that reintroduction of rhinos at the reserve will also give a boost to tourism in the state.

The board also decided to raise voluntary village protection force in villages where man-animal conflicts are more frequent. The board also gave its nod to a study of the capacity of Rajaji and Corbett Tiger reserves to accommodate tigers and elephants besides sending a proposal on the lines of Himachal Pradesh to the Centre seeking declaration of monkeys as predators.

It was also decided to take up installation of solar lights and construction of toilets in villages close to reserve area on a priority basis.

West Bengal CM remembers Mumbai terror attack victims



KOLKATA, NOV 26 (PTI): Remembering the victims of the Mumbai terror attacks, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday paid tributes to civilians and security personnel who risked their lives to protect people on this day in 2008.

Urging people to fight terror unitedly, the chief minister said, she shared the grief of the bereaved families.

"Today is the 11th anniversary of 26/11 #MumbaiAttacks. Solemnly re-

membering those who lost their lives on that day. My thoughts with their families. Homage to the brave police officers, military, and civilians, who risked their lives to save people. Let us unitedly fight terror," Banerjee tweeted.

In one of the deadliest terror attacks in the country's history, 166 people, including security personnel and foreigners, were killed and over 300 injured when 10 heavily-armed terrorists from Pakistan created mayhem in Mumbai.

ESSAYS ON TEESTA, HYDEL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN SIKKIM

EDITED BY TSHERING EDEN AND PEMA WANGCHUK

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'Dhoni will decide future after IPL next year'

NEW DELHI, NOV 26 (PTI): Former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni will take a call on his future after next year's Indian Premier League (IPL), a source close to the star cricketer said on Tuesday, seeking to quash the endless speculation surrounding his career.

Dhoni has been on a sabbatical since India's semifinal exit from the ODI World Cup in England in July. He has missed the tour of the West Indies and the home series against South Africa and Bangladesh.

"If at all MS will take a call on his future, it will only be after the IPL. You can't stop speculation as he is such a big player. He is in the best shape possible fitness-wise and has been training hard for the last one month," the source told PTI.

"However the number of competitive games he will play before the IPL will be decided in due course," he added.

The 38-year-old, who captains Chennai Super Kings in the IPL, will also skip the limited-overs home assignment against the West Indies starting December 6 and comprising three T20 Internationals and an equal number of one-dayers.

National selection committee chairman MSK Prasad has already made it clear that the panel has "moved on" and Dhoni is aware of its intent to blood youngsters such as Rishabh Pant keeping in mind next year's T20 World Cup in Australia.

Pant, however, hasn't capitalised on the chances that have come his way and has copped criticism for sloppy work behind the stumps. Recently, Pant also drew flak for poor DRS calls, something that the seasoned Dhoni had aced. Dhoni, on his part, has not uttered a word on his future course of action.

He was, however, seen training with Jharkhand's under-23 team in Ranchi some days back, triggering a fresh round of speculation on a possible comeback.

BCCI President Sourav Ganguly has stated that Dhoni will get the respect that a player of his stature deserves and had ruled out an immediate retirement by the celebrated wicketkeeper-batsman.

"You know champions don't finish quickly," he had stated when he took over as the Board President last month.

One of the biggest names in Indian cricket, Dhoni led India to two world titles -- the 2007 World T20 in South Africa and the 2011 ODI World Cup at home.

The veteran has played 90 Tests, 350 ODIs and 98 T20 Internationals for India, accumulating over 17,000 runs.

He is also considered one of the best wicketkeepers in international cricket with over 500 dismissals in limited-overs format. He has nearly 300 Test dismissals to his credit.

Flawed, dysfunctional Barcelona are top of La Liga but not very good

SID LOWE
theGuardian

Barcelona beat Leganés 2-1 at Butarque on Saturday afternoon and are top of the table. Undefeated, they also lead their Champions League group, ahead of Internazionale and Borussia Dortmund. Win on Wednesday night and they will be mathematically qualified from the competition's hardest group with a game to spare. They have lost just one of their last 11 matches, winning nine, and have scored more league goals than anybody in Spain: seven more than second-placed Real Madrid and more than twice as many as Athletic Bilbao in fifth, Atlético Madrid in fourth and Sevilla in third. When they played Sevilla, they put four past them. They stuck four more past Celta and five past Betis, Valencia and Valladolid.

They have the striker who scored 115 over the last four La Liga seasons, more than anyone except that guy, and they have that guy too – the best player in their history and maybe anybody else's history either. They won last season's league, making it four of five, and were a goal off a probable treble. Then they signed Europe's two most wanted players, even if neither was their players' most wanted: the €75m midfielder made for them, voted Europe's best, and the summer's joint most expensive footballer at €126m. Their new front three had scored 401 league goals in five years; their goalkeeper might be Spain's best; they signed the full-back Bayern, Madrid, City chased; have the kid exciting everyone; and this weekend's starting XI cost €489m.

