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# Summit **TIMES**

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## Sikkim Himalayan becomes first local team in 40 yrs to reach Gold Cup finals

**SAGAR CHHETRI**  
GANGTOK, 09 NOV:

Sikkim Himalayan Sporting Club today became the first local team to make it to the finals of the All India Governor's Gold Cup Football Tournament after a gap of forty years.

Sikkim Himalayan came up tops against Royal Football Club of Siliguri in the keenly contested first semi-final match of the tournament played here at Paljor Stadium under floodlights on Saturday evening.

The match drew a handsome crowd and the spectators were treated to some riveting football with the home team emerging



victorious at 3-1.

Both teams took to the field raring to go and started strong with attacking plays. After missing some good opportunities to snatch an early lead, Uttam Rai finally scored the lead for the home team to end the first half 1-0.

The second half was again full of attacks and counterattacks launched by both teams. Midway through the second half, Royal FC was awarded a direct free-kick just outside the home team D-box area, which was beautifully converted into

the equaliser by captain Adash Tamang.

When the match appeared headed to a 1-1 draw, Sikkim Himalayan made a very good comeback into the match. John Kane extended the lead for the home team with a beautiful goal in the dying minutes of



the match and another goal by his teammate, Eugene Nimako in the injury time sealed a 3-1 victory for Sikkim Himalayan SC.

The second semi-final match of the tournament will be played between Sikkim Police and Mohammedan Sporting

Club on Sunday afternoon at 2 PM.

Gangtok Municipal Corporation was the first local team to make it to the finals of the Governor's Gold Cup Football Tournament, something it pulled off in the inaugural edition back in 1979 and a feat

which had not been match since until Sikkim Himalayan burst through the scene this year. The GMC team also beat BSF, Kadamtala, in the finals that year to lift the trophy. We shall know on 12 November whether Sikkim Himalayan SC has the legs to

become the second local team to lift the Gold Cup.

Making the day even more special was the presence of Governor Ganga Prasad as the chief guest today. Also on the occasion, Sikkim Football Association felicitated one of its founding members, Pannalal Chatterjee, for his contributions towards the All India Governor's Gold Cup Football Tournament since its inception. It is informed that Mr Chatterjee also holds the national record for witnessing the most number of FIFA World Cup Football tournaments, a record he holds along with his wife at ten World Cups.

## Sikkim power lifters bring home gold from National C'ship

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
GANGTOK, 09 Nov:

Two power lifters from Sikkim have returned home with two gold medals from the 44th National Power Lifting Championship held from 03 to 05 November at Jammu. Asal Rai and Tashi Gyatso Lachungpa won a gold medal each in their respective weight categories for Sikkim.

Asal Rai won a gold medal in his 100 kgs weight category by lifting the total weight of 500 kgs, while Tashi Gyatso lifted a total of 525 kgs of weight in his 82.5 kgs to clinch a gold medal.

The two-member Body Building & Power Lifting Association of Sikkim [BBPLAS] team was accompanied by

Yogesh Rai as the team manager for the championship.

Addressing a press conference here today, BBPLAS president, Kala Rai congratulated both lifters for winning gold medals and laurels for the State in the national championship.

The duo's achievement in the national level will inspire and motivate promising and young lifters in the State, she said. She further expressed hope that the concerned government department would support the association to bring out more national and international athletes from the State.

BBPLAS general secretary, Pema WD Bhutia said that the duo's achievement was

a prestigious moment for the association and state. He also shared that BBPLAS plans to organise the state level bodybuilding championship in the State this December.

BBPLAS vice-president, Yogesh Rai, who accompanied the team as the manager, informed that lifters from 10 States had participated in the championship. Except for the two-member team from Sikkim other participating States had big contingents in the championship, he added.

However, it was a proud moment for the state when both members in the team won gold medals with their outstanding performances, said Mr Rai. He

added that it was a historic and proud moment for the entire powerlifting community of the State.

Likewise, Asal Thapa expressed his happiness on winning the first national gold medal for the State. He said that the competition was really tough and to win a gold medal in such a competitive event was a very big moment for him.

Tashi Gyatso said that his hard work has finally borne fruit in the form of his first national gold medal. He encouraged young upcoming lifters of the State that hard work was the key to success. He also thanked every individual for their support in getting him to this level.



THE SKIES OVER SIKKIM stopped people on their tracks on Saturday evening as they fished out their phones to capture the mesmerizing play of colors that unfolded above them. Social media was also flooded with photos of the evening sky. Gold transcending to pink and red, the skies offered a treat to Gangtokians and tourists alike. The Khangchendzonga, of course, looked even more magnificent on this red canvas.

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or call us at 03592-208698

## SC paves way for temple at disputed site at Ayodhya, alternative land for mosque

**NEW DELHI, NOV 9 (PTI):** The Supreme Court on Saturday paved the way for the construction of a Ram Temple by a Trust at the disputed site at Ayodhya, and directed the Centre to allot an alternative 5-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a new mosque at a "prominent" place in the holy town in Uttar Pradesh.

In a bid to put an end to the more than a century old dispute that has torn the social fabric of the nation, the court in a unanimous 5-0 verdict ruled that the 2.77 acres of disputed land where the demolished Babri Masjid once stood will remain with a Central government receiver and be handed over to a Trust within three months for the construction of the temple.

"The faith of the Hindus that Lord Ram was born at the demolished structure is undisputed," ruled a 5-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi weeks after a mar-

athon 40-day hearing--the second longest in the history of apex court. Justice Gogoi is due to retire on November 17.

The verdict in the politically-sensitive Ram Jambhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case, one of the most important and most anticipated judgements in India's history, runs into 1,045-page pages.

The disputed site in Ayodhya was occupied by the 16th century Babri mosque which was destroyed by Hindu kar sevaks on December 6, 1992. The demolition had triggered communal riots.

The apex court bench, also comprising Justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S Abdul Nazeer, said possession of the disputed 2.77 acre land rights will be handed over to the deity 'Ram Lalla', who is one of the three litigants in the case.

It said the new mosque should be constructed at a "prominent site" **turn to pg02**

**THEME : "TAKE THE LEAD, KNOW YOUR HIV STATUS"**

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**RED FEST**

**MULTI MEDIA CAMPAIGN**

**2019-2020**

**CASH PRIZE:**  
**1st PRIZE- Rs 70,000**  
**2nd PRIZE-Rs 50,000**  
**3rd PRIZE- Rs 30,000**

**REGISTRATION CLOSING ON 12TH NOVEMBER 2019**

**RULES AND GUIDANCE**

- The competition is only for local bands of Sikkim and the language should be English.
- All Genres of music, except Death Metal.
- Bands should prepare two songs. One original on the theme "Take the Lead, Know your HIV status" and the second can be a cover song.
- Participating bands should mail the bio-data, original lyrics and contact details of the band to [iecsikkimsacs@gmail.com](mailto:iecsikkimsacs@gmail.com)
- The bands will be provided Travel Allowance (TA) for the District level audition & the Grand Finale.
- The winner will represent the State in the 2nd North East Multi Media Competition scheduled on 18th December 2019 at Imphal, Manipur.

**You can also follow us on:**

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## North holds Inter School Energy Club Competition

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 09 Nov:

The State Designated Agency, Sikkim, organised the District Level Inter School Energy Club Competition for North District on 08 Nov at Zilla Panchayat Bhawan, Mangan, North Sikkim, a press release informs.

Three Energy Club Schools participated in the competition namely Government Secondary School Gor, Government Secondary School, Passingdang and Government Secondary School Tingvong.

On the occasion, District Planning Officer (North), Pempa Tshering Lepcha, was the chief guest while the jury members were Executive

Engineer (Mangan), Karma Zamyang, Executive Engineer (Chungthang), Thenley Gyamtso Bhutia and Assistant Engineer (SDA), Sigratha Pradhan.

Also present were senior officers Chief Engineer (SDA), DN Khatiwara, Panchayat members, Teachers, staff and students of different schools had witness the competition.

In the Power Point Presentation Competition, Ringzum Lepcha, Government Sec. School, Passingdang stood first followed by Richamit Lepcha, Government Sec. School, Gor in second position and Arip Lepcha, Government Sec. School, Tingvong in third position.



In Essay Writing, Tarmit Lepcha, Government Sec. School, Gor, stood first followed by Dawkey Lepcha, Government Sec. School, Tingvong in second position.

In Elocution, Kesongmit Lepcha, Government Sec. School,

Gor stood first followed by Lyangmit Lepcha, Government Sec. School, Tingvong, in second position and Gurummit Lepcha, Govt Sr. Sec. School, Passingdang in third position.

In Skit, Government Sec. School, Tingvong came first followed by

Government Sec. School, Passingdang in second position and Government Sec. School, Gor in third position. Superintending Engineer (SDA), Pemba Lepcha, welcomed all the guests and students, and expressed gratitude to all the Energy Club co-ordinators and students for

taking active participation in the Energy Conservation movement.

Chief Engineer (SDA), D. N. Khatiwara, highlighted the achievements of State Designated Agency, Sikkim and importance of Energy Conservation. The chief guest and senior officials gave away cash prizes and certificates to the winners.

The winning students and schools will be participating in the state level competition on 14 Dec 2019 during Energy Conservation Day.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Junior Engineer (SDA), Saran Subba, and program was conducted by JE (SDA), Tek Maya Darjee.

## CM meets Singhi Cham troupe in Delhi



NEW DELHI, 09 Nov

[IPR]:

The dance which is being choreographed by Nanda Kumar Chettri and coordinated by Ranjana Pradhan and Sheetal Shontang is representing the state of Sikkim in the ongoing North East Festival at Janpath, New Delhi.

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## Gyalshing college performs Singhi Cham in NE Fest



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 09 Nov:

A team of Sikkim Government College, Gyalshing, represented Sikkim in the ongoing North East Festival at Janpath in New Delhi. In the festival, students of Sikkim Government College, Gyalshing performed Singhi Cham in the festival on Friday which was received well by the au-

dience.

The cham was performed by Kham Sum Dorjee Bhutia, Dhan Tshering Lepcha, Phur Temba Bhutia, Tendong Lepcha and Subash Sanyas.

The cham was choreographed by Nanda Kumar Chettri and co-ordinated by Sheetal Shontang Rai and Ranjana Pradhan.

## Special Christian Programme concludes at Jorethang



JORETHANG, 09 Nov

[IPR]:

Two-day Special Christian Programme of Sikkim Healing Crusade 2019 concluded at Jore-

thang Public Ground, South Sikkim, today.

Minister for Agriculture, Lok Nath Sharma attended the occasion as the chief guest.

The programme was also attended by the wife of the Chief Minister of Sikkim, Krishna Rai as the guest of honour and the Political Secretary to the Chief Minister, Jacob Khaling as the special guest.

The programme also had the presence of Rev. Dr Chet Bahadur Khar-el from Kathmandu as the key note speaker, Christian leaders and large number of devotees from all around the State.

## New building construction begins at Lingi Payong school

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 09 Nov:

The construction of eight-roomed school building sanctioned by Education Department, Government of Sikkim, has started at Lingi Payong Secondary School, South Sikkim, a press release informs.

The ceremonial rituals were performed on Monday by the contractors, Manorath Gautam, Raj Kumar Gautam and Bhumi Nanda Gautam.

