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SummitTIMES

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SDF complains to CEO against DIG-Range, wants him removed for duration of by-elections

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 OCT:**
Sikkim Democratic Front today approached the Chief Electoral Officer seeking the removal of DIG [Range], ST Bhutia, from his present position for the duration of the by-elections since the party is convinced that the officer has failed to ensure that the police acted in impartial and fair manner.

In a complaint letter

to the CEO, Sikkim, with copies marked to the South district Returning Officer and the Chief Election Commissioner, SDF general secretaries Dev Gurung and Amos R Lepcha, have detailed the incidents of violence at Poklok-Kamrang constituency and alleged slack and biased follow-up by Sikkim Police and highlighted the public statements of the DIG [Range]

to argue that negligent policing was giving a free hand to the ruling party to intimidate the people and attack campaign teams of the Opposition. The letter alleges that the manner in which the DIG has overseen the case reflects that he was acting on the behest of the ruling party.

SDF has also narrated the sequence of events leading to the attack on

the party president's motorcade on the evening of 10 Oct and stresses that even though Sikkim Police was informed about the party's concern that SKM party functionaries would try and disrupt the campaign, adequate police bandobast was not undertaken.

It further took the police two days before it began investigating the case and even then

the investigation was tasked to a junior officer despite the enormity of the incident.

The party has also taken serious note of the tone and tenor of the public statement of the DIG [Range] on the incident and also the half-truths he presented.

The letter accuses the DIG of acting with bias in order to please the ruling party.

HSP lashes out against BJP, clarifies on alliance allegation



**SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 14 OCT:**
Hamro Sikkim Party [HSP] spokesperson, Biraj Adhikari today claimed that it was Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] that had approached HSP for an alliance prior to the 2019 elections and the alliance did not materialize after BJP failed to give written assurance on five-point Sikkim-centric issues placed by the party.

Addressing a press conference here this afternoon, Mr Adhikari warned BJP state president, DB Chauhan to stop talking about the alliance issue as BJP had approached HSP and not the other way around. He also lashed out against Mr Chauhan

for calling Bhaichung Bhutia anti-national and separatist.

HSP will always raise voice for Sikkim and Article 371F, he added.

HSP president, Bina Basnett mentioned that the discussion for alliance with BJP was always transparent and in the public domain. She alleged that BJP took 10 MLAs of Sikkim Democratic Front party unethically.

She further alleged that BJP forcefully took two seats from Sikkim Krantikari Morcha and is now trying to show that both parties are working together.

Stating that opposition is the soul of democracy, she questioned the safety of democratic val-

ues in the state without an opposition.

Letting BJP win the by-election will not be HSP's loss but it would be the loss of entire Sikkim and its people, she stated.

On the same, she appealed to the people of Sikkim to support a genuine candidate and prevent the unethical entry of BJP into the State.

HSP spokesperson, Sonam Sherpa expressed his objection to the statement given by senior BJP leader, Ram Madhav that BJP can form the government without contesting elections. He also demanded that the BJP state-unit clear its stand on the Citizenship Amendment Bill and NRC in the State.

Justice Arup Kumar Goswami to be sworn in as CJ today



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 OCT:**
Justice, Arup Kumar Goswami will be sworn in as the Chief Justice of Sikkim here at Raj Bhawan on 15 October.

Governor, Ganga Prasad will administer the oath of secrecy to the new Chief Justice, Justice Arup Kumar Goswami.

Justice Goswami was senior most judge of Guwahati High Court and had discharged his responsibilities as Acting Chief Justice till his elevation to the post of Chief Justice.

Earlier this month on 03 October, Ministry of Law & Justice published a notification appointing him as the Chief Justice of Sikkim.

Justice Goswami was born at Jorhat, Assam on 11 Mar, 1961 and graduated in Economics from Cotton College. He got his LLB Degree from Government Law College, Guwahati in 1985. He enrolled as an Advocate with the Bar Council of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh on 1985.

He was designated Senior Advocate by the Gauhati High Court on 2004 and has served as Standing Senior Counsel of Gauhati High Court and Karbi-Anglong Autonomous Council, Education Department, Government of Assam and Standing Counsel, North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council till appointed as an Additional Judge of Gauhati High Court on January, 2011.

Justice Goswami had represented Assam in Ranji Trophy and also represented East Zone in Under-19, Under-22 and at the senior level. He became permanent Judge on 07 Nov, 2012.

Golay receives grand welcome at Damthang and Sorak-Simpani



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 OCT:**
In continuation of his ongoing election campaigning in Poklok-Kamrang constituency, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha [SKM] president and Chief Minister, PS Tamang received a grand welcome from the peo-

ple of Damthang and Sorak-Simpani blocks on Monday.

As per an SKM press release, the CM stated that SKM was the sun rise while Sikkim Democratic Front was the sunset. He mentioned that the victory of SKM in the election will bring

the people of the area in direct contact with the government and help in the overall development of the constituency.

On the same, he urged the people to take the right decision in this by-poll. Mr Tamang assured to work for the people in these four and a half years.

The release informs that the meeting was also addressed by Ministers, Sanjeet Kharel and Loknath Nepal along with other senior leaders of SKM. It is informed that 34 families of SDF from Damthang and Salghari blocks led by Dawa Tamang also joined SKM today.

Post-paid mobile phone services restored in Kashmir without internet

SRINAGAR, OCT 14 (PTI): Mobile phones in Kashmir buzzed back to life on Monday, connecting 40 lakh post-paid subscribers to their families and friends in the country, the Valley and their neighbourhoods after 72 days but without any internet facilities.

The phones started ringing from noon as promised by the government on Saturday and people across the Valley quickly dialled out to speak to those they had been unable to since August 5, when the Centre revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status and reorganised the state into two union territories. The resumption of the service is only on post-paid connections and only for voice calls and SMS. Over 25 lakh prepaid mobile phones and other internet services, including WhatsApp, will remain deactivated for now, officials said.

Connectivity was snapped exactly a week before Eid, celebrated on August 12. And so great was the relief on Monday that many Kashmiris wished each other Eid Mubarak.

"This day is no less than Eid for us. In a global era of the world becoming one, transcending borders, we were cut off from the rest of the world for more than two months," said Nighat Shah.

Basharat Ahmad, a resident of the old city, lost no time in calling his friends and relatives within Kashmir and outside to just hear their voices after the long gap. In just an hour, he



made 30 calls. "I had not spoken to my relatives in Delhi and elsewhere outside Kashmir for 70 days. I want to hear from all of them and want to tell them we are still alive," Ahmad said.

It was a tough 72 days even for those whose loved ones stayed close by.

Yasir Ahad said he was talking to his fiancée when the lines snapped abruptly.

"I was not able to contact my fiancée who lives just five kilometres from my place. We got engaged in July this year and two weeks later we had no information about each other's

well being," Ahad said. Ahad, who plans to get married next spring, said he would talk to his fiancée every day till the sudden communication blockade came into force in the early hours of August 5.

"I was talking to her when the signal went off. Initially, I thought there was something wrong with my phone but soon realised that the rumours ahead of August 5 were not unfounded," he added. Security forces are fully geared to meet any challenge arising out of the opening of mobile communications, offi-

cials said. The restoration of post-paid mobile phones of all services tops a number of steps taken in recent weeks to remove restrictions in the Valley.

Last week, the state was opened to tourists. Educational institutions are also open, but attendance has been slim. On August 17, partial fixed line telephony was resumed in the Valley. On September 4, nearly 50,000 landlines were declared operational.

The announcement that the services would be restored was made by Jammu and Kashmir Principal Secretary and spokesperson Rohit Kansal at a nationally televised press conference here on Saturday.

Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik had earlier said mobile phones were being used by terrorists to spread a hate campaign in the state. Lack of mobile phone connectivity caused immense hardship to the people and the announcement of its restoration is the most significant step towards ending the communication blockade.

"With this step, tourists will be able to visit the state without being handicapped by the lack of phone connectivity, students can be in touch with parents while attending school, businessmen can be in touch with customers, transporters can contact clients and contractors can be in touch with staff," Kansal said on Saturday.

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Chance to Stop Culture of Violence from Becoming the New Normal

PD RAI

Recently the Government of PS Golay and SKM Party laid bare its intentions by removing a hoarding near the Manipal Hospital which read "Save Sikkim" - this was put up by a rival political outfit. Not the SDF. But what came out was clear in its message that free speech was not to be tolerated. In fact the police carrying out the act of removal, caught on camera, was shouting out this message in no uncertain terms.

But why is this kind of intolerance being propagated when the same Party was propagating, before the 2019 general elections, that there was no democracy in Sikkim. How is it possible to have such a short memory about Democratic values and tolerance is highly significant. This is really a real about turn which is not lost out on anyone.

For PS Golay everything will be lost if he loses the bypolls in Poklok Kamrang. If he wins he will save his chair as the Chief Minister. But can he erase the dangerous legacy he and the SKM party

are stridently crafting?

The recent acts of violence witnessed in Poklok Kamrang when motivated SKM youth and others attacked SDF Party President's vehicle and damaged it is an indication of what is their violent agenda. A stone hit his young daughter who was accompanying him. What was shocking to see was that this was done in full view of mute police personnel. What has become of our law and order machinery, especially when the model code of conduct is in operation?

These acts of violence and intolerance sends out several clear messages:

One, that those who are carrying out these acts of violence are not bothered about the law. It is during the model code of conduct that all this is happening. Very sorry state of affairs this. Is the Election Commission taking note of this? After all it certainly has been reported and in the know of the several agencies conducting the polls.

Second, we are dangerously moving into a society that is a more violent one

and tolerant of it. If law enforcement will not do what it has to do then all sides of the political spectrum will do the same when their turn comes.

Third, Poklok Kamrang constituency must be won by the SKM Party at any cost in order to allow PS Golay to continue as Chief Minister. So use everything you can do. We have always maintained that violence is in their DNA.

Now, if we as a society read all these messages clearly then what inferences can we draw that are fundamental to our very existential nature.

We definitely have to ask ourselves whether we have obtained the right kind of democracy when we merged with India in 1975? And this is clearly what different political outfits are asking when they say 'Save Sikkim' and put out political hoardings. Never were such views aired when the SDF was in power. Never did we question the democratic values obtained thus far.

Did we not have peace and development leading to a prosperous and egalitarian society in the last 25 years?

What comes out of all this is the absolute failure of our law enforcers - rule of law is now being sacrificed for narrow personal political gains.

The role of the District Collector comes under scrutiny as he is the election Commission's law enforcement arm.

The Governor has a duty to ensure peace in a border state. If a culture of violence starts to overtake our society then we are definitely not doing justice to the mandate given under Article 371F of the Constitution of our country. Clearly from all of the above we see that we are headed for a new normal. Will we want to tolerate this as right thinking citizens is a very moot question. We have one way to protect ourselves from this dangerous trend and that is to exercise our vote in the best possible manner. Let us not waste an opportunity to reorient the trend.

Else, Shangri La will be truly lost. Sikkim, as we know it, will be lost.

Is this the 'parivartan' we so badly wanted?

Please think.

Open men's football tournament at Dikchu school



WANGCHUK BHUTIA MANGAN, 14 OCT:

Sporting Boys Lachung played against Mangan Police in the open men's football tournament today at Dikchu Senior Secondary School.

On the twelfth day of the 78th foundation year celebration of the school, Mangan Police defeated

Sporting Boys Lachung by 5-0 goals.