And they're not very good. A few days ago in his latest interview squeezed between sets at the Davis Cup, Gerard Piqué insisted: "If we're top, we can't be playing that badly." But, yes, they can. A couple of days later, Ernesto Valverde asked why so many questions start with are you worried that...?, when the answer is obvious: because they're worried. And it's not going away;



it's getting worse. That day, Ernesto Valverde said he always leaves the press room suddenly "worried about a whole load of things"; on Saturday, he laughed when a journalist sought a way of asking if he was worried without asking if he was worried, but they still were, even if he wasn't – or wasn't showing it. More, in fact, than ever before.

The headline on the front of Sport summed it up: "A worrying victory."

Another one. Saturday's result against Leganés is an improvement on last year – Barcelona were beaten then – but nothing else is. A goal down after 12 minutes, Youssef En-Nesyri bending a beautiful shot into the top corner, Barcelona turned it around with strikes from Luis Suárez and substitute Arturo Vidal. Afterwards Valverde admitted it "wasn't brilliant", which was one way of putting it. Check the papers and there were others: "abhorrent," "frightening," "filthy". Most importantly, it felt like a portrait of what Barcelona have become. As Francisco Cabezaz neatly put it in El Mundo: "Arturo Vidal rescued Ernesto Valverde's Barcelona at the team that's bottom. It's impossible to find a better metaphor for our times."

If that might not be entirely fair on Vidal, the man everyone except the four-year-old with the mohican and the biro beard loves to hate when they shouldn't – Vidal is much more Barça than it seems, the one midfielder to press, move, run, score goals – there was something in it. "Arturo Vidal," ran the front page of El Mundo Deportivo, and when he is vital, coming on to rescue you, there is a problem. "The feelings we're left with are bad ones," the Chilean admitted.

A win does not hide that, or shouldn't. Barcelona started by gifting Martin Braithwaite an opportunity inside two minutes and completed a comeback thanks to a header from a free-kick and a scuffed finish off a deflected corner, from which the only reason Vidal wasn't miles offside was because the ball bounced back to him off an opponent's leg. They did so at the team that have won once all season. Yes, Piqué hit the post, and Pichu Cuéllar made a superb save from Luis Suárez. Yes, Barcelona had most of the ball. And, no, conditions weren't good. But this was no siege, no avalanche of opportunities, and no one-off. Instead, Butarque laid Barcelona bare.

Barcelona started with four forwards and no idea,

an empty space where one of the interiores should be, playing a sort of 4-1-1-1-3, maybe a 4-2-4, if you could call it anything at all. Slow, lacking ideas, barely able to open up lines of passes, they gave the ball away 135 times. Most the time, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say they didn't know what to do.

"I try to read my teammates' movements, but it's difficult," Antoine Griezmann said recently. "It's all new for me. I still don't understand the runs of Suárez, Messi or Dembélé. I still lack the confidence to pass or shoot, but it will come." Forced into a left-sided role, nor do they understand his movements and if it might come, it hasn't yet. The case of Ousmane Dembélé, now in his third season, is even more startling. Neither man did anything of note on Saturday. Again. In midfield, Frenkie de Jong is the only regular starter imposing any rhythm on the game, and he's finding his options limited. At the back, they're overrun when pressed, lacking focus and football. But their dysfunction was most noticeable as at full-back, where Junior Firpo didn't know where to go or what to do, unable or unwilling to overlap.

This was not Saturday,

this was systemic. Deeper even than that: it goes to the top, speaks to a culture, an environment where players are accommodated, Barcelona "losing the ball, their play, their soul" in the words of El País's Ramón Besa; a place where there is little leadership or clear direction. It was striking to hear Piqué, the organiser of the Davis Cup who admitted that some nights he sleeps only four or five hours and who spent the last few days travelling back and forth to Madrid, say that his manager asked him what the plan was this week. And it is hard to avoid the suspicion that Barcelona will pay for it. Already have, in fact: you can't demand a team wins all the time, but Rome and Liverpool were not just isolated accidents and 2015, Barcelona's last Champions League success, feels a long way away now.

Win on Wednesday against Dortmund and they're through; lose, though, and they will have to go to Milan needing a victory. Next Sunday they face Atlético at the Metropolitano. Barcelona have only won four of their last 15 Champions League games away, and they have won fewer than half their league games away this season. Defeated three times this

season – as many times as in the whole of last year, three times as many as in the year before – this is their worst start on the road for eighteen years. In the meantime, Real Madrid are starting to come good. Winning when you're not playing well is a sign of a title-winning team, they say, but just as often it's the sign of a team reality will soon catch up with. Only one of their last seven goals has been scored from open play.

