



SummitTIMES

CM and Cabinet's swearing-in scheduled for Tues

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 NOV:

The swearing-in of the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers has been scheduled for 26 November, Tuesday, at Ashirwad Hall, Raj Bhawan.

The Home Department communique issued to the Secretary, IPR Department, released to the media today, 24 Nov, is interestingly dated 25 November and directs that apart from ensuring a PA system and media coverage in electronic and print media, IPR Deptt should also restrict the media personnel attendance to 20.

Sources in the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha inform that the swearing in is being held since the last time that Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] was administered the oath of office, since he was not an elected MLA at the time, was only for a six month period.

Now that he has been elected a member of the legislative assembly, the rules prescribe make it mandatory for him and his cabinet to be sworn in afresh for the full term.

While this might explain why the CM has to be sworn-in afresh, it is not clear why the swearing-in ceremony should include Ministers as well and until that is clarified in more detail, expect speculations to circulate.

Meanwhile, the move to hold the swearing in ceremony, SKM sources inform, was initiated by the Raj Bhawan.

Sikkim hoteliers reject OYO, allege fraud and cheating

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 NOV:

Sikkim Hotels & Restaurant's Association [SHRA] today resolved to take cognizance of complaints received by it against hotel chain, Oyo Rooms, and has promised affected hoteliers here to take "all necessary steps to protect the interests of OYO Hoteliers which may include legal and police action against OYO in Sikkim."

An SHRA press release informs that the association received a joint complaint letter from around 50 Oyo hotel owners of Gangtok accusing Oyo of fraud, payment issues, violation of contract, non-transparency accounts, arbitrary charges and deductions, and gross mis-management.

"All OYO hoteliers unanimously complained that they have been defrauded by OYO which had

turn to pg 02

Aapdara's had enough with delays and dodging

WANGCHUK BHUTIA
DIKCHU, 24 NOV:

Residents of Aapdara, a village near Dikchu which sits right above the dam and head-race tunnel of Teesta Stage V hydel project, has been grappling with sinks and slides ever since the project was commissioned back in 2006. Over the more than a decade that has passed since, their worries have only increased and now the 27 affected families that call Aapdara home want no more assurances and token repairs - they want NHPC to acquire all their affected lands and property and compensate them properly so that they can relocate to safer sites.

They took out a protest rally here today, driven to desperation by what they see as NHPC's disinterest towards their situation and administration's casual approach.

The residents have clearly had enough of seeing their lands sink away, houses tilt, court-



yards crack and landslides tear off from the below the village, tugging at its very foundations.

Through the years, the villagers here have suffered damage, received inspection teams. The cycle is proving too repetitive and the condition too traumatic for the people who are demand-

ing that NHPC acquire everything - from their imperiled lands to the in-threat houses - compensate them adequately so that they can relocate.

While this demand has been raised often by the people since 2015 when matters came to a head, it had not been taken into consideration

with any seriousness by the concerned authorities until recently. The trouble at Aapdara has now clearly grown too dire to be sidestepped any longer and measures were taken to evaluate the scale of damage with the intention to compensate the affected families, paving the way

for their relocation.

The 27 families of Aapdara Dikchu, Lower Tintek, East Sikkim, are demanding long pending justice.

"Our houses were declared completely damaged by the 2011 earthquake but we were not provided new homes under the REDRH scheme



and were just offered meagre amounts," says Saroj Rai, one of the affected people of Aapdara.

The Buildings & Housing Department has already certified the valuation of these 27 houses for the compensation but recently that NHPC dodged paying up on the claim that the damage

was a surface issue and not related to the dam or tunnelling.

On 17 June this year, the approach road to damsite was blocked due to a landslide and the people took this as an opportunity to make a stand and did not allow NHPC to initiate repairs

turn to pg 02

Governor tables State Report at Delhi meet, seeks Centre's indulgence

HYDEL, CONNECTIVITY AND PENDING ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 NOV:

Governor Ganga Prasad today attended the main session of ongoing three-day Governors' Conference at Ashoka Hall, Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

The third day of the conference saw the presentation of State Reports by the respective Governors and Lt. Governors, highlighting issues of prime importance of the States which required urgent attention of Central Government, a press communiqué from

Raj Bhawan informs.