The match today was attended by Umesh Munda as chief guest along with panchayat, Dikchu-Jang, Chandra Lall Sharma, SHO SIS, Suraj Thakuri, officials from SKPPL, Praveen Pradhan, Jonah George Tamang as special guests and other dignitaries.

General Observer visits Poklok Kamrang Polling Stations

NAMCHI, 14 OCT (IPR):

General Observer for By-Elections for 10 Poklok Kamrang Assembly Constituency, Alak Kumar Saharia visited various polling stations today. He was accompanied by Sector Magistrate, RB Bhandari, Liaison Officer, Chewang Bhutia, Polling Stations and Basic Minimum Incharge, Tenzing Bhutia and other election officials.

The General Observer inspected various polling stations at Chisopani, Denchung, Poklok, Tinik, Dhargaon Dorop and Salghari. At the polling stations Mr Saharia enquired the adequate measures that have been



undertaken to fulfill the basic minimum requirements of the voters. He added that proper exit doors have to be set up and printed information regarding the elections needs to be put up at the stations.

In addition, he also

interacted with the students and headmasters wherein the polling station has been put up. He further explained the students about the significance of elections in a democratic country like ours, the functioning of Election Commission

of India and how voting is one of the vital responsibilities of the Indian citizens.

During the course of the tour Mr Saharia also met with the teams of police personnel, flying squads and video surveillance.

185 dengue cases in Oct, total mounts to 467 in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 14 OCT (PTI):

Cases of dengue have spiked in the national capital with at least 111 of those being reported in the last one week, taking the total number of people affected by the vector-borne disease this year in Delhi to 467, according to a municipal report released on Monday.

The number of malaria cases recorded till October 12 has also risen to 459, it said.

October alone has seen 185 cases of dengue while 190 cases were reported in September.

However, 91 cases of malaria have been recorded this month till October 12 while September saw 214 cases.

Till October 5, the city had recorded 356 cases of dengue, marking a rise of 111 fresh cases in the past one week, according to civic authorities.

Of the total 467 dengue cases, August recorded 52 cases, July recorded 18, June witnessed 11 cases and the rest was registered between January and May, according to the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), which tabulates the data on vector-borne diseases in the city.

As many as 56 malaria cases were recorded in August, 54 in July, 35 in June, eight in May and one in April, it said.

Malaria cases had

outstripped those of dengue in Delhi for the past several weeks, but dengue has once again eclipsed malaria as far as the infection count is concerned in Delhi.

According to the report, at least 118 cases of chikungunya have also been reported this year.

Last year, 2,798 dengue cases and four deaths were recorded by the SDMC. It had also reported 473 cases of malaria and 165 cases of chikungunya.

Both the Delhi government and local bodies have been making efforts to raise awareness on precautions to ensure that there is no breeding of mosquito larvae.

The AAP government has started an anti-dengue campaign '10Hafta, 10Baje, 10Minute' urging people to inspect their house for any standing water.

The campaign from September 1 and November 15 to combat dengue has garnered support from several personalities, including cricket legend Kapil Dev, many Bollywood actors and well-known journalists.

During a press conference on Sunday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said, "In five years, the number of dengue cases reported have come down by 80 per cent. We have tried to reduce it even fur-

ther. This year, fortunately, there is no spike in it and it is because all the people have come together, from the Delhi government to the Centre and the MCD".

Dengue mosquito larvae breed in clear, standing water while those of malaria mosquito thrive even in dirty water.

Doctors have advised people to take precautions and ensure that there is no breeding of mosquito larvae around them. They have urged people to wear full-sleeves clothes and use mosquito nets.

Water coolers should be dried up when not in use as mosquitoes carrying dengue virus usually breed there, a doctor said.

Cases of vector-borne diseases are usually reported between July and November, but the period may stretch to mid-December.

Meanwhile, mosquito-breeding has been reported in at least 1,55,921 households and 1,24,589 legal notices have been issued this year.

From public schools to government office premises, 72 institutions have been penalised by civic authorities in north Delhi in the last five months for breeding of mosquito larvae in their premises, officials had earlier said.

Very very happy and delighted: Amartya Sen

KOLKATA, 14 OCT (PTI):

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen on Monday said he was "very very happy and delighted" over Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee jointly winning the Nobel in Economics.

Sen had won the same award in 1998 for his contribution to welfare economics.

Speaking to PTI from Boston, Sen said Im very very happy and delighted that Abhijit Banerjee along with others have been awarded with the Nobel for Economics, he told PTI.

58-year-old Banerjee bagged the coveted prize jointly with his wife Esther Duflo and another economist Michael Kremer for his "experimental approach to alleviating global poverty".

I think that the prize has been given to the most competent persons, Sen said.

Banerjee is currently the Ford Foundation International Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

86-year-old Sen currently serves as professor of economics and philosophy at Harvard University, from where Banerjee received his PhD in 1988.

HDFC lowers lending rates by 10 bps to 8.25%

MUMBAI, OCT 14 (PTI): Mortgage major HDFC on Monday announced a 0.10 percentage points reduction in its floating rates, joining a growing list of lenders which are revising down their loan prices.

The move, applicable for both new as well as existing borrowers, brings down its lending rate to 8.25 percent for the salaried borrowers to the lowest bracket and at 8.65 percent on the upper end.

The rate cut by the largest mortgage lender comes following a cumulative 1.35 percent rate reductions by the Reserve Bank since February 2019 to prop up the sagging economy amid a sustained period of low inflation.

Many others have also reduced their lending rates in recent past.

The nation's largest lender and HDFC's immediate competitor in the mortgage space SBI had also cut its key rates by 0.10 percent last week.

"HDFC has reduced its retail prime lending rate on housing loans, on which its adjustable rate home loans are benchmarked, by 0.10 percent, effective October 15," a company spokesperson said.

The interest rate will range from 8.25 to 8.65 percent depending on the borrower.

SBI's one-year MCLR, to which the some of its home loans are linked, is now at 8.05 percent. Since Junly, its new home loans are linked to the repo rate.

Fouaad Mirza wins gold at Olympic qualifying event

BENGALURU, OCT 14 (PTI):

India's double Asian Games silver medallist Fouaad Mirza bagged the top honours at the CCI3*S, an Olympic qualifying event, held in Strzegom, Poland.

Fouaad is currently the highest ranked individual in Group G for Asia Pacific Zone with 34 points on one horse Fernhill Facetime, 30 points on the second horse Touchingwood and at present qualifying his third horse, Dajara.

The eight-year-old Dajara, procured by the Embassy Group, is a promising German Holsteiner with an excellent track record of wins including a German National Championship, Bundeschampionat.

"I am very excited about our new horse Da-

jara, which has immense potential for success at the Olympics. Through the event CCI3*S, we were able to level up the horse rider combination to 4* and building up my points to qualify for the Olympics," Fouaad said on Sunday.

Fouaad started the week with a solid dressage score of 26.8 which placed him second with a very close score to Germany's Antonia Baumgart, who was one penalty better at 25.8.

This was followed by the showjumping event where Fouaad maintained the second position with a clear round. He finished the deciding cross-country round in four seconds over time, leading him to the gold in the Strzegom CCI3*S in Poland.

Post-paid...

In Jammu, communication was restored within days of the blockade and mobile internet was started around mid-August. However, after its misuse, internet facility on cell phones was snapped on August 18.

Mobile communication in the Valley was shut down to prevent externally aided terrorists from disturbing peace and inflicting casualties, officials said.

"There are sustained attempts from across the border, both in the past and more so in the last two months, to promote militancy and terrorism in the state in order to create a sense of fear and terror among the people and keep the place in a disturbed condition," a senior official said.

Kansal had said restrictions were imposed in anticipation of Pakistan trying to foment trouble.

LOST & FOUND

Class X Pass Certificate and Mark sheet
Passed Year: 2009
Name: Ms Binita Subba
School Name: Modern Senior Secondary School
Lost while travelling from Soreng to Gangtok via Jorethang on 27 Sept, 2019
Center No. 3726
School No. 05420
Roll No. 3134519
Date of Birth: 07/02/90
Serial No. 62451
Contact No. 7029599075

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GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

For details contact: 9083826462

FLAT FOR RENT/LEASE

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

For more details: 9083826462 /9832556698

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

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

Contact: 9800201335

Win against India will change Bangladesh football: Jamal

KOLKATA, OCT 14 (PTI): Bangladesh captain Jamal Bhuyan on Monday said his team is relishing the challenge of producing an upset win against favourites India, something which will give a big boost to the sport in the cricket-crazy country.

Bangladesh football is in dire need of investment and sponsorship as there is lack of academy, equipment and the league is also not properly structured.

Bhuyan is hoping to bring a change in Bangladesh football by outsmarting the hosts India in front of a sellout crowd at the Saltlake Stadium on Tuesday.

"If we win something will change in Bangladesh football. India have big companies supporting the sport but we lack in investment. So it's a great opportunity to change that by showcasing what we have and attract big investments," he said.

A sellout crowd is expected here as India will play their first International in Kolkata after eight years when they take on Bangladesh, who are ranked 83 places below in the FIFA rankings.



Bhuyan said his team is ready to break the hearts of home fans in their World Cup group qualifier. "No pressure on us, the pressure is on India as if they don't win the fans will be after them," he said.

"I am going to tell my boys to go there and give their best. But yes India are favourites. I am going to break the India hearts tomorrow," the Danish-born Bangladeshi captain said on the eve of the match. Sunil

Chhetri will be back to lead the side after sitting out against Qatar where Gurpreet Singh Sandhu led the side with the defence putting up an impeccable show in their goalless draw. Bhuyan, a defensive midfielder, said the contest will centre around the midfield.

"This is a big game because we have a history between the two countries and all the players from both camps are eager to play this game. Whoever wins the mid-

field battle has the better chance to win the match," said the 29-year-old. While India drew against Qatar in an away match, Bangladesh lost to the Asian champions 0-2 after putting up a valiant fight.

"We missed many chances against Qatar. Even I missed some. But it is part of the game sometimes you win sometimes you lose. We have to be dedicated. We are improving and I see a bright future for Bangladesh. At the moment we

have great confidence," Bhuyan said.

Bangladesh coach Jamie Day also agreed that the team is all pumped up to put up a good fight against India.

"I am very excited and happy to be here in the 'City of Joy, the Mecca of Indian football'. Everyone is so excited to be here. If I were a player I would have looked forward to play in front of such a crowd," he said.

"I told my players you might not get a chance to play again in front of such a crowd so make the most of it. I want them to be confident and play their natural game," the Englishman said at the media interaction.

Day also pointed out that they lag behind India on league structure and the facilities.

"From what I saw we are behind in terms of league structure. We don't have proper academies. The equipment that the India team have we don't have that. We are trying to change that. We have one or two clubs who are changing. It will not happen overnight, it will take some time," Day said.

Aama, by Damber Kumar Thegim Subba released



SUMMIT REPORT NAMCHI, 14 OCT:

Aama, a collection of short stories and poems by Damber Kumar Thegim Subba, was released at a special function held at New Light Academy here today by Lopsang Lama, the Principal of the Academy.

The release ceremony

was also attended by singer Sailesh Pradhan, academician Anup Kumar Dural, Khem Lal Adhikari Chettri, Bikash Thatal, Bikash Chettri and others.

Mr Subba's is a familiar name with readers here given that he has written extensively in different newspapers

and magazines here.

A teacher by profession, Mr Subba is recognised as an energetic social worker, music composer and a litterateur.

Mr Subba has dedicated the book to his mother. The book is a collection of 12 poems and six short stories and other articles.