If you don't know why you won, you won't know why you lose either. If there is no clear system, the system becomes Messi. Instead of taking refuge in the structure, they take refuge in him – which says something about personality as well as play, about the lack of a model offering alternatives. And while give the ball to the best player there may have ever been might be a logical enough plan sometimes, it can't be your only plan. It becomes an abdication, removing responsibility, weakening them and him. Just because he often does it "alone" doesn't mean he should. Or even that he wants to. There is a reason Messi wanted Neymar – a player who was not only good but knew it.

It is often said Barcelona were not that good over the last two years with Valverde but it is not entirely true. The flaws were there, deepened at Anfield but not created there. They have been better than anyone else in Spain, and if it was not pure, if they were losing their religion, it was sometimes good. If this was coming, it wasn't here yet – not always, not quite like this. This is worse; there's a better squad but their problems weren't addressed, including the role of their manager. And now they're all exposed. On a cold, windy Saturday in Madrid, Barcelona beat Leganés to stay top of the table. "We'll take it as a good thing," Valverde said. "We had to win any way we could."

Outside, the team bus was waiting. Blue and orange, unmarked, as it headed out of Butarque and down the road, no one could tell it was Barcelona on board.

Mario Balotelli subjected to racist comment by his Brescia chairman

MARK DOBSON
theGuardian

Mario Balotelli has been subject to an extraordinary racist comment from his chairman at Brescia. The former Leeds owner Massimo Cellino targeted the striker, who was dropped for the weekend defeat by Roma after a row with the manager, Fabio Grosso, as he answered questions about the former Italy international.

Cellino said: "What can I say? That he's black and he's working to whiten himself but he has great difficulties in this."

He was asked about Balotelli before a Serie A meeting on Monday and may have been using a play on the word "black", which in Italian is often used to mean angry. Brescia, who are bottom of the league, attempted to play down Cellino's comment, saying in a statement it was "a quip" that was "clearly misunderstood". The club added Cellino was "attempting to downplay the excessive media coverage by protecting Balotelli".

On leaving the meeting Cellino said: "Who's

calling me a racist? ... I don't have to excuse myself from something that I don't believe in."

Balotelli had experienced racism at the beginning of his career in Italy, where he rose to prominence with Internazionale. He was also the target of racist chants this month during a match at Verona. That match was suspended for several minutes and Balotelli threatened to leave the field after angrily kicking a ball into the stands.

Balotelli was then called "arrogant" by the club's ultras group as it defended the Verona fans after the racial abuse. Derogatory chants have also been aimed at Romelu Lukaku, Franck Kessié, Dalbert Henrique, Miralem Pjanic, Ronaldo Vieira and Kalidou Koulibaly in Serie A. All the players targeted except for Pjanic, who is Bosnian, are black.

Balotelli rejoined Serie A after three years in the French league. He has scored two goals in seven matches but has not been able to spark Brescia, with Grosso challenging the former Manchester City and Liverpool forward to show more "determination and enthusiasm" to regain his place.

Abuse of Jofra Archer a reminder that racism remains ingrained in cricket

JONATHAN LIEW
theGuardian

Jofra Archer has been an international cricketer for just over six months and has been racially abused twice. Those are just the two incidents we know about. As many people of colour will tell you, for every comment that comes to light, there will have been dozens more that go unheeded: ignored or shrugged off so as not to cause an unseemly fuss, internalised and rationalised as simply the price of doing business as a non-white athlete in 2019.

In September Archer was subjected to racist barracking from Australian spectators during the Ashes Test at Old Trafford. Now, after the first Test between New Zealand and England at Mount Maunganui, he revealed he was targeted by a fan "yelling bbc and bc from the scoreboard area". The precise content of the insults remains unverified but we can be fairly certain the fan in question was not proclaiming his love of the Black Caps. More telling still was Archer's characterisation of the abuse he received: not shocking or surprising, but merely, as he put it, "a bit disturbing". This was, after all, hardly a new experience. He remembers early in his county career sitting with his bib on in front of the pavilion at Tunbridge Wells when an elderly spectator asked him incred-



ulously: "How are you playing for Sussex?"

So yes, it is fair to say this is something of a problem, albeit not one that many in cricket like to talk about. For there remains in many quarters a curious complacency about racism, one that occasionally even lapses into a delusion that cricket's broad geographical spread and in-built multiculturalism render it somehow post-racial. While a superficial comparison with, say, European or South American football may bolster the case, the abuse of Archer is a reminder that racism remains as stubbornly ingrained in cricket as anywhere else.