The Sikkim Governor urged the Union Government to assist the State in augmenting the Hydro Power Potential of Sikkim and underlined the need for more investment in the sector in order to complete the ongoing projects on priority.

This will ensure greater economic dividends for the State's developmental needs, the Governor reportedly said.

He highlighted the need for strengthening of road connectivity to Sikkim and upgradation and

expediting construction of alternate highway to Sikkim.

He also conveyed the concern and displeasure of Sikkim on the slow pace of construction of the Sevoke-Rangpo rail-link project and sought its early completion.

The Governor also highlighted the issues and bottlenecks which have halted flight operations at Pakyong Airport since June and urged the central government to intervene and ensure early restoration of flight operations.

turn to pg 02

SKM legislators meet

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 NOV:

An urgent meeting of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha legislators was held here at Samman Bhawan on Sunday, an SKM press release informs.

The meeting, which was attended by all Ministers and legislators of the party, was chaired by SKM party president, Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay], a press release issued by SKM publicity secretary, Ranjana Pradhan, informs.

The release states

that the party president announced that all developmental works will be taken to people across the State and that 3,000 houses, each costing Rs 15 lakh, will be built under Sikkim Gareeb Awas Yojana and house upgradation distributed to 200 beneficiaries each in every constituency.


The release states that this was unanimously supported by all legislators.

The meeting also discussed political issues like the LT seat reservation issue, tribal status

to eleven leftout communities, to include Bhutia, Limboo and Lepcha languages in the eighth schedule of the Constitution and placing these demands to the Centre in a stronger manner in the near future, the release informs.

It is added that the meeting has also discussed administrative issues.

The release informs that the CM directed legislators to maintain strong vigilance in their respective constituencies on substance abuse.



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Fake notes of Rs 1 cr face value seized, five arrested

SURAT, NOV 24 (PTI): The city crime branch has arrested five persons from different locations in Gujarat and seized from them fake currency notes with a face value of over Rs one crore, police said on Sunday.

While one of them was arrested on Saturday, the others were held on Sunday, police said.

The Surat crime branch took this action based on a tip-off and total 5,013 fake notes of Rs 2,000 denomination with Rs 1,00,26,000 face value were seized during the operation, they said.

The officials on Saturday arrested Pratik Chodwadia from a farm house near Kamrej in the district and recovered 203 fake notes of Rs 2,000 denomination from him. During his interrogation, he revealed the names of four others.

Based on his information, the police conducted a raid at a room in an under-construction Swaminarayan temple ashram in Ambav village of Kheda district and arrested the priest, identified as Swami Radharaman, they said, adding that fake notes of Rs 50 lakh face value were recovered from him.

Three others- Pravin Chopda, Kalu Chopda and Mohan Wadhurade- were arrested from Sarthana in Surat district, they said.

All of them have been booked under IPC sections 489 (counterfeiting currency notes), 120 (b) (conspiracy) and 34 (acts done by several persons towards common intent), police said.

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Com

Amar Ujala buys majority stake in Cygnus Medicare for Rs 130 cr

NEW DELHI, NOV 24 (PTI): Leading media firm Amar Ujala Ltd has acquired a majority stake in Cygnus Medicare, which operates a chain of super specialty hospitals, for around Rs 130 crore as part of its expansion plans in the healthcare segment. Cygnus Medicare currently has more than 1,000 beds across its 10 super specialty hospitals in Delhi and Haryana.

"We have concluded a deal of around Rs 130 crore with Cygnus Medicare to take over their 10 hospitals and added our two hospitals in the overall portfolio," Amar Ujala Ltd Director Probal Ghosal told PTI. The company has acquired a majority share in Cygnus Medicare with management control, he added.

On raising of funds for the acquisition, Ghosal said, "It is through internal accruals."

The investment of Rs 130 crore includes a significant primary com-

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 NOV: The top-ten singers of Sikkim-e-Culture, the e-swor 2019, Season 2, were announced here on Sunday.

The event is being organized by U First Mick with the support of Reeyaz Sangeetlaya.

The shortlist was finalized on the basis of points given by judges and likes received on YouTube.