Training on gravity-fed drop irrigation system at Nimthang



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 14 OCT:

The College of Agricultural Engineering and Post Harvest Technology organized a training program and demonstration on "Gravity-fed Micro Irrigation System for

Hilly Topography" at Nimthang under Nandok block on 13 October, a press release informs.

35 farmers participated in the program during which Dr GT Patle, Assistant Professor and Principal Investigator of ICAR-Micro Irriga-

tion Project, explained the benefits of gravity drip irrigation system for cultivation of organic vegetables in Sikkim.

Dr Patle has designed a gravity drip irrigation system for terraced fields under the ICAR-funded MIS Project at CAEPHT.

Three persons trapped in Kulti coal mine

KOLKATA, OCT 14 (PTI): Three persons have been trapped while extracting coal from an illegal coal mine at Kulti in West Bengal, an official said on Monday.

An Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) rescue team could not enter the mine in Paschim Bardhaman district due to poisonous gas at the mouth of the pit, the ECL official said.

The incident took place on Sunday night

when four coal pilferers were extracting coal from the mine, locals said.

"Police informed us that three persons are trapped in an illegal mine at Aldhi village in Kulti. Our rescue team failed to enter the pit twice due to poisonous gas at the mouth of the pit, which is narrow," the official told PTI.

While three illegal miners got trapped inside the mine, the fourth managed to escape, the police said.

Retail inflation scaled 14-mth high of 3.99 pc in Sept



NEW DELHI, OCT 14 (PTI): Retail inflation climbed to a 14-month high of 3.99 per cent in September due to costlier vegetables and pulses but still remained within the RBI's comfort zone, government data showed on Monday.

The Consumer Price Index-based inflation stood at 3.28 per cent in August and 3.70 per cent in the September 2018. The previous high was 4.17 per cent in July 2018.

However, the wholesale inflation in September slipped to an over three-year low of 0.33 per cent.

The CPI data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) showed that the rate of price rise in the food basket in September 2019 was 5.11 per cent as against 2.99 per cent in the preceding month.

The inflation print for vegetables shot up to 15.40 per cent during the month from 6.9 per cent. Besides, price rise in pulses and meat and fish baskets for the reported month was higher over August.

However, there was a decline in inflation in the fuel and light segment.

The Reserve Bank of

India, which has been slashing the key interest rate (repo) since January 2019, mainly factors in CPI while arriving at its bi-monthly monetary policy.

India Ratings and Research (Fitch Group) Principal Economist Sunil Sinha said the central bank will continue with its accommodative policy stance and may go for further rate cut in the policy review of December 2019.

However, Emkay Wealth Management Head Research Joseph Thomas said the persistence of prices at higher levels beyond the ameliorating influence of the rains may alone would invite a policy shift by the RBI to neutrality.

Principal Economist with ICRA Aditi Nayar said while food inflation did record a broad-based increase in September 2019, the primary driver of the uptick was vegetables, a fallout of the flooding in various states.

As vegetable prices normalise over the next two months, particularly with the seasonal arrival of winter supplies, food inflation may recede below 4 per cent by the end of this quarter, she said.

"While the decline in the core inflation provides some comfort, the unexpectedly sharp jump in the September 2019 CPI inflation has pushed up the likelihood of a pause in the next Monetary Policy Committee (of RBI) review, unless the headline retail inflation recedes sharply in the ongoing month," Nayar said.

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) released earlier in the day revealed that the inflation eased to more than three-year low of 0.33 per cent in September mainly due to falling prices of fuel and certain food articles, according to official data.

The WPI-based inflation was 1.08 per cent in August this year and 5.22 per cent in September 2018.

Inflation print for food articles, as a basket, remained nearly flat at 7.47 per cent during the month. Prices of potato fell by a further 22.50 per cent as against a decline of 21.28 per cent in August, the Commerce and Industry Ministry data showed.

For fuel and power category, inflation came in at (-) 7.05 per cent, as against (-) 4 per cent in the preceding month.

TSRTC stir enters 10th day, bandh observed in Khammam



HYDERABAD, OCT 14 (PTI):

The indefinite strike by unions of Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) continued for the tenth day on Monday even as a bandh was being observed in Khammam district following the death of a driver.

D Srinivas Reddy, 55, driver of TSRTC Khammam depot, who set himself ablaze on Saturday, succumbed to the burn injuries at a hospital here on Sunday. Hours after Reddy's death, a conductor Surender Goud, aged around 50, allegedly committed suicide by hanging at his house here on Sunday night.

Another TSRTC driver, aged around 40, doused himself with petrol at Narsampet depot in Warangal district on Sunday, however, police immediately intervened and foiled his alleged self-immolation bid.

The Khammam bandh call was given by the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of TSRTC and various political parties following Reddy's death.

The striking employees held demonstrations even as workers of dif-

ferent political parties and organisations also took out protest rallies in Khammam and Kothagudem districts.

Khammam Commissioner of Police Tafseer Iqbal told PTI over phone the bandh was going on peacefully and the situation was normal, though dharnas and rallies were being held by RTC employees and others, but shops were open.

Condolence meetings were also being held at depots and bus stands in the state by the striking employees and workers.

Shops and business establishments remained shut in some areas in Khammam security was beefed up in view of the bandh.

Nearly 48,000 employees of different unions of TSRTC, boycotted their duties and began an indefinite strike from October 5 across Telangana on a call given by the Joint Action Committee (JAC), demanding merger of the RTC with the government, pay revision, recruitment to various posts, among others resulting in state-run buses staying off the roads causing inconvenience to commuters.

The striking employees continued to hold protest rallies across the state and raised slogans against the government. Taking a tough stand, Chief Minister K Chandrabab Naidu had said the 48,000 striking RTC staff had "self-dismissed" themselves, as he also made it very clear that under no circumstances would the RTC be merged with the government.

On Saturday, he had said there was no question of having talks with the striking employees or taking them back, terming the agitation as "illegal."

TRS Parliamentary Party leader and party Secretary-General K Keshava Rao on Monday said he was deeply pained at the deaths of two striking RTC employees. In a release, Keshava Rao, also a Rajya Sabha member, appealed to the RTC employees to call off their ongoing strike and sit with the government to sort out their issues in a "legitimate way".

Keshava Rao, who also headed the TRS Manifesto Committee, said at no time was the merger of RTC with the government considered.

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Time to Change

We gossip so that we don't have to engage

Rumours serve only one purpose - entertainment. They titillate, scandalise, and then evaporate. In most cases, the receivers and circulators of such gossip know that no one believes the rumours and everyone partakes in it only get over the boredom with which most people appear afflicted in these lazy autumnal months. That said, there also appear to be a whole lot of people, who even if they don't accept rumours as true, convince themselves that there has to be a germ of truth some layers down for active imaginations to have created the dramatized versions in circulation. And then there is that whole smoke and mirrors trick that 'information' bereft of context can pull. But then again, while one can reason with the informed, there is really no defence against ignorance. Hence, at the end of the day, there is really only one way to settle a rumour - ignoring it. But while it is easy to ignore something when it is only whispered in street corners and closed circles, it becomes difficult to do so when they are palmed out and circulated in the public domain.

The drift should be obvious by now. Most rumours are brought into wider circulation by political parties, both ruling and opposition and the in-betweens, by way of press releases, public speeches, throwaway comments and wink-wink suggestions. Trolls, and the anonymity they hide behind, have now made it possible for nuance to be abandoned on "social media" and fling anything at the thousands of walls hoping that something sticks. Leaders, most of them new to the medium, make the mistake of engaging with agent provocateurs either by getting into arguments themselves, unleashing their online armies or issuing official denials and/or suffering an online meltdown themselves. The moment they do any of these, they give the faceless rumour-mongers credibility as representative voices because they receive response. Once this cycle begins, followers follow and the lines start getting blurred and suspicions start getting stronger.

Meanwhile, newspapers, by the very definition of their jobs, are required to allow space for public statements by public personalities. Unfortunately, the party workers who play rumours into the streets are not required to be accountable. What is worse, few demands are made of them to even be professional. Allegations are raised without even prima facie evidence and claims are made without any supporting evidence and very often condemnations issued on something that is only being gossiped. To deny them the space by way of news coverage would be unfair to the profession of journalism, but to sensationalise their statements means being even more unprofessional. It is a difficult call, but given the extremes to which claims and counter-claims swerve in the political domain, the only hope is that the readers can see through the weak fronts on their own and sift the gossip from the news.

That would be the ideal situation, but we don't live in an ideal world.

The best defence against rumour-mongering would have been strong implementation of the Right to Information Act. If that were to happen, whenever people felt real fears or suspicions, they would be able to draft an application and exercise their right to information. But information by itself is worthless if the debate that follows is not intelligent, informed and coherent. Thus far, public debates have essentially been shouting matches with no heed paid to putting things in context or explaining the issues, much like the nightly TV newsroom debates. The people had to make do with slanging matches, but, if the people desire, things can be different now. They can inform themselves in advance and then hear out the politicians to decide whether their arguments and interpretations are sound or not. At the end of the day, the only weapon against rumours is the truth. Circulate it in the public domain and embarrass those who deal in rumours.

Abiy Ahmed has won the Nobel Peace Prize: but big challenges still await Ethiopia

MOHAMMED GIRMA
theconversation.com

Abiy Ahmed, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, has won the Nobel Peace Prize. He becomes the 100th Nobel Peace Prize winner, and the first Ethiopian to receive the accolade.

Abiy is the 12th winner from Africa to be awarded the prize. Last year it was won by medical doctor Denis Mukwege from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Other African winners have included Albert Luthuli, Anwar al-Sadat, Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk, Kofi Annan, Wangari Maathai, Mohamed ElBaradei, Leymah Gbowee and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Tunisia's National Dialogue Quartet won it in 2015.

The Nobel Peace Prize is one of the five Nobel Prizes established in 1895 under the instructions of Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel in his will. The Peace Prize is awarded to the person who, in the preceding year, has: "done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses."

The formal announcement by the Nobel Prize said that Abiy was awarded the prize for:

"his important work to promote reconciliation, solidarity and social justice. The prize is also meant to recognise all the stakeholders working for peace and reconciliation in Ethiopia and in the East and Northeast African regions...efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighbouring Eritrea."

But who is Abiy Ahmed? Does he deserve an international accolade? And what of the challenges still facing the country he leads?

Berit Reiss-Andersen, the Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, commented in her announcement speech that:

"... many challenges remain unresolved. Ethnic strife continues to escalate, and we have seen troubling examples of this in recent weeks and months."

UNEXPECTED RISE TO POWER

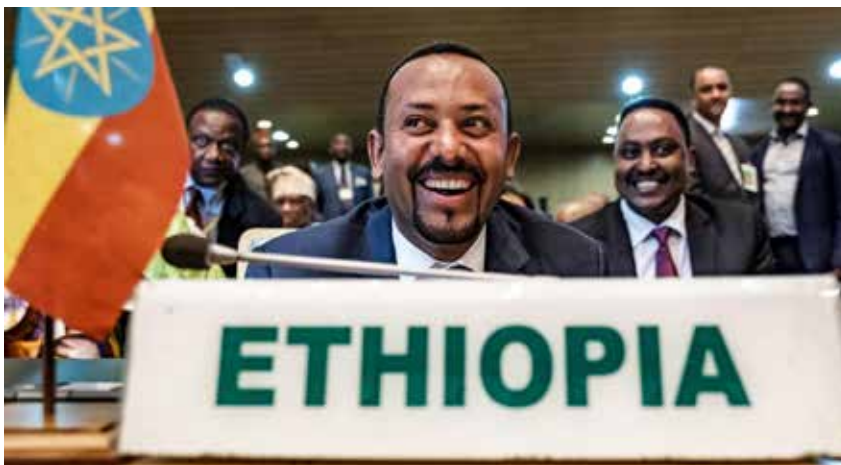
Barely two years ago Abiy Ahmed

was largely an unknown figure. In early 2017 a couple of YouTube clips started to circulate on social media that showed him gathered with veteran leaders at a party meeting. He came onto the scene with a simple, but powerful, message of togetherness.