Partly this is a product of the game's vaguely unsettling relationship with alcohol, those long baking hot Test afternoons when the most reliable form of entertainment is to get tanked up and shout the most atten-

tion-seeking thing you can think of. It is possible, for example, that this may have been a factor at the MCG last December, when Australian crowds were heard directing abuse at Virat Kohli and the touring India side. Or on England's last Ashes tour, when Moeen Ali recalls a fan asking him what time his kebab shop opened.

Very little of this ever gets logged in a report or raised with authorities. But it's always there, as intrinsic to the basic viewing experience as crowd catches or complaining about declarations. If this were all the work of a few beery miscreants, cricket could probably rest easy. But racism does not simply disappear when you step on to the field of play. Craig Overton's England recall this summer raised barely a murmur of dissent, despite the fact that four years ago he escaped with the barest of pun-

ishments for allegedly telling an opponent to "go back to your own fucking country". Moeen speaks of being called "Osama" by an Australian player during the 2015 Ashes. In January the former Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed was banned for four matches after racially abusing South Africa's Andile Phehlukwayo during a one-day international.

The last of these incidents remains one of the few occasions when cricket's response to racist abuse has been fit for purpose. Elsewhere its perpetrators have been tolerated, indulged, even celebrated. Darren Lehmann, who as a player in 2003 described Sri Lanka players as "black cunts", was not banished from the game but instead handed a succession of plum coaching jobs. The former Australia batsman Dean Jones, who once described Hashim Amla as "a terrorist" live on air, has just walked into his latest post in the Pakistan Super League. In 1995 the commentator Henry Blofeld described a hotel balcony at Hedingley from which people could watch the cricket for free as "the Jewish stand". Two decades later he was given a standing ovation at Lord's at the culmination of a long and illustrious broadcasting career, his misdemeanour long forgotten. (Ahmed, Lehmann, Jones and Blofeld all issued apologies after criticism).

Australian gran wins Malaysia drugs death sentence appeal

An Australian grandmother won her final appeal against a death sentence for trafficking in Malaysia on Tuesday and walked free, after claiming she fell for an online love scam and was tricked into transporting drugs.

Maria Elvira Pinto Exposto looked delighted and kissed her lawyer in court after the ruling, which brings down the curtain on a saga that began in 2014 when she was arrested with crystal meth in her backpack while transiting in Kuala Lumpur.

The 55-year-old, who was detained while heading home to Australia, had said she was fooled into carrying the bag after travelling to China to meet someone she met online called "Captain Daniel Smith", who claimed to be a US serviceman.

"I thank God and my lawyers for my freedom after almost five painful years in jail," she said in statement through her legal team, after the country's top court overturned her conviction and ordered her release.

Her son Hugo added: "All I want to do is to take my mum home back to Sydney -- she has missed out a lot."

The mother of four



was briefly held by immigration authorities but soon left court in a car with her lawyers. They hope she can fly home within two days once her documents have been processed.

After being arrested in a Kuala Lumpur airport with 1.1 kilos (2.4 pounds) of meth stitched into a compartment of her backpack, she stood trial but was cleared of trafficking in 2017 when a judge ruled she did not know she was transporting the drugs. However the ac-

quittal was overturned after prosecutors appealed and she was handed a death sentence -- only for the Federal Court in administrative capital Putrajaya, her final avenue of appeal, to rule in her favour Tuesday.

Death by hanging is mandatory in Muslim-majority Malaysia for anyone convicted of trafficking certain amounts of some controlled substances.

- 'Innocent carrier' - Exposto had travelled to Shanghai to see

"Smith" after a long online romance. But she did not succeed in meeting her supposed love interest and was instead given a bag by a stranger, who asked her to take it to Melbourne.

When she arrived at Kuala Lumpur International Airport to change flights, she mistakenly went through immigration as she was unfamiliar with the airport.

She voluntarily offered her bags for customs inspection and the drugs were discovered.

On Tuesday, her lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah told the court she was an "innocent carrier", adding: "She was intoxicated with love even though it was an internet romance."

Even if the death sentence was upheld, Exposto would not have been executed soon as Malaysia's government has imposed a moratorium on capital punishment while it mulls reforms.

A reformist government which took power last year vowed to abolish capital punishment entirely but watered down the plan after a conservative backlash, and has instead said it will scrap the mandatory death sentence for some crimes. There are hundreds of people on death row in Malaysia, many for drug offences, but executions have been rare in recent years.

Two Australians were hanged in 1986 for heroin trafficking -- the first Westerners to be executed in the country -- in a case that strained relations.

In 2013 Dominic Bird, a former truck driver from Perth, was acquitted of drug trafficking charges after he was allegedly caught with 167 grams of crystal methamphetamine.