The building has been sanctioned af-



ter the upgradation of the school from Junior

High School to Secondary School in the year 2016.

## Organic farming training at Navey Shotak

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 08 Nov:

One-day training and demonstration program was organized on 07 Nov by International Panaacea Limited and Sikkim Organic Mission under FS&AD Department, Government of Sikkim for the farmer community of Phachey & Navey Ward under Navey Shotak GPU, a press release informs.

The program was attended by Agricul-

ture Development Officer, Hissey Bhutia, and Horticulture Inspector, Kabita Basnet from the Horticulture Department, and Progressive Farmers of Pachey & Navey, Navey Shotak GPU.

Field Executives of International Panaacea Limited, Renuka Ghimirey, Tshering Doma Bhutia and Sonam Ongmu Bhutia briefed about the activities of Organic Farming, In-

ternational Control System and Certification programme.

ADO, Ms Bhutia urged the farmers to learn and apply the Indigenous Technical Knowledge on their farm.

Similar training and demonstration programmes were also held at Namrang Ward of Tumin, Rawtek ward of Rawtek Rumtek, Takchang Kaizaley Ward of Taza GPU and 9th Mile ward of Lingdok GPU.

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## 40-day hearing in Ayodhya land dispute case was 2nd longest in SC's history

NEW DELHI, Nov 9 (PTI):

The hearing in the politically and religiously sensitive decades-old temple-mosque land dispute in Ayodhya was the second longest proceedings in the history of the Supreme Court which had lasted for 40 days.

The high voltage hearing in the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute involving 2.77 acres of land had commenced on August 6 and concluded on October 16, and the apex court pronounced the verdict on Saturday.

In the unanimous verdict the court cleared the way for the construction of a Ram Temple at the disputed site, and directed the Centre to allot a 5-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a mosque.

In one of the most important and most anticipated judgements in India's history, a 5-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi put an end to the more than a century old dispute that has torn the social fabric of the nation.

The arguments in the matter were the second longest after the landmark Keshvanand Bharti case in 1973 during which the proceedings for propounding the doctrine of basic structure of the Constitution continued for 68 days.

On the concluding day of the marathon hearing, the bench had observed "enough is enough". The day was marked by high drama when Rajeev Dhawan, a senior counsel for the Muslim parties, tore a pictorial map provided by Hindu Mahasabha purportedly showing the exact birth place of Lord Ram in Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh.

The third longest hearing in the top court

was on the validity of Aadhaar scheme and had lasted for 38 days in the top court which came into existence in 1950.

The bench, also comprising Justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S A Nazeer, had come out with schedules for

Ayodhya dispute hearing more than once and the arguments were first fixed to be concluded by October 18. That was later advanced to October 17, but on October 16, the bench decided to wrap it all up saying "enough is enough".

The bench was racing against time since the verdict was to be delivered before Justice Gogoi demits office on November 17.

After wrapping up the hearing and reserving the verdict, it had granted three days to contesting parties to file written notes on 'moulding of relief' or narrowing down the issues on which the court is required to adjudicate.

The marathon hearing was marked by frequent heated exchanges between the lawyers of the Hindu and the Muslim sides, and midway the issue of settling the dispute through mediation once again cropped up. The first mediation bid failed to find an amicable resolution leading to the commencement of day-to-day hearing from August 6.

Later, the panel, which comprised F M I Kallifulla, a former apex court judge, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder of Art of Living Foundation and Sri Ram Panchu, an acclaimed mediator, was allowed to continue mediation proceedings. The panel submitted its report to the court on the last date of hearing.

## Muslim leaders, scholars welcome SC Ayodhya verdict

MUMBAI, NOV 9 (PTI):

Several Muslim leaders and scholars on Saturday welcomed the Supreme Court's Ayodhya verdict, and asked people to maintain calm and peace.

The Supreme Court in a unanimous verdict on Saturday cleared the way for the construction of a Ram Temple at the disputed site at Ayodhya, and directed the Centre to allot a 5-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a mosque.

Maharashtra Samajwadi Party MLA Abu Asim Azmi said the SC verdict must be respected.

"We have full faith in the judicial system and we accept the verdict. We don't need to get dejected and we should have faith in the people who fought the case on our behalf," Azmi said, adding that people from the minority community should not react independently on the issue but let their

leaders guide the response.

Chennai-based H Abdur Raqeeb, general secretary of Indian Centre for Islamic Finance (ICIF), an organisation pushing for Shariah banking in India, said he was unhappy with the verdict but respected it all the same.

"We respect the Supreme Court verdict but unhappy with the result. Further course of action will be decided after going through the judgement and consulting lawyers who appeared in the case. We will then decide whether a review petition will be useful," Raqeeb, also a member of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board told PTI.

Former professor of Islamic Studies at south Mumbai's St Xavier's College, Dr Zeenat Shaukat Ali, termed the Ayodhya verdict "meticulous and scientifically thought out".

## SC paves way for temple...

and a trust should be formed within three months for the construction of the temple at the site many Hindus believe Lord Ram was born

As security remained tightened at communally sensitive places across the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi led a host of leaders who appealed for peace, unity and amity. He said the verdict should not be seen as anybody's win or loss

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said the verdict should not be seen as anybody's victory or defeat. The building of a Ram temple is a long-held objective of the BJP

The verdict was pronounced on 14 appeals 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'

The bench said the high court wrongly decided the title suit by resorting to partitioning of the disputed land in three parts

"The disputed site was government land in the revenue records," the court said adding, "The fact that there lay a temple beneath the destroyed structure has been established by the Archaeological Survey of India(ASI) and the underlying structure was not an Islamic structure."

"The history and culture of this country have been home to quests for truth, through the material, the political, and the spiritual. This Court is called upon to fulfil its adjudicatory function where it is claimed the two quests for the truth impinge on the freedoms of the other or violate the rule of law," it added

CS Vaidyanathan, lawyer for deity 'Ram Lalla', said the verdict is very balanced and it is a victory of people. But, the Sunni Waqf Board, one of the main parties, said it was not satisfied and will seek a review

"The verdict holds no value for us, It has lot of contradictions," Zafaryab Jilani, lawyer for the Board, told reporters

The Nirmohi Akhara said it has no "regrets" regarding the verdict

Home Minister Amit Shah appealed to all communities to accept the verdict and maintain peace and remain committed for 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' while Defence Minister Rajnath Singh urged everyone to take the verdict with equanimity and

magnanimity. The Congress said it respects the verdict and is in favour of construction of Ram temple

Former VHP president Praveen Togadia said giving Ram Lalla's birth land for Ram Temple is a salute to the sacrifice of lakhs of workers

Prominent Muslim leaders appealed for peace and harmony even as they expressed surprise

"I was surprised to see the ruling and it's beyond my understanding. I feel there were enough evidences in favour of the mosque but these were not taken into consideration," Mufti Abul Qasim Nomani, the current Mohtamim (Vice-Chancellor) of the Islamic seminary Darul Uloom Deoband, told PTI

Prohibitory orders were issued across the national capital to maintain public order, according to Delhi Police while an emergency Operations Centre was set up in Lucknow to keep an eye on reports from media, social media and other sources on the verdict

As Justice Gogoi read out the operative part of the verdict for 45 minutes, people belonging to both Hindu and Muslim communities in Ayodhya sat glued before Television sets, while the tech-savvy youth kept a tab on their mobiles phones

Directing allotment of alternative land to Muslims to build a new mosque, the court said the Hindus have established their case that they were in possession of outer courtyard and the UP Sunni Central Waqf Board has failed to establish its case

The court said the extensive nature of Hindu worshipping at outer courtyard at the disputed site has been there, and the evidence suggests the Muslims offered Friday prayers at mosque which indicates that they had not lost possession of the site. It said that despite obstruction caused in offering prayers at Mosque, the evidences suggest that there was no abandonment in offering prayers

The court also said that the Hindus consider the disputed site as the birthplace of Lord Ram and even Muslims say this about that place

The bench said the existence of Sita Rasoi, Ram Chabutra and Bhandar grih are the testimony of the religious fact of the place

The court further said however that the title cannot be established on the ground of faith and belief and they are only indicators for deciding the dispute.

## East Administration awards election officials



**GANGTOK, 09 Nov (IPR):** In recognition of outstanding contribution towards the conduct of a free and fair by-election 2019, District Administration, East, under the guidance of District Collector Raj Yadav organized an award ceremony at hotel Tamarind here in the capital today. Transport Minister, Sanjit Kharel and Urban Development Minister, Arun Upreti presented the awards on the occasion.

## An arrest that bled India but gave BJP political heft

Samastipur, Nov 9 (PTI): The Supreme Court's verdict marking the denouement of the vexatious Ayodhya dispute might have riled or relieved the warring parties, but L K Advani, the hawk-turned-dove BJP patriarch, must be a happy man.

The apex court verdict, which has paved the way for the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya, came just a day after he celebrated his 92nd birthday.

Nearly three decades ago, on October 23, 1990, his 'chariot', a swanky air-conditioned monster of a vehicle, was stopped on track by the orders of an ebullient Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad at little-known town of Samastipur, setting off a string of events that would shape the country's politics in years to come.

Advani's attempt to galvanise Hindus through his 'Ram Rath Yatra', and Lalu's act of having him arrested, was a watershed moment

in the country's history that gave birth to the 'Mandal-Mandir' politics which left society cleaved on both religious and casteist lines.

The arrest of Advani, then the BJP president, was as dramatic as its effects were cataclysmic.

"It was early in the morning when my telephone rang. I was surprised to find the chief minister on the other side. He was his usual chatty self. He asked me kitna sote hain (how long do you sleep). Knowing that Prasad himself was a late riser, I enquired what made him rise so early," reminisced S D Narayan, a veteran journalist who then headed the Patna bureau of PTI.

"Baba ko pakad liya (we have caught the old man) was his terse response. Governments across the country and in many states were feeling the heat of Ram Rath Yatra and were itching to do something to bring it to a halt. Finally, the flamboyant chief minister of Bihar

chosse to bite the bullet," said Narayan. A veteran Samastipur-based journalist, who was then a cub reporter working for a Hindi daily, recalled how the air was thick with anticipation that day.

"I was told to follow the rath yatra from Hajipur to Samastipur. In Hajipur, Advani had received a rousing welcome but, oddly, helicopters were hovering in the sky. We had a vague impression that something big was going to happen," he said.

The news of Advani's arrest was broken to journalists by R K Singh, the redoubtable district magistrate of Samastipur. All telephone lines had gone dead before Advani's arrest and an official briefing was the only way to gather news in those days when internet and mobile phones were not known and fax machines were a rarity. Singh later went on to become the Union home secretary and is now a Union minister from the BJP quota.

## Namchi girl gets gold medal in Journalism & Mass Comm

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 Nov:** Deepshikha T. Subba of Mandir Dara in Namchi, South Sikkim, has received a Gold Medal in her Master's Degree. She recently completed her Master's in Journalism and Mass Communication from Sikkim University. Deepshikha is the daughter of Damber Kumar Subba and Sunita Subba of Namchi in South Sikkim.



## 12-member badminton squad leaves for School Games

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 08 Nov:** A 12-member squad of badminton players left today for the School Games Federation of India to be held at Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh from 11 to 15 Nov.

The Sikkim contingent comprises 20 players [five girls and five boys], accompanied by a coach and manager.