The top-10 singers are - Drishya Chettri, Riya Limboo, Nichalraj Dewan, Shisir Thatal, Pranita Chettri, Ishwar Nepal, Jigme Sherpa, Milan Biswakarma, Dipti Bardewa and Pema Tamang. Likewise, Ocean Rai is the wildcard entry for the finale.

Names of these 11 singers



were announced by Reeyaz Sangeetlaya founder, Manoj Rai, and Sound Engineer, Sudhir Singh, and the selected singers were handed over mementos.

It is informed that the

recording for the finale is scheduled to be held on 06 December at Sargam Sikkim Digital Studio, Gangtok.

Mr Rai mentioned that the winner will be decided on the basis

of popular votes and points given by judges. Snehashree Thapa is a guest judge for the finals. The winner of the competition will get a music video along with cash

prize and scholarship to train at Reeyaz Sangeetlaya and first and second runners-up will also get cash prize and scholarship for training at Reeyaz Sangeetlaya.

3rd batch of NISHTHA training ends at Phodong School



SUMMIT REPORT

MANGAN, 24 NOV: The valedictory function of the third batch of training under National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement [NISHTHA] for Kabi BAC, which had started on 18 November at Phodong Senior Secondary School was held on Saturday.

A total of 150 teachers and principals of

primary and elementary government schools took the five-day training organised by the State Project Office, Samagra Siksha, Education Department.

The valedictory function had Deputy Director, Education Department [Mangan], Sajan Sabastan, as chief guest. Trainings for the next two batches are scheduled for February 2020.

Christ the King Feast in Gangtok



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 NOV: St Thomas Church, Gangtok, observed the Christ the King Feast on Sunday.

On the occasion, the Eucharist mass of the Christ the King Feast was conducted by parish priest, Father Paul Kabo and assistant parish priest, Father Michael

Lepcha. Fr Lepcha spoke about the significance of the Christ the King Feast.

After the mass, a procession was taken out from St Thomas Church to Missionaries of Charity, Sichey. Devotees of the church participated in the procession carrying banners and singing hymns.

Bhakti Sharma's third collection of lyrics released

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 NOV: The third collection of lyrics, 'Nirbad Maan', of Bhakti Sharma was released during a function organized by Geetkar Sangh, Sikkim, here at Nepali Sahitya Parishad on Sunday.

The release function, which was chaired by Nepali Sahitya Parishad president, Rudra Poudyal, had a senior litterateur, Anita Nirola, as the chief guest.

The book has been published by Sushma Organisation.

Mr Sharma has al-

ready taken out his two collections of lyrics, 'Geet Ka Anubhuktiharu' and 'Pailaharu'.

In her address, the chief guest commented that although singers are more popular amongst the people, song writers were the real force behind songs. She expressed hope that Geetkar Sangh would evaluate the contribution of song-writers in the near future. She said that encouragement and motivation were needed to attract people to song writing.

Likewise, in his pres-

idential address, Mr Poudyal, also reiterated that song writers have been disappearing from the society and stressed upon the need to encourage and motivate them.

The programme, which was conducted by litterateur Usha Sharma, started with a welcome address by Geetkar Sangh, Sikkim, president, Hari Dhungel and introduction to the organization by treasurer, Kamal Dahal. The programme ended with a vote of thanks proposed by vice-president, Bimal Kafley.

BJP nominates dist representatives



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 NOV: A meeting of Bharatiya Janata Party's Sikkim unit was held at the party's head office in Singtam on Sunday.

The meeting, which was chaired by the Sikkim-BJP president, DB Chauhan, was attended by vice president, Bharat Dulal, treasurer, GD Agarwal and other senior leaders of the party. A BJP press release in-

forms that the meeting was convened mainly to discuss elections to the party organisation and nominate presidents and representatives to all four districts.

The release adds that Digam Subba was nominated district president and Sanjit Subba district representative for West District, Tashi Ongdup Lepcha as district president and Chewang Rinzing Lepcha as dis-

trict representative for North District. East District has Bhanu Bhakta Sharma as district president and Prakash Rai as district representative and CL Gurung was nominated district president and Bishnu Kumari Mangar as district representative for South District.

10 former SDF members from Sang Martam constituency are also reported to have joined BJP today.