Chinese state media say Hong Kong elections 'skewed'



BEIJING, Nov 26 (AFP): Chinese state media on Tuesday sought to downplay and discredit the results of Hong Kong elections that delivered a stunning victory for pro-democracy candidates and a stinging rebuke to the pro-Beijing establishment.

Local elections in the semi-autonomous city revealed broad public support for a protest movement that has stirred months of violence, as candidates seeking to loosen control by China seized an overwhelming majority of the 452 elected seats.

But the election winners were not mentioned in Chinese-language state media on Tuesday, including official broadcaster CCTV and Communist Party mouthpiece the People's Daily.

The People's Daily said "social unrest... has seriously disrupted the electoral process." An ed-

itorial in the English-language version of China Daily said the poll was "skewed by intimidation" and "dirty tricks".

The editorial said "violent intimidation tactics were intended to reduce the exposure and visibility of pro-establishment candidates."

"External forces that have helped stoke the months-long anti-government campaign in the special administrative region also contributed greatly to damaging the election chances of pro-establishment candidates," it said.

A commentary in English on official news agency Xinhua said that the election "fell victim" to "rioters". "Campaigns of some patriotic candidates were seriously disrupted, and their offices were trashed and set ablaze," it said Tuesday.

"One candidate was injured in an attack. Harassment on patriotic

candidates occurred on the voting day." The commentary went on to give its support to city leader Carrie Lam, and said the "Hong Kong community should also correctly understand the relationship between Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland".

The Tuesday front page of the nationalistic Global Times said the election had sparked "reflection" but warned it was "highly politicized amid ongoing social unrest". The article went on to quote experts saying there was "no need to over-interpret the victory of pan-democrats".

Global Times said that "under the plurality voting system... the opposition won 80 percent of seats with only 60 percent of the vote".

On Monday evening, the flagship Chinese news programme Xinwen Lianbo also did not mention the Hong Kong elections.

Dog that helped kill Al Baghdadi honoured by Trump

BY LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, Nov 26 (PTI): US President Donald Trump has honoured Conan, the specially trained "hero dog" who helped American commandos in the mission that led to the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr-al Baghdadi.

Baghdadi, 48, died in October after the world's most wanted terrorist was chased by the US special forces along with military working dogs. He blew up his suicide vest following the US raid on his compound in Syria's Idlib province.

The dog, who was injured during the mission that killed Baghdadi, visited the White House on Monday and met President Trump in his Oval Office. It later appeared before the White House press corps in the Rose Garden along with Trump, the First Lady Melania and Vice President Mike Pence.

Introducing the Belgian Malinois as "probably the world's most famous dog", Trump said he had given Conan a plaque and called the canine commando so brilliant, so smart.

Conan was hailed by Trump as a "special" animal who helped execute a "flawless attack" on the ISIS leader.

Trump also met with Special Forces involved in the attack in Northern Syria that resulted in the death of Baghdadi. The commandos did not come out in the public.

"Al Baghdadi is gone, but it was a flawless attack," Trump told reporters. Trump said he met with the soldiers and had given Conan an award.

Hong Kong leader offers mea culpa, but no concessions



Hong Kong's deeply unpopular leader Carrie Lam acknowledged Tuesday that public dissatisfaction with her government fuelled a landslide win by pro-democracy candidates in local elections, but offered no new concessions to resolve months of violent protests.

In China, state media sought to downplay and discredit the weekend ballot that delivered a stinging rebuke to the financial hub's pro-Beijing establishment in what was widely seen as a referendum on Lam's handling of the unrest.

The city's chief executive pledged to "improve governance" in the wake of the district council elections, which she acknowledged revealed concern over "deficiencies in the government, including unhappiness with the time taken to deal with the current unstable environment."

In a rout that stunned the semi-autonomous territory, candidates campaigning against greater control by China seized an overwhelming majority of 452 elected seats in the city's 18 district councils, bodies that have historically been firmly in the grip of a Beijing-aligned establishment.

The result -- the first vote held since protests engulfed the city -- was a humiliating rebuke to Beijing and Lam, who has dismissed calls for political reform and repeatedly suggested that a silent majority supported her administration.

In the wake of the polls, pro-democracy politicians have stepped up calls for Lam to address the movement's key demands -- such as direct popular elections for the city's leadership and legislature, and a probe into alleged police brutality against demonstrators.

But in Tuesday's weekly press briefing, she sidestepped those calls, denouncing the street violence and repeating an earlier pledge to open a dialogue on the unrest, a proposal that opponents have dismissed as too little, too late.

- 'In a coma' - Millions of Hong Kongers took to the streets earlier this year after Lam's government introduced a bill to allow extraditions to China's opaque judicial system.

