



**13th Board  
meeting of IHCAE  
held at Chemchey**  
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**ATTC BARDANG HOLDS  
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**MARTAM NAZITAM  
SCHOOLS CELEBRATE  
I-DAY AT RAJ BHAVAN**  
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# SummitTIMES

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

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**GOV ON ATAL  
BIHARI VAJPAYEE'S  
DEMISE**

**"Country  
has lost true  
fighter and  
statesman"**

#### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 16 AUG:**

Governor Shrinivas Patil has expressed deep sadness and grief on the demise of former Prime Minister of India, Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee, at AIIMS New Delhi this afternoon.

In a press communiqué received from Raj Bhavan, the Governor wrote, "I am deeply anguished and shocked by the news of the demise of Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the former Prime Minister of India at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi today following prolonged illness.

An outstanding Parliamentarian, prolific orator and finest poet in the contemporary Hindi literary world, Late Vajpayee's persona and aura won him accolades and salutations the world over. One of the most respected Parliamentarians in modern times, he was fondly called as Azatshatru across the political arena. His love for the country found reflections in his poems enriched with nationalist fervour, his will power as the leader of the country to attain the nuclear capability to se-

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## Sikkim liberates itself from illiteracy on I-Day

**WE ARE NOW  
THE FIRST FULLY  
LITERATE STATE IN  
THE COUNTRY, CHIEF  
MINISTER INFORMS**

**GANGTOK, 15 AUG (IPR):** Sikkim welcomed the 72nd Independence Day with the declaration of the State of Sikkim as the first fully literate State in the country, surpassing the State of Kerala. Chief Minister Pawan Chamling made this historic declaration at the State level Independence Day Celebration at Paljor Stadium on 15 Aug.

It was reported that the Literacy Mission was carried out jointly by National Literacy Mission Authority, Government of India, and State Literacy Mission Authority under HRDD, Government of Sikkim.

To celebrate the accomplishment, students of West



Point Senior Secondary School presented a song titled 'Pavitra Kranti', based on the Literacy Mission.

The programme began

with the CM unfurling the National flag, followed by National salute and review of the Independence Day parade. The parade comprised of 18 con-

tingents and four bands.

The celebration began with the march-past by Para Military forces, Sikkim Police [Male and Female], National Cadet Corps,

School contingents from various schools from the capital, Army and Police Bands. The All-Girls Band of West Point Senior Secondary School, the first all-girls band to perform in the State level Independence Day Parade, made a mark with their display.

In his address, Mr Chamling extended his greetings to the people of Sikkim and the nation. He paid his tribute on the demise of former Member of Rajya Sabha and Ambassador of India to Mongolia, late Karma Topden, and also mourned for the untimely passing away of Members of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly, late Laxuman Lepcha and late Gopal Lamichaney. He also expressed heartfelt condolence on the passing away of two stalwarts of Indian politics, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, late M Karunanidhi, and former

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## 7 new Addl Secretaries

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 16 AUG:**

On the recommendation of Sikkim Public Service Commission, the State Government has promoted various members of Sikkim State Civil Service in the selection grade-I of SCS in level-20 as Additional Secretary on substantive capacity. The new officiating Additional Secretaries are Suman Thapa, Norgay Dawa Bhutia, Anand Pradhan, CK Chettri, Sonam Tshering Tamang, DB Rowath and DK Chettri.

## Health Minister makes surprise visit to Rinchenpong PHC

**GYALSHING, 16 AUG [IPR]:** Minister for Health Care, Human Services & Family Welfare Department, Arjun Kumar Ghattani, made a surprise visit to Rinchenpong Primary Health Centre in West Sikkim today.

He inspected every ward and section of the PHC and interacted with the patients and further asked about their improvements in health status and availability of medical facilities in the centre.

He also briefed Medical Officer, Dr Bandana Thapa, and health pro-

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## Army XI, Lucknow wins Sir Tashi Namgyal Memorial Cup trophy

**SAGAR CHETTRI**

**Gangtok, 16 AUG:**

Army XI, Lucknow emerged as the champion of the Independence Day Football Tournament for Chogyal Sir Tashi Namgyal Memorial Cup 2018 played here at Paljor Stadium. In the contesting final match played on 15 Aug, Army XI outplayed home team Sikkim Aakraman Football Club 2-0.

Both the teams played an attacking game from the start. In the presence of home support, Sikkim Aakraman FC players made constant attacks but could not breach the opponent's defence. Finally, Army XI finished the first half with 1-0 lead with the help of Liton Shil's goal in the 34th minute.

In the second half, when home team players were trying to equalise the game, Jain P extended the lead of Army



XI to 2-0 in the 64th minute.

Eight teams participated in this

tournament which had kicked off on 08 Aug. The tournament was organised by

Sikkim Football Association under the aegis of Home Department.

## Vajpayee- pragmatist, orator and statesman who went beyond BJP's nationalist political agenda

**NEW DELHI, AUG 16 (PTI):** Statesman and pragmatist, orator and poet, a man of peace and conviction. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a towering nationalist who softened the often sharp edge of his party's politics with a gentle sophistry of words, earning him the sobriquet "ajaat shatru" or the man with no enemies.

The first prime minister from a non-Congress party to complete a full term in office, Vajpayee began shakily -- his first stint as prime minister in 1996 lasted only 13 days when his unlikely coalition government failed to get support from other parties. The BJP-led coalition government came back to power in 1998, and this time Vajpayee stayed in office for 13 months before losing a no-confidence motion by one vote.

The National Democratic Alliance returned to power in October 1999 with Vajpayee as prime minister once again. This time he lasted the entire term, capping a glorious career that saw him go from student activist to journalist, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh pracharak, Member of Parliament, foreign minister, opposition leader and finally a much-loved leader of the nation.

Like many of his generation, Vajpayee -- who died today at age 93 -- came into politics as an 18-year old during the Independence movement in 1942 when the Quit India movement was going on.



A lifelong bachelor, Vajpayee was first elected to Lok Sabha in 1957 from Balrampur in Uttar Pradesh in India's second general elections. His maiden speech in Parliament so impressed his peers and colleagues that the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru introduced Vajpayee to a visiting foreign dignitary thus: "This young man one day will become the country's prime minister."

He remained a member of Parliament for 47 years -- elected 10 times to the Lok Sabha and twice to Rajya Sabha.

Vajpayee's signature in politics was achieving pragmatic consensus, and in this process he earned the respect of his par-

ties, allies and opponents. Abroad, he projected a harmonious image of India and connected it to the world through his foreign policy outreach.

Fluent in English, his oratory was at its best in Hindi. With his well-timed wit, and carefully-chosen words delivered with trademark long pauses, Vajpayee immediately connected with all those who came in contact with him -- the common man, politicians, bureaucrats, students and world leaders.

As foreign minister under the Janata Party government headed by Morarji Desai in 1977, Vajpayee was the first leader to deliver a speech to the United Nations General Assembly in Hindi.

He was awarded India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, in March 2015.

While his six years in office were defined by several crises -- including the hijacking of an Indian Airlines jetliner to Kandahar, Afghanistan in 1999, an attack on the Parliament building in 2001, communal riots in Gujarat in 2002 -- he also left a mark with peace initiatives and infrastructural projects. Chief among them is the Golden Quadrilateral Highway network, connecting India's four major metropolises with 5,846 kilometers of roads.

During his second term as prime minister, Vajpayee ordered nuclear tests in May 1998 in a strategic masterstroke to blunt Pakistan's nuclear ambitions while at the same

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## Maintain BL seats ration, restore Nepali seats: NASBO

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 16 AUG:**

A general body meeting of the National Sikkimese Bhutia Organisation [NASBO] was held today in Gangtok which was attended by Zonal representatives of the organization. The daylong meeting discussed various topics, particularly the constitutional rights of the Sikkimese people.

In a NASBO press release, the organization states that no single section of Sikkimese population should play dominant role in the political affairs of Sikkim mainly by virtue of their ethnic origin.

"This has been the basic essence of the historic 08 May Tripartite Agreement and the Gov-

ernment of Sikkim Act 1974 followed by insertion of the Article 371F of the Constitution which are a prelude to the Annexation of Sikkim in 1975. Any attempt to disturb this constitutional position which is a testimony of long Sikkimese history and its subsequent evolution tantamount to redo Sikkim's takeover by its own protecting power – India in 1975.

It is at such circumstances, this organization appeals to the Indian government that the political rights of the Sikkimese people of Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepali origin must be preserved and restored by ensuring to maintain the existing ratio of the Bhutia Lepcha seats in the

Sikkim Legislative Assembly under any circumstances and to urgently restore the Nepali seats [including the Tsong] in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

These shall strengthen the distinct Sikkimese identity and rights while simultaneously strengthening Article 371F of the India constitution.

Further, those section of Sikkimese population included within the category of Scheduled Tribe may continue enjoying socio-economic benefits and privileges as are provided accordingly.

However, if the Union intends to disturb the existing arrangement in Sikkim Legislative Assembly by reducing the

existing 37.5 % BL seat reservation in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly or if immediate step is not initiated to restore the Nepali seats [including the Tsong] in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly, it will be a step closer to derecognizing Sikkim's takeover by India in 1975 and the political commitments given to the Sikkimese people and the repercussion therein after," the release states.

The organization has urged upon the Indian Union to act promptly on the basis of the above pre-Annexation developments, Article 371 F of the Constitution and the judgments of Supreme Court on the BL seat [RC Poudyal vs. Union of India].



## HSP starts its #wakkaibhayo campaign

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 16 AUG:**

Hamro Sikkim Party [HSP] today held a meeting of its social media cell at its party head-office here in Deorali.

Vice president, Bhaichung

informed that the HSP social media cell has started a campaign on social media with the hashtag 'wakkaibhayo'.

"We appeal to the people to send video clips and pictures to us with hashtag #wakkaib-

hayo. We've met many people after founding HSP and all we could hear them say was 'wak-kai bhayo' [have had enough] and based on this, we are starting this social media campaign," said Mr Bhutia.