The players were selected from the recently held Block, District & State Level annual



school sports Competitions and comprises of Pravakar Pradhan, Semon Limboo, Aron Pradhan, Manish Pradhan and Topzang Lepcha in the boys team and

Anisha Rai, Brinda Gadai, Abhail Jeena Lepcha, Sumnima Rai and Normit Sherpa in the girls team. A send-off programme was organized at Paljor Stadium.

## RBI officials explain Monetary Policy Report to ICAFI students

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 08 Nov:** Executive Director of Reserve Bank of India, Micheal D Patra and his team along with General Manager, Officer in charge RBI Gangtok, RV Sangvai visited ICAFI University, Sikkim, today, a press release informs.

They gave a presentation on the Monetary Policy Report to the students and faculty of the university. They discussed the Monetary Policy Report which is prepared every 6 months by the committee members. During their presen-

tation, they discussed how the forecast of Monetary policy is done which also gives guidance to the Monetary policy committee members. The audience were made aware that transparency and effective communication are the key factors of Monetary Policy Report.

They also spoke on the structure of Monetary policy which is driven by the top five factors such as external environment prices and cost, demand and output, liquidity management and macro-economic outlook.

## BJP Sikkim welcomes SC verdict on Babri Masjid

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 Nov:** Bharatiya Janata Party Sikkim Pradesh has welcomed the verdict of the Supreme Court on Babri Masjid.

In a press release, BJP state president, DB Chauhan has stated that the verdict was not about any community winning or losing but it was a long pending case which has finally been resolved.

The Supreme Court has respected the religious beliefs of both parties and tried its best to mete out justice by giving the verdict on the basis of historical facts, he

adds. BJP has appealed to all to maintain peace and brotherhood by respecting the historic decision of the Apex Court.

Mr Chauhan has also said that the Supreme Court's verdict will be a milestone in building a new India.

Meanwhile, another BJP press release informs that the state president inaugurated the constituency-level party office for Barfung constituency at Rabongla Bazaar in South Sikkim today. He was accompanied by Area MLA, TT Bhutia, youth and women members of the party.

### ADVERTORIAL

## KisanKraft - solving the problem of land fragmentation and lack of mechanization in North-East India

Agriculture provides livelihood support to 70% of the North-East region's (NER) population. Diverse agro-climatic conditions, varied soil types and abundant rainfall have endowed NER with promising horticulture and value added products that can be marketed within the country and abroad. The soil and climatic condition of the state offers an ideal condition for the production of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Paddy is one of the most important crops that is cultivated here. The zone is also ideal for growing crops like coffee, tea and cardamom.

Despite majority of the population here being employed in agriculture, the region produces only 1.5% of the country's food grain production and continues to be a net importer of food grains even for its own consumption.

Most states of north eastern region follow organic agriculture, but, unavailability of organic inputs (cultivars for organic conditions, organic manures and organic pesticides), improper package of practice, and lack of solution to common problems like fragmented land holding, lack of mechanization, lack of modern agriculture education, and adherence to traditional agricultural practices have hindered the agricultural productivity of the region.

As the land use pattern in the hills are different, significant resources need to be allocated for research and designing separate strategies to improve farm productivity to match requirements of hills. The land productivity as compared to its potential is low except for few pockets in Manipur, Assam and Tripura. Land productivity and farm output can significantly be enhanced through initiating measures like educating the farmers on mechanization and best practices in agriculture.

Average farm power available in most North Eastern states is less than 1 Hp/Ha



**Ankit Chitalla**  
Chief Executive Officer

- B.Tech Production Engineering (2008 rank holder, Mumbai University)
- 5 years at KisanKraft handling Sales & Operations
- KisanKraft achieved its highest turnover under his leadership

**Ravindra K Agrawal**  
Director & Managing Director

- 22 Years in I.T. Sector
- 17 years of extensive software development experience for various products for Microsoft Corporation, Oracle, etc.
- holds 2 I.T. patents related to software I.T.

**Dr. R E Shekhar**  
Senior Consultant

- 40+ years of experience in Agriculture
- 10+ years of experience in India
- 10+ years of experience in International
- 10+ years of experience in Government
- 10+ years of experience in Private Sector
- 10+ years of experience in Academia
- 10+ years of experience in Entrepreneurship
- 10+ years of experience in Management
- 10+ years of experience in Research
- 10+ years of experience in Development
- 10+ years of experience in Innovation
- 10+ years of experience in Leadership
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## It's Everyone's Responsibility

*The minors need to be kept safe and allowed their childhood*

It is not easy to grow inured to issues that demand our involvement. We ease into such somnolence after years of consciously looking the other way until we reach a stage where most people prefer to remain silent spectators even when they are witness to obvious maltreatment. We deflect guilt by pretending sympathy at discussions around the dinner table and convincing ourselves that it is not 'proper' to get involved in what transpires beyond our private spaces. Soon, with this distancing sets in indifference, and with that everything that a society stands for starts falling apart. The collapse is already happening all around us and this is because the society is not striving to make things better for the underprivileged and the marginalised. It is in societal impassivity as this that the government has to step in and make specific laws protecting the ignored, marginalized, underprivileged and even children; sections for whom the society should be looking out, but does not. Had the society remained involved, these sections would not have suffered so much that legislations had to be brought in to ensure humanity.

And with that setting up, we segue again into a problem that refuses to get contained. And no, "catching" the culprit, although necessary, is not the same as keeping the children safe. One of the most difficult demands of putting together a newspaper is filing reports about abuse against minors. Apart from the disturbing chore of piecing together details to highlight the level of depravity that made a victim out of a child who has not even begun understanding the life around her/him, there is the fear of over-sensationalizing the incident in a way that might force the incident and the reaction to it on a tangent that is not necessarily what the situation demands. There is also the worry of underplaying it so much that it trivializes the issue. But that is an uncertainty that challenges journalists; what is that befuddles the society at large so completely that it remains insensate to the trauma of the young victims? It is one of those moments in the process of putting out a newspaper when we regret being the bearers of news [since we have to confront all the gory details] and not receivers [readers do have the benefit of not reading beyond the headline and a sanitized retelling of the incident]. What is even more disturbing is to realize that we continue to fail in keeping our children safe. And make no mistake, this is a societal failing, not a failure of the law and order machinery.

Crimes against minors continue to occur [a few get reported, many get swept under the carpet and too many remain secrets with victims and traumatize them throughout their lives] because Sikkim, as a society, blindsides its children. Secure years while growing up are the least that can be guaranteed to the young, and despite its small size, the society here continues to come up wanting in this regard. The solution is not in lynch mobs to punish the accused, nor even in over-protective cushions created by paranoia. As a society we need to start realizing that children here are in harm's way, as parents and hopefully because we are also responsible citizens, we need to educate the young and ourselves on the ways and means that the young can be kept safe. Child abuse is no longer rare in Sikkim and minors suffer sexual abuse in numbers which are distressing. Still more are denied their basic rights and continue to work as domestic servants in homes across the state, invariably working in conditions which are deplorable.

As per the 2011 Census, there were 64,111 children aged 0-6 in Sikkim. This is also the most vulnerable age-group when it comes to abuse. Given that Sikkim has a population of 6.11 lakh, this means that there are more than 9 people above the age of six to look out for the minors. Pedophiles form a tiny, very tiny, sliver of this remaining population. And no, it is not being suggested that we form nine-abreast wall of bodyguards around the children, but ensure that these nine are adequately informed about warning signs and wrong behavior and are effectively reassured that when they spy a predator, he will be taken one and taken away.



## Thirty years after the Berlin Wall came down, Germany is still working to meet east with west

MATT FITZPATRICK  
THECONVERSATION.COM

Thirty years after protesters pulled down the Berlin Wall, the city has knitted itself back together. It has emerged not only as the new capital of reunified Germany (during the split, West Germany's capital was Bonn), but also as the political and cultural centre of Europe.

Old eastern suburbs like Prenzlauer Berg have become some of the hottest addresses in Germany. Icecream-eating crowds flock to the stirring monument to the Soviet war dead in Treptower Park, while tourists patiently wait in line to pose for photos with giant statues of Marx and Engels in the shadow of the old East German TV tower.

Even the east's iconic hat-wearing Ampelmännchen (traffic light figure) has managed to colonise the west. Thirty years after mass protests led to the capitulation of East German officialdom and the opening of the Berlin Wall, parts of the old east have not only persisted, they have thrived.

Nevertheless, the old east hasn't had everything its own way. Symbolically, the East German parliament building, the "People's Palace" (which also housed theatres, restaurants and a disco, all for public use), was dramatically torn down between 2006 and 2008. This was heartbreaking for many who had fond memories of times spent there.

Somewhat strangely, it has been replaced with a replica of the palace of the German Kaisers that once stood there. This colossal monument to Germany's pre-Communist and pre-Nazi royal past will host a museum filled with colonial-era artefacts (many of a dubious provenance).

Understandably, some East Germans feel that important parts of their past have disappeared down a memory hole. Familiar landscapes and fond reminiscences have been air-brushed out by others eager to view the "two dictatorships" - the genocidal Nazi empire and the Communist East German state - as equal halves of a history of 20th-century German totalitarianism.

More broadly, the effects of change (that is, westernisation) on the old East Germany have been unevenly felt. Material standards of living have clearly risen. Parts of the east have done very well out of the billions of euros that flowed eastward as part of the reunification "solidarity tax". But structural redevelopment has been a rocky road.

The way in which economic gurus from the west either sold off or shut down East Germany's heavy industries left many in the "new German states" protesting against what they saw as a form of western colonisation that conspired to keep Germany's industrial muscle concentrated in the west at the expense of eastern jobs.

The sentiment is understandable, given unemployment has remained stubbornly high in the east ever since reunification. As a result, outside of hipster hubs like Berlin and Leipzig, many young people continue to head west in search of better career and life prospects.

Politically, there are some noticeable differences between east and west. Unarguably, the less multicultural east has played host to an unnerving rise in increasingly brazen far-right extremist activity.

For example, Chemnitz (the old "Karl Marx City") was the scene of far-right rallies (but also anti-racist counter-rallies) in 2018. Dresden recently declared a "Nazi emergency" as it tries to combat anti-democratic racists who have gravitated to the city. And in recent local elections in Thuringia in the old east, the far-right Alternative for Germany Party (AfD) came in second to the Left Party.

The Left Party, seen as unelectable in the west due to perceived links to the old East German Communist Party, has been a popular government in this eastern state for several years. The old centrist parties of the west, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD), whose govern-

ing grand coalition creaks along at the federal level, floundered into third and fourth places respectively at the last election. Elsewhere, in this year's elections in Saxony the AfD surged to take almost a third of the seats in the state parliament.

This rise of the AfD in the east is noteworthy, but it is not contained to the east. In some ways, looking to the legacy of communism to explain it doesn't really make too much sense either, given that similar far-right, anti-immigration parties have risen in Austria, Switzerland, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Hungary and Poland.

Notably, the AfD's most incendiary leader, Björn Höcke, is from the industrial heartland of the west, the Ruhr region.

In terms of recent neo-Nazi violence, although the murderous October attack on a synagogue occurred in the old East German city of Halle, its inspiration seems to have been other racist mass murders such as the Christchurch attack. A believer in the international far-right white genocide delusion allegedly carried out the Halle attack.