Although it was eventually withdrawn under public pressure, the bill added fuel to growing fears that Beijing was tightening its grip on the city, unleashing broader public demands for reform and leading to violent clashes between police and protesters.

The public support for change indicated by the election result appeared to pour cold water on repeated claims by the chief executive and China's government that the protests were the work of a violent radical fringe.

Lam's latest comments indicated "no reflection, no response and no resolution" for Hong Kong's ongoing crisis, said Lam Cheuk-ting, a

lawmaker and leading figure in the Democratic Party, the city's largest anti-establishment party. "While the pro-establishment camp was finally awakened by votes, Lam still chooses to remain asleep, as deeply as in a coma," he said.

China's state media, however, cast doubt on the vote's legitimacy, focusing on violence that marred campaigning.

The People's Daily said "social unrest... has seriously disrupted the electoral process," with an editorial in the English-language version of the China Daily said it was "skewed by intimidation" and "dirty tricks" that hurt pro-establishment candidates.

"External forces that have helped stoke the months-long anti-government campaign in (Hong Kong) also contributed greatly to damaging the election chances of pro-establishment candidates," it said.

The result revived speculation that Lam might be dumped by Beijing, but a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman on Monday reiterated the government's backing.

Questioned over whether China's leaders had asked her to take responsibility for the rout, Lam said she had received such no communications from Beijing.

She also repeated calls for a small number of protesters holed up in a university campus surrounded by police for more than a week to come out peaceably.

Pak SC suspends notification on Army chief Bajwa's tenure extension

BY SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, Nov 26 (PTI): In an unprecedented move, Pakistan's Supreme Court on Tuesday suspended the notification granting a three-year term extension to Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

The move came just ahead of Bajwa's retirement on November 29.

Chief Justice Asif Saeed Khosa after suspending the government's notification adjourned the hearing until Wednesday.

Prime Minister Imran Khan on August 19 had approved an extension in the tenure of General Bajwa for another three

years. "General Qamar Javed Bajwa is appointed Chief of Army Staff for another term of three years from the date of completion of current tenure," according to the notification. Khosa during the hearing said that only the president of Pakistan can extend the tenure of the Army chief.

He also observed that when the matter was discussed in the Cabinet, only 11 out of 25 members approved the extension.

Attorney General Anwar Mansoor contested the observations by the chief justice, saying that the extension was announced after approval of the president.

However, the chief justice suspended the extension notification and fixed the next hearing for further proceedings. The petition against the extension was filed by a person named Raiz Rahi, who later filed an application to withdraw it.

But Khosa rejected the withdrawal bid and took up the petition as a public interest litigation under Article 184.

It is for the first time that the top court has suspended a notification by the government to extend service of the powerful army chief.

The Army so far has not commented on the development.

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VIDEO NEWS SECTION

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Ranveer Singh 'Stapled' His Stomach During Lootera Shoot

Did you know that Ranveer Singh stapled his stomach while filming the 2013 film *Lootera*? Yes, that's true! During an interview with Film Companion, when film critic Anupama Chopra asked Ranveer if he "stapled the side of his stomach and then hit himself there to get the right expression of pain" for a scene in *Lootera* where he gets shot, the actor said, "Yes." However, he later explained why he stapled himself and stated that he would never do such thing again. Ranveer co-starred with Sonakshi Sinha in *Lootera*.

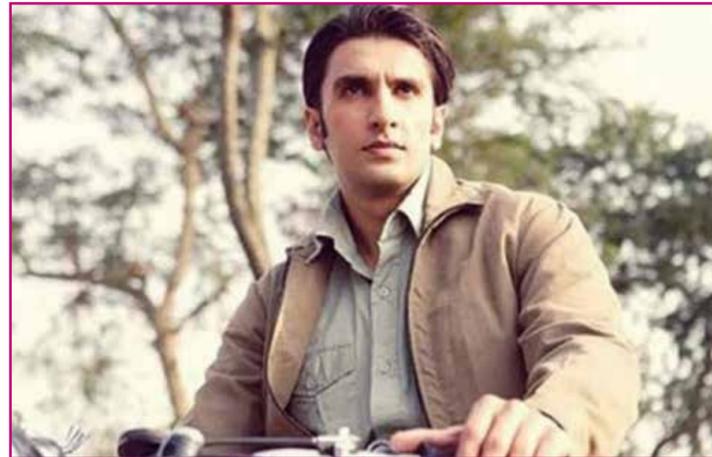
- **Ranveer Singh co-starred with Sonakshi Sinha in *Lootera***
- **He played a young conman in the film**
- **"At that time I was very raw as an actor," he said**

Acknowledging that he did staple himself for a shot, Ranveer said: "At that time I was very raw as an actor, exploring my craft. I wasn't comfortable with my craft. I didn't know how to do it. I was so raw that I didn't know the ABC of filmmaking. Even when I was an Assistant Director, I used to be given menial jobs, I would be far away from the sets. So I hit the ground running."