## SMU celebrates I-Day at SMIMS

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 16 AUG:** The students and staff of Sikkim Manipal University and its constituent colleges- Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences [SMIMS], Sikkim Manipal College of Nursing [SMCON], Sikkim Manipal College of Physiotherapy [SMCPT], celebrated the 72nd Independence Day with much fervour and enthusiasm. Vice-Chancellor, SMU, Lt Gen [Dr] MD Venkatesh, hoisted the National Flag while students of SMIMS, SMCON, SMCPT and Security Services staff participated in march-past. The Best Marching Contingent prize was won by SMCON contingent. A colourful cultural programme was also presented by students on the occasion.

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## Martam Nazitam schools celebrate I-Day at Raj Bhavan



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 16 AUG:**

Governor Shrinivas Patil unfurled the Tri-color at the lawns of Old Raj Bhavan in a formal ceremony in the morning of 15 Aug on the occasion of 72nd Independence Day. First lady Rajanidevi Patil, officers, staff and their family members, ITBP officers and Jawans, students and local gentries were present on the occasion, a press communiqué received from Raj Bhavan informs.

There was special presence

of Panchayats, teachers, students from six different schools of Martam Nazitam Gram Panchayat Unit, East Sikkim. The students were brought to Raj Bhavan on the occasion of Independence Day as a part of their excursion sponsored by Martam Nazitam GPU. The Panchayats also presented organic vegetables and items made by waste products as a part of their Zero Waste Campaign in their GPU.

Following the hoisting of the National Flag and National Anthem sung by school children, a

special cultural presentation and sports activities were organised involving children, ITBP Jawans and staff of Raj Bhavan.

First Lady Ms Patil distributed sweets to all the participants of the Independence Day function.

The Governor expressed his pleasure on meeting the students on the special day and has also expressed his desire to make it a tradition to invite and facilitate the visit of school children during special occasions at Raj Bhavan.

## 72nd I-Day celebrated in West Sikkim

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 16 AUG:**

Dentam Senior Secondary School emerged victorious against Soreng Senior Secondary School by 3-1 goals in the 2nd State level Girls' Football Tournament held at Soreng in West Sikkim to commemorate the 72nd Independence Day celebration, a press release informs.

Rojana Lepcha of Dentam SSS was adjudged best player of the tourney while Simaran Gurung and Kalpana Manger of Soreng SSS bagged the highest scorer and best goal keeper titles respectively.

The winner was presented with cash prize of Rs. 50, 000 along with trophy and the runner up team was awarded with



Rs. 30,000 along with trophies by area MLA cum HRDD Minister, RB Subba, who attended the celebration as chief guest.

It may be mentioned here, with this win, Dentam SSS will now get to play in the prestigious Subroto Cup 2018 in New Delhi.

Likewise, the 72nd In-

dependence Day cum 3rd Harka Maya and Damber Limboo Memorial Diamond Cup organized by Pratap International School of Tikpur in West Sikkim had Area MLA, DN Sherpa, as chief guest along with Headmaster of Tikpur SS, DM Pradhan, as guest of honour.

The U-15 category of Harka Maya and Damber

Limboo Memorial Diamond Cup had Tikpur SS secure a win against Sombaria SSS by 5-2 goals. In the men's open category, TUC won against Salangdang FC by 3-1 goals. The winner and runner up teams were presented with cash prizes of Rs 50,000 and Rs 30,000 respectively.

## I-Day celebration in Dzongu

### WANGCHUK BHUTIA

**MANGAN, 16 AUG;**

The sub divisional level celebration of the 72 Independence Day was held at Gor Government Secondary School in Dzongu, North Sikkim. Organized by Dzongu Independence Day Celebration Committee [IDCC], the event had the presence of Deputy Speaker SLA cum area MLA, Dzongu, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, as chief guest.

The chief guest hoist-

ed the National flag which was followed by display of band and parade by students of different schools of Dzongu.

Addressing the programme, the chief guest commended the organizing committee for putting together such an excellent programme despite the fact that it was being organized for the first time in Lum/Gor/Sangtok GPU.

He took the opportunity to caution the people of Sikkim on the

propaganda and misinformation engineered by certain sections to distract people from the sincere efforts of the State Government. He advised all to steer clear of such propaganda and called for collective resolve to accomplish the common aim of a peaceful and developed Sikkim.

The programme was also marked by felicitation of best teachers, ASHA, Anganwadi workers and progressive farmers.

## Himalayan FC wins Rangpo I-Day Football Tourney

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 16 AUG:** Himalayan Football Club, Gangtok won the 72nd Independence Day Open Football Tournament organised by IDCC Rangpo at Rangpo Bazaar playground in East Sikkim. Himalayan FC edged past Sikkim Police 3-2 and lifted this year's champion's trophy. Area MLA, Gopal Baraily, awarded the winner with cash prize of Rs 1,50,000 and trophy made of 1.5 kg silver



sponsored by Sikkim Distilleries Limited, Rangpo while the runner up team was awarded with

cash prize of Rs 1,00,000 and trophy sponsored by Alkem Lab, Kumrek, a press release informs.

## Sikkim liberates itself from illiteracy on I-Day

### contd from pg01

Speaker Lok Sabha and long term Member of Parliament, late Somnath Chatterjee.

While addressing the gathering, the CM expressed that it took Sikkim decades to overcome the political irony of the initial years of democracy and that it was only after the formation of the present government that Democracy in its true form was established in Sikkim.

"Sikkim of today stands tall in India because of the collective efforts of the public and the State Government and that this legacy of rapid development and pride should be carried forward together. The last 24 years of governance has been most rewarding. Sikkim today is one of the most progressive and vibrant States in the coun-

try. Over the years Sikkim government has set up many policy initiatives and have introduced and implemented them with finesse," he added.

Speaking on Sikkim becoming a fully literate State, the CM stated that it was possible due to the efforts of teachers, guardians and the students themselves. He also attributed the success to the priority laid by the Government towards education. He reiterated that the vision of his Government is to impart holistic education to children with an aim to make them ready for life.

"The State endeavours to move ahead in development with total focus on its mission to serve the State and its people. We have witnessed phenomenal changes in various fields of development and today Sikkim is

the best State in the country," he stated.

The CM highlighted on the progress made by Sikkim in the fields of education, tourism, environment, social justice, agriculture and horticulture, health and the rural development sector.

He also made a specific mention of the many initiatives that Sikkim has been a pioneer of such as the first State to initiate organic farming, the state to provide free education up to college level, free medical education amongst many other achievements, and free HPV Vaccination for girls between age group of 9-14 girls.

Outlining the numerous steps taken by the Government for the welfare and upliftment of women, the CM also announced

an enhancement in the job reservation to women to 33%.

While directing his address to the students in the audience, the CM informed them about the educational policies of the State Government and reiterated the State Government's commitments towards fulfilling the educational aspirations of the young students. He also called upon the youths to come forward and utilize the opportunities and benefits provided to them through the Chief Minister's Start-Up Scheme.

In conclusion, he urged the Sikkimese people to refrain from falling prey to rumours and hearsay and instil faith in the progress and success of the policies of the State Government which are there for everyone to see.



## Health Minister makes surprise visit...

### contd from pg01

fessionals to deliver impeccable service to the patients with full dedication and accountability.

The Minister also took stock on functioning of equipments, availability of medicines, existing manpower, etc.

Regarding accomplishment of first phase of HPV vaccine, the MO informed that a total of 758 beneficiaries [100%]

from 44 schools under its jurisdiction have been administered HPV vaccine which is a notable initiative taken up by the State Government to prevent cervical cancer in the State. Two staff nurses have recently joined the health centre to fulfill requirement of manpower, she informed.

The Minister also instructed health workers to continue Chief Min-

ister's Comprehensive Annual and Total Check-up for Healthy Sikkim [CATCH] programme at people's door steps and encouraged for the implementation of Indradhanush programme.

Further, he telephonically instructed the concerned officials to carry out inspection of the PHC for immediate repairing of rooftop and staff quarters.



MINISTRY OF  
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(25 December, 1924 - 16 August, 2018)

## Nation Bids Farewell To Atal Ji

**Atal Ji**

Is A True Ratna of Bharat  
A Leader Of Our Ages

His Spirit Will Continue To Guide Us  
As We Build The New India Of His Dreams

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।  
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

(Shrimadbhagavadgita: Chapter 2, Verse 23)

**Time & Venue for Last Respects:**

6 A, Krishna Menon Marg, New Delhi  
730 AM to 830 AM, 17th August 2018

BJP Headquarters,  
6 A, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi  
9 AM to 1 PM, 17th August 2018

**Final Journey:** 1 PM Onwards,  
17th August 2018

**Last Rites:** Rashtriya Smriti Sthal,  
Mahatma Gandhi Marg, New Delhi



# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

## Environmental Concerns

*The real ones, not the ones that babus deem as important*

The US is grappling with the embarrassment of having a President who prefers pollution over protection (of the environment) and has torn up the fate of an international accord which would have scaled down emissions which have been harming the planet for far too long. Meanwhile, the developing world wants the developed countries to clean up their act and reduce their unloading of greenhouse gases. What cannot be denied is that the developed countries remain predominant producers of these gases and therefore need to take the lead in reducing harmful emissions. The developing world, because this section also needs to provide for its people and has a lot of catching up to do, is also a major contributor now, although their per capita contribution to the ruining of Earth is comparatively much lower. But then again, most of the people on this planet reside in the developing segment so the quantum becomes too large to ignore. These are part of the global debate on the environment which has been going on for many years. The developed countries have been asking the poorer nations to desist from practices that harm the global environment while the developing countries have pointed the finger right back at the richer countries over the hothouse gas issue.

Blame game is not going to cool this planet down or stop it from overheating. While both sides make valid points, the unavoidable fact is that all of us, the rich and the poor, have to live together on spaceship Earth. We have to be collectively responsible for making the world environmentally sustainable.