Another shocking political murder this year, of pro-immigration CDU politician Walter Lübcke, was carried out in the western city of Kassel, allegedly by a long-time member of the West German neo-Nazi scene.

With infrastructure renewed and the standard of living approaching that of the west, the AfD and its extremist fellow travellers represent a real threat to the political life and social cohesion of the old East German states, indeed to all Germans. Pre-empting that its rise somehow stems from a deep East German nostalgia for authoritarian rule won't help, particularly given the enormous number of AfD voters who hadn't been born when the wall came down.

The assumption that the AfD is a legacy of East Germany's communist past is an example of the patronising attitude of "west knows best" that has irked Germans in the east ever since reunification.

*[the writer is Associate Professor in International History, Flinders University]*

## World's deadliest inventor: Mikhail Kalashnikov and his AK-47

RICHARD GUNDERMAN  
THECONVERSATION.COM

What is the deadliest weapon of the 20th century?

Perhaps you think first of the atomic bomb, estimated to have killed as many as 200,000 people when the United States dropped two on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

But another weapon is responsible for far more deaths - numbering up into the millions. It's the Kalashnikov assault rifle, commonly known as the AK-47.

Originally developed in secrecy for the Soviet military, an estimated 100 million AK-47s and its variants have been produced to date. This gun is now found throughout the world, including in the hands of many American civilians, who in 2012 bought as many AK-47s as the Russian police and military. As a physician, I have witnessed the destruction this weapon can wreak on human flesh.

### KALASHNIKOV'S INVENTION

Russian Mikhail Kalashnikov invented the weapon that bears his name in the middle of the 20th century. Born on Nov. 10, 1919, Kalashnikov was a tank mechanic in the Soviet military during the Second World War. He was wounded during the German invasion of the USSR in 1941.

Having seen firsthand the combat advantage conferred by Germany's superior firearms, Kalashnikov resolved to develop a better weapon. While still in the military, he produced several designs that lost out to competitors before eventually producing the first AK-47.

The name of Kalashnikov's greatest invention stands for Automat Kalashnikova 1947, the year it was first produced.

In 1949, the AK-47 became the assault rifle of the Soviet Army. Later adopted by other nations in the Warsaw Pact, the weapon quickly

spread around the world, becoming a symbol of revolution in such far-flung lands as Vietnam, Afghanistan, Colombia and Mozambique, on whose flag it figures prominently.

Over the course of his long life, Kalashnikov continued to tweak his classic design. In 1959, production began on his AKM, which replaced the AK-47's milled receiver with one made of stamped metal, making it both lighter and less expensive to produce. He also developed the cartridge-fed PK machine gun. Modified AK-47s are still in production in countries around the world.

### THE AK-47'S ADVANTAGES AND ABUNDANCE

Why was the AK-47 such a revolutionary rifle?

It is relatively inexpensive to produce, short and light to carry, and easy to use, with little recoil. It also boasts legendary reliability under harsh conditions ranging from waterlogged jungles to Middle Eastern sandstorms, in both extreme cold and heat.

It also requires relatively little maintenance. This stems from its large gas piston and wide clearances between moving parts, which help to prevent it from jamming. Kalashnikov liked to boast about the rifle's superiority to the American military's M-16 rifle. "During the Vietnam War," he said in a 2007 interview, "American soldiers would throw away their M-16s to grab AK-47s and bullets for it from dead Vietnamese soldiers. And I hear American soldiers in Iraq use it quite often."

The world's most abundant firearm is also well suited to crime and terrorism. The hostage-takers who stormed the Olympic Village in Munich in 1972 were armed with Kalashnikovs, and mass shooters in the U.S. have used semi-automatic versions of the weapon in killings in Stockton, California, and Dallas.

The U.S. military has acted as a distributor of the weapon in conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

With a service life of 20 to 40 years, AKs are easily relocated and repurposed.

Today, global prices often run in the hundreds of dollars, but some AK-47s can be had for as little as US\$50. The huge worldwide production of the weapon, particularly in countries with low labor costs, has driven prices downward.

### KALASHNIKOV'S LEGACY

For his labors, the Soviet Union awarded Kalashnikov the Stalin Prize, the Red Star and the Order of Lenin. In 2007, President Vladimir Putin singled out the Kalashnikov rifle as "a symbol of the creative genius of our people."

Kalashnikov died a national hero in 2013 at the age of 94.

Throughout most of his life, Kalashnikov rebuffed attempts to saddle him with guilt over the vast number of killings and injuries inflicted with his invention. He insisted that he had developed it for defense, not offense.

When a reporter asked in 2007 how he could sleep at night, he replied, "I sleep well. It is the politicians who are to blame for failing to come to an agreement and resorting to violence."

Yet in the final year of his life, Kalashnikov may have experienced a change of heart. He wrote a letter to the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, saying, "The pain in my soul is unbearable. I keep asking myself the same unsolvable question: If my assault rifle took people's lives, that means that I am responsible for their deaths."

It's a perennial debate: What kills? Guns, or those who carry them? At the bottom of the letter, he signed it, "a slave of God, the designer Mikhail Kalashnikov."

*[the writer is Chancellor's Professor of Medicine, Liberal Arts, and Philanthropy, Indiana University]*

# Gun Island by Amitav Ghosh: A Roller Coaster of Global Phenomena that rides through an Immersive Fictional World.

MUDANG PAMPI

**GUN ISLAND**  
**AMITAV GHOSH**

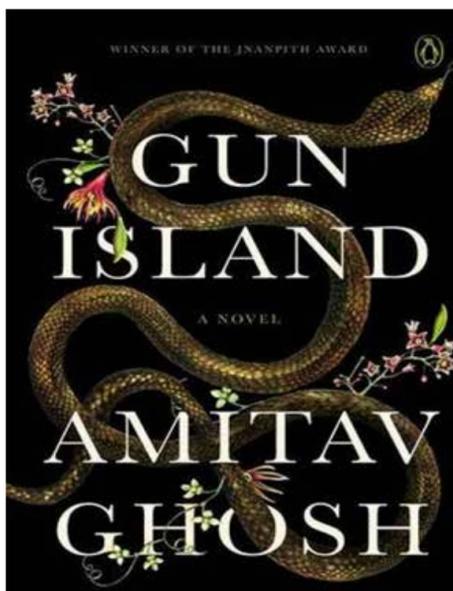
First published in Hamish Hamilton by Penguin Random House India 2019.

## BASIC PLOT SUMMARY

The novel is divided into two parts and has been narrated by the protagonist named Deen, who is an antiquarian book dealer. It is a brilliantly written novel which ranges reality. It is an account of a world on the edge, of growing changes in the environment, its effect on humans as well as animals, unstoppable human immigration across the world, etc. In doing so the author doesn't bore the reader in spite of its reality check with the biggest issues that our planet is facing. The book takes its reader on a voyage of global phenomena through an engaging fictional world.

In the first part, the author introduces us to a figure called 'Bonduki Sadagar' or 'The Gun Merchant', a character from Bengali folklore who is said to have fled overseas in order to escape the persecution of Manasa Devi, the Goddess who rules over snakes and all other poisonous creatures, whose trials had been recorded on the walls of a small shrine on an island in the Sunderbans. The shrine and the tale related to the legend here seem to overlap Hindu and Muslim cosmology, maybe because both of them share some common practices such as fasting and pilgrimage due to their historical interaction since the 7th century. While on the journey to discover more about this Gun Merchant, the author flips us through the pages of the past with the present being its sidekick all the way through the end. To be precise, the book deals with the leading issues of the contemporary world: climate change and its various impacts on the environment as well as the people in every possible aspect. The author has added some fictional characters playing important roles in order to make the book interesting as well as to make the readers realize about present-day issues that are on the face of the earth and really needs the attention. The book is very informative and contains a lot of historical events that took place which tells how everything is connected and one phenomenon is the consequences of another.

The author talks about how the 1970's Bhola Cyclone in the Bengal delta has been the greatest natural disaster of the twentieth century that had raged and torn through the Indian province of West Bengal and Bangladesh where half a million people lost their lives. The situation was then aggravated by a steady surge of refugees and migrants from Bangladesh into India, bringing many more hungry mouths into a region that was already desperately short of food. The climate disruption in Sunderbans in the 1970's then again in 2009 had resulted in the destruction of the communities and families, attracting traffickers who smuggled the youths to other countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and other countries. Ghosh also emphasized the importance of modern-day technologies, how these technologies and devices like phones had become an undetachable part of our lives that we need to



live an optimal life whereas people back in the days didn't even need passports and visas to cross international borders. One of the main factors which make the movement of people possible from one place to another is the internet.

Deen, who is supposed to be on the quest to discover more about the Gun Merchant comes across one too many forces that convinced him to go on with the pursuit which otherwise he had already decided to overlook. In the early part of the book, he believed that the story was just a conjecture tale about fantastic places; something that no connection with reality but finds out the story is an apocryphal record of a real journey of a merchant to Venice. Cinta, another important character in the novel, who happens to be a brilliant academic and an exceptionally compelling speaker helps him dig up and connect all the dots to finally get hold of the audacious journey of the Gun Merchant in the end. She points out how it is not just the Indian who believes in goddesses, witches, and demon but also people in other parts of the world have a similar belief and that stuffs like witches, spirit-possession, tarantism or foreknowledge are simple facts of life. The protagonist then guided by two other characters (Tipu and Horen) in the novel finally lands on the island where the shrine associated with the Gun Merchant was built. The shrine resembled the Bishnupur style of architecture which originated in the seventeenth century. On the walls of the shrine were crudely drawn hieroglyphs, some symbols, and motifs that recurred again and again. The author here highlights the importance and power of symbols as well as stories in unfolding mysteries and reconstructing the past. Since the ability of story-telling is what makes us different from animals. It is through the stories that silent can speak and invisible can be seen. The story allows the past to reach out to us. So, the book has fragments of everything such as ancient traditions, symbolism, magic, myth, history, geography, science, and etymology to list out few.

Deen's quest also involves Piya, a marine biolo-

gist whose research involves tracking river dolphins fleeing pollution in the Sunderbans because of the increasing oceanic dead zones. These dead zones are mostly caused by the chemical fertilizers when washed off in the sea and they happen to have been growing at a phenomenal rate not only at seas but rivers too. As a result, marine organisms are either migrating or dying at a very high pace. The author does not only represents the global crisis faced by the humans due to destructive climate change but also brings into light the sufferings of animals and birds that are caused due to natural disaster as well as man-made at times. He doesn't want his readers to overlook the fact that the animal's plight is no different from the human migrant's.

The author takes us back to the 'climate change and Apocalypse in the Seventeenth Century', also described as 'Little Ice Age' that took place due to severe climate disruption. Many parts of the world had been struck by famines, droughts, earthquakes, and epidemics in the Seventeenth Century. He points out how the past is on the verge of repeating itself if we humans don't realize the danger soon enough. This is also the part where the protagonist starts assembling all the scattered pieces of the puzzle to bring about a clear picture of the Gun Merchant's tale. Nonetheless, the turmoil of that era had been accompanied by extraordinary intellectuals and creative ferment to supplement the world with masterpieces of literature, art, and architecture. Though, the author makes an emphasis on the point that it was not the intellectuals but the common people all around the world that sensed the stirring of something big as earth-shattering which ultimately may lead to calamity.