Aapdara's had...

on the road unless compensation was paid. They also argued that if machines were deployed, the activity would cause further devastation.

They also complain that the disaster management authorities have not even assessed the situation properly.

The affected people have requested the administration and Land Revenue Department to order an official stay on NHP's road repair works to avoid further damage to their homes.

They add that the assessment report of the Mines & Geology Dept in 2015 was unfair and unacceptable to them because it was too vague and did not establish clear accountability.

The people are demanding that adequate compensation be paid and a proper Rehabilitation & Resettlement package provided to them along with a regular/permanent job.

They add that the a fresh stability report of their village to be prepared by an autonomous body independently without consulting NHP as it has been already delayed and pending for settlement since 2015.

Sikkim hoteliers...

tied up with them promising various benefits for a commission ranging from 15-20%. However much to their shock, OYO unilaterally revised the commission to 23%, increased Platform Fees to 5%, taking the overall commission to 28% without consent of hoteliers and in violation of the signed agreement. Over and above this, various hidden charges such as 3C Penalty, Walk in Penalty, Audit Penalty, GST deductions etc which were not disclosed earlier have been deducted from payments made to them. Surprisingly they are charged commission even on No-Show or Cancelled bookings and fake bookings," the release details.

Similar complaints against Oyo have been reported from across the country, it may be recalled.

Governor tables...

Broadband and internet connectivity also featured in the Governor's report who stated that Sikkim was yet to take full advantage of the digitisation of economy, cashless banking and other transactions, public delivery of services as per Digital India Mission due to poor internet connectivity.

He also underlined Sikkim's current internet connectivity coverage and said that except a few towns and cities, broadband network remains elusive in nearly 65% of the total area under habitation in the State.

Highlighting the strategic location and geographical limitations of Sikkim, the Governor sought continuous assistance and patronage of the Central Government to fulfil its developmental needs, specially in the sector of tourism, organic farming, infrastructure including road network within the State.

Hon'ble Governor called for a special criteria of providing central funds to states like Sikkim, based on potential of growth rather than on the criteria of area and population.

While placing the State Report, the Governor also sought the Centre's intervention in early resolution of all pending demands of the State lying with the Central Government.

Earlier, on second day of the Conference, the Governor attended a breakaway session of the sub-group of Governors on 'Governance for 'Ease of Living' and participated in deliberations.

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Maha politics: All eyes on 13 Ind, 16 smaller party MLAs

MUMBAI, Nov 24 (PTI): While major political parties in Maharashtra are slugging it out to form a government amidst twists and turns, all eyes are now on which way 13 Independents and 16 MLAs from smaller parties will swing in the quest to achieve the 145-mark in the 288-member House in floor test.

The Shiv Sena, which is in talks with the Congress-NCP to form a government sans one-time ally BJP, claims to have the support of seven MLAs apart from its own flock of 56.

The BJP, which emerged the largest party in the October 21 Assembly polls with 105 seats, claims to have the support of 14 more MLAs, taking its tally effectively to 119.

It is not certain how many MLAs, if any, are backing NCP leader Ajit Pawar who joined hands with the BJP on Saturday and took oath as deputy chief minister in the BJP-led government under chief minister Devendra Fadnis. Achalpur MLA and Prahar Janshakti Party (PJP) chief Bacchu Kadu, who had given the Sena a letter of support several days ago, on Sunday told PTI that he and his two legislator colleagues will continue to back the Uddhav Thackeray-led party.

Krantikari Shetkari Paksh (KSP) MLA Shankarrao Gadakh has also given a letter of support to the Sena, which has also managed to garner backing of Ashish Jaiswal (Ramtek), Narendra Bhondekar (Bhandara), Manila Gavit (Sakri) and Chandrakant Patil (Muktainagar). The MLAs supporting the BJP comprise Independents Ravi Rana (Badnera), Kishore Jorgewar (Chandrapur), Geeta Jain (Mira Bhayander), Mahesh Baldi (Uran), Sanjay Shinde (Karmala), Rajendra Raut (Barshi), Pakash Awade (Ichalkaranji), and Rajendra Patil (Shirol).