At the time he was a political leader at regional and cabinet levels. But

ing system, Abiy opted for internal transformation.

It has taken tremendous courage to break away from a powerful political machine while remaining within the system. But he has stuck to his beliefs, even promoting the notion of "Medemer" - synergy and togetherness - while remaining within the party.



he didn't sound like one. He comes across as remarkably authentic and his approach was distinct. At a time of elevated fear that the nation might head into disintegration, his message soared above the popular anxiety of possible conflict.

Unlike Ethiopian politicians of the past four decades his rhetoric mimicked neither Albanian Marxism nor Maoism. He has anchored his story on local cultural and religious sensibilities.

DELICATE COURSE

Abiy's extraordinary rise to power, as well as his ability to steer a more peaceful political course in Ethiopia, is remarkable given the tensions and complexities of the country's politics.

He has distanced himself, at least in his political outlook, from his party's maligned old guard. He has had to steer a delicate course to keep various factions of the political coalition that has ruled Ethiopia for almost three decades - the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) - on board. The ruling elites from this party have never tolerated dissent. There have been numerous accusations levelled against them of human rights abuses and the imprisonment of journalists who criticised the regime.

Instead of dismantling the exist-

HOPEFUL TIMES

Abiy inherited a nation that was in political disarray. Hundreds of people had died in three years of anti-government protests.

But shortly after taking office from Hailemariam Desalegn in April 2018, Abiy began to move ahead rapidly with political reforms. He released political prisoners, unfairly incarcerated journalists and activists. He opened the door for political dissidents.

His message was that the country needed to win through bold ideas, not through the barrel of a gun.

He also showed his intention to build institutions. One example was the appointment of the well-known political dissident Birtukan Mideksa as the head of the electoral board.

He has also championed the role of women, including in politics. He appointed women in the positions of president, chief justice and press secretary. He also brought their share in his cabinet to 50%.

INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

But arguably his biggest achievements have been in international diplomacy. Ethiopia and neighbouring Eritrea share a common culture, language and ways of life. But a decades-long conflict between the two nations has brought immense misery

to people who live on the border, and to families split by the fighting.

Abiy brought the conflict with Eritrea to an end. A treaty ended the state of war between Eritrea and Ethiopia and declared a new era of peace, friendship and comprehensive cooperation. A lot remains to be done, though.

He also played a crucial role in regional politics. He was key to bringing leaders of Sudan and South Sudan to the negotiating table and helped mediate between Kenya and Somalia in a maritime territory dispute.

His popularity in the region and further abroad is evident when he's travelling. He's often greeted more like a rock star than a head of state. But maintaining the same image at home has been more complicated.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

The Nobel Prize is an acknowledgement of Abiy's achievements over the past two years. But it doesn't guarantee his future success.

A case in point is Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi. After surviving house arrest, and attacks on her life by the ruling junta, she won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1991. But her fortunes turned after her party won a national election. It now stands accused of carrying out what the United Nations high commissioner for human rights has called "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing" against the Rohingya Muslims.

There are a great many troubling issues still unresolved in Ethiopia and tense times ahead with an election due next year. Abiy also has many enemies. These include agitators who try to use ethnic fault-lines for their own political ends, powerful ethno-nationalist activists who thrive on division and political entrepreneurs who only see politics as a means of personal enrichment. All are relentlessly working to exploit a fragile situation. Securing the safety of the citizens is the bare minimum he needs to do.

In my view he needs to accept the Nobel Peace Prize as acknowledgement of what he's achieved, as well as a mandate to champion equality, justice and lasting unity in Ethiopia.

[the writer is Research associate, University of Pretoria]

Voters often parrot the party line, even when polls suggest otherwise

JUSTIN BUCHLER
theconversation.com

As the 2020 election approaches, voters will see a variety of polls. Many of them will be misleading.

Over time, political science has learned which types of questions are informative and which are not, based on models of public opinion. But many of the questions that polling organizations ask simply do not inform the public.

I am a political scientist who studies polarization and the gaps between the public and their representatives on political matters.

Election polls often fail to heed the lessons that have been hard-won by decades of survey research. Pollsters build their surveys around the idea that voters begin with firm beliefs, evaluate candidates on the basis of those beliefs and will explain their reasoning when prompted.

In reality, voters often just respond to party signals, and can rarely explain their reasoning to pollsters.

THE BIRTH OF SURVEY RESEARCH

In 1960, political scientists published their first major study based on the American National Election Studies survey in a book called "The American Voter."

This was the first time that such a survey brought a person's political party to the forefront of the question of why people vote the way they do.

Prior to that, the most significant survey-based study of voting behavior was a book published by a trio of Columbia University sociologists in 1954. They argued that people's political choices reflected their social backgrounds and connections.

For example, if people's family and social contexts are groups that happen to lean toward the Democratic candidate, they will vote for the Democratic candidate - but not out of loyalty to the Democratic Party.

While there have been many changes in the American electorate over the last half-century, political scientists have replicated the core findings in The American Voter, including two updates. In studies of political behavior, party identification is nearly always the 800-pound gorilla in the room.

Social backgrounds and associated traits may influence beliefs and vote choice, but they do so

mainly by informing a person's party identification, which remains central. In the 2016 American National Election Studies survey, about 79% of respondents who reported having voted were either self-identified Democrats who voted for Hillary Clinton or self-identified Republicans who voted for Donald Trump.

A related study, published in 1964, showed that asking people their opinions on a topic will often lead to responses that don't reflect real beliefs. People don't want to admit when they haven't thought much about a topic. Instead, they will respond with "nonattitudes" - stated opinions that don't indicate any real beliefs - to avoid the admission of not having thought much about the question.

In a famous, if ludicrous, demonstration of the principle, in 2015, Public Policy Polling asked respondents whether or not they supported bombing Agrabah. The country does not actually exist. But about half of Democrats and Republicans expressed opinions, mostly consistent with Democratic opposition to military action and Republican support for it.

LESSONS FOR 2020

I believe it is important for Americans to think critically about survey questions. There are three lessons that an informed news consumer can bring to understanding, and weighing the importance of, surveys.

First, beware of poll questions that prompt responses that aren't real attitudes.

People have real beliefs about certain issues because the issues are easy to understand, like abortion. However, the more technical the issue, the less likely people are to hold firm beliefs.

For example, while budget deficits sound intuitively bad to most people, they are a technical issue. Most people lack the education to explain how the balance between taxes and spending affects interest rates, or how interest rates conditionally affect economic growth. According to the Economic Literacy Survey, many, if not most, Americans lack understanding of economic concepts even more basic than that.

When pollsters ask about technical issues like the deficit or international relations, then, readers must be wary of responses.

Second, beware of questions in which people are just parroting a party line.

Consider changes in relations with Russia. Gallup has run a series of polls about how people perceive Russia's relations with the U.S. Prior to Trump, Democrats and Republicans had similar beliefs, and those beliefs changed over time in similar ways. However, after Trump began sending positive signals to Republicans about Russia, Republican expressions of support for Russia increased. Democratic support did not move.

This change among Republican respondents was not because of assessments of diplomatic developments between the two countries. No new treaties nor economic agreements were signed. A Republican president simply spoke more positively about Russia, and that was reflected in Republicans' survey responses.

On any question that requires a great deal of information to understand, party identification becomes central to how people respond. When pollsters ask people about deficits, international relations or other complex topics, people may respond with what leaders from their party tell them. The public mostly responds to elite signals.

Third, the public should be wary of questions that ask people how their votes will be affected by various policy positions, a lesson which follows from the first two.

After all, if people's stated beliefs aren't real attitudes, and they are simply responding to party signaling much of the time, then when pollsters ask them if a candidate's position on an issue will influence their vote choice, their answers won't be informative.

Nonacademic surveys often ask voters if they would be more or less likely to vote for candidates given certain policy positions. But voters may not know how they would respond to policy positions, and they may not admit the truth. Voters rarely admit that party is why they vote the way they do, after all.

Research shows that party has more predictive power than anything else. This was the central lesson from "The American Voter", and most political science research following from it. I think that the public should interpret polls with that in mind.

[the writer is Associate Professor of Political Science, Case Western Reserve University]

TMC to conduct survey to assess support base ahead of municipal polls

KOLKATA, OCT 14 (PTI): The Trinamool Congress leadership has decided to conduct a survey to assess its support base and penetration of the BJP in 107 municipalities of the state and the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) that will go to polls in 2020.

The elections to civic bodies are being tipped as “mini assembly elections” ahead of the crucial 2021 assembly poll in West Bengal.

Speaking to PTI on condition of anonymity, TMC sources said that the survey would be conducted by the party with the active help of poll strategist Prashant Kishor and his I-PAC team. Following the TMC’s dismal performance in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the party had appointed the I-PAC to shore up its popularity in the state ahead of the 2021 assembly election.

“The survey would look into various aspects, including our support base among people, lo-



cal issues, image of the councillors, grievances of the locals and penetration of the BJP in those areas. If everything goes well, the survey is likely to start from November and by February 2020, we will have the report,” a senior TMC leader said.

Based on the report, the strategy and selection of candidates would be conducted for the

municipal polls, the leader said. The Trinamool Congress leadership has called a meeting of ward, block and district committees’ presidents on Tuesday.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supreme Mamata Banerjee, along with senior party functionaries and Prashant Kishor, will attend the meeting to pre-

pare a draft strategy for the municipal polls.

According to party sources, the results of the 107 municipal polls and the KMC, covering nearly 60 per cent of the state, will act as an indicator of a possible outcome of the 2021 assembly poll.

The municipal polls have acquired more importance due to the BJP making deep inroads in

the state and emerging as the main challenger to the ruling TMC by pushing the Congress and the Left Front to distant third and fourth position respectively.

The BJP in 2019 Parliamentary election bagged 18 out of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state, just four less than the ruling TMC. The TMC’s tally has come down from 34 in 2014 to 22 seats in this election.

Proud moment: Abhijit Banerjee’s alma mater

KOLKATA, OCT 14 (PTI): The Presidency University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and South Point School in the city, the alma mater of Nobel laureate for economics Abhijit Banerjee on Monday expressed their pride and happiness over his being named as a joint winner of the prestigious award.

Indian-American Abhijit Banerjee, his French-American wife Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer were declared winners of the Nobel Prize for economics on Monday.

Presidency University registrar Debajyoti Konar told PTI here, “The entire family of Presidency feels immensely proud of Banerjee.

He said Presidency feels happy that two of its alumni members - Amartya Sen and now Banerjee have been chosen for Nobel in Economics, for their works.

“Banerjee had been a member of our mentor group and has always offered us valuable suggestions about the economics department ... Whenever he visits Kolkata he makes it a point to visit his alma mater with which he is still associated,” Konar said.

Professor Anjan Mukherjee, who taught Banerjee at the Centre For Economic Studies and Planning, JNU, said he has sent his former student a congratulatory email. Banerjee had pursued his masters in economics from JNU.

“He (Banerjee) was a very good student, among the best that we have taught. We always expected that he would go far and he did.