He went on to explain how he started from the scratch in the film industry. "I was so kaccha during *Band Baaja Baraat*, I would be doing two shots with

Anushka Sharma (his co-star) and there would be a boom mike guy standing and I would ask her: 'Who's this guy?' She's like: 'Whatever dialogues you say, he's going to capture that.' I would be like: 'He's going stand here only?' I literally

it." "Back then, I am thinking to myself: 'I have never been shot and now I am going to get shot. So, how am I going to depict a real sort of pain on screen?' Now, when I look back on *Lootera*, I watch the scenes like this (Ranveer makes an



started from scratch."

Ranveer stated that now when he watches that particular scene from *Lootera*, it "takes him back to a memory of immense amount of physical pain." He said: "I didn't know at that time when I was making that choice for *Lootera*. You operate from a place where you are not comfortable with your craft, a place of insecurity and nervousness and you tend to do a lot more to achieve a certain effect... Sometimes to the degree of harming yourself. I wouldn't do it now as I know that there is more efficient way of doing

expression of discomfort during the interview) because it takes me back to a memory of immense amount of physical pain. It's all real. But today, having acquired more knowledge and comfort with my craft, I know that there is another way of creating that effect," he added.

Check out Ranveer Singh's interview with Film Companion, where he was joined by his actress wife Deepika Padukone, Alia Bhatt, Ayushmann Khurrana, Vijay Deverakonda, Manoj Bajpayee, Tamil star Vijay Sethupathi and Malayalam actor Parvathy Thiruvethu.

J.J. Abrams says a real Rise of Skywalker script leaked due to careless actor



J.J. Abrams says a legitimate script for the ultra-secretive *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* leaked onto eBay due to a careless actor.

The director told Good Morning America on Monday that one of the actors on the show left their script under the bed in their hotel room.

"One of our actors, I won't say which one — I want to, but I won't — left it under their bed and it was found by someone who was cleaning their place," Abrams told the audience. "And it was given to someone else, who then went to sell it on eBay."

Somebody who works at Disney saw the item up for sale and bought it so they "got it back before it sold."

Abrams also notes the film was just completed on Sunday. As EW's recent cover story details, the director was working on polishing the film up until the last minute trying to make it as perfect as possible.

While Abrams doesn't say which actor was so haphazard with the top-secret script, it's likely one of the film's stars as support-

ing actors aren't typically given full scripts on such ultra-secretive projects. Keri Russell, for example, who plays Zorri Bliss in the new film, says she was only allowed to keep the "sides" for her specific scenes and could only read the full script in a room under guard (despite working with Abrams going all the way back to ABC's *Felicity*).

Now "Who left a script under their hotel bed?" has the potential to become the "Who left the coffee cup?" of *The Rise of Skywalker* cast.

The *Rise of Skywalker* opens Dec. 20.

Also, read EW's interview with Abrams in our *The Rise of Skywalker* cover story, and check out our eight new exclusive photos.

To read more on *The Rise of Skywalker* and other untold stories from the *Star Wars* universe, pick up the new issue of Entertainment Weekly at Barnes & Noble now — or buy your choice of covers featuring stars of the prequels, original trilogy, or current saga. (The issue will be on newsstands starting Nov. 28.) Don't forget to subscribe for more exclusive interviews and photos, only in EW.

Billie Eilish is Billboard's 2019 Woman of the Year

LOS ANGELES, NOV 26 (PTI): Singer Billie Eilish will be honoured as Billboard's 2019 Woman of the Year on December 12.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, pop star Taylor Swift will also be honoured at Billboard's event, receiving the inaugural Woman of the Decade award.

"Billie has disrupted the entertainment industry through her music and social media platforms, leaving an indelible impact on the global cultural zeitgeist.

"Her ability to speak to the Gen-Z population, making teens and young adults feel accepted in today's society has quickly allowed Eilish to grow to the top of the charts, breaking the mold for this generation with her electric hair-colour and sharp attitude" Billboard's editorial director Hannah Karp said in a statement.

Eilish is the youngest artist ever to be named Billboard's Woman of the Year.

Alanis Morissette, Brandi Carlile and Nicki Minaj will also be honoured at the "Women in Music" event.



SUPER STYLISH! The *Good Place* actress and activist looks chic, Jameela Jamil in a beige outfit and yellow bag at Jimmy Kimmel Live! in Los Angeles.

Meezaan Jaaferi To Play The Lead Actor In Hungama 2

Meezaan Jaaferi will play the lead actor in the sequel to the 2003 film *Hungama*, confirms filmmaker Priyadarshan. In an interview with Bollywood Hungama, Priyadar-

Shoma Anand in the lead roles.