While the developing countries need to ensure that their factories move up the technological ladder and adopt manufacturing methods that are safer, the richer countries must help with transfer of technology to the poorer countries so that they can become environmentally responsible. The developed countries cannot dictate terms in this regard and have to listen to the reasonable arguments of the poorer nations.

While the debate between the developed and the developing heats up further, it is time that we started another debate at the national level - one between the highlands and lowlands. In Sikkim, as must surely be the case with any other hill state, we suffer because of rules framed by policy-makers sitting in the air-conditioned confines of Shastri Bhavan posturing concern for glaciers like Zemu or Gangotri. They read somewhere that using wood for fuel puts undue pressure on the environment. While this might be true, they don't realise that a villager in Labdang in west Sikkim does not have as easy an access to even kerosene oil as the babu in Delhi has to LPG. He has no alternative, but to depend on the forest for his needs. Why the policy framers can't comprehend the fact that villagers don't exploit the forest resources, but only share it in sustainable models refined over centuries, defies all logic. Maybe it doesn't, because, sadly for the peripheral states like Sikkim, policies are framed with dry statistics in mind by even drier officials. Local concerns are ignored and the colonial hangover sees to it that the natives need to be told what to do. So even though Sikkim and Himachal lost a lot of their forests to provide timber for the railway berths which never even made the climb to towns in the two states, the locals are made to pay. All of a sudden someone realised that the forest cover was shrinking and the forests were made out of bounds for the locals who might have even protested earlier when the plains denuded their hills.

Since we sit on the lungs of the entire country, it is time that Sikkim and other states like it are given a greater say in the framing of environmental policies. And no, the Forest Rights Act, at least in the form it is understood and implemented is not the only way to go. The rest of the country, the section which ruined the environment, should listen to regions which have conserved well and lived responsibly.

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

# Syria's White Helmets and the long history of attacking wartime humanitarians

JAMES CROSSLAND  
*theconversation.com*

The evacuation of 422 White Helmet volunteers from Syria seemingly marks the end of a daring five-year humanitarian mission in one of the world's most war torn countries. Founded and initially trained by a retired British officer and comprised of local recruits, the White Helmets (AKA the Syrian Civil Defence) were formed in 2013. Their aim was to carry out search and rescue operations for victims of bombings in rebel held areas of Syria.

The White Helmets, who claim to have saved the lives of more than 100,000 people, stand as a beacon of light for much of the international community amid the darkness of the Syrian civil war. They have become the subject of an Oscar-winning Netflix documentary and earned a Nobel Peace Prize nomination in 2016.

But this rosy picture of humanity at its best has been tainted by the politicisation of the outfit's activities and the establishment of a counter narrative in which the volunteers appear as anything but battlefield angels.

### PROPAGANDA AND SMEAR CAMPAIGNS

The White Helmets have been demonised by Russian-backed propaganda outlets as everything from being partial to the rebel cause (despite the group's motto being "to save a life is to save all humanity") to collaborating with ISIS, to staging chemical weapons attacks, to simply being an all-purpose front for unofficial Western meddling into Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad's affairs.

The latter claim, in particular has been repeated in press outlets sympathetic to the Syrian president, which reference the fact that the White Helmets have been funded primarily by Western governments.

Aside from this smear campaign, the White Helmets have also been the victims of more direct action. This has included the bombing of several of their hospitals and, most unambiguously, a mid-night raid on one of their safe houses in August

2017 in which seven of the volunteers were executed by assassins still unknown.

This might read like chapters of a modern war thriller - indeed, the tale of the White Helmets is scheduled to become a George Clooney-led film.

### WARTIME HUMANITARIANISM

So much of their experience is neither new nor unique. The triumphs, travails and tragedies of the White Helmets are just the latest instalment in the long, brutal story of wartime humanitarianism which stretches back over 150 years. Similar tales were played out on the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) and the Balkans Uprisings (1875-1878). Both involved cases of clearly identified humanitarians being targeted for violence and having their motives questioned.

In these instances, it was not White Helmets, but Red Crosses and Red Crescents that distinguished the volunteers from the fighters. They were the symbols enshrined by the articles of the Geneva Convention as indicating the neutrality of battlefield medics. But these "sacrosanct" symbols did not protect the volunteers from suspicion and attack.

Red Cross hospitals were routinely shelled throughout the Franco-Prussian War. During the siege of Paris a number of volunteers were shot in the belief that they were using their "neutral" Red Cross status as a cover for committing acts of espionage.



onage. Like the White Helmets of today, the idea that volunteers could act in the service of all war's victims raised eyebrows.

The Swiss volunteer, Frédéric Ferrière was imprisoned on suspicion of being a spy, despite offering his medical services to the "enemy" Prussians.

The French volunteer nurse, Coralie Cahen, was also forcibly ejected from a camp by Prussian troops when she tried to gain access to starving prisoners of war; testament to how - then as now - humanitarians' actions were also politicised. Cahen was later lauded by the national press as a symbol of French humanitarian spirit

triumphing over Germanic barbarism. Contemporary questions over the White Helmets' funding and motive are also nothing new. During the Balkans Uprisings of the 1870s, a British organisation called the Stafford House Committee sent a humanitarian mission to the troubled region. Although serving under the Red Cross and Red Crescent - and therefore supposedly impartial - Stafford House's volunteers were characterised in the press as medical mercenaries acting in favour of the Turkish army and taking gold from the Sultan and pro-Turkish backers in Britain.

The grounds for these accusations were far firmer than those currently being thrown at the White Helmets. But the fact remains that the murky grey area between political agendas and "neutral" humanitarian action has always existed, along with slur campaigns and violence from those who are threatened by the work of humanitarian volunteers.

In this sense, the White Helmets' evacuation from Syria may mark the end of their individual story. But, if history is any guide, the sobering and sadly familiar aspects of their tale will continue elsewhere in future.

*[the writer is Senior Lecturer in International History, Liverpool John Moores University]*

# Turkey's lira crisis: 'economic war' sees Erdoğan look east for new allies

EMRE TARIM  
*theconversation.com*

Global markets are on edge once again, this time thanks to the Turkish lira. It crashed more than 15% against the US dollar, euro and pound sterling on August 10 and continued to fall when markets reopened after the weekend on August 13.

The latest trigger was Donald Trump's announcement that he would double import tariffs on Turkish steel and aluminium. But the lira has been falling consistently over the past year as markets fear for the president's increasing control over the economy.

With their mammoth depth and reach, global currency markets reflect big shifts to new economic and political realities. Sterling dropped by more than 10% when it became clear that the UK had voted to leave the EU in June 2016. Currency markets can also hasten these shifts, for example in 1992 when the UK crashed out of Europe's fixed currency regime, the Exchange Rate Mechanism, after sustained runs on sterling in currency markets.

The lira crisis therefore - at the very least - reflects the political and economic turmoil taking place in Turkey. It could also play a key role in shifting the country from relying on the West to aid its economic development and turning east to Russia and China for growth and investment.

### CRISIS AND CONTAGION

The underlying economic cause for the crisis is simply a lack of confidence in Turkey's economy. Inflation is spiralling (currently more than 15%), Turkish companies are saddled with foreign debt and the country has one of the world's largest current account deficits in proportion to its economic output, heightening fears of a debt crisis.

As an open economy since the late 1980s, Turkey has attracted significant international capital flows.



These flows, some of which are highly mobile and short term, also expose Turkey to sudden stops and reversals when international investors fear the worst. The recent history of globalisation in developing countries is full of such crises, including the 2000-01 Turkish banking and currency crisis. It was the aftermath of that crisis that brought Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his AK party to power.

As of August 2018, Turkey has an external debt of US\$406 billion, US\$99 billion of which is short term. What worries foreign banks and markets is the exposure of some European banks, as direct investors in the Turkish banking sector. According to estimates, this amounts to more than US\$138 billion.

Should private Turkish debtors, who owe around 75% of Turkey's external debt, fail to service their share as a result of the nosediving lira and creditors' unwillingness to lend any more hard currency, the European financial system might have to absorb significant losses. This is similar

to what happened during the Greek debt crisis.

### POLITICAL DECISIONS

None of these debt figures have emerged overnight. What transforms them into a currency and debt crisis is ultimately political. The presidential election in June gave Erdoğan unprecedented control over all branches of the state and he has made his intention to interfere with the economy clear.

Since the new presidential system came into effect, international investors have been trying to understand where Erdoğan would steer the Turkish economy. The signals so far, including Erdoğan's appointment of his son-in-law as the minister in charge of the economy, suggest a new period of "Erdoğanomics". This includes a mix of high government spending, politically repressed interest rates and runaway inflation. Such a heady mix has caused a surge in Turkey's risk premium.

The worsening political relationship between Turkey and the US does

not help. Over his 16-year rule, Erdoğan has rallied his supporters on a number of occasions against real and purported threats to his rule. He is once again defiant against Western economic and political actors, whom he accuses of striving to destabilise Turkey under his rule, this time via the runs on the Turkish lira.

This defiance seems to have consolidated Erdoğan's domestic power, but given the country's considerable economic reliance on Western banks and markets, the country is now more vulnerable than ever to a currency and debt crisis of its own making. Freeing Turkey from this difficult corner will be a feat. If and when Erdoğan achieves it, Turkey will probably have shifted a considerable part of its economic and political allegiances, from the West to the East, with both Russia and China potential future allies in what Erdoğan has called an "economic war".

*[the writer is Lecturer in Behavioural Sciences, Lancaster University]*



“Country has lost true fighter and statesman”

contd from pg01

cure the sovereignty and integrity of the country despite international pressures and sanctions makes him the tallest leader among his contemporaries. His vision for the developed India of twenty-first century and his initiatives to create the world class network of highways across the length and breadth of the country, the golden quadrilateral, the project of linking rivers, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana etc. have inspired the Young India and have touched the lives of millions.

I had the fortune of listening to his fiery speeches in the Lok Sabha during my first term as Member of Parliament from Karad constituency of Maharashtra from 1999 to 2004.

I have fond memories of experiencing the vibrancy of democracy inside the House whenever Late Vajpayee Ji stood up to speak as the Leader of the House which was often applauded by the opposition bench.