The BJP also claims the support of PWP MLA Shyamsunder Shinde (Loha), Rashtriya Samaj Paksh's Ratnakar Gutte from Gangakhed, Rajesh Patil from Bhoisar, Kshitij Thakur from Nalasopara, Hitendra Thakur from Vasai, all from the Bahujan Vikas Aghadi (BVA), and Jan Surajya Shakti Party's Shahuwadi MLA Vinayak Kore.

Others in the Assembly include the AIMIM and Samajwadi Party with two MLAs each, and the CPM, MNS, RSP and Swabhimani Paksh with one MLA each.

In the polls, results of which were declared on October 24, the BJP got 105 seats, followed by the Sena with 56, the NCP 54 and the Congress 44.

Earlier in the day, the supreme court said the issue of floor test, demanded by the Congress-NCP-Sena combine, would be dealt with on Monday only after perusing the two letters-of-Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari inviting Fadnis and of the BJP leader staking his claim to form the government- it has demanded.

Abad and ABYF in Sikkim United semis

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 Nov:

Abad and ABYF Baptist Church have made it to the semi-final round of the ongoing Sikkim United Cup.

In the first quarter-final match played on Sunday, Abad registered a convincing 8-3 victory over Shiloh Church, Lower Martam. Dipen Ranpal of Abad was adjudged the Man of the Match.

In the second quarter final match today, ABYF Baptist Church outplayed Mazzaroth in the tie-breaker.

The closely fought match ended in a 1-1 draw and proceeded to a tie-breaker through penalty shoot-out. ABYF players converted



two shots into goals while Mazzaroth managed to score only one goal. Finally, ABYF won the match 3-2 to enter

the semi-final round of the tournament. Ronak Gurung of Mazzaroth was awarded as the Man of the Match.

On Monday, EPCS Namchi will take on Word of Life Church in the third quarter-final match which will be followed

by the last quarter-final match between Bethany Church, Ranipool and Gitang Dagbari, West Sikkim.

Hong Kong: protests prompt huge turnout for local elections Emma Graham-Harrison & Verna Yu



HONG KONG, 24 Nov [THEGUARDIAN]: Hong Kong residents have turned out in unprecedented numbers for local elections that many in the city are treating as a proxy referendum on months of anti-government protests.

Hour-long queues stretched outside many polling stations and by early afternoon more than 1.5 million people had voted, exceeding the total ballots cast in the 2015 elections.

"It's my first time voting. I registered myself because of the [protest] movement," said Vivian Lee, an insurance worker in her 30s. "I'm happy so many people have come out to vote, because we want our voices heard. Its the first time I've seen people in Hong Kong so politically involved."

The district councils are relatively toothless bodies, with few powers, limited budgets and a reputation for corruption. In past years the elections have seen low turnout, with disciplined and well-funded pro-Beijing groups winning easy control of almost all councils.

But after protests against a controversial extradition bill exploded into a broad pro-democracy movement that has convulsed the city for nearly six months, they have become a focus of intense political interest.

"If you are willing to march or protest in the streets, which requires blood and sweat and tears, its much easier to walk downstairs and vote," said one man who has taken part in the street protests, and asked not to be named because of fear of official retaliation.

"Even if the system is broken, we can try to

use it against the government. And we have to provide a voice for those who were silenced by death [during protests]."

Hong Kong authorities have frequently insisted that protesters are a vocal but small minority, while they enjoy the support of a "silent majority". Frontline protesters in turn point to the huge crowds that came out for peaceful protests – the largest 2 million-strong – before the police started refusing permits for the gathering, to argue they have wide popular backing.

Both sides' claims are being put to the test in the poll, the only election in the city decided by full universal suffrage. The city's leader is chosen by an electoral college and only some seats in the city's legislature are selected in open ballots.

A last-minute surge in registration added nearly 400,000 voters, most of them young, to the rolls, and a wave of novice pro-democracy candidates meant that for the first time in Hong Kong's history every seat was contested.

Many pro-Beijing candidates were running on promises to "stop the violence" of the protests which have seen hundreds injured, some critically. Battles between police and demonstrators have also repeatedly shut down part or all of the metro, and sections of the city as the two sides trade teargas and rubber bullets for bricks and molotov cocktails.