Hungama is an adaptation of Priyadarshan's own Malayalam film *Poochakkoru Mookkuthi*, which released in 1984. The Hindi film revolves around the story of Anjali (Rimi Sen), who shifts to Mumbai in search for a job. However, unable to find a decent place to live, she agrees to live with stranger Nandu (Aftab) as a fake married couple. Her life takes hilarious turns when her boss Jeetu (Akshay) falls in love with her - assuming she is the daughter of millionaire businessman Radheshyam Tiwari - and tries to win her



love back. The film also starred Rajpal Yadav, Shakti Kapoor, Neena Kulkarni, Manoj Joshi and Upasana Singh in pivotal roles. While Priyadarshan has finalised the lead actor for *Hungama 2*, he is yet to announce the name of the female lead for the film. On the work front, Meezaan Jaaferi, son of actor Javed Jaaferi, made his debut in Bollywood with Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Malaal* earlier this year.

shan, who also directed the original film, confirmed the actor's presence as the lead in the sequel and said: "Yes, we've found our male lead in *Hungama 2* and it's Meezaan." He was all praise for Meezaan as he said: "The boy is terrific on screen. He is a fabulous dancer like his father, emotes and fights well too. There is nothing he can't do." The original film, which is a cult comedy, featured Akshay Khanna, Aftab Shivdasani, Rimi Sen, Paresh Rawal and

from you? Understand the runner and chaser dynamic and how it is playing out in your relationship. To be with somebody who sees you as you are (minus the masks) can be rather intimidating.

Tip: Break out of the vicious cycle. **CANCER:** Words of wisdom, Cancer: you cannot keep a tight leash on life no matter how much you try. Think of life as a gamble. There are variables beyond your understanding that are affecting this process. Need of the hour: surrender. Listen to what your intuition is telling you and choose the path of least resistance. Trust what's happening behind-the-scenes for you and expect nothing less than divine intervention.

Tip: Your heart and soul know the answers. **LEO:** A day of enlightenment and aha moments awaits. Your circumstances may or may not have changed. But your perception of them certainly has! Continue to rise above the mundane reality, Leo. Continue to move towards the light. Your transformation is sure to turn the tide in your favour. Some of you

may be experiencing a rebirth through your relationships.

Tip: A rebirth is on the cards.

VIRGO: You are graduating to the next level, Virgo. Welcome to the league of adult relationships! Having enjoyed your fair share of flirtations, you are now ready to manifest a love that brings with itself the promise of safety and security. On your part, find a balance between romanticism and practicality. Overheard at the cosmic conference: you have a bright future together. Tip: Welcome to the big leagues.

LIBRA: "In all the world, there is no heart for me like yours. In all the world, there is no love for you like mine." When Maya Angelou penned these words, she was probably bitten by the same love bug as you. Is it enough to feel all the feels and wax eloquent about your amour? You tell us, Libra. What Spirit is offering your right now: the chance to have a heart-to-heart and progress to the next level. Tip: Commit to the practice of love.

SCORPIO: This is not the end, Scorpio, but it is the metaphorical death of the darkness. You are ready to enter a new phase, one that promises to bring with itself both hope and healing. Be cognisant of the blessings in your life and the people who provide you with unconditional love and support. Tip: This week marks the end of the metaphorical darkness.

SAGITTARIUS: Remember when Mark Darcy looked at Bridget Jones and charmed her with the words, "No, I like you very much. Just as you are"? That's the kind of love you are attracting in your Universe. But is the definition of love limited to romance, Sagittarius? Commit to the practice of seeing and experiencing love every day, in every single way. Tip: Commit to the practice of love.

CAPRICORN: A romantic proposal is on the cards, Capricorn. Prepare to be swept off your feet. The suitor at hand is an expert in the art of love. Allow yourself to be just as vulnerable and express what is in your heart.

But that's not the only miracle you will experience today. Open your heart and mind to see what life is offering you, and you will be filled with nothing but gratitude.

Tip: Express gratitude for all the good things in your life.

AQUARIUS: If you're the only one putting in the work, this week will bring with itself a reality check. The burden is not yours alone, Aquarius. Reach out and ask for help, no matter how vulnerable that makes you feel. Their willingness (or unwillingness) to show up for you will show you exactly how invested they are in this relationship. Tip: Ask for help when you need to.

PISCES: This week isn't so much about playing dress up and being seen at all the right places. It's about doing things that matter with the people who matter. Make time for your good vibes tribe, which reminds you what joy, happiness, and unconditional love feels like. You may also feel inspired to spend more time indoors. Tip: Raise a toast to the people who love and accept you as you are.