With his demise, the country has lost a fighter, a nationalist and a statesman in true sense, who never compromised on his ideals and interest of the country. He has left behind a huge void in the political spectrum of the country which will always be felt by the countrymen. The country has lost a gem and a noble soul.

At this time of National mourning, I join the people of Sikkim and my fellow countrymen to pay tributes and offer my deepest condolences. I pray to the almighty for bestowing strength to the family members to cope with this irreparable loss.”

Namchi celebrates 72nd Independence Day

NAMCHI, 16 AUG [IPR]: The 72nd Independence Day was celebrated by South District Administration at Singithang public ground in Namchi, South Sikkim on Wednesday. Speaker, SLA, KN Rai, attended the event as chief guest in the presence of District Collector [South], Prabhakar Verma, Additional District Collector [South], Satyan Pradhan, and other officials.

The day’s event commenced with hoisting of the National Flag followed by inspection of the march past parade by the chief guest. Thereafter, DC, Mr Verma, and ADC, Mr Pradhan, read out the 72nd Independence Day message from Governor Shrinivas Patil and Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, respectively.

The programme was marked by colourful band display by Namchi Girls’ Senior Secondary School and various cultural performances by different schools and colleges.

In the march past competition, Namchi Public School girls’ contingent stood first, the second position was a tie between two girl contingents namely Namchi GSSS and Tendong Institution while Namchi SSS



bagged the third position.

The chief guest also presented the Simran Memorial Trust Award which included a souvenir and cheque of Rs 50,000 to district topper, Rashid Ghosh from Namchi SSS, who scored 97% in Science stream.

Mr Rai also felicitated Government employees from an array of departments for their relentless efforts in elevating their concerned departments.

The awardees are Lall Bahadur Basnett [Lower Division Clerk, Human

Resource Development Department], Gyamtsö Bhutia [Assistant Sub Fire Officer, Namchi Fire Station], Prem Dhoj Raj [Field Assistant, Food Security & Agriculture Development Department], Birkha B Pradhan [Village Level Worker, FS&ADD], Tshering Uden Bhutia [Field Assistant, FS&ADD], Jas Bahadur Chettri [Office Assistant, Forest Wildlife Division], Nar Bir Gurung [Chowkidar, Forest Wildlife Division], Dawa Tamang [Head Forest Guard, Forest South Territorial

Division], Man Bahadur Tamang [Nursery Mali, Forest South Territorial Division], Sangita Dahal [Coordinator, Namchi Nehru Yuva Kendra], Santosh Rai [Junior Engineer, Road & Bridges, Yangang Division], Daya Ram Kharel [Senior Accountant, Roads & Bridges, Namchi], Kalawati Chettri [Private Secretary, Roads & Bridges, Namchi], Karma Lepcha [Junior Supervisor, Roads & Bridges, Namchi], Prashant Rai [Sub

Inspector, Jorethang Police Station] and Marcus Dhungel [Head Constable, Jorethang Traffic].

In the final match of South District Football Tournament, organized by South District Football Association Namchi [SDFA], Red Panda FC emerged as the winner against Sikkim Police with a score line of 1-0.

Addressing the gathering, SLA Speaker, Mr. Rai, spoke in brief about the significance of celebrating Independence Day while drawing examples of great prominent national leaders as well as of responsible citizens who have sacrificed for the country. He emphasized that public should immensely value their freedom and work diligently towards developing the nation.

He spoke in detail about the holistic achievements that the State of Sikkim has achieved in various fields like economic development, education, tourism, rural development, organic farming, health and many more and updated that the State Government will continuously work towards uplifting the lives of the State and its people.

72nd I-Day celebration in Jorethang

contd from pg01

JORETHANG, 16 AUG [IPR]: The 72nd Independence Day celebration 2018 was organized by Jorethang Independence Day Celebration Committee with much grandeur at Jorethang playground in South Sikkim on Thursday.

The programme was marked by felicitations being handed over to employees of Energy and Power Department under Jorethang sub-division for their dedication towards their service.

Other highlights of the day were pipe band display by Jorethang Senior Secondary School, inter school drill display competition, march past and cultural competitions between various schools under Zoom Salghari constituency.

The day also featured the finals of the Jorethang Inter-Department Open MLA Challenge Cup 2018 between IRBn Pipaley and Health Department. Team IRBn Pipaley was declared the winner of the tourney with a score of 1-0.

Area MLA cum Minister of Healthcare Human Services & Family Welfare and IPR, AK Ghatani, attended the event as chief guest along with Sub Divisional Magistrate, Tshering Bhutia, Naya Bazaar Jorethang Municipal Council Vice Chairperson, Pema Tamang, Sub Divisional Police Officer, Sonam W Bhutia, IRB Pipalay Commandant, Pravin Gurung, NJMC councillors, Government officials, Panchayats, and students of various schools.

Speaking on the occasion, chief

SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES

DEAR ENERGY EVENING

Draw No:1 DrawDate on:16/08/18

1st Prize Rs.26.03 Lakhs/- 85L 90545  
Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 90545 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)  
2nd Prize Rs.9000/-  
12587 32780 33386 45605 58335  
64471 68913 72226 86941 93185  
3rd Prize Rs.500/- 2901 4050 4205 4223 4398 5934 6961 8189 8836 9749  
4th Prize Rs.250/- 1515 1991 3017 4173 5518 6034 6347 7480 7735 8351  
5th Prize Rs.120/-  
0097 0246 0247 0350 0356 0365 0394 0434 0544 0657  
0863 0936 1082 1213 1230 1297 1374 1516 1856 1964  
1979 2106 2218 2243 2263 2457 2567 2592 2687 2805  
2972 3033 3169 3225 3247 3268 3275 3450 3541 3560  
3713 3816 3881 3930 4302 4396 4820 4914 4918 4991  
5167 5187 5204 5288 5629 5781 5802 6002 6138 6153  
6357 6577 6611 6814 6883 7055 7207 7395 7491 7565  
7736 7768 7787 7928 7930 7969 7972 8055 8141 8170  
8193 8249 8310 8693 8730 8852 8902 8991 9189 9269  
9610 9691 9718 9780 9814 9868 9873 9879 9956 9964  
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Vajpayee-pragmatist, orator and statesman...

contd from pg01

time announcing a moratorium on future testing. He followed this up with peace overtures to Pakistan, riding on the first direct bus from India to Pakistan in February 1999.

Undeterred by party hawks, Vajpayee arrived in Lahore on the bus, accompanied among others by legendary actor Dev Anand. Vajpayee met with then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in what was hailed as the dawn of a new era in India-Pakistan relations.

However, then army chief Gen. Pervez Musharraf did not turn up to greet him at the Wagah border. It soon became clear why.

Only months later, in June 1999, Pakistan began hostilities in Kargil that took the two countries to the brink of a full-scale war. Vajpayee felt betrayed and never hid his bitterness whenever Kargil was mentioned. He tried again to build peace with Pakistan -- which people close to him say was the mission of his life -- by holding a historic summit in Agra with Musharraf in 2001, who by then had become the president. But the summit too failed spectacularly.

Another historic event that he experienced anguish about was the post-Godhra communal riots in Gujarat in 2002 when Prime minister Narendra Modi was the chief minister.

Unwilling to hide his feelings over the riots, Prime Minister Vajpayee said the government must follow “raj dharma”. In his autobiography, former President Pranab Mukherjee wrote that the Gujarat riots were “possibly the biggest blot” on Vajpayee’s government that could have cost the Bharatiya Janata Party the 2004 Lok Sabha

elections.

After the NDA was routed in the elections, Vajpayee announced his retirement from politics in 2005 and slipped into relative political oblivion. He was rarely seen in public after suffering a stroke in 2009, and subsequently developed dementia. However, his influence loomed large over the party, which often quoted him and his policies.

In his Independence Day speech yesterday, Modi said he wants to resolve the Kashmir issue through Vajpayee’s doctrine of “Insaniyat, Kashmiriyat, Jamhooriyat”, which seeks to preserve the composite Kashmiri culture while ensuring democracy in a humane manner.

When he assumed office for the second time in 1999 as the head of a more stable coalition, Vajpayee had to abandon some of the cornerstones of BJP’s policies to get the backing of more secular groups. This included the BJP’s demands for scrapping the special status for Jammu and Kashmir, building a Hindu temple on the site of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya and abolishing the separate civil code for Muslims.

The demolition of Babri Masjid by kar sewaks in December 1992, when he was the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, was an acid test for Vajpayee’s secular agenda and his stand within the party. Vajpayee’s trusted lieutenant L K Advani and most BJP politicians supported the demolition but Vajpayee condemned the attack unequivocally.

At times he tried to appeal to Muslims and other minority groups, and was seen as a reassuring figure for India’s mainly secular establishment.

His personal integrity was never seriously questioned but arms bribery scandals exposed corruption in his government and at times cast doubts on his judgment.

A romantic at heart, Vajpayee wrote poetry in his spare time, and was a connoisseur of good food. Vajpayee was born on December 25, 1924 in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh to a schoolteacher, Krishna Bihari Vajpayee, and Krishna Devi. Today, his birthday is celebrated as Good Governance Day’.

After schooling, he graduated from Victoria College in Gwalior, now known as Laxmi Bai College. He did his M.A. in political science from DAV College in Kanpur. Following a brief flirtation with communism, he became a full-time worker of RSS in 1947.

Vajpayee subsequently entered journalism and was editor of Rashtradharm, a Hindi monthly, the Panchjanya Hindi weekly and the dailies, Swadesh and Veer Arjun.

He became a close follower of Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the precursor to Jana Sangh and later the BJP. Under Mookerjee’s tutelage, Vajpayee’s right-wing philosophy shaped.

Vajpayee accompanied Mookerjee to Kashmir in early 1950s during the BJS leader’s fast-unto-death to protest the identity card requirement for Indian citizens visiting the state. It was Vajpayee’s first insight into the Kashmir problem, which decades later he addressed in 2003 with the “Insaniyat, Kashmiriyat, Jamhooriyat” doctrine. Vajpayee is survived by his adopted daughter, Namita Kaul Bhattacharya.