“He has been at the forefront for many years. When his book came out in 2008, that is the time when we thought that he would get the Nobel. We were all hoping that he would get it,” Mukherjee told PTI.

“There are not too many teachers in India who can say that they have produced a Nobel laureate. All of us at the



Centre for Economics Studies and Planning can proudly say so,” he added. JNU vice-chancellor M Jagadesh Kumar also expressed pride at Banerjee’s achievement.

“Prof. Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee, a JNU alumnus (MA in Economics, 1983) wins Nobel Prize (together with two fellow economists) for contributing towards alleviating global poverty. JNU is proud of his achievement. Our alumni are torch bearers of JNU. We are proud of them,” he tweeted. “It is a great great achievement. We are proud of him.

It is also a great achievement for India as well,” Professor Shakti Kumar, chairperson of Centre for Economic Studies and Planning (CESP), JNU, told PTI.

Banerjee had then gone on to study in Harvard University and received his Ph.D in 1988.

In 2003, Banerjee founded the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) along with Duflo and Sendhil Mulainathan and he remains one of its directors.

The authority of South Point School, of which Banerjee was a student as a youngster, too expressed happiness and pride. “This is a matter of pride for us. His feat will inspire the students,” said Krishna Damani, the spokesman and trustee member of the school board.

“The students of South Point will be thrilled when they will think Banerjee had walked on the same cor-

ridor, and took notes from the same black board as a student of the school,” he said.

Banerjee had passed the higher Secondary examination from the institute in the 70s.

Damani said the students, faculty and non-teaching employees of the school will send a congratulatory mail to Banerjee when the school reopens after Puja vacation on Tuesday.

West Bengal Education minister Partha Chatterjee conveying his wishes to Banerjee and his wife Esther Duflo, who won the Nobel Prize for economics with him, said this is a defining moment for the state as he has been declared a winner of the prestigious award after Amartya Sen.

“We are also happy that he had been named as a member of the Presidency University mentor group by the West Bengal government five years ago,” Banerjee is currently the Ford Foundation International Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Presidency Alumni Association said in a statement said it takes enormous pride in the selection of Abhijit Banerjee as one of the recipients of Nobel Prize for Economics 2019.

“An alumnus of 1978-81, Economics, (Presidency College) Banerjee is the second Indian recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economics, after Amartya Sen, both students of Presidency College, now an University.

Euphoric Bengal proud of Banerjee’s Nobel win



KOLKATA/NEW DELHI, OCT 14 (PTI): West Bengal on Monday received with pride the news of Bengali origin Indian-American Abhijit Banerjee winning the 2019 Nobel Prize in Economics.

Banerjee, his wife Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer jointly won the Nobel “for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty.”

From his economist mother to politicians and academia-- all hailed Banerjee’s achievement.

“Hearty congratulations to Abhijit Banerjee, alumnus of South Point School & Presidency College Kolkata, for winning the Nobel Prize in Economics. Another Bengali has done the national proud. We are overjoyed,” Banerjee said in a tweet. The chief minister’s tweet came on a day when Sourav Ganguly, another Bengal icon and former India skipper, was set to assume the reins of the national cricket board.

Abhijit Banerjee is an alumnus of South Point School in the city and Presidency College, Calcutta, where he completed his BSC degree in economics in 1981. He received his PhD in 1988 from Harvard University.

The 58-year-old Banerjee is currently the Ford Foundation international professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Nirmala Banerjee, his mother, said it was a proud moment for her.

“I am very happy and proud of his achievements. I am yet to speak to him. I think he must be sleeping as it’s still night in the US,” she said.

“He was always a brilliant and a disciplined student,” she recalled.

About her 47-year-old daughter-in-law Esther Duflo, Banerjee said, “She is so young and so intelligent.”

The Presidency University, earlier Presidency College, said it was a proud moment for the institute that Banerjee, an alumni and a member of its mentor group, had won the Nobel Prize for Economics.

“Presidency University feels happy that two of its alumni members, both stalwarts in Economics - Amartya Sen and now Banerjee-- have been chosen for the Nobel in Economics,” University registrar Debajyoti Konar said.

Konar said Banerjee had visited the university last year. “Whenever he visits Kolkata he makes it a point to visit his alma mater with which he is still associated,” he said.

Banerjee’s former professors at Delhi’s Jawaharlal Nehru University, where he pursued his Masters in Economics, remembered him as among the “best” students they had taught.

Professor Anjan Mukherjee, who taught Banerjee at the Centre For Economic Studies and Planning, said he has sent his former student a congratulatory email.

Ganguly has made India and ‘Bangla’ proud: Mamata

KOLKATA, OCT 14 (PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday congratulated former Team India captain Sourav Ganguly, who has emerged as the consensus candidate for the post of BCCI president.

Extending good wishes to Ganguly, Banerjee said he has made India and ‘Bangla’ (West Bengal) proud.

“Wish you all the best for your term. We were

proud of your tenure as CAB (Cricket Association of Bengal) President.

Looking forward to a great new innings,” she tweeted.

Ganguly, who is currently the CAB chief, has pipped another former India batsman, Brijesh Patel, in a see-saw battle and is expected to be the only nominee for the president’s post at the Indian cricket board.

Prohibitory orders clamped in Ayodhya

AYODHYA, OCT 14 (PTI): Prohibitory orders under section 144 have been clamped in Ayodhya as the Supreme Court’s revised deadline for wrapping up the proceedings in the sensitive Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case approaches.

The prohibitory orders will continue till December 10, officials said. Posting the order on his official Twitter account, District Magistrate Anuj Kumar Jha said, “The order has been issued considering safety and security of Ayodhya and those visiting here as Govt’s paramount concerns.”

He added, “I must add that already there is another order in force since 31.08.2019 covering aspects of unlawful assemblies and undesirable activities. The order dated 12.10.2019 has been issued to cover a couple of points which were not there in the earlier order.” The administration has also demanded a large number of security forces to maintain law and order and communal harmony.

Jha told PTI that the order also restricts drones, unmanned aerial vehicle for filming and shooting inside Ayodhya.

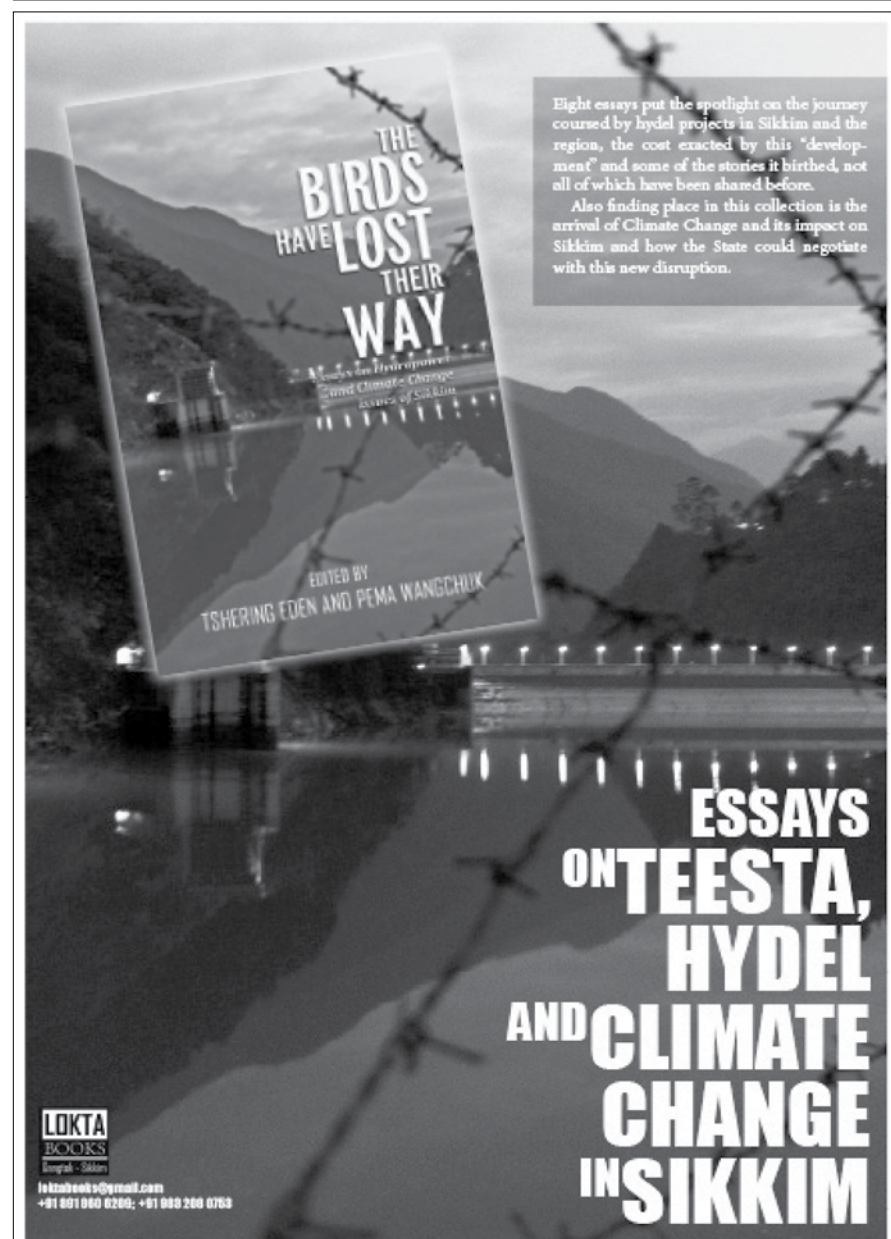
The sale and purchase of crackers will not be allowed on the occasion of Diwali without permission of the magistrate.

Section 144 prohibits assembly of four or more people and empowers the police to book people for rioting.

The protracted hearing in the politically sensitive Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute at Ayodhya entered into the crucial final leg on Monday when the Supreme Court resumed proceedings on the 38th day after the week-long Dussehra break.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, which started the day-to-day proceedings on August 6 after mediation proceedings failed to find an amicable solution to the vexatious dispute, has revised the deadline for wrapping up the proceedings and has fixed it on October 17.

Fourteen appeals have been filed in the apex court against the 2010 Allahabad High Court judgment, delivered in four civil suits, that the 2.77-acre land in Ayodhya be partitioned equally among the three parties -- the Sunni Waqf Board, the Nirmohi Akhara and Ram Lalla.



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US boxer Day 'extremely critical' after devastating knockout

LOS ANGELES, OCT 14 (AFP): American boxer Patrick Day was fighting for his life in critical condition in hospital on Sunday night after lapsing into a coma following a vicious knockout by Charles Conwell the night before.

The 27-year-old Day suffered a "traumatic injury" and underwent emergency brain surgery Saturday night after being knocked out by Conwell in a super welter-weight bout on the card at Chicago's Winstrust Arena.

"Patrick is in a coma caused by the injury and is in extremely critical condition," said fight promoter Lou DiBella.

"We appreciate the outpouring of support, prayers and offers of assistance from all corners of the boxing community," Day is in intensive care in Northwestern Memorial hospital. No specific details of Day's injuries were provided by the promoter.

Conwell asked his social media followers to pray for Day's recovery. "Keep him in your prayers!! #prayforpatrickday," he wrote on his Twitter page.

"Pat Day makes any room he is in a better place. Never saw him greet someone without a big smile," DiBella wrote on Twitter.

"Life doesn't seem fair sometimes. Please keep Pat in your prayers, thoughts and hearts."

Day was unconscious when he was taken from the ring in a stretcher and loaded onto a waiting ambulance. He suffered a seizure in the ambulance and needed a breathing tube once he arrived at the hospital.