A stone's throw from Nam Pin Wai, a village which saw a notorious attack on protesters and commuters in July, several older voters said they would be supporting the government for that reason. "I think both sides

have faults but I am here to support the government. The young ones are too radical," said Ms Tang, 70, who refused to give her first name. "No matter how noble the protesters' ideals are, they shouldn't bash things up and interfere with our daily lives."

A landslide for pro-democracy candidates would have few immediate political consequences, but longer term it might slightly tip the balance of power in the city, because the councils play a role in choosing the chief executive and some legislators.

Control of a majority of councils might allow pro-democrats to have greater leverage the next time the city chooses a leader, although they would still be far from a majority.

Ahead of the election both sides expressed worries about intimidation, following violence during campaigning that saw one pro-democracy law maker's ear bitten off and candidates from both sides stabbed.

The polls appeared to run smoothly, although an election monitoring group raised concerns about unidentified people who were taking videos outside polling stations.

"The video-recording may intrude privacy and agitate voters. It may even discourage people to vote and disturb the operation of polling stations," the Election Observation Project said, urging election authorities to investigate.

Polls close at 10.30pm local time, and the first results are expected in the early hours of Tuesday morning, although the high number turnout may mean vote counting takes longer than in the past.

FPAS hands over Rs 4 lakh to Reeya's parents



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 Nov:

Football Players Association of Sikkim [FPAS] handed over a cheque of Rs 4 lakh to Reeya Lepcha's parents at their residence in Dentam, West Sikkim, on Sunday.

The amount was raised by FPAS members through a fund-raising drive at Gangtok and other parts of the State.

The FPAS team was led by its president, Nirmal Chettri, accompanied by Nim Tshering Lepcha, Ashish Chettri,

Jasman Gurung, Kunzang Lepcha and Lokendra Gurung.

They interacted with Reeya's parents and FPAS and the parents expressed their heartfelt gratitude towards all those who contributed to the fund-raising.

15-year-old Reeya is a promising footballer who has been diagnosed with brain tumour. Her parents had appealed for financial support as they are unable to meet the expensive medical treatment. They will be flying to Delhi on Monday for Reeya's treatment.

Singtam Newars hold felicitation at AGM



SUMMIT REPORT

SINGTAM, 24 Nov:

Newa Bhay Bowney Guthi, Singtam branch, organised a felicitation program for the participants and winners of the recent talent hunt organized by the Sikkim Newar Guthi. The occasion also provided the attendance for the organisation's annual general meeting.

Dances and songs were performed by the guthi

members and the troupe which won the New Folk-dance competition.

"Singtam is home to a lot of talented artists and what the Singtam branch of the Guthi achieved within 11 months is a great example to all Newars," said Santa Pradhan who was present as the chief guest today.

Mr Pradhan also donated Rs 10,000 to the Singtam branch during the program.

Fit India School grading system launched

NEW DELHI, Nov 24 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched the Fit India School grading system in schools across the country.

The Fit India School rankings have been divided into three categories -- The Fit India Schools, which is the first level of ranking, Fit India School (3 star) and Fit India School (5 star).

The level of ranking will depend on how much importance the school gives to inculcating fitness among its students and teachers, besides facilities available for fitness activities.

In his popular radio programme, Mann Ki Baat on Sunday, Modi said, "In the Fit India

Movement, schedules have been drawn for ranking schools in accordance with fitness. The schools that achieve this ranking will also be able to use the Fit India logo and flag."

Explaining the ranking system, the Prime Minister said, "Schools can declare themselves as fit by visiting the Fit India portal. Fit India three star and Fit India five star ratings will also be given.

"I appeal that all schools should enroll in the Fit India ranking system and Fit India should become innate to our temperament. That it become a mass movement and bring awareness is what we must strive for," Modi added.

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An Article of Faith *The 36th amendment of the Constitution – revere it, sure, but also study it*

The nation will celebrate Constitution Day on Tuesday, marking the 26th of November 1949 when the Constitution of India was adopted by the Constituent Assembly. The Constituency came into force exactly two months later, on 26 January 1950, the (Constitution) day we are all more familiar with as Republic Day. Constitution Day offers itself as an apt day for Sikkim to reframe its association with the Constitution and extend its emotional attachment with Article 371F to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of this, the thirty-sixth amendment to the Constitution of India, and one which established the provisions laying out the special status that Sikkim would enjoy as a State of the Union of India.