North district celebrates 72nd I-Day

MANGAN, 16 AUG [IPR]: The 72nd Independence Day was celebrated in a grand manner at Mangan in North Sikkim in the presence of Minister for Forest Environment and Wildlife Management, Tshering Wangdi Lepcha, as chief guest.

Mr. Lepcha hoisted the National Flag and received the guard of honour from the Parade Commander, Gaurav Gautam.

The march past parade consisted of contingents from Sikkim Police, NCC and students from the nearby schools. The parade also consisted of two pipe bands from Ringhim Secondary School and Mangan Senior Secondary School.

District Collector [North] read out the Independence Day speech of Governor Shrinivas Patil while the Additional District Collector [North] read the message of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling.

A cultural programme showcasing the rich diversity of the State and the country was also presented by school students.

On the occasion, various awards were also distributed to Government employees for their meritorious service.

Department of Social Justice, Empowerment & Welfare Department felicitated the District Collector, North, Karma R Bonpo, and Child Development Project Officers, Sonam Lhaden Lachungpa, Lhazey Denzongpa and Netuk Lepcha, for their exemplary performance in the implementation of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao in North district.

The chief guest also presented various awards to Ganga Prasad Pradhan [Best Service Award, ASBO, Energy & Power Depart-



ment], Marmit Lepcha [Best Anganwadi Worker, Mangan Block], Renuka Lepcha [Best ASHA Worker, Mangan Block] and District Topper of Class X and Class XII from various schools of North Sikkim.

Mr Lepcha also presented Certificate of Appreciation to Dr Karma Tenzing Bhutia [Joint Director, AH,LS&VS Department], Dr Praveen K Saini for his valuable contribution to District Hospital Mangan, Dr Hari Krishna Rai [Medical Officer, Passingdang PHC], Shyam Bahadur Thakur [Graduate Teacher, Rangrang JHS], Rinchen Thargay Bhutia [Government contractor, Kabi] and Gaurav Gautam [Sub Inspector, Mangan Police Station].

The Independence Day was also celebrated in all the sub-divisions of North district.

At Chungthang, MP Rajya Sabha, Hishey Lachungpa, attended the function as chief guest held at Chungthang public ground while MLA Kabi, Ugen Nedup Bhutia, was the chief guest for the Independence Day celebration held at Kalzang Gyatso Senior Secondary School in Kabi.

Likewise, at Dzongu, Deputy Speaker, SLA, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, was the chief guest for the event held at Gor Secondary

School in Dzongu.

A football tournament was also organized by NDFA at Mangan public ground. The final match of tournament was held between Dzongu Football Federation and JVC Singtam wherein Dzongu Football Federation emerged victorious in a tie breaker.

Speaking on the occasion, chief guest Mr. Lepcha stated that Sikkim has witnessed development in all spheres. He stated that the HPV vaccination programme was a laudable initiative of the State Government and people should take the benefit since in private sectors, the vaccine costs Rs. 10,000 whereas the State Government is providing free of cost. He also stated that the State has sought to decriminalize the users of drugs and treat it as a disease to control drug abuse in the State.

He also informed that the State Government has sanctioned a new football ground for Mangan and stated that it should be implemented properly for the benefit of all. Various projects such as the protection work of Rafong Khola, sewage system of Mangan and solid waste land fill for Mangan has been sanctioned which will lead to rapid development of the town.

SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES

DERBY MEET THURSDAY

Draw No:13 DrawDate on:19/04/18

1st Prize Rs.11 Lakhs/- 93A 9538  
(Including Super Prize Amt)  
2nd Prize Rs.9000/-  
0277 3866 5784 7395 8105  
3rd Prize Rs.3,000/-  
0038 0899 4894 5235 5978 6489 7245 7482 8877 9002  
4th Prize Rs.1000/-  
1974 2040 2570 3308 3496 3995 6391 8856 9047 9902  
5th Prize Rs.500/-  
0762 2660 5026 7316 8401 8558 8771 9268 9366 9456  
6th Prize Rs.100/-  
0017 0074 0081 0123 0158 0218 0264 0270 0311 0345  
0381 0421 0426 0446 0475 0480 0483 0517 0532 0547  
0557 0609 0645 0701 0703 0705 0718 0732 0761 0790  
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6704 6745 6756 6783 6848 6853 6880 6883 6892 6920  
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7104 7107 7151 7160 7200 7236 7255 7264 7269 7275  
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8219 8232 8253 8273 8319 8335 8350 8366 8392 8396  
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8533 8595 8600 8623 8626 8661 8682 8683 8692 8714  
8726 8764 8775 8813 8821 8826 8829 9007 9034 9085  
9089 9092 9167 9174 9189 9191 9219 9222 9228 9261  
9271 9275 9278 9295 9342 9356 9389 9394 9442 9494  
9522 9523 9567 9579 9585 9594 9645 9653 9693 9708  
9722 9734 9751 9752 9769 9778 9787 9791 9797 9836  
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# Adieu Wadekar: Kumble, Azhar remember father figure, big influence, says Tendulkar

**NEW DELHI, AUG 16 (PTI):** Their careers got a new lease of life under his managership and no wonder Mohammed Azharuddin and Anil Kumble mourned the loss of a "father figure" in Ajit Wadekar, while Sachin Tendulkar described the former India captain as a big "influence".

Wadekar, 77, passed away in Mumbai yesterday after prolonged illness.

The cricketing world was in mourning, especially those whose lives were touched by the man, who gave Indian cricket new belief by leading the side to overseas Test wins against England and the West Indies back in 1971.

"Deeply saddened to hear about the demise of Ajit Wadekar Sir. He was some-



one who was instrumental in bringing out the best in us during the 90s. We'll always be grateful for his advice

and guidance. Praying for strength for his family during this difficult time," Tendulkar wrote on his twitter page.

Manager Wadekar had an instrumental role to play in making Tendulkar an opener, a position in which he flour-

ished.

It was also under Wadekar that Azharuddin, who was till then a struggling captain after Test series losses in New Zealand, England and Australia, got a second wind from 1993 to 1996.

"such an iconic person.. deeply saddened by his demise!! Sir was a father figure for me.. May his soul rest in peace!! My Heartfelt Condolences to the family," Azharuddin wrote on his twitter page.

For Kumble, Wadekar was a God-sent after he was dropped following the 1990 tour of England.

His comeback coincided with Wadekar's entry as manager during the 1992-93 tour of South Africa. He was

never dropped during the next 16 years till his retirement in 2008.

"Deeply saddened by the passing away of #Ajit-Wadekar He was more than a coach to the entire team - a father figure and a shrewd tactician. My heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones. He will be missed. Thank you Sir for the confidence shown in my ability!" wrote Kumble.

For Sanjay Manjrekar, Wadekar was a "tough character" as coach.

Manjrekar tweeted a video of Wadekar in cricket gear one last time during an undated charity match at the Shivaji Park Gymkhana in Mumbai.

"Ajit Wadekar's impact on

Indian cricket is immense. His contemporaries worshipped him, such was his aura. Found him to be a tough character as coach. Exceptional Indian cricketer... RIP Sir."

The legendary Bishan Singh Bedi was magnanimous in his praise even though he conceded that they had difference of opinion on cricketing issues.

"V sad news-Ajit Wadekar passing away-only Indn Capt to win 3 series in a row-2 away 1 at home-ALW was good contemporary-we had differences of (sic) opinion but always respected glory of (sic) Crkt-fine batsman & great close in catch-served Indn Crkt w/plomb as player/Selectr/Coach-RIP Jeetu!."

## Duleep Trophy kicks off domestic season

**DINDIGUL, AUG 16 (PTI):**

The 2018-19 domestic season begins here tomorrow with the Duleep Trophy, which will provide a platform to the aspirants to shine and challenge the established names, who are away on national duties.

The tournament will be staged at the picturesque NPR College ground at Natham.

Three teams - India Red, India Blue and India Green - comprising a mix of experienced players and talented youngsters will battle it out in the 57th edition of the tournament, which would be played under lights with a pink ball.

While the three round-robin matches would be four-day affairs, the final, to be held from September 4, would be played over five days.

The first match is between India Green and defending champion India Red.

The tournament would serve as an opportunity for the players who have been part of the national squad at various points but find themselves on the fringes now.

For India Red captain Abhinav Mukund, a good performance would not only set the tone for the



long season ahead but will also remind the selectors of his capabilities, considering that the Indian openers have had a tough in the ongoing Test series in England.

India Green skipper Parthiv Patel is another player trying to shine in the season-opening tournament, coming in the backdrop of injury to Test 'keeper Wriddiman Saha and the unimpressive display by Dinesh Karthik in England.

There are others like Basil Thampi, who is yet to make his international debut for India but has been part of

the T20 squad, Dhawal Kulkarni, Parvez Rasool and Rajnesh Gurbani, who starred in Vidarbha's Ranji triumph last season. There are three Tamil Nadu players, apart from Mukund, in the squads and the tournament presents them a chance to stake claim for higher honours.

Young paceman K Vignesh, who had a stint in National Cricket Centre in Australia recently as part of the MRF Pace Foundation and Cricket Australia exchange programme, has done well in the last two seasons and will aim to show his potential.

Former India cricketer M Venkataramana, who was coach of Dindigul Dragons in the recent Tamil Nadu Premier League feels the pitch here would have good bounce and said the TNPL matches showed the true nature of the surface.

"The pitch (in Dindigul) has excellent bounce. The outfield is also good. There will be something in it for the fast bowlers," he added.

There are some players who have done well at the U-19 level and how they perform in the championship will be

watched with interest.

Dindigul District Cricket Association secretary N Venkataraman said he was happy that the BCCI had allotted the tournament to them and expected quality cricket to be played over the course of three weeks.

"Spectators have witnessed red and white ball cricket. Now, they will have the opportunity to watch matches being played with pink ball as well," he added.