Conwell, a 2016 American Olympian, was dominating the fight dropping Day in the fourth and eighth rounds and then landing a right hand in the 10th which caused Day to stumble.

Seconds later he rocked Day with a massive left hook that resulted in Day falling backwards and his head bouncing off the canvas. Referee Celestino Ruiz called off the fight at one minute, 46 seconds of the round.

Day lay on the canvas for several minutes while receiving medical treatment before being removed from the ring.

Day was coming off a loss in June to Carlos Adames in New York. He has 17 wins and four losses and one draw in his pro career which began in 2013.

Day was fighting on the undercard of Russian Dmitry Bivol's successful World Boxing Association light-heavyweight world title defence over Lenin Castillo.

There is no dependency on me: Chhetri

KOLKATA, OCT 14 (PTI): Expectations are always high from India's record goalscorer Sunil Chhetri but ahead of the team's World Cup qualifier against Bangladesh, the skipper said others players in the side are very much capable of outperforming him.

Having sat out of their historic goalless draw against Qatar, Chhetri will return to take charge of the team against Bangladesh but he played down his presence in the side.

"It was never about me, it will be never about me. It's always about India versus Bangladesh. I'm just one of the 23 players. I definitely have been lucky to have a little bit more experience and that's about it. There's no dependency on me from my team mates. We are one and we are going to play like one," Chhetri said on the eve of their group E fixture.

Gurpreet Singh Sandhu put up a heroic show in Chhetri's absence against Asian champions Qatar to come out with a historic goalless draw in their last World



Cup qualifier.

The 35-year-old said the secret to their success is India coach Igor Stimac's squad selection which is purely based on performance in the training.

"It was because of my absence that the team played good against Qatar, the players keep reminding me," he said in a lighter vein.

"This is one of the very good changes that we have in our team right now. The importance of who's going to play is so less and the important thing is the team that is

going to play under him (Stimac). He has come with no prejudice.

"Sometimes he has defied what I think or what you think. He just looks at you in the training and think. That's why we did so well against Qatar. That's the beauty of the team that we have right now. Everyday he keeps you on your toes and whoever does well in the training will going to play."

On his knack of finding the target, Chhetri said: "It comes naturally and sometimes it does not come. I don't try to

think like that. Will it do any good if I score a hat-trick but we go on to lose. For me it does not matter who scores the goal, I just need three points."

The Jamie Day-coached Bangladesh have made it clear that India will start as favourites with Chhetri being the main threat.

"I hope four people mark me. So me and four from the opposition are out and we are playing 10 versus six. I will be very happy then we will come to know about someone like Udanta (Singh), Ashique (Ku-

runiyan), (Abdul) Sahal, Manvir or Balwant."

"I will try to be as best that I can be. But if they want to mark, then it's good because we have better players who are in better shape than me. You will see them tomorrow," the 35-year-old said.

The match is set to witness a full house at the 65,000-capacity stadium and the talismanic India captain admitted that it would be a first-time experience for him and the entire team.

"Yesterday our coach asked how many of you have played for the national team with a packed crowd of 45,000-plus. My answer was 'I have not' then obviously nobody else has. It's a great feeling. I'm hope we hope the most out of it tomorrow."

"I have played a lot of games for my country but there are very few that have crossed 30-35,000 mark. I know a lot many gather for a Mohun Bagan-East Bengal derby but that's different. For a national team, it's really good and amazing when you anticipate a fan base of more than 45,000.

Australia's Mitch Marsh injures bowling hand punching wall

PERTH, OCT 14 (AFP): Australian Mitch Marsh was nervously waiting Monday to see how badly he has hurt his bowling hand after punching a dressing room wall in frustration during a weekend Sheffield Shield game.

The Western Australia all-rounder, who was recalled to the Test side for the final game of the Ashes against England last month, was on his way to a big score Sunday against Tasmania when he was caught and bowled for 53.

The match ended in a draw and Marsh took his frustrations out on the changing room, with reports that he may have fractured his hand.

"Western Australian captain Mitch Marsh injured his hand during (Sunday's) Sheffield

Shield match against Tasmania at the WACA ground," said a statement from his team.

"Marsh sustained the injury when he struck the wall in the change-rooms following his dismissal earlier in the day.

"The extent of the injury and a time frame on his return will be determined later this week after further investigation."

Western Australia's next match is against Victoria on Friday and missing it would be setback to Marsh's chances of further impressing selectors ahead of the first Test against Pakistan, which gets under way in Brisbane on November 21.

He was in the frame to retain his place in the side after taking 7-86 in the fifth and final Test against England at The Oval.

Poland, Russia reach Euro 2020 as Germany, Netherlands close in

PARIS, OCT 14 (AFP): Poland and Russia secured their places at Euro 2020 on Sunday with victories over North Macedonia and Cyprus respectively, while Germany and the Netherlands boosted their hopes of reaching the finals.

Russia eased to a 5-0 thrashing of 10-man Cyprus, with Poland joining them, Belgium and Italy in qualifying this week by seeing off North Macedonia 2-0.

Stanislav Cherchesov's Russia, who reached the World Cup quarter-finals on home soil last year, only had to avoid defeat in Nicosia to follow Belgium in qualifying from Group I.

Valencia winger Denis Cheryshev fired in a ninth-minute opener for the visitors, before Magomed Ozdov, who scored a fabulous long-range strike on Thursday against Scotland, made it two midway through the first half.

Any thoughts of a Cyprus comeback were ended in just the 28th minute when Kostas Laifis was dismissed for a nasty lunge on Russian full-back Sergei Petrov.

Striker Artem Dzyuba scored his third goal in two games in the 79th minute, before Aleksandr Golovin and Cheryshev's second completed the rout late on.

Russia will attempt to overtake Belgium, who beat Kazakhstan 2-0 earlier on Sunday, at the summit when they host the world's number one side on November 16.

The European Championship finals, which start on June 12 next year, are being held at 12 different venues across the continent, including Saint Petersburg in Russia.

Poland went into their game against North Macedonia knowing victory would punch their ticket for the Euros.

They were forced to be patient by the visitors, who could qualify through the playoffs after winning their Nations League group if they fail to do so automatically. But Przemyslaw Frankowski prodded home less than 60 seconds after coming on as a substitute in the 74th minute, before Akardiusz Milik made the points safe.

Poland remain three points clear of Austria, who won 1-0 in Slovenia, at the top of Group G, with North Macedonia and Slovenia five points further adrift.

- DUTCH SEE OFF BELARUS -

Ronald Koeman's Netherlands remained at the top of Group C ahead of Germany on head-to-head record with a nervy 2-1 win over Belarus in Minsk.

The Dutch lead third-placed Northern Ireland by three points after beating Michael O'Neill's side 3-1 on Thursday.

Georginio Wijnaldum headed the away team in front in the 32nd minute, shortly after Denis Laptev had spurned a golden chance to give Belarus a shock lead.

The Liverpool midfielder doubled the advantage before the break with a wonderful 25-yard strike into the top corner, and although Stanislav Dragun gave Belarus hope early in the second half, the Netherlands held on with relative comfort.

"We have to do better than we did in the second half, although in the end we had things under control," Dutch captain Virgil van Dijk told television channel NOS.

"We are now very close to qualifying for the finals, and ultimately that's what counts."

Victory in Belfast over the Northern Irish next month would secure the Oranje a first appearance at a major tournament since finishing third at the 2014 World Cup. Germany eased to a 3-0 victory in Estonia despite seeing Emre Can sent off in the 14th minute.

Ilkay Gundogan, who along with Can before kick-off 'unliked' a controversial Instagram post by Turkey forward Cenk Tosun, scored twice, with Timo Werner also finding the net.

Joachim Loew's side host Northern Ireland in their final game, which could decide second place.

"We had to regroup after the red card, the team did well after the break, we did not concede and scored three goals," said Loew.

Taking over at a time when BCCI image has got hampered: Ganguly

KUSHAN SARKAR

MUMBAI, OCT 14 (PTI): The new BCCI president-elect Sourav Ganguly's on Monday said "it's a great opportunity for him to do something good" as he is taking over the reigns of the board at a time when it's image has got a serious beating.

Ganguly pipped Brijesh Patel in a see-saw battle and is expected to be the only presidential nominee. "You need to wait till 3 pm in the afternoon," Ganguly told PTI during an interaction.

"Obviously, it's a great feeling as I have played for the country and captained the country.

"And I am taking over at a time when BCCI has not been in greatest of position for the last three years. Its image has got hampered quite a lot. It's a great opportunity for me to do something good," said the former India captain, who will have to demit office in July, due to compulsory cooling off period.

Ganguly also said his first priority in the short tenure would be to look after "first-class cricketers" The 47-year-old plans to meet all the stakeholders in Indian cricket and wants to do something that Committee of Administrators (CoA) didn't do for 33 months.

"We will speak to everyone first as we take a decision but my biggest priority will be to look after first class cricketers. I had requested that to the CoA for three years and they didn't listen. That's the first thing I will do, look after the financial health of our first-class cricketers," said Ganguly, who scored more than 18,000 international runs.

Being selected unopposed is a big responsibility, he admitted.

"Whether unopposed or not, there has to be responsibility as it is the biggest organisation in



world cricket. Financially, India is a cricketing powerhouse, so it will be a challenge," he said. Does he regret that the term will be only for nine months?

"Yes, that's the rule and we will deal with it."

For someone, who has won many close ODIs for India, Ganguly was emotionally intrigued by how the board room politics worked.

"I didn't know I would be the President when I came down. You (reporter) asked me and I told you it's Brijesh and when I went up and I came to know it has changed. I have never been in a BCCI election and I never knew it worked like this," he said. He had a meeting with Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday and when asked about whether he will have to campaign for BJP in Bengal, he answered in the negative.

"No, no nothing of that sort. Nobody told me anything," Ganguly said.

Jagmohan Dalmiya has pulled off some amazing board room coups and talking about the late BCCI boss, Ganguly got emotional.

"I have never imagined so (that I will be in shoes of late Jagmohan Dalmiya). He has been like a father to me. There has been some great presidents of BCCI, Mr Srinivasan, Anurag, who have done great job," he said.

So will it be different from captaincy? Ganguly answered, "Nothing can beat being an India captain.

ISL to replace as I-League as country's top league



NEW DELHI, OCT 14 (PTI):

Indian Super League (ISL) will replace the I-League as top-tier competition in the country as per a proposal presented by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) on domestic structure reforms in India.

The roadmap was formulated in a meeting of the I-League and ISL clubs with the officials of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the AFC in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Monday.

The officials of FSDL, the organisers of the ISL, were also present during the meeting.

As per the roadmap, the ISL champions would also be entitled to a play-off place in the AFC Champions League and the I-League champions would take a place in the AFC Cup in "a package that takes into consideration the recommendations of FIFA/AFC report of 2017".

"Everyone has to put the good of Indian football at the forefront and take the best decisions to develop Indian club football. The AFC will be very much involved to ensure the growth of the game to the next level with the pathway to a single league," AFC General Secretary Dato' Windsor John said in a statement.

"Every point of this package and it is a package has been thought-out extremely carefully and it is aimed simply at providing the best chance to develop Indian club football. We have informed AIFF that 10-12 teams are not enough for the

top League it must be bigger.

"Everyone has contributed to the development of the Indian club game - ISL, I-League clubs, the AIFF and the AFC and I am sure that if this roadmap is considered further, then Indian football will see the benefits for the game. We are now all working together to deliver the best future," he added.