Meanwhile, Southern California is being frequently visited by yellow-bellied snakes that generally lived in warm waters and due to warming of the oceans their distribution was changing as well. The author directs its audience towards the rising effect of global warming on Mother Nature and the various organisms inhabiting it. Coming back to the story, the narrator realizes that he had been wrong about the name 'Bonduki Sadagar' all this time and the name didn't mean 'The Gun Merchant' but could be 'The Merchant who visited Venice'. The word 'bundook' with which the novel begins with is the Arabic name of Venice i.e. 'banadiq' or 'bunduqeyya', which also is a word for the gun. Etymology has established its way into the book. I personally feel that the author has done an excellent work with the way he has given out the hints and then letting the characters put together the pieces in order to find more to the story.

The second part of the book mostly talks about human migration that is taking place not just within India but across the globe. The protagonist takes us to Venice where the last scene of the book is played out. In Venice, Deen stumbles upon so many Bangladeshi immigrants. No doubt there is massive demographic shake-up happening due to climate change and economy which is the biggest threat, so as to say, the world is facing today. The author also talks about the existing international links that make the movement of the people possible no matter how much they have been tried to shutdown. Moreover, in today's date human trafficking has become a business that

earns a lot of profit for traffickers. The slowly sinking city of Venice as well as the Sunderbans, another symbolic reminder of the rising sea levels associated with climate change is expressively stirred up by Gosh.

## PRAISE AND CRITIQUE

I feel that the book has been very informative for the most part. Climate change and its impact on all life forms on earth is the biggest threat today. The author has very beautifully engaged himself with these topics which need extensive attention from the people. The novel tackles various contemporary world issues such as climate change, degradation of the environment, disrupted ecological system, migration of humans, refugees, etc. Because people are moving every day due to various reasons, out of which, climate crisis and economic factors are the main cause. The author takes the readers through different time and space for them to see what the people have done to earth and how nature, once innocently beautiful, is coming to an end. The author did not miss the point that it is just not us human who is suffering but the floras and faunas are also being affected by the change in climate. The animals are migrating too from their original habitats mainly due to global warming which in turn affects humans. Since, new studies suggest that the climate crisis is increasing the risk of Ebola beyond current outbreak areas in West Africa and potentially hitting China, India, Russia, Europe, and United States by 2070. One of the risk factors contributing to this is the changes in animal habitats that increase the rate of animal-to-human communication of deadly disease. I appreciate how varied issues have been tied together like beads on a string and show that everything is inter-connected. The book has brilliantly been cooked with a perfect mixture of ingredients such as magic, myth, folklore, history, etymology, climate change, global issues, science, and technology, etc. The fact that our life every day is governed by internet culture is highlighted very well. Internet is becoming a space where everything happens right from human interaction, buying things online, movement of people to even creating wars between nations.

The novel is very entertaining and engaging from the beginning all the way till the end with so many interesting characters that come alive on the pages. But I felt that the author in order to make the best out of the book went slightly overboard. There is a hodgepodge of events going on. I wish the author had talked more about identity crisis faced not just by the migrants and refugees but people of their countries as well because through global processes, diasporas and migration of people, the world is becoming increasingly deterritorialized and as a result the significance of space and place has been transformed. Some parts were little too dramatic with one too many coincidences. Besides, the character Cinta is too good to be true, more like a fairy godmother to the protagonist. But of course it is a fictional novel and anything is possible, after all how can any reality match the worlds that only exist in books? This was my first Amitav Gosh Novel and definitely not the last. I will be looking forward to his other works as well.

(The writer is a Phd Scholar with Sikim University)

## No more repatriation exercise: Mizoram govt

**AIZAWL, NOV 9 (PTI)** The Mizoram government has decided that the ongoing Bru repatriation process should be the last one and no more such exercises would be carried out, officials said on Saturday.

Over 4,000 Bru displaced families, lodged in the relief camps in North Tripura district, are scheduled to return to neighbouring Mizoram during the repatriation process which commenced on October 3 and is scheduled to be completed by November 30.

A meeting of the Mizoram Council of Ministers held on Friday decided not to conduct another repatriation exercise of Brus after completion of the ongoing repatriation process, the officials said.

The repatriation issued was deliberated in the meeting which was chaired by Chief Minister Zoramthanga and was attended by all the ministers including Cabinet and ministers of state, the officials said.

Former Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee president Pradyot Manikya had visited the Bru relief camps located in North Tripura district during the road block-

ade organised by the inmates of the relief camps on Wednesday and made a statement that the Tripura government should allow the Brus (known as Reangs in Tripura) to remain in the state.

"Tripura has enough place to accommodate Reang people.

This is your land and nobody can force you to quit from here," the former Tripura state PCC chief, said while stating that the Reang people, who lost their lands due to Dumbur Hydropower plant at Amarpur sub-division in Tripura migrated to some parts of Mizoram.

Earlier, the last meeting of the Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) held in Delhi on September six had decided that the ninth and 'final round' of physical repatriation of 4,447 Bru families lodged at the six relief camps in North Tripura district would commence from October.

The Centre had made it clear that the relief camps of Bru refugees in Tripura would be closed down and the displaced persons must be repatriated to Mizoram during the ongoing exercise, Special Secretary (internal security), Ministry of Home Affairs, A P Maheshwari, had said on October 16.

## Real Sociedad latest leader of topsy-turvy La Liga

**Madrid, Nov 9 (AFP):** Basque outfit Real Sociedad went top of Spain's La Liga thanks to a 1-1 draw at home against bottom side Leganes.

In a season which has seen several sides go top, including Granada, Real Sociedad have 23 points from 13 games with Barcelona and Real Madrid just a point behind with two games in hand and both playing on Saturday.

Leganes striker Mikel Merino got the away side off the mark in the 63rd minute before before Moroccan Youssef En-Nesyri equalised with



a header on 78.

"I see long faces both inside the dressing room and out of it, but we have to be happy," said Real Sociedad coach Imanol Alguacil.

His opposite number Javier Aguirre overseeing his first point in his first match in charge was also positive.

"We're still bottom

and that's how it goes sometimes but we have got a point at a difficult ground against a strong side who are top of the league and I'm really happy for the boys," said Aguirre.

Leganes have just six points and will be locked in a long struggle to climb out of the relegation zone

## Advertorial

### Digisol unveils 'ConvergeX', a New Series of Structured Cabling Solution in Kolkata

**GANGTOK, 09 NOV:**

In a bid to empower enterprises digitally, DIGISOL Systems Ltd., a leading provider of IT Networking solutions, has launched 'ConvergeX', a series of enterprise structured cabling solution in an event held in Kolkata on 08 Nov, as per a press release.

The name ConvergeX refers to the term 'Converge' that stands for a single network that unifies and carries a combination of data, voice and video traffic, while X stands for the Xtreme speed.

ConvergeX enterprise structured cabling series aims to enhance the way enterprises works and unlocks opportunities for the future.

Digisol's newly announced ConvergeX series is designed to support the high performance needs of the present and next generation data com-



munications services, applications and technologies like 5G, IoT, Wi-Fi 6, Cloud, AI etc.

The series holds UL & ETL certification and is perfect structured cabling solution that would help enterprises accelerate their business and boost productivity by speeding secure access to information by unifying data over a single network.

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## Maddinson out of Pakistan clash over mental health issues

**PERTH, NOV 9 (AFP):** Nic Maddinson on Saturday pulled out of Australia A's clash against Pakistan in Perth on mental health grounds, all-but ruling him out of contention for a berth in the Test squad.

The middle-order batsman's decision comes barely a week after Glenn Maxwell withdrew from Australia's Twenty20 team to deal with similar issues.

Cameron Bancroft will replace Maddinson for the three-day match against Pakistan at Perth Stadium from Monday.

"Nic has made the right decision and we are all behind him," said Australia A coach Graeme Hick.

"It is braver to speak up than to suffer in silence and I applaud Nic for having the courage to put his health first."

His withdrawal almost certainly rules him out of the opening Test against Pakistan in Brisbane later this month, with the Australia A game widely seen as a final chance to impress selectors.

It opens the door to Travis Head or rising star Will Pucovski, who has also struggled with mental health issues in the past, to stake their case.

Maddinson's decision followed Maxwell, one of the world's best short-format batsman, late last month opting to take a "short" break from cricket to deal with similar challenges.

Alex Kountouris, Cricket Australia's head of sports science and medicine, said the governing body was committed to better understanding mental health and supporting those needing help.

"Mental health is a challenge faced by Australian communities and elite sporting organisations and cricket is no different," he said.

"Like other professional sports we are working very hard to better understand the challenges faced by our players and staff so we can support them."

## Mahmudullah had a hint of MS Dhoni in his captaincy: Irfan Pathan

**NEW DELHI, NOV 9 (PTI):** Bangladesh skipper Mahmudullah Riyad's captaincy has traits of Mahendra Singh Dhoni's leadership, feels former India seamer Irfan Pathan. The Mahmudullah-led Bangladesh defeated India in the series opener last week to register its first-ever T20 win over the hosts. "When you win a match against one of the best teams in the world, it helps in boosting your confidence and Mahmudullah had shown great qualities of a captain including the changes he made during the match," Pathan said during the 'Nerolac Cricket Live' show on Star Sports.

"There was a hint of Mahendra Singh Dhoni in his captaincy as he also used part-time bowlers after the power play which is a strategy often used by Dhoni," he added.

However, Bangladesh couldn't hold on to the winning momentum as India cantered to a massive series levelling eight wicket win in the second T20 in Rajkot.

# Liverpool's Alisson: 'We don't want to feel how we felt last season'

**ANDY HUNTER**  
**THE GUARDIAN**

Champions League glory elevated Liverpool in June and ingrained a relentless winning mentality that now propels their pursuit of a first league title for 30 years. That is the popular perception anyway. Alisson offers an alternative theory that explains the punishing standards behind Liverpool's six-point advantage over Manchester City and his status as the finest goalkeeper in the world today.

"We don't want to feel how we felt last season" is his take on the motivation driving Jürgen Klopp's team into Sunday's key game with City at Anfield and beyond.

Liverpool's unflappable keeper credits his rise with following the advice that has been constant throughout his career. "Every goalkeeping coach who has worked with me has told me to always keep calm and cool, as I am, and train hard all the time," says Alisson, who cites his older brother Muriel, a goalkeeper at Fluminense, as his biggest influence. Cool and calm comes naturally to the guitar-playing 27-year-old but there is an unmistakable perfectionist behind that thoughtful demeanour.

Alisson has not tasted defeat for club or country since 1 May – excluding the penalty shootout loss to City in August's Community Shield – but the absence of a clean sheet this season is annoying him greatly. He has enjoyed the most decorated year of his career in 2019 and yet, as with many who reach the summit of their sport, the near-misses gnaw away. In Alisson's case it is winning the Golden Gloves in his debut Premier League season with 21 clean sheets for a Liverpool team that won a club record 97 points but not the title. That will be a factor on Sunday.

"Last season we had a great experience, an almost perfect season," says Liverpool's No 1. "We lost one game and that one game was against City. We know how big this game is for us. We know how big the game is for everyone –



for them and for our fans. In the end it is just three more important points but Manchester City have been the best team in the league for the last few years so we need to give everything to win this game.