With some India players and those who participated in the IPL set to turn out for the three teams, Venkataraman

said he expected a good turnout as entry is also free.

Vidarbha captain Faiz Fazal will lead India Green which includes Andhra wicketkeeper K S Bharat, Jaydev Unadkat and Dhawal Kulkarni among others. The tournament promises interesting action with focus on how the pink ball behaves and also the performances of the players.

Squads: India Blue: Faiz Fazal (captain), Abhishek Raman, Anmolpreet Singh, Ganesh Satish, N Gangta, Dhruv Shorey, KS Bharat (WK), Akshay Wakhare, Saurav Kumar, Swapnil Singh, Basil Thampi, B Ayappa, Jaydev Unadkat, Dhawal Kulkarni.

India Red: Abhinav Mukund (captain), R R Sanjay, Ashutosh Singh, Baba Aparajith, Wriddick Chatterjee, B Sandeep, Akshay Wadkar(WK), S Nadeem, Mihir Hirwani, Parvez Rasool, R Gurbani, A Mithun, Ishan Porel, Y Prithvi Raj.

India Green: Parthiv Patel (captain & WK), Prashant Chopra, Priyank Panchal, Sudeep Chatterjee, Gurkeerat Mann, Baba Indrajith, V P Solanki, Jalaj Saxena, Karn Sharma, Vikas Mishra, K. Vignesh, Ankit Rajpoot, Ashok Dinda, Atith Sheth.



## Forced to eat rice porridge with pickle at 1984 Olympics Village: PT Usha

**NEW DELHI, AUG 16**

**(PTI):** India's track superstar PT Usha recalls that during the Los Angeles Olympics of 1984, where she missed a medal by one-hundredth of a second, she was forced to eat just rice porridge with pickle at the Games Village.

That food without any nutrition supplement had cost her the bronze, she claims.

"That definitely affected my performance in the last 35 metres of my event since I couldn't sustain the energy level," she said.

In that epic 400m hurdles final, Usha and Cristeana Cojocaru of Romania crossed the finish line at almost the same time but the latter prevailed as she went for the decisive lunge.

Usha regrets that in those days only the bare facilities were available to Indian athletes.

"We would jealously look at the athletes from other countries enjoying fabulous amenities; they had the latest equipment at their disposal. We wondered if we too would one day have access to such facilities," she is quoted as saying in an interview in the latest edition of the Equator Line magazine.

She then goes on to say that for days at the Games Village she was forced to eat rice porridge with pickle.

"I remember it - the pickle we in Kerala call 'kadu manga achar'. That and some sliced fruit. I

was not accustomed to baked potatoes or half-boiled chicken with soya sauce and some other typical American food.

"No one had told us that in LA we would get only American food. I had no choice but to eat rice porridge without any nutrition supplement, and that definitely affected my performance in the last 35 metres of my event since I couldn't sustain the energy level," she says.

Usha blazed the track for 18 glorious years winning medals for India at various competitions. Now the ace sprinter runs a coaching academy - Usha School of Athletics.

On that unforgettable race of 1984, Usha says, "It was a perfect start for me. As planned, I tried to cross the first hurdles of 45 metres in 6.2 secs and kept the rhythm and maintained that level of speed and endurance... But in the last 35 metres, I couldn't sustain my energy at a consistent level."

Naval Moutawakal (Morocco) won the gold and Ann Louise (Sweden) the silver medal.

Usha says she now wants to fulfil her dream of an Indian sprinter on the Olympic podium.

"Now my life is completely focused on that goal with the start of Usha School of Athletics. The school seeks to give the budding athletes things I was denied as an athlete. Eighteen girls are training here as boarders," she says.

## Is Paes coming to Asian Games? Indian captain Zeeshan Ali has no clue

**PALEMBANG, AUG 16 (PTI):**

The Indian tennis contingent arrived here today for the Asian Games but the biggest name in the squad, Leander Paes, was conspicuous by his absence.

Zeeshan Ali, the captain and coach of the men's team, has no clue about Paes' arrival three days before the start of the competition on Sunday.

"I have no idea of his arrival. Only Paes can tell you when he is coming. The last time I spoke to him he said he would play in Cincinnati and then come to Palembang. But he is not playing there also," Ali told PTI.



There is still uncertainty over whom the 18-time Grand Slam champion will partner in the doubles, with Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan expected to play together. Paes, who last played at the Asian Games in 2006, could either

partner an inexperienced Sumit Nagal or singles specialist Ramkumar Ramanathan.

The 45-year-old is in the twilight of his career and would like to end his Asian Games outing on a high. He already has five gold medals to

his name in the event, starting from the Hiroshima edition in 1994.

While there is no information on Paes' arrival, Bopanna's recovery from a shoulder injury is good news for the Indian camp. The big-serving Indian arrived with Sharan and the women's squad comprising debutants Ankita Raina and Karman Kaur Thandi, besides doubles specialist Prarthana Thombare, who won a bronze alongside Sania Mirza in Incheon four years ago.

Asked about his fitness and lack of match practice since Wimbledon, Bopanna said: "It is not an issue at all. It won't be

the first time I will be coming back from an injury. I would not have been here if I wasn't hundred percent fit."

Bopanna too last played at the Games more than a decade ago and is looking forward to the next one week.

"I would have played earlier also but the 10-day schedule did not allow me to do that. Now it is a week-long thing which means I only miss one tournament and not two," said the 38-year-old.

India's singles players, Ramanathan and Prajnesh Gunneswaran, will be joining the team tomorrow and so will Nagal.

## Creamy layer cannot be applied to deny benefits of quota in promotions: Centre to SC

**NEW DELHI, AUG 16 (PTI):** The Centre today told the Supreme Court that the creamy layer concept cannot be applied to deny benefits of quota in promotions to government employees of SC/ST community as the stigma of caste and backwardness is still attached to them.

Attorney General K K Venugopal told a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra that there is no judgment which says that affluent people of the SC/ST community can be denied quota benefits by applying

creamy layer concept.

Venugopal was responding to a question whether the creamy layer concept can be applied to exclude persons who have come up to ensure that the backward among the SC/ST communities can reap the benefits of quota.

The top law officer said that even if some people of the community have come up, the stigma of caste and backwardness is still attached to them.

He also said that the question of excluding certain class of SC/ST has to be decided by the President

and the Parliament and this exercise is not open to judiciary.

"They have to marry from their own caste. Even a well-off person of SC/ST community cannot marry from a higher caste. The fact that some persons have become affluent does not take away the imprint of caste and backwardness.

The top law officer termed the discriminatory caste system as a misfortune of the country.

Advancing of arguments is still continuing.

The bench, also comprises justices Kurian Joseph, R F

Nariman, Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Indu Malhotra.

Earlier on August 3, the apex court had asked the Centre as to why states have not come forward with any quantifiable data to decide the inadequacy of representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in government services even 12 years after its verdict on the 'creamy layer'.

The five-judge Constitution bench is examining whether its 12-year-old verdict that had dealt with the issue of 'creamy layer' for reservations to SC and ST catego-

ries in government job promotions needs to be re-visited by a seven-judge bench.

The apex court had on July 11 refused to pass any interim order against its 2006 verdict and said that a five-judge bench would first see whether it needs to be examined by a seven-judge bench or not.

The M Nagaraj verdict of 2006 had held that the 'creamy layer' concept cannot be applied to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for promotions in government jobs, like two earlier verdicts of 1992 Indra Sawhney and others

versus Union of India (popularly called Mandal Commission verdict) and 2005 E V Chinniah versus State of Andhra Pradesh which had dealt with creamy layer in Other Backward Classes category.

It had reiterated that the ceiling-limit of 50 per cent, the concept of the creamy layer and the compelling reasons like backwardness, inadequacy of representation and overall administrative efficiency were all constitutional requirements, without which the structure of equality of opportunity in Article 16 would collapse.



US newsrooms to Trump: We’re not enemies of the people

**NEW YORK, AUG 16 (AP):** The nation's newsrooms are pushing back against President Donald Trump with a coordinated series of newspaper editorials condemning his attacks on “fake news” and suggestion that journalists are the enemy.

The Boston Globe invited newspapers across the country to stand up for the press with editorials today, and several began appearing online a day earlier.

Nearly 350 news organisations have pledged to participate, according to Marjorie Pritchard, op-ed editor at the Globe.

In St Louis, the Post-Dispatch called journalists “the truest of patriots.” The Chicago Sun-Times said it believed most Americans know that Trump is talking nonsense.

The Fayetteville, NC Observer said it hoped Trump would stop, “but we’re not holding our breath.” “Rather, we hope all the president’s supporters will recognize what he’s doing - manipulating reality to get what he wants,” the



North Carolina newspaper said.

Some newspapers used history lessons to state their case. The Elizabethtown Advocate in Elizabethtown, Penn., for instance, compared free press in the United States to such rights promised but

not delivered in the former Soviet Union. The New York Times added a pitch.

“If you haven’t already, please subscribe to your local papers,” said the Times, whose opinion section also summarised other editorials across the country.

“Praise them when you think they’ve done a good job and criticize them when you think they could do better. We’re all in this together.” That last sentiment made some journalists skittish.

The Wall Street Journal, which said it was not participating, noted in a column by James Freeman that the Globe’s effort ran counter to the independence that editorial boards claim to seek. Freeman wrote that Trump has the right to free speech as much as his media adversaries.

“While we agree that labeling journalists the ‘enemy of the American people’ and journalism ‘fake news’ is not only damaging to our industry but destructive to our democracy, a coordinated response from independent dare we say ‘mainstream’ news organisations feeds a narrative that we’re somehow aligned against this Republican president,” the Baltimore Sun wrote.

Still, the Sun supported the effort and also noted the deaths of five Capital Gazette staff members at the hands of a gunman in nearby Annapolis, Maryland.

The Radio Television Digital News Association, which represents more than 1,200 broadcasters and web sites, is also asking

its members to point out that journalists are friends and neighbours doing important work holding government accountable.

“I want to make sure that it is positive,” said Dan Shelley, the group’s executive director. “We’re shooting ourselves in the foot if we make this about attacking the president or attacking his supporters.”