AIFF General Secretary Kushal Das said the proposed roadmap is in the best interest of all stake holders of Indian football.

"We now have a roadmap which provides the best opportunity for Indian club football. I would like to thank the AFC and its General Secretary for their contribution in proposing a solution to this unique problem. India is an important country for football in Asia," he said.

"We have to be financially sustainable and take into consideration all commercial and contractual aspects of this plan because commerce is key to football not only in India but across the world of football.

"We must be cognisant of that fact of football life, that footballing legacy and investment are equally important for the development of Indian football," Das added.

The proposal will now be presented to the AFC Executive Committee and the AIFF Executive Committee for approval.

As per the proposed roadmap in 2019-20 season, the ISL will attain

Ecuador govt, protesters agree deal to end deadly unrest

QUITO, OCT 14 (AFP): Ecuador's president and indigenous leaders reached an agreement Sunday to end nearly two weeks of violent protests against austerity measures put in place to obtain a multi-billion-dollar loan from the IMF.

President Lenin Moreno met with Jaime Vargas, the head of the indigenous umbrella grouping CONAIE, for four hours of talks in the capital Quito broadcast live on state television.

"With this agreement, the mobilizations... across Ecuador are terminated and we commit ourselves to restoring peace in the country," said a joint statement, adding the government had withdrawn an order that removed fuel subsidies.

Rocketing prices after Moreno cut the subsidies to obtain a 4.2 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund sparked 12 days of demonstrations that left seven people dead.

The statement was read by an official from the United Nations, which mediated the talks along with the Catholic Church.

"The measures applied in all our territories are lifted," confirmed Vargas, wearing face paint and a head wreath of feathers.

Moreno had declared a curfew and placed Quito under military control to quell the unrest. On



Sunday, violent clashes continued before the talks began as police fought to disperse protesters who tried to put up a barricade of debris from Saturday's unrest.

"Native brothers, I have always treated you with respect and affection," Moreno said as the talks opened. "It was never my intention to affect the poorest sectors."

Protesters had converged on Quito from around the country. Authorities said 1,349 people had been injured and 1,152 detained in the demonstrations.

The violence forced Moreno to relocate his government to Ecuador's second city, Guayaquil, and hit the oil industry hard with the energy ministry suspending more than two-thirds of its distribution of crude.

Protesters seized three oil facilities in the Amazon. CONAIE had previously rejected an offer of dialogue but reversed course Saturday. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres earlier called on all groups "to commit to inclusive and meaningful talks, and to work in good faith towards a peaceful solution."

Ecuador's indigenous groups make up a quarter of the country's 17.3 million people. Thousands from disadvantaged communities from across the Amazon and the Andes have traveled to Quito to spearhead demands the subsidies be reinstated.

Demonstrators on Saturday ransacked and set fire to the building housing the comptroller general's office, which was shrouded in thick

smoke after being attacked with fire bombs.

The prosecutor's office said 34 people were arrested.

Protesters on Saturday also targeted a television station and a newspaper. The Teleamazonas TV channel interrupted its regular broadcast to air images of broken windows, a burned vehicle and heavy police presence on the scene.

The station evacuated 25 employees, none of them hurt.

Nearby, protesters built barricades in front of the National Assembly building as police fired tear gas at them.

"We have nothing to do with the events at the comptroller's office and Teleamazonas," said CONAIE. El Comercio newspaper reported on Twitter that its offic-

es were attacked by a "group of unknowns." Protesters did not immediately heed the curfew that went into effect on Saturday, with security forces struggling to impose order in some parts of the city.

"Where are the mothers and fathers of the police? Why do they let them kill us?" cried Nancy Quinyupani, an indigenous woman.

The restrictions in Quito, a city of 2.7 million, came on top of a state of emergency Moreno had declared on October 3, deploying some 75,000 military and police and imposing a nighttime curfew in the vicinity of government buildings.

Moreno is struggling with an economic crisis that he blames on waste and corruption by Correa's administration.

Britain, EU enter make-or-break Brexit week

LONDON, OCT 14 (AFP) Britain and the European Union on Monday enter a pivotal week that determines if they are still on course to reach amicable divorce terms -- and when Brexit might finally occur.

Queen Elizabeth II is due to step into the fray by performing her ceremonial duty of informing parliament about the government's agenda for the coming year.

But the odds of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's tenure lasting that long will depend largely on the outcome of hurried discussions held behind closed doors in Brussels around the same time.

EU leaders will then meet on Thursday and Friday for a summit held under the pressures of the October 31 Brexit deadline just two weeks away.

Diplomats see little hope that the sides can achieve in a few days what they had failed to in the more than three years since Britons first voted to leave the bloc after nearly 50 years.

"A lot of work remains to be done," EU negotiator Michel Barnier told ambassador Sunday.

Technical talks are continuing -- variously described as "intense" or "constructive" -- but few familiar with the process can point to progress on the decisive issue of British Northern Ireland's

place in the EU customs zone.

Johnson warned his ministers Sunday to brace for a cliff-hanger finish.

The British leader said "a pathway to a deal could be seen but that there is still a significant amount of work to get there and we must remain prepared to leave on October 31."

Johnson rose to power in July on a promise not to extend Brexit for a third time this year -- even if only a few more weeks are needed to get a deal done.

Breaking that pledge could come back to haunt him in an early general election that most predict for the coming months. Johnson is under parliamentary orders to seek an extension until January 31 of next year if no deal emerges by Saturday.

He has insisted that he will both follow the law and get Britain out by October 31 -- a contradiction that might end up being settled in court.

Outgoing EU chief Jean-Claude Juncker said British politics were getting more difficult to decipher than the riddle of an "Egyptian sphinx".

"If the British ask for more time, which they probably will not, it would in my view be a historical nonsense to refuse them," Juncker told Austria's Kurier

newspaper.

Something will have to give when the British parliament holds its first emergency Saturday meeting since the 1982 Falklands War.

Johnson could theoretically then try to put up a fight and refuse to sign off on a Brexit extension request.

His refusal would immediately be contested in court.

The EU leaders could complicate matters further still by deciding to offer Britain extension terms that parliament cannot accept.

But Brussels might want to push Brexit back further into next year so that it stops interfering with all the other European issues piling up.

A long delay would be untenable for many euro-skeptics ahead of an early election that some expect as early as December.

But a short one of a few months might only come on the condition that it is the last.

The last and seemingly least likely outcome would see parliament vote on an actual agreement reached in Brussels against all odds this week. Brussels insists that the ball is now in Johnson's court.

"If the British government wants a solution, it must move quickly now," a European diplomat told AFP. "The clocking is ticking."

Hungary opposition wins Budapest in blow for PM Orban: partial results

BUDAPEST, OCT 14 (AFP): Hungary's opposition scored a shock win in the Budapest mayoralty election Sunday, the first electoral blow for nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban since he came to power in 2010.

With around 89 per cent of votes counted, centre-left challenger Gergely Karacsony led by around 50 per cent of the vote ahead of the incumbent mayor Istvan Tarlos on around 45 per cent.

In office since 2010, Tarlos, backed by Orban's right-wing Fidesz party, congratulated the 44-year-old challenger by telephone, a spokesperson for Karacsony told AFP. "The government respects the decision of Budapest's citizens," a government spokesman told local media. Karacsony had

compared the Budapest race to the Istanbul mayoral election in March, in which the candidate of Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan's party was defeated by the opposition challenger.

The nationwide municipal elections were seen as a rare chance for the beleaguered opposition to roll back the power of nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Opposition parties across the political spectrum had joined forces to wrest control of Budapest and deny Orban's party landslide wins nationwide for the first time in almost a decade.

In many municipalities just one opposition challenger lined up against Fidesz, offering it a chance of competing under electoral rules changed Orban that re-

ward the biggest party. A swathe of larger cities outside the capital were also won by the unified opposition. "This election proves that opposition co-operation works, the opposition reached its best result in years with the new strategy," said Andras Biro-Nagy, an analyst with Policy Solutions.

The elections were seen as a litmus test for the opposition's new strategy, which could offer a way to challenge Orban in the next general election in 2022.

"Budapest is the big prize, but the breakthrough in numerous provincial cities is at least as important," said Biro-Nagy.

"It is the first crack in the Orban system, and it seems guaranteed that the strategy will continue for 2022," he said.

Trump backs Giuliani, but some aides wish he would cut ties

WASHINGTON (AP): President Donald Trump on Saturday stood behind personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, one of his highest-profile and most vocal defenders, amid reports that federal prosecutors in the city Giuliani led as mayor are eyeing him for possible lobbying violations. Behind the scenes, however, many of Trump's closest aides and advisers, inside and outside the White House, quietly wish the president would cut ties with Giuliani, whose leadership of New York after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks earned him worldwide admiration and the moniker of "America's mayor."

Giuliani was a force in Trump's defense during the lengthy Russia investigation by the special counsel.

Yet the effort to undermine special counsel Robert Mueller led Giuliani to Ukraine, which now entangles the former federal prosecutor and mayor in legal jeopardy and is central to the danger threatening the presidency he labored to protect.

The New York Times reported Friday, citing a pair of anonymous sources familiar with the matter, that the investigation is linked to Giuliani's efforts to undermine Marie Yovanovitch, formerly the US ambassador to Ukraine. The US attorney's office in Manhattan has declined to comment on the Times report.

Two Florida businessmen with ties to Giuliani were charged Thursday with federal campaign finance violations.

Both played key roles in Giuliani's efforts to get Ukraine to launch a corruption investigation into Democratic presidential contender Joe Biden and his son Hunter, who sat on the board of a gas company there. On Saturday, Trump deployed in Giuliani's defense the same two-word phrase "Witch Hunt!" he repeatedly used to attack the legitimacy of the special counsel investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and now the House impeachment inquiry against him.

"So now they are after the legendary 'crime buster' and greatest Mayor in the history of NYC, Rudy Giuliani," Trump tweeted while on the way to his northern Virginia golf club. "He may seem a little rough around the edges sometimes, but he is also a great guy and wonderful lawyer." Later Saturday, he told Jeanine Pirro during a telephone interview broadcast on her Fox News Channel program that Giuliani continues as his lawyer.

"He's a great gentleman. He was a great mayor, one of the greatest, maybe the great-



est mayor in the history of New York," the president said. "He was a fantastic prosecutor. I know nothing about him being under investigation ... I can't imagine it."

"He's a man that looks for corruption and whatever he does I really believe he's a totally, I mean, I know he's an honorable man," Trump added.

A whistleblower complaint about Trump's dealings with Ukraine led Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to open an impeachment inquiry into the president.

Three House committees taking depositions in the impeachment probe heard Friday from Yovanovitch.

The former ambassador has said she was fired from her post in May after insisting that Giuliani's requests to Ukrainian officials for investigations be relayed through official channels, according to a former diplomat who has spoken with her.

The former diplomat spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private conversation. Trump seemed to try to create space between himself and Giuliani on Friday when reporters asked if Giuliani was still representing him.

"Well, I don't know. I haven't spoken to Rudy," Trump said as he left the White House for a trip to Louisiana, adding that the two spoke briefly on Thursday. "He's a very good attorney, and he has been my attorney. Yeah, sure." Asked if he still represented Trump, Giuliani replied to The Associated Press with a one-word text message: "Yes."

White House officials have been flab-

bergasted by Giuliani's performance on Trump's behalf, particularly his habit of revealing embarrassing information without so much as a heads-up to the president's full-time aides. Aides have come to view Giuliani's behavior much as they have their boss' with resignation that they will rarely be consulted beforehand to develop a strategic plan, and that any plan will be ignored.