"We don't want to feel how we felt last season. Being second by just one point – and we don't know which game made us lose the title because we had a few draws where we could have done better, and we had the loss away to Man City when we could have won or drawn – means we know that we need to give everything in every game if we want to become Premier League champions. We want it and we will try to do it."

City's refusal to yield during last season's title race was a rare source of regret in an otherwise outstanding year for Alisson. He conquered Europe with Liverpool and then South America with Brazil in the Copa América. The two major trophies generated a host of individual awards including Best Fifa Men's Goalkeeper, Uefa Champions League goalkeeper of the season and Copa América Golden Gloves winner. Liverpool's decision to pay what was briefly a world record sum for a goalkeeper of £65m no longer invites questions.

"I do think everything is coming together," Alisson says between sips of water in the players' dining area at Anfield. "I have worked hard all my life for those moments and I also made the right choice to come here to play for Liverpool. I felt I would have the possibility to achieve great things here and we had a great season – everyone

did, not just me – and of course it is nice to get the personal awards but I only have them because I have a great team around me. I achieved it with their help and also with the national team we are doing a great job. We are on the right path and obviously the Copa América is an important competition for us but we want more. We are looking for the World Cup." Success has whetted Alisson's appetite for every team he represents.

Madrid on 1 June provided the pinnacle of his Liverpool career so far, with the keeper reproducing the dominant form that deflated Barcelona in the unforgettable semi-final to thwart Tottenham and ensure his club's sixth European crown. That was the third of nine consecutive clean sheets and his run of almost 15 hours without conceding was ended only by Paolo Guerrero's penalty for Peru in the Copa América final.

The image of Alisson relaxing on the Estadio Metropolitano pitch after the Champions League final, phone in right hand, winner's medal in his gloved left and ticker-tape all around as he spoke to his wife, Natalia, was among the most memorable from Liverpool's celebrations.

He explains: "My wife was pregnant and she needed to go to Brazil because I had the Copa América coming up afterwards and I always wanted to be there to see the birth of my son. The only way we could make that happen was if she went home to Brazil, and so she missed the final. She couldn't be there in the stadium and I know how important those moments are for

her too. They are important moments for us to be together as a family, my daughter [Helena] also.

"My wife went to every away game with us in the Champions League last season but could not come to the final so I FaceTimed her after the game to bring her inside the stadium and to celebrate with me on the pitch. I wanted her to see and experience everything. It was a special moment.

"I said to her: 'We are the champions, we got it!' She worked hard with me for this. I have my teammates working together with me but the most important part of my career is the support I receive from my family – my wife and my parents. My parents were at the stadium fortunately and it was important for me to speak with my wife and my daughter after we'd won. My daughter misses me when I'm away from home and I told her: 'Daddy got it, Daddy got it!' Everything that happened in the final was really special for me. I lived that final intensely and every moment will be in my mind forever."

Matteo Becker was born the day before Brazil opened their Copa América campaign with a win over Bolivia. Alisson's and Natalia's plan came to fruition. "I was there for the birth fortunately," he says. The successful tournament strengthened his position as Brazil's first choice over Ederson who, despite the growing rivalry between their respective clubs and competition at international level, is a close friend. The City keeper is out of Sunday's game because of a

muscle injury suffered against Atalanta in midweek, according to Pep Guardiola. Alisson had hoped they would face one another.

"I speak with him pretty often really because he is a friend. The rivalry between us only starts when we arrive for the game and on the pitch. I see him socially too. Our daughters are the same age and I've been to his son's birthday party. We have a good relationship, our wives have a good relationship and our daughters like to play together. We don't see each other often – I would like to see him more often – but we have our football lives, our jobs to do and our families. It is a busy life."

This has been the most rewarding year of Alisson's career but also a reminder of how precarious life at the top can be. A calf injury against Norwich on the opening night of the Premier League season sidelined the Liverpool keeper for 10 weeks and cost him the chance of another winner's medal in the Uefa Super Cup. His deputy, Adrián, delivered instead and Alisson believes the painful experience could prove a blessing.

"The first three days it was really difficult to assimilate what had happened," he says. "Straight after the injury the doctor told me it could be four to six weeks. Then when we did the scan we saw it was a big injury and it became more. In the beginning it was difficult to deal with that but I always have faith in God and I believe things happen for a reason.

"I could see the good side of the injury. It meant I could spend more time with my family but also prepare myself better for the whole season because I had four weeks of just treating the calf and then, when I could start to train again and work harder, I had four or five weeks of hard training. It meant I could do a pre-season, something I hadn't been able to do, and now I am 100% fit in my mind and my body. This will help me for the rest of the season – and it is a season when we have to give everything."

## Weakened Man City offer Liverpool chance to increase Premier League lead

**LIVERPOOL, NOV 9 (AFP):** Liverpool have lived through many false dawns in the 29 years since last lifting a league title, but the class of 2019/20 have the chance to prove they are the real deal when reigning champions Manchester City visit Anfield on Sunday.

City's relentless hunger to push the bar to new heights under Pep Guardiola has kept Liverpool waiting.

Despite posting the third highest points tally in English top flight history last season with 97, Liverpool lost out by a solitary point as City backed up their 100-point campaign with 98 to retain the title.

Beset by defensive injuries, those stan-

dards have slipped slightly at the start of this season, allowing Jürgen Klopp's men to open up a six-point lead ahead of Sunday's battle between the top two.

"Last season we won the Premier League (against) the best contender I ever faced in my career," said Guardiola on Friday.

"Right now Liverpool are the strongest team in the world. Playing at Anfield, we know what it means for them and for all their rivals."

Revisited since Klopp took charge four years ago, Liverpool have not lost a home game in the Premier League since April 2017. Their solitary defeat in the last 50 league games on any ground came away to City in January

in a titanic tussle that ultimately decided the title race.

The consistency of both sides has seen this fixture become English football's biggest game in recent seasons. In 2017/18 it was Liverpool who ended City's quest for an unbeaten league season and thrashed Guardiola's men 5-1 on aggregate in an ill-tempered Champions League quarter-final.

"It's getting bigger and bigger," said Klopp.

"Man City is a pretty good football team. Thank God there is a rivalry because that means we are not in bad place as well."

While City have suffered shock defeats to Norwich and Wolves in the first 11 games of the

season, Liverpool have had the air of champions in recent weeks with their ability to fight to the end for their rewards.

Late goals against Leicester, Tottenham, Manchester United and Aston Villa have earned Klopp's men an extra eight points in the past month alone. Now they have the perfect opportunity to press home their advantage against a City side further weakened at the back by an injury to goalkeeper Ederson.

The erratic Claudio Bravo, who was sent off for a characteristic charge from his goal against Atalanta in the Champions League in midweek, will start a Premier League game for the first time since May 2018.

## Chahal has proved his value again in middle overs: Rohit

**NAGPUR, NOV 9 (PTI):** The returning Yuzvendra Chahal has once again proved his worth in the middle overs, India's stand-in captain Rohit Sharma said on Saturday and lauded the leg-spinner's ability to outthink batsmen.

Chahal and Kuldeep Yadav were left out of the T20 series against the West Indies and South Africa after the 50-over World Cup. The selectors did not pick them as they wanted to try out some fringe players ahead of the T20 World Cup next year.

While Chahal has made a successful comeback with a stellar showing against Bangladesh, Kuldeep is waiting his opportunity.

"This is a very, very new unit. But Chahal, for the last two years has been extremely consistent with how he has performed in white ball cricket. Even in the ODI format, he has done extremely well for us," said Rohit ahead of the series decider against Bangladesh here on Saturday.

"He bowled well in the IPL, and then his performance got recognised and he was picked for the Indian team in the ODI format. Since then, he's been one of the important members of the squad, and he's proved that in this series, how important he can be in the middle overs."

Rohit feels Chahal's ability to outthink the batsman is what makes him different from others. The leggie took two crucial wickets in the same over in Rajkot, Mushfiqur Rahim and Soumya Sarkar, to put the brakes on Bangladesh's scoring rate.

"He knows what he's trying to do, and he exactly knows what the batsman is trying to do. He's basically trying to stay ahead of the game, ahead of the batsman. That makes him a little more challenging for any batsman. He has understood that really well, and he's got variation and skills."

"If you have that in this format, you will definitely succeed. He's bowled well in the middle overs and even in the PowerPlay. He's not afraid to bowl even at the end. I used him in the 18th over as well and he

bowled pretty well in that over as well. He gives us so much flexibility," said Rohit.

Bangladesh coach Russell Domingo said his team will be looking to put the inexperienced Indian attack under pressure on Sunday. Rohit, too, acknowledges that his bowlers are inexperienced but "there can't be a better stage to learn."

"Yes, they are slightly inexperienced. This is the right time for them to learn. We always say you should play domestic cricket and learn. But I feel that till you play international cricket, you won't know where you stand as a bowler. This is a very good challenge for the whole bowling group," said Rohit.

The young attack comprises Deepak Chahar, Washington Sundar, Khaleel Ahmed and Rahul Chahar.

"An international team will always challenge you. Their batsmen will always challenge you, put you under pressure. Only when these things happen will our bowlers emerge. We have seen that in this format when you have 1 or 2 bad games, you can come under pressure and you are not able to execute your skills."

Rohit has scored a mountain of runs against Bangladesh and even in the last game, he made a match-winning 85. Asked if he likes playing against Bangladesh and the secret behind his success against them, Rohit quipped: "f I say what is the mystery, they will know and they will restrict me. I don't want to reveal that."

He also said that he was not disappointed at missing out on a hundred in his 100th match.

"I was not looking to score a hundred, I was looking to win the game. Really happy about that."

Rohit is expecting a sporting wicket for the series decider.

"Nagpur generally is a very good track to play cricket actually. It assists the bowlers also if you are bowling in the right channels. Even the Rajkot pitch there was something in there for the bowlers. Our spinners especially were getting a lot of turn. The pitch doesn't matter if you have skills and variations in your armoury.

## Please leave Rishabh Pant alone: Rohit Sharma

**BHARAT SHARMA**  
**NAGPUR, NOV 9 (PTI):** Stand-in India captain Rohit Sharma on Saturday strongly backed an under-fire Rishabh Pant, urging critics to "leave him alone" as he is only trying to execute the team management's strategy.

Pant, whose shot selection has come under the scanner on several occasions, became the centre of unwanted attention due to his poor glovework in the second T20 against Bangladesh in Rajkot.

He botched up a stumping of Liton Das with the third umpire ruling that his hands were slightly in front of the stumps, when he dislodged the bails.

"You know there is a lot of talk happening about Rishabh Pant every day, every minute. I

just feel that he needs to be allowed to do what he wants to do on the field. I would request everyone to keep their eyes away from Rishabh Pant for a while," skipper Rohit said on the eve of the T20 series decider against Bangladesh here.

"He is a fearless cricketer and we (team management) want him to have that freedom. And if you guys take your eyes off him for sometime, it will allow him to perform even better, added Rohit.

Not so long ago, Pant was the preferred choice in all three formats but Wriddhiman Saha played ahead of him in the three Tests against South Africa at home last month only on the basis of superior glovework.

"He is a young guy, 22, trying to make his mark in international cricket. Every move he makes

on the field, people start talking about him. It is not fair. I think we should allow him to play his cricket which actually he also wants to do," Rohit didn't hide his irritation at constant criticism that the Delhi man is subjected to.