It remains unclear how much sway the effort will have. Newspaper editorial boards overwhelmingly opposed Trump’s election in 2016.

Polls show Republicans have grown more negative toward the news media in recent years: Pew Research Center said 85 per cent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents said in June 2017 that the news media has a negative effect on the country, up from 68 per cent in 2010.

Still, newsrooms are trying to convince them otherwise.

“We are not the enemy,” declared the Mercury News in San Jose, California.

Pakistan to elect next president on Sept 04

**ISLAMABAD, AUG 16 (PTI):** Pakistan will hold presidential elections on September 4 to elect President Mamnoon Hussain’s successor at the end of his five-year-tenure, the election commission announced today.

Pakistan’s president is elected indirectly by the members of Parliament and the four provincial assemblies.

“Presidential election will be held on September 4,” the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said as it issued the schedule of the election.

The candidates can file nominations by August 27 and the final list of contesting candidates will be issued on August 30, it said.

The polling will be held in the buildings of the federal parliament and provincial assemblies.

In Pakistan, the President is considered as a symbol of the federation and head of the state and exercises all powers on the recommendations of the prime minister.

Mamnoon Hussain, elected in September 2013, was a nominee of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led by former jailed prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

Hussain’s parents migrated from Agra and settled in Karachi after partition.

A tough competition is expected between nominees of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) led by Prime Minister-in-waiting and cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan and the joint opposition forged by the PML-N, the Pakistan Peoples Party and the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal.

Anger grows in Italy as bridge toll rises to 38

**GENOA, AUG 15 (AFP):** A frantic search was underway today for survivors of a bridge collapse in Genoa as the death toll rose to 38 and the government blamed the company in charge of the country’s motorways for the disaster.

A vast span of the Morandi bridge caved in during a heavy rainstorm in the northern port city on Tuesday, sending about 35 cars and several trucks plunging 45 metres (150 feet) onto the railway tracks below.

The victims include children aged eight, 12 and 13, Interior Minister Matteo Salvini said today, adding that more people were still missing.

The government said it intended to revoke the contract of Autostrade per l’Italia, a private sector company owned by Atlantia, and slap it with a fine of 150 million euros ( 170 million).

Deputy prime minister Luigi Di Maio, who is due to arrive in Genoa on Wednesday morning, said the tragedy “could have been avoided.”

“Autostrade should have done maintenance and didn’t do it,” he said.

Rescuers recovered three bodies overnight, fire official Emanuele Gissi told AFP, after scouring the scene of devastation under floodlights.

“All accessible spaces have been explored, now



we are moving the largest pieces of debris,” Gissi said.

“We cannot know if there are survivors remaining, but it’s our job to search.” He added that two large cranes would be used in the operation, which is set to take days.

Sources in the interior ministry told Italian media that 16 people were wounded, including 12 in serious condition.

The collapse came as the bridge was undergoing maintenance work while the Liguria region, where Genoa is situated, experienced torrential rainfall.

Italian President Sergio Mattarella said a “catastrophe” had hit Genoa and the whole of Italy.

“Italians have the right to modern and efficient infrastructure that accompanies them safely through

their everyday lives,” Mattarella said.

Aerial footage showed more than 200 metres (650 feet) of the viaduct was completely destroyed.

Rescuers combed through the wreckage strewn among shrubland and train tracks, as helicopters winched survivors on stretchers from the rubble.

A thousand people have been mobilised in the rescue effort, according to the Civil Protection service.

As cars and trucks tumbled off the bridge, Afifi Idriss, 39, a Moroccan lorry driver, just managed to come to a halt in time.

“I saw the green lorry in front of me stop and then reverse so I stopped too, locked the truck and ran,” he told AFP.

Some that plunged

down with the bridge managed to escape unscathed, including a former goalkeeper for Italian Serie A club Cagliari.

“I was driving along the bridge, and at a certain point I saw the road in front of me collapse, and I went down with the car,” Davide Capello told TV news channel Sky TG24.

The incident -- the deadliest of its kind in Europe since 2001 -- is the latest in a string of bridge collapses in Italy, a country prone to damage from seismic activity but where infrastructure generally is showing the effects of a faltering economy. Anger grows in Italy as bridge toll rises to 38

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China to send negotiator to US for trade talks this month

**BEIJING, AUG 16 (AFP):** China will send a top negotiator to the United States in late August to resume trade talks, the commerce ministry said today, the first public meeting on the subject in weeks as the trade conflict intensifies.

Vice Commerce Minister Wang Shouwen, the deputy representative on international trade negotiations, will meet with a senior US treasury official, David Malpass, at the invitation of the United States, the ministry said in a statement.

“The Chinese side reiterates that it opposes unilateralism and trade protectionism practices and does not accept any unilateral trade restriction measures,” the ministry said.

“China welcomes dialogue and communication on the basis of reciprocity, equality and integrity,” US Commerce Minister Wilbur Ross held talks with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He in Beijing in June.

But the discussions failed to reduce tensions as the United States slapped tariffs on 34 billion worth of Chinese goods in early July, triggering an immediate dollar-for-dollar retaliation from Beijing.

The two countries plan to launch a new round of tit-for-tat tariffs on 16 billion worth of goods from each country on August 23.

Washington has also lined up an addi-

tional 200 billion in Chinese imports and US President Donald Trump said he could raise tariffs on those products to 25 per cent instead of the previously touted 10 per cent.

“It is hard to tell how the talks will go but it’s a positive signal that the two countries are looking for some compromise plan,” said Makoto Sengoku, market analyst at Tokai Tokyo Research Institute.

“If they were determined to fight it out, they wouldn’t meet,” he told AFP.

Chinese officials say the tariffs have yet to make an impact on the country’s economy, with its exports even beating forecasts in July.

But analysts warned that China could feel the full effect of tariffs in August.

Trump has boasted that trade wars are “easy to win” and warned he would hit virtually all Chinese imports if Beijing does not back down and take steps to reduce its 335 billion surplus with the US.

China does not import enough from the United States to match Washington dollar-for-dollar, but it has warned that it could fire back with other measures.

The yuan has declined in recent weeks, helping Chinese exporters as it makes their products cheaper, but it could fuel tensions with Trump, who has accused Beijing of manipulating its currency.

Eight essays put the spotlight on the journey coursed by hydel projects in Sikkim and the region, the cost exacted by this “development” and some of the stories it birthed, not all of which have been shared before.

Also finding place in this collection is the arrival of Climate Change and its impact on Sikkim and how the State could negotiate with this new disruption.

**ESSAYS ON TEESTA, HYDEL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN SIKKIM**

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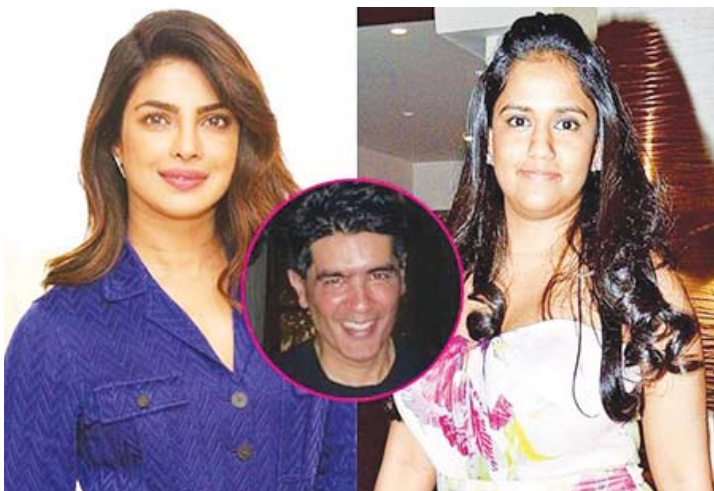
**EXCLUSIVE!**

## Priyanka Chopra, Arpita Khan Sharma bond at Manish Malhotra's party despite the Bharat walkout

Everyone was looking forward to seeing Priyanka Chopra and Salman Khan together in Bharat. It would be a near-perfect comeback for the actress who has been away from Bollywood for a while now. The film is being directed by Ali Abbas Zafar who is a good friend of both. The first schedule was supposed to start in Mumbai in August but in the last week of July, Ali announced on Twitter that Priyanka was no longer a part of the project.

The tweet also hinted at Priyanka's engagement and impending wedding with Nick Jonas as Ali wished her love and happiness for a very special reason. As expected, stories flew about how Salman Khan was upset with Priyanka's decision to walk out of the project at the end minute. News also did the rounds how Priyanka's relation with BFF Arpita Khan Sharma would be affected post this.

If people assumed that it created a rift between PC and Sharma, then they're wrong. A source told Bollywood Life, "Priyanka and Arpita were both present at Manish Malhotra's house party. The two



girls spoke and bonded like before. There were no cold vibes. Clearly, Priyanka's walk out from Bharat has not affected relations."