One White House aide said there was frustration among aides that they have borne the brunt of criticism from some in Trump's orbit for not having a more coordinated response to the impeachment probe, saying they were operating without visibility into what Giuliani has been doing. The aide and others who spoke on this subject did so on the condition of anonymity.

White House lawyers rarely deal with Giuliani directly, preferring to coordinate when necessary with Jay Sekulow, viewed as the more even-keeled lawyer on the president's outside team.

Aides who spoke on this subject said the general feeling among them is that Trump has yet to fully grasp the extent of Giuliani's side-dealings and hope Trump will eventually sour on his fellow New Yorker.

Giuliani was first brought on as the public face of Trump's defense of the Russia investigation, with Trump valuing his pugnacious style from the 2016 campaign and his reputation as "America's mayor."

Giuliani wanted to be secretary of state, but ended up withdrawing from consideration for a Cabinet post.

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HANDSOME HEMSWORTH! The actor, Chris Hemsworth takes the stage for a Q&A panel at the 2019 ACE Comic-Con at Rosemont, Illinois.

Kanye West Confirms He Recently Converted to Christianity

While the masses thrilled by Kanye West's announcement during a listening session at George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C. on Saturday, that Jesus Is King is now tentatively slated for an October 25 release, another interesting revelation occurred.

Kanye confirmed that he recently converted to Christianity, TMZ reports. "I want to let you know that I am not here for your entertainment this afternoon," West told the crowd. "We are here to spread the gospel."

"Excuse me if I mispronounce anything," he added. "I am a recent convert. It means I recently got saved within this year."

Given his ongoing Sunday Service events and his vow to move away from making secular music in favor of creating only gospel music, West fully committing to his faith by becoming a Christian convert falls in line with his recent exploits.

Kanye's pastor, Adam Tyson, hinted at this new direction by revealing how West reacts

to people cursing in his presence.

"If somebody cusses in his presence, I've heard him say a couple of times, 'Hey, man, you can't cuss when you're with me. I'm a born-again Christian,'" Tyson said on the Pure Flix Podcast. "Who's gonna say that if they're not meaning that they want Christ to be exalted in all that they do? [He told me], 'From



now on, all I want to do is serve Christ. I want every song that I sang, to have part of my testimony, to include the gospel, and to include the element of worship to our great God. That's what I want to do."

Jesus Is King is now slated to drop the same day as his IMAX film Jesus Is King: A Kanye West Experience, which will be in select theaters until October 31.

For Huda Kattan, beauty has become a billion-dollar business

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — From a humble start of leaving the world of finance to write a beauty blog, Huda Kattan now has become one of the most recognizable names in makeup around the world.

"I do think the idea of makeup as a form of self-expression will just grow even more," Kattan told The Associated Press in Dubai. "I don't think it's going to be about beautifying anymore."

Kattan reaches customers through a YouTube channel where she uploads all her makeup tutorials. Her brand's Instagram account boasts more than 39 million followers, along with her seven million followers on Facebook. Her beauty line has found success globally, and especially across the Mideast and Persian Gulf, where Huda's business model has been particularly successful.

So-called "beauty influencers" are seeing strong growth in the United Arab Emirates, a federation of seven sheikhdoms home to Dubai. They also play an important role in showcasing beauty and personal care products in Saudi Arabia, which has the highest number of active users in the region on social media platforms.

According to Euromonitor International, big brands in the UAE such as Mac, Bobbi Brown and Estee Lauder "saw slight declines in their value shares in 2018, due to the stronger competition from smaller brands" like Huda Beauty, singer Rihanna's brand Fenty Beauty and Charlotte Tilbury.

As makeup sales slow in Europe and the U.S., they continue to grow in the Mideast. From 2018 to 2023, Euromonitor predicts a 7.2% growth in the color cosmetics industry across the Mideast, with a 2.9% growth across the Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This year alone, the color cosmetics market is valued at \$2.3 billion in the Mideast, growing to \$3.1 billion by 2023, according to Euromonitor.

Kattan said her business remained

strong because of her focus on the Mideast. Unlike in many Western countries where more natural makeup looks are in vogue, women across Arab Gulf countries often lean toward bright, eye-catching makeup trends and accessories that offset the utilitarianism of black veils and abayas. That complements the bold colors of Kattan's lines.

Kylie, so many other brands. But in reality it's becoming super competitive and sales are dropping for almost every beauty brand out there," said Mona Kattan while sitting beside Huda at their office in Dubai. "And the only way you can survive is if you have a really purposeful mission and a strong identity and you're trying to be different and that's what



"I feel like it's very normal in a cosmetic business to go after the No. 1 beauty business or the industry, which is the U.S.," she said. "Of course, I do want to go for the U.S., but I still feel like there's so much to do in this part of the world."

That focus has served her well so far. With a net worth of more than \$600 million, Kattan was named one of the "10 most powerful influencers in the world of beauty" in 2017 by Forbes magazine and was named by Time as one of the 25 most influential people on the internet.

Kattan's makeup line includes lipsticks, eyeshadow palettes, foundation and highlighters among other products. She now is expanding her empire with a newly launched perfume line headed by her business partner and sister, Mona. Huda Kattan has also started a reality web show on Facebook's Watch service.

"I think there's a buzz of the beauty brands that have boomed and created billion-dollar brands like Huda Beauty,

we've always tried to do."

Huda Kattan also plans a soon-to-come skincare line.

"You know, I never really had great skin and I always wanted to feel comfortable not wearing makeup, and I finally feel like that for the first time in my life," she said.

"So makeup shouldn't be a need, it should be like a want. Like men!" she added with a laugh. The 36-year-old Iraqi-American now runs her eponymous empire Huda Beauty, a makeup line valued at \$1.2 billion that has fast become a favorite among A-list celebrities and artists around the world.

Her personality has been key in connecting to the public via social media, a major driver for her makeup known for its vibrant color and contouring popular among Arab women. She's part of a growing vanguard of lines built around personalities, an expanding business model as more-established brands face slower sales.

I'd love to get paid as much as my male co-stars: Kareena

MUMBAI, OCT 14 (PTI): Actor Kareena Kapoor Khan says she has never walked out of a film due to pay disparity but hopes to get paid as much as her male co-stars in films. At the Jio MAMI Movie Mela with Star, 2019, Kareena was in conversation with filmmaker Karan Johar and Alia Bhatt. When asked if she has ever walked out of a film because she was getting paid less, the actor said, "There were probably different reasons of walking out of films, but not because of this particular reason. I'd love to get paid as much as my male co-stars though."

Kareena recently worked in Johar's home production "Good News", co-starring Akshay Kumar. When Johar asked, that one would assume Kareena and Akshay would've gotten paid equally, Kareena quipped, "Please pay me as much as you paid Akshay Kumar I'll run out of MAMI!"

Johar, however, said there is a larger understanding of the economics of movies that sometimes is "lesser known by people who don't understand the business and how it

functions." "Many times, people make sweeping statements about it. I'm the first person who'll always want to pay what is completely right and justified and valid. I've always done it. But I feel there's a larger understanding of the budget versus the verticals that you sell on digital and satellite that are driven by different data."

"Sometimes the data of satellite and digital look at the history of the artiste, male or female I'm not specifying, and that determines a certain price factor and then thode determine the final cost of what you pay," he added. The filmmaker said there are many women who deserve much more money than the men and there are men who have earned that because of their talent and just the work they have put in.

"So, it's very subjective and cannot be just put into one strong slot. While I'm all about equality, when it comes to love and paying people, but there are larger optics to look at where we have to."

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ARIES: This is the new beginning you have been manifesting, Aries. Some of you could be making your way up the ladder. Did somebody say promotions? Others may be on the brink of beginning a dream project. Either way, you need to be alert and active, ready to capitalise on every opportunity that comes your way. This is what will help you advance your career to the next level.

TIP: Having a plan of action will keep you focused on the right track.

TAURUS: You are stepping into a brand new phase, one that promises both emotional fulfilment and material rewards. When in doubt, listen to your heart. She will always guide you towards your higher purpose. For those experiencing the 'another day, another drama' syndrome, this is a reminder to tap into your compassionate side. People around you are dealing with turbulence on a personal or professional level.

TIP: Listen to your heart.

GEMINI: Let's talk about your sacred purpose, Gemini. The reason you jump out of bed as soon as the alarm rings. This week

brings with itself a sense of alignment. The more confident you are in your abilities, the more you will be able to shine your light on the world. Is there a correspondence you have been waiting on? Positive news is on its way to you.

TIP: Find your true calling.

CANCER: Another day, another drama? If you're the common denominator in the clashes here, you know you've got a problem, Cancer. Could you be letting the chaos within create conflict without? See how and where you need to realign. Sometimes, stepping away from an argument is the best way to salvage the situation and keep your sanity intact.

TIP: Beware of bringing your personal issues into the workspace.

LEO: Daily reminder: age is not a factor. Neither is the number of years you have worked in the industry. This Sunday brings with itself the promise of a fresh start, one that is aligning you with the future you have always dreamed of. Carpe diem, Leo! Here's a Robin Sharma classic that will inspire you

to embrace the change: "Dream big, start small, act now."

TIP: It's never too late to start over.

VIRGO: None of us like to do the heavy lifting on a Monday morning. But you don't have a way out of this, Virgo. There are pending decisions that require your immediate attention. Remember, saying yes to one thing means saying no to another, and that doesn't have to be a bad thing.

TIP: Expansion is on the cards.

LIBRA: Word of wisdom courtesy Osho: "The greatest fear in the world is the opinion of others. And the moment you are unafraid of the crowd, you are no longer a sheep, you become a lion. A great roar arises in your head, a roar of freedom." Your birthday month has been quite the rollercoaster ride, Libra, one that's made you question your own beliefs and transform negative thought patterns.

TIP: You are becoming more you than you have ever been.

SCORPIO: If there's anything your past experiences have taught you, it's the importance of being seen and heard at the right

places and placing your project strategically. There's no harm in tooting your own horn occasionally if it gets you noticed by the right people. The good news? Being proactive will help you set the wheels in motion. The project that's been stuck for a while could surprise you too.

TIP: It's a get-set-go kind of day.

SAGITTARIUS: A powerful affirmation to transform you into a money magnet: "I am aligned with the energy of wealth and abundance." Repeat these powerful words to yourself in the mirror, or write them down on a piece of paper. Trust that you will spark off a change that is both internal and external.

TIP: It's time to make massive changes in the money department.

CAPRICORN: "Some people never go crazy. What truly horrible lives they must lead." A Bukowski quote to remind you of the importance of creative rebellion. Don't be afraid to push the boundaries. You're not doing this to make a statement. You're simply finding new ways to challenge yourself. This day also promises to bring wit itself a

surge of new ideas. Write them down, so you can develop them over the next few days.

TIP: Don't be afraid to push the boundaries.

AQUARIUS: Your life could feel a bit like a multiple choice question round. The method of elimination will help separate the wheat from the chaff. When in doubt, turn inwards. Your heart knows the best way forward. In love, let truth and integrity be your magic words. Don't stick it out simply because things look fantastic on paper. If you're seeking something deeper, communicate your needs to your partner.

TIP: Your heart always knows the best way forward.

PISCES: Despite your experimental ways, you're learning the importance of going by the book. When in doubt, research. This will give you an edge over your competitors. Do you know somebody who has walked this path before? Don't be afraid to turn to your mentor for guidance. They could inspire you to see things in a way you never have while awakening you to your true potential.

TIP: Refer to the rule book.