With the bat, he has not been able to carry his IPL form into the T20 Internationals, having scored 352 runs in 22 games at 20.70. In 12 ODIs, he has scored 229 runs at 22.90.

In fact, Rohit said that just like his unimpressive performances are highlighted, there should be focus on good things also.

"Focus on him a lot more when he is doing good things also, not just bad things. He has been learning, there have been times he has kept well also. He is trying to do what the team management wants him to do.

## Cyclone Bulbul: Mamata monitoring situation

**KOLKATA, Nov 9 (PTI):** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Saturday said she is herself monitoring the situation and the administration has taken all measures to tackle any contingency in view of Cyclone Bulbul, which will make its landfall in the coastal area of the state.

She appealed to citizens to maintain calm and not to panic.

According to the IMD, Cyclone Bulbul will make landfall at West Bengal and Bangladesh coasts between Sagar Island (WB) and Khepupara (Bangladesh) across Sunderban delta by Saturday late evening.

"Cyclone Bulbul is about to pass through Bengal. Our state administration is closely monitoring the situation 24x7.

We are taking all measures to tackle any contingency. Special Control Rooms have been set up and NDRF-SDRF teams are deployed," Banerjee said in a tweet.

Schools, colleges and anganwadi centres have been closed and more than 1.2 lakh people have already been rescued from the vulnerable coastal areas, she said.

"Please do not panic. Kindly remain calm and cooperate with the administration in its rescue and relief efforts. Be alert, take care and stay safe," she said.

The very severe cyclonic storm 'Bulbul' over the Bay of Bengal is likely to make landfall between West Bengal-Bangladesh coasts by late Saturday evening or night, bringing in its wake very heavy rain and gale wind of up to 135 kmph along the coastline, the MeT department said here.

With the weatherman apprehending that the severity of 'Bulbul' will cause damage to kutcha houses, roads, communication and power lines along its path in the coastal and adjoining districts of West Bengal, the state government has put in place measures to tackle the evolving situation.

'Bulbul', which was centered 190 km south-southwest of Sagar Islands at 5.30 am on Saturday, is likely to weaken gradually and cross the coast between Sagar Islands of West Bengal and Khepupara in Bangladesh with a reduced force as a severe cyclonic storm, the Met department said.

# Bangladesh orders massive evacuation for Cyclone Bulbul

**ANISUR RAHMAN DHAKA, Nov 9 (PTI):** Authorities in Bangladesh on Friday ordered the evacuation of about 18 lakh people from the low-lying coastal villages and islands as the country braced for a "very severe" cyclonic storm that is set to hit the country this evening.

Officials from the disaster management ministry said thousands of people have already been moved to safe shelters as the evacuation process was underway particularly in 10 southwestern coastal districts, which are likely to face the maximum brunt of Cyclone 'Bulbul'.

"By now 3 lakh people have been evacuated and we plan to move 18 lakh people to cyclone shelters by the evening in the vulnerable regions," disaster ministry secretary Shah Kamal told reporters.

He said army troops



were called in to supplement the cyclone preparedness.

The latest met office bulletin said Bulbul was 280 kilometers southwest of Bangladesh's southwestern Mongla Port and 315 km southwest of Payra Port while it was moving in a north/northeastern direction.

It said the maximum sustained wind speed within 74 kms of the cyclone centre was about 130 kph which was rising to 150 kph in gusts/

squalls.

"Maritime ports of Mongla and Payra have been advised to keep hoisted great danger signal no ten (the highest)," the bulletin read.

Under the influence of the storm and the moon phase, the low-lying areas of the coastal districts of Chattogram, Noakiiali, Laxmipur, Feni, Chandpur, Barguna, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barishal, Pirojpur, Jhalakathi, Bagerhat, Khulna, Sat-

khira and their offshore islands and chars are likely to be inundated by storm surge of 5-7 feet high above normal astronomical tide.

The Met Office said light to moderate rain or thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at most places in Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barishal and Chattogram divisions and at many places over Rangpur, Mymensingh and Sylhet

divisions with moderately heavy to very heavy falls at places over the country.

Bangladesh's authorities earlier ordered a temporary ban on the movements of ferries and boats in internal river routes alongside all fishing boats and trawlers over northern part of the Bay of Bengal, where the storm originated initially in the form of low pressure.

State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief, Enamur Rahman told a news briefing in Dhaka that "adequate measures" were taken to tackle the storm.

Rahman said some 56,000 volunteers were ready to provide help, particularly to evacuate people to safe shelters before the cyclone made the landfall while the local administrations were equipped with packs of dry food for the temporarily displaced people.

## Kartarpur Corridor opening testimony to Pak's commitment to regional peace: PM Imran

**SAJJAD HUSSAIN KARTARPUR (PAKISTAN), Nov 9 (PTI):** The historic opening of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor is a testimony to Pakistan's commitment to regional peace, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Saturday as he congratulated the Sikh community on the 550th birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism.

The Kartarpur Sahib Corridor linking Dera Baba Sahib in Gurdaspur in India and Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan was thrown open on Saturday, in a historic people-to-people initiative, sparking a glimmer of hope for improvement in the strained ties between the two countries.

The Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib is located across the Ravi river in Pakistan and is about four kilometres from the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district of Punjab.

In his message on the occasion of Kartarpur Sahib Corridor's opening, the Prime Minister said, "we believe that the road to prosperity of region and bright future of our coming generation lies in peace."

"Today we are not only opening the border, but also our hearts for the Sikh community," he said.

Prime minister Khan said the unprecedented gesture of goodwill from his government was a reflection of its deep respect for Baba Guru Nanak Dev and religious sentiments of the Sikh community.

Khan congratulated the Sikh community on both sides of the border and the world over on the historic day, the report said.

Pakistan believes that interfaith harmony and peaceful coexistence would provide an opportunity to work for larger interests of the people of the sub-continent, he said.

Muslims have a great understanding of the sanctity and prestige of religious sites and places of worship, he said.

A Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman said that about 12,000

Sikhs, including 5,000 from India, were expected to participate in the opening of the corridor.

An official of the interior ministry said that special security measures had been taken on the occasion for the Sikh visitors coming from all over the world.

"Police and paramilitary security personnel are being deployed to ensure smooth security arrangements," said the official who wished anonymity.

The landmark project was announced last year when prime minister Khan performed the ground-breaking of the development work.

The work was completed in a record time and its completion is being termed as "gift" by the government of Pakistan to the Sikh community.

According to the agreement between Pakistan and India, 5,000 pilgrims from India can visit the shrine daily and the number can be increased in future.

The requirement of passport and the USD 20 service fee have been waived for Saturday and for November 12 by Pakistan.

Separate events have been organised on both the sides of the border to launch the much-awaited corridor ahead of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary on November 12.

The inauguration of the corridor comes in the midst of frayed ties between India and Pakistan following New Delhi's decision in August to withdraw Jammu and Kashmir's special status and bifurcate it into two Union Territories.

Notwithstanding a chill in bilateral ties over Kashmir, India and Pakistan after tough negotiations signed an agreement last month, paving the way for the inauguration of the Kartarpur corridor on November 9.

The agreement will allow 5,000 Indian pilgrims daily to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib where Guru Nanak spent last 18 years of his life.

## Iraq protesters, politicians dig in for third week

**BAGHDAD, Nov 9 (AFP):** Anti-government protesters from across Baghdad flooded Iraq's capital on Friday despite fresh bloodshed, as leaders appeared to have closed rank around embattled Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi.

Recent deaths in Baghdad and Iraq's south have pushed the toll since demonstrations erupted on October 1 close to 300, according to a tally compiled by AFP. Officials have stopped providing updated figures.

"Abdel Mahdi's position means more to him than the blood of Iraqis," charged a tribal dignitary protesting in the capital on Friday.

As evening fell, clashes between security forces and protesters resumed in Baghdad after six people died there the previous day, as demonstrators -- who upped their efforts in the last week of October after a lull -- continued to come out in force.

Armed units fired canisters that emanated bright purple tear gas at clusters of young protesters along Rasheed Street, one of the city's oldest and most celebrated avenues.

The steady pops of stun grenades echoed throughout nearby districts, many of which have been sealed off.

Still, thousands of Iraqis managed to reach the main protest camp in Tahrir (Liberation)



Square, occupied for two straight weeks by demonstrators.

"Even if the bridges and most of the roads are closed, people are driving all the way around from far-away areas to reach Tahrir," one protester said proudly.

Security forces have sealed off four bridges to keep protesters in Tahrir from crossing the Tigris into the Green Zone, which houses parliament, the cabinet, foreign embassies and other key buildings.

"Even if it comes down to the last man, we have to enter the Green Zone and bring it down," another protester shouted.

"We'll announce our people's revolution from there against everyone who stole from us -- Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi, Qais al-Khazaali, Hadi al-Ameri!" he said.

Khazaali and Ameri are leading commanders in the Hashed al-Shaabi paramilitary network, which has publicly backed the government after protests erupted.

It was founded in 2014 to fight the Islamic State group, drawing from a host of Shiite armed factions, many of which have close ties to Iran.

On Friday, a Hashed source told AFP that the network had brought in hundreds of reinforcements to protect government buildings in the Green Zone from any attempt by protesters to storm them.

The main lines of defence remain the bridges, where security forces have built up barricades, fired volleys of tear gas and stun grenades and resumed using live ammunition.

Amnesty International said it has found the military-grade canisters were Serbian- and Iranian-made.

Fired at point-blank range, the tear gas canisters have pierced protesters' skulls and chests, killing at least 16 people, according to the United Nations.

The death toll across the country has continued to rise in recent days,

with seven protesters killed between Thursday and Friday in the southern port city of Basra.

For a week, protesters have cut access to Basra's Umm Qasr port, which brings in most of Iraq's food and medical imports, and attempts by security forces to reopen the road have turned deadly.

Activists and medics say they have been subject to a campaign of intimidation, with two activists killed in Missan on Wednesday by unknown assailants.

Public anger erupted last month over widespread corruption and a lack of jobs, then escalated into calls for the entire ruling system to be overturned.

Oil-rich Iraq is OPEC's second biggest producer, but one in five people live in poverty and youth unemployment stands at 25 percent, according to the World Bank.

It is ranked the 12th most corrupt country in the world, according to Transparency International.

Many protesters have

## No agreement on China tariff rollback: Trump

**WASHINGTON, Nov 9 (AFP):** President Donald Trump said Friday he has not agreed to roll back tariffs on Chinese imports, dampening recent optimism for a major de-escalation in the US-China trade war.

Amid a steady stream of conflicting reports, Trump's remarks appeared to push back against Beijing's claims that the two sides had agreed to remove tariffs in stages as part of a partial deal announced last month.

Hopes for progress in defusing trade tensions

have driven global stocks higher this month, since an agreement would remove a major source of uncertainty in the world economy that is undercutting growth.

But Trump again portrayed the dispute as a boon for the United States despite the tariffs paid by American companies and consumers.

"They would like to have a rollback. I haven't agreed to anything," Trump told reporters at the White House.

"China would like to get somewhat of a rollback, not a complete roll-

back, because they know I won't do it."

Beijing, however, said this week the two sides had already agreed to mutual tariff reductions. Commerce Ministry spokesman Gao Feng announced Thursday that negotiators "agreed to roll back the additional tariffs in stages, as progress is made towards a (final) agreement."