Days back, she had tweeted the Loveratri trailer showering love on Ayush Sharma, Arpita's husband who is making his debut with the film. The two ladies are very good friends and Priyanka makes sure she catches up with Arpita every time she is in town. In fact,

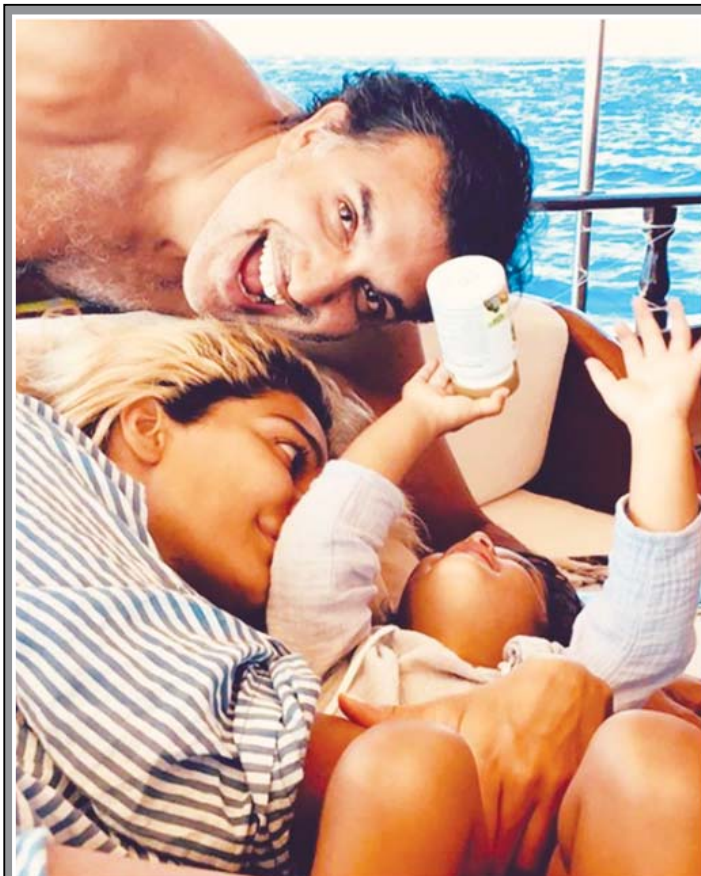
their dinner in March had sparked off the rumour of Priyanka making a comeback with a film with Salman Khan. In 2016, she took Arpita to meet The Rock, Dwayne Johnson. A picture of Priyanka walking in New York holding Arpita's son Ahil's hand also went viral.

Buzz is that Nick Jonas and his folks are coming over to India this weekend for the engagement party and to discuss the wedding. Priyanka

wants it to be a traditional affair.

A source told E!Online, "It's a tradition for them to meet before the wedding and Priyanka's family insisted on hosting the Jonas family in their country. She wants everything to be traditional to respect her family's values, and definitely an Indian wedding."

It seems the guest list is rather secretive but the couple is wasting no time to take matters ahead.



**FAMILIA!** Lisa Haydon shares a picture of her 'Boys' Dino and Zack and it's the cutest thing on the Internet today!

## NICK JONAS AND FAMILY COMING TO INDIA FOR PRIYANKA CHOPRA'S BIG BASH!

### OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE CARDS?

It's happening, you guys! Nick Jonas and folks are coming to India to meet Priyanka Chopra and her family. At least, that's what an insider told E Online. That's right, after a rushed engagement, the families of both Priyanka and Nick are finally going to meet in India. We already knew that the actress is throwing a party this 18th, a reported post-engagement cheer, but this development at hand only raises our expectations. Will the power couple make it official?

Now, while there is time for that, it is reported that PeeCee's relatives are preparing to welcome the Jonas family.

"Nick Jonas and his immediate family are traveling to India this weekend to attend an engagement party hosted by Priyanka's family. It's going to be the first time that their families intermingle and get to know each other. It's a tradition for them to meet before the wedding and Priyanka's family insisted on hosting the Jonas family in their country," a source told E! News.

Apparently, it is Priyanka who wants to go the traditional way and if things fall into place [like they seemingly are], it will be a desi wedding for #PriNick.



"Priyanka wants everything to be traditional to respect her family's values, and definitely an Indian wedding. Priyanka and Nick are excited for everyone to meet and to celebrate. Everything is very secretive but guests are expected to head there starting tomorrow. All of the plans are moving quickly and Priyanka and Nick do not want to have a long engagement," the source added.

## Shah Rukh Khan to return to television with second season of TED Talks

Last year, the much talked about show, TED Talks premiered on Indian television and was hosted by Bollywood's King Khan, Shah Rukh. Though the show was popular and received immense critical acclaim, it didn't

fare well on BARC charts. Thus speculations were rife whether the show will return with its second season or not. However, hold your breath, fans, as SRK will be back to the small screen with a new season.

According to the latest reports, TED Talks India - Nayi Soch will be back with season 2 and none other than Shah Rukh will continue to be its face. Last year, the show was



shot in the month of August and went on air in November. However, this time it will be different. Shah Rukh will be shooting in November and the show will go on air from late November or December.

Moreover, rumour mills were abuzz if the superstar will be hosting the show or not as his movie Zero is lined up for release, but now, the air's cleared and fans can rejoice.

Unlike last year, this season won't be as small as 7 episodes, but it will have 10 episodes. Also, biggies like AR Rahman who missed last season are invited to be a part of this season.

## 'CAN'T WAIT TO GET BACK ON SET WITH U': VARUN DHAWAN'S BIRTHDAY WISH FOR DAVID DHAWAN

David Dhawan celebrates his 66th birthday today. His super hit jodi with Govinda has spun hit movies at the box office. Today, he is busy giving hits with his son Varun Dhawan. In fact, the latter is so in love with his father's films that he can't wait to get back on the sets.

He wrote on Instagram, "Happy birthday pa. All I can say is I don't know anyone else who is as passionate about making movies like you. Can't wait to get back on set with u #DD#NO1" He has also shared

a lot of pictures on his Insta story paying tribute to his father and also a picture of the celebration.

After Judwaa 2 set the box office on fire, Varun was spoilt for choices. DNA had quoted a source then, "Varun getting so many offers is also a problem! He wants to do content-oriented movies and is confused because he has too many to choose from. So, he is seeking dad David Dhawan's help to finalise a good script that will keep his box-office performance record intact."



## John Abraham's Satyameva Jayate becomes highest opening day earner for any A cert film

Satyameva Jayate's stupendous first-day collections have come as a surprise to many. Even Trade Analyst Taran Adarsh seemed pleasantly surprised by its day 1 numbers.

He posted, "#SatyamevaJayate springs a BIG SURPRISE... Plexes are good, but single screens are ROCKING... Wed 20.52 cr. India biz."

The film has managed nearly 2000 screens and thus, it has earned well from the start itself. Now it is not only John Abraham's biggest opener but also the highest opening day for any film with an A certificate.

The last film with an A certificate to earn heavily on the first day was perhaps Grand Masti which had made Rs 12.51 crore at the box office. In fact, it was the first adult film in India to earn over Rs 100 crore. As absurd as it may sound, people did watch this sex comedy and even loved it. Now Satyameva Jayate takes that place with Rs 20.52 crore. That means John Abraham's anti-corruption film is going on the right track. In fact, it is now one of the highest openers of this year despite clashing with Akshay Kumar's Gold.

However, Satyameva Jayate didn't really get great reviews. But the fact that it is a massy entertainer with a message has clearly worked in its favour. Plus an I-day release bolstered its performance at the box office.

**ARIES:** The influence of the planetary aspects will bring an end to any lethargy you've been feeling. Aries. It's an excellent day to head outside and do something active. Gardening or landscaping can make great use of your energy and creativity. Fresh air and physical exertion will benefit your health. Even if you have to work today, there's always the evening to enjoy.

**TAURUS:** Take charge of your health today, Taurus. You'll likely wake up feeling energetic. Take advantage of the energy boost from the planetary movements to actively do things that maintain your sense of well-being. Consider emotional and spiritual aspects of your health. Sit outside in the fresh air. Take a walk, do some gardening, engage in something creative and physical.

**GEMINI:** If you saw something in a craft shop or art studio that you'd like to buy but can't afford, consider making it, Gemini. Even if you don't think you're artistic, you could surprise yourself if you try. There are resources for novice crafters. They can give you the needed support and instructions. Don't dismiss your ability. Explore this avenue and see about finding a creative niche.

**CANCER:** It's the perfect day to head outside, Cancer. You'll likely be feeling positive and energetic, and the fresh air, sunshine, and physical activity may be long overdue. Even if this is a workday, make the most of your breaks and lunch hour by walking. This evening could be the opportune time to get together with friends.

**LEO:** It won't be surprising if

you're frustrated with a close friend or partner who's far less ambitious than you, Leo. The energy in the air can emphasize your dynamic ways of reaching goals and achieving success. Others who are passive or fearful may be difficult for you to understand. Yet people have to do things in ways that are best for them. Try to be patient.

**VIRGO:** See about using your good relationships with friends and loved ones to get group activities going today, Virgo. You're probably feeling great, and the idea of socializing appeals to you. See about inviting people over for supper or cards. If you're feeling especially lively, some sports may be just the ticket to get you moving. Do whatever it takes to have fun and get some fresh air.

**LIBRA:** If you lack a regular exercise

routine, Libra, today's a great day to remedy that. Exercise doesn't have to exhaust you or hurt. Even activities like walking or yoga are excellent ways to stay healthy. Play a sport that appeals to you and you combine fun with exercise. Even dancing is a fantastic means of exercise. Find something that works for you.

**SCORPIO:** Put your ambition into action today, Scorpio. The day's planetary aspects should find you feeling energetic and positive, so take steps to achieve your goals. Nothing will happen if you don't actively pursue them. The years can pass quickly. You don't want to be sitting in a rocker wondering "what if." Trust yourself and do what it takes. Everything starts with that first step.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Don't hesitate when it comes to taking on a project

or making plans today, Sagittarius. Extra energy will complement your organizational skills, making a perfect combination for handling almost anything. Write down your plans and goals to help stay focused. Get rid of things you never use. Consider donating these items, since there's probably someone who needs them.

**CAPRICORN:** Today should go well for you, Capricorn. Expect to feel a renewed energy and fresher perspective, especially concerning anything work related. Make the most of this by finishing projects that have been stalled or organizing your desk or closets. Feel confident that you can handle any task quickly. When everything is taken care of, make plans for a little recreation. You deserve it.

**AQUARIUS:** Today you may feel very creative and ambitious, Aquarius. You might want to use this energy to work on an artistic project, or you may choose to channel it into such activities as organizing your home or workspace. If you plan for it, there should be plenty of time to do both if you have a mind to. Make the most of the day.

**PISCES:** Don't be surprised if you feel super today, Pisces. Chances are good that you'll enjoy renewed physical strength, with energy to spare. It might be a good day to tackle any projects that require muscle. Perhaps there are household repairs that need tackling or furniture to move. You might want to go to the gym. Whatever the activity, this is a good day to go for it with gusto.