The United States and China have imposed steep tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars in two-way trade, and another round of US duties are set to hit on Decem-

ber 15 on USD 160 billion in Chinese goods.

Trump again said Beijing is eager for a deal because their economy is hurting, although observers say China has more leverage as the US president prepares to compete for reelection.

Economic data show the conflict has hit US businesses and the uncertainty created by the dispute between the economic powers is undermining global growth.

"Frankly, they want to make a deal a lot more than I do," Trump said, adding

that the initial agreement will be signed "in our country," possibly in Iowa.

Investors worldwide have been cheered in recent days by reports quoting sources in Washington and Beijing saying duties already imposed could be removed in a proportional way.

But markets also have been buffeted by conflicting comments from White House officials, including China hardliner Peter Navarro, who earlier Friday cast doubt on any plans to remove punitive duties.

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## A Revenge Reboot Is In the Works and Emily VanCamp Approves, But Who's Returning?

Revenge, a dish best served rebooted. ABC has a new show in development with original Revenge creator Mike Kelley that's basically Revenge 2.0. It centers around a Latina immigrant who arrives in Malibu to get revenge on a pharmaceutical dynasty responsible for the murder of her biochemist mother, the destruction of her family, and a global epidemic.

She'll be guided by a character from the original show, and while we don't know who that is yet, original star Emily VanCamp does.

"I can't say who, but they're bringing back a specific person, and I love that specific person, so it's exciting," VanCamp told TV Insider in an interview, going on to say she "would absolutely watch that!"

"I heard about it from Mike and [Joe Fazzio], who are rebooting it, about a month ago," she told the site. "I'm really happy for them! It's exciting. That was such a special time in my life. I loved making that show and I think it's just a great theme. We'll see what happens. It's very exciting!"

Now, the question we're asking is who on earth is this very specific person who Emily VanCamp loves and who would make this reboot worth watching?

There's definitely one person we're really hoping it is, and it's the person we think it could be based on the way the series finale of Revenge ended in 2015.

You probably forgot, but at the very end of the episode, Nolan (Gabriel Mann) was approached by a man who said he was sent there by Amanda Clarke and needed Nolan's help with the fact that his mother has been falsely accused of embezzlement.

"What goes around comes around," Emily/Amanda's voiceover said.

This makes us hope and think the new guide in the art of revenge is Nolan himself, and honestly he's the one we're hoping to see again. He also makes the most sense. He was still alive at the end of the show, he wasn't a criminal, and he was already carrying on Amanda/Emily's legacy as she sailed away with her new husband.

But then again we also wouldn't put it past Victoria Grayson (Madeline Stowe) to still be alive somehow. She's done it before, she can do it again.



## Flattering to be mistaken for Keanu Reeves' girlfriend, says Helen Mirren

LOS ANGELES, Nov 8 (PTI): Veteran actor Helen Mirren says being compared to Keanu Reeves' girlfriend Alexandra Grant was "flattering".

The 55-year-old actor recently stepped out with Grant for Los Angeles County Museum of Art's (LACMA) Art + Film Gala.

At the event Grant, 44, wore her natural, silver hair in a bun and somewhat resembled Mirren, leading to confusion on social media.

"I saw that. That was very flattering on me, you know, because she's obviously lovely," Mirren told Entertainment Tonight, referring to the Twitter furore.

The veteran star, whose husband Taylor Hackford worked with Reeves on 1997's "The Devil's Advocate", added that she is happy for the new couple.

"I do know Keanu very well. He did a film with my husband and he is just the most adorable, lovely person. So she's a lucky girl and I'm sure that he's a lucky boy."

Reeves and Grant have known each other for quite some time.

In 2011, the two collaborated for Reeves' book "Ode to Happiness", that



the actor had penned while the illustration was done by Grant.

Five years later, they again worked

together on his follow-up book "Shadows" and later launched the publishing house X Artists' Books.

## Charlie Higson joins 'Curse of the Kohinoor' series as co-writer



LOS ANGELES, Nov 9 (PTI): British writer-actor Charlie Higson has boarded "Curse of the Kohinoor" series as a co-writer.

He will join India-born British writer Farrukh Dhondy on the Anglo-Indian heist series, reported Variety.

The thriller recounts a plot to steal the Kohinoor diamond, centerpiece of the British Crown Jewels.

Colin Teague will direct the series, which will feature many Indian actors in significant roles.

"Curse..." will be shot on location in India and the UK from March 2020.

Padma Galla for Amara Raja Media & Entertainment, Rahul Agarwal for Star Entertainment Worldwide, and Bobby Bedi for Contentflow Studios are attached as executive producers on the project.

## Kaitlyn Dever, Jonathan Tucker to star in anthology 'Monsterland'



LOS ANGELES, Nov 9 (PTI): "Unbelievable" actor Kaitlyn Dever and "Westworld" star Jonathan Tucker are set to appear in the first episode of Hulu's horror anthology series "Monsterland".

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the series is based on the short stories from Nathan Ballingrud's collection, "North American Lake Monsters".

It follows "broken people driven to desperate acts in an attempt to repair their lives, ultimately showing there is a thin line between man and

monster."

Dever will play 19-year-old Toni, a struggling waitress and mother to a deeply troubled little girl. But when she meets Alex (Tucker), she is pushed to decide how far she is willing to go to change her life.

Mary Laws serves as the creator and writer on the series.

She is also attached as the executive producer on the project along with Under the Shadow's Lucan Toh and Babak Anvari and Annapurna's Megan Ellison and Sue Naegle.

## GOT7's Jackson Wang Opens Up



There is a fire that burns behind the eyes of 25-year-old Hong Kong-born rapper, Jackson Wang and it reflects in his incredible work ethic. The GOT7 member has big dreams and it looks like he is on track to make them all come true. On 25 October, Wang released his long-awaited solo debut album titled MIRRORS under his self-made label, TEAM WANG. The album features eight brand new tracks; Mostly in English with the exception of the Chinese version of Stephanie Poetri's "I Love You 3000". Wang establishes his own sound with

this project. The mixture of trap, hip-hop and r&b influences suits his raspy, baritone voice perfectly. It's a huge contrast from his work with GOT7 and shows his versatility as an artist.

For his first solo project, Wang boasts an impressive features list. American rapper Goldlink and 88rising's Rich Brian are featured in bangers like "Bad Back" and "Titanic" respectively. MIRRORS debut at number 32 on the Billboard 200 Charts and number 3 on the Billboard Digital Albums Chart, which is a huge feat for any artist on their first solo project.



INSTAGRAM, WE NEED THE JENNIFER ANISTON FILTER! On Friday, the Morning Show star took to her new Instagram account with a glowing selfie, or as she cleverly called it, a "mugshot." "Mugshot. (New episode of @themorningshow out TODAY)," she captioned the shot in honor of her new Apple TV+ series along with a teaser for the new episode. Meanwhile, fans showered the E! People's Choice Awards People's Icon Award recipient with compliments and love.

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**ARIES:** There's no such thing as TMI for you today, Aries. With the moon in your sign, you're in your live-out-loud element. Don't feel bad about being so...overt. Your bold authenticity will actually create a safe space in which others can open up. Own your past, Ram! Those "embarrassing" mishaps birthed golden lessons that you can pass on to others who are struggling with the same issues.

**TAURUS:** You're in an emo groove today, Taurus, so just go with it. This is one of those days when you'd benefit from setting aside that intense work ethic so you can bond with the people in your environment. Power down your laptop and go have lunch with a colleague. You could even have a chance to pass along some of your sage wisdom to someone who is struggling with an issue you've overcome. Reach up to mentors too, especially a powerful woman who's been in your corner in the past.

**GEMINI:** Lighten up about love today, Gemini. With the moon in your "the more the merrier" eleventh house, you could turn

that table for two into a table for six or eight. If your entourage has yet to meet your amour du jour, this would be the perfect day for a getting-to-know-you gathering. Single? Sparks could fly with a friend of a friend.

**CANCER:** Be more "purpose-driven" in your personal life today. People adore you, and there are plenty of friendships you COULD cultivate. But since each one requires an investment of time, you want to reserve your energy for folks who fill your cup—not a bunch of small-talking randos. Have you been loading up your calendar with "meh" events out of fear of being lonely?

**LEO:** Bigger, stronger, faster: Well, why not, Leo? Today's moon in your expansive ninth house could bring rapid expansion to one of your goals. Take your foot off the brake, but keep your hands on the wheel. You of all people know that progress CAN happen at supersonic speed. People from other parts of the globe could be involved, so get ready to fire up Skype or Zoom and brainstorm away! To accelerate the process, you might have to take a risk. Make sure it's a

calculated leap instead of an impulsive gamble.

**VIRGO:** Got secrets? One of those skeletons is rattling the closet door, begging to be freed. Time for a confessional conversation, Virgo—the truth will liberate your soul. Connect with a trusted confidante tonight, over the phone or huddled in a private corner. If you just want them to listen without offering advice, make that clear up-front.

**LIBRA:** Forget all those parental advisories about the dangers of talking to strangers. Today, your usual people-watching could erupt into a fascinating dialogue when you see someone at a coffee shop who's reading a book that changed your life or who's wearing an indie-label designer that only a few insiders know about.

**SCORPIO:** You're back! On March 5, expressive Mercury turned retrograde in your passionate fifth house. You may have felt like you were missing the love boat. Or perhaps you couldn't get a clear read on a romantic interest. Get ready to shake off the confusion and insecurity today, as the communication planet powers forward and calls forth your most radiant self!

**SAGITTARIUS:** Put a little luxe in your life. Today's decadent fifth-house moon gives you a hall pass to be a little hedonistic. This doesn't have to be harmful to your health or the Earth. Skip the avocado toast and sip a smoothie made with young coconut milk, which requires less water to produce. Looking for a signature accessory for spring? Find a sustainable jeweler who repurposes gold and gems from antique pieces. This romantic lunation can turn up the heat with a love interest. Slip off for a lunch date, and don't be surprised if it turns into a spicy nooner. Though it's a weeknight, do what you can to lure friends out for some cultural activities—or at least happy hour!!

**CAPRICORN:** Bless this mess? Not today! With the Aries moon percolating in your domestic fourth house, tidying up your spaces could lead to sharper thinking. As within, so without, right? Now, here's the rub: The piles in your space might be a metaphor for situations you've been avoiding. As you're folding laundry and deleting junk mail, you may become acutely aware of emotions that you

swept under the rug.

**AQUARIUS:** The Aquarius social butterfly is bursting out of the cocoon thanks to today's lunar lift in your communication corner. Since you won't have much patience for desk work, rejig your schedule so you can handle the people-oriented tasks on your to-do list. A spontaneous lunch date with a coworker could turn into an amazing brainstorming session that leaves you buzzing with inspiration. With the moon in active Aries, slip out for fresh-air breaks. Who says you can't listen in on a conference call while walking the trail of an urban park?!

**PISCES:** Would you care to upgrade, Pisces? With the moon beaming into your sensual (but sensible) second house, you're willing to splurge on quality. Review your financials: Is there room to indulge? As long as it's practical and functional, you can consider it an investment. Funds too tight for that go-with-everything Celine bag or the cold-pressed juicer? Create a special savings account and make your first deposit today. This will motivate you to keep on hustling, even if your gratification is delayed.