What we have on ground though is the unsettling reality of how obscure Article 371 F remains even though it underlines the very identity of Sikkim and sets the conditions for its being a part of India. It is also ironic that its potency is compromised more from its constant invoking than any intentional sidelining or harm. This tendency to bring up the Article too often has, it appears, replaced the need to explain or understand it in deeper detail. As a result, there is more confusion than understanding about it.

All the confusion surrounding this Article of the Constitution of India perhaps stems from the terminology that that Sikkim has associated with it – speaking almost exclusively of protecting and upholding the “sanctity” of Article 371F. Sanctity, which means sacredness, something inviolable, is associated with that which is to be accepted without question. Much like faith actually, and thus the communication gap which exists between religious texts and followers of the faith, is also seen in Sikkim with its understanding/ appreciation of Article 371F. Even the most devout adherent has at best a sketchy understanding of the invocations that are always on her/his lips. Maybe the incompleteness is an intentional dodge, but in public statements on the Article, it becomes obvious that s/he might not understand the full import of the words, but will never question them. Clearly then, the desire is never expressed to interpret the meanings. Till such time that such beliefs remain in private spaces, they are fine, but the moment this incomplete knowledge is exploited in the public domain, things can go out of hand. India knows only too well how faith and its interpretations have often been exploited to bloody ends by various factions. In the case of Sikkim, Article 371F occupies a similarly edified position. It is respected, but only superficially understood and still passionately protected. While no one questions the need of protecting the Article, it is the still sketchy understanding that needs to go and one needs to underline here that the Article, being a part of the Constitution, is already well protected, so energy will be better deployed trying to explain, understand and interpret it. It is downright laughable how easily political parties whip up emotions just citing this Article. Fact remains that Article 371F is an over-arching clause put in place to guard against the complete swamping of the Sikkimese identity. To whip it out at every pretext makes a mockery of the obviously noble ideals which led to the creation and insertion of this Article in the Constitution. Lazy leaders cannot be expected to go easy with their exploitation of Article 371F in their speeches, so the onus falls on the people to protect its “sanctity” which is under threat more from the over-invocation that it suffers than a concerted plan to undermine it. For that to happen, the people must first understand what the Article is all about.

Anyone can pick up a copy of the Constitution and read Article 371F in it, but to develop an understanding, one needs more. For that Sikkim will have to bring the Article down from the pedestal of reverence it has been placed on and approach it more practically. It has to be tackled as an academic pursuit of understanding and not as a theology class. Once the people know, they will also be able to see things properly for themselves and not the tinted glasses that leaders whip out each time they say Article 371F.

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: news@summittimes.com

These young Muslim Australians want to meet Islamophobes and change their minds. And it’s working

IHSAN YILMAZ, ANA-MARIA BLIUC & FETHI MANSOURI
THECONVERSATION.COM

The political influence of the far-right, along with a more salient national security agenda, has spurred a growing anti-Muslim sentiment and deep social division in Australia.

In fact, a new report from the Islamophobia Register looked at hundreds of Islamophobic incidents in 2016 and 2017. It found that while the number of incidents is steady, the attacks are becoming bolder and more physical, with the overwhelming majority directed at women.

In the face of this growing division, our new research offers hope to our multicultural society.

We looked at the experiences between Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia from the perspective of 28 young Muslim Australians. We wanted to understand how contact between these two groups shape young Muslims’ experiences of discrimination and their perceptions of integrating in Australian society.

Sadly, but unsurprisingly, all our participants said they had experienced discrimination at various times. One respondent said:

“The fact that I don’t look Australian, the fact that I look brown, and no matter where I go, the first thing I’ll be asked is where I’m from because of my name and because of the way I look [...] I heard things like ‘oh, you have a terrorist-sounding last name’ said to me. I’ve had comments about my skin colour.”

Social psychology research on the effects of contact between cultural groups shows interaction isn’t always positive. And when there’s a negative experience, prejudice and conflict between these groups can rise.

Yet, we found Islamophobic experiences didn’t deter these young Muslim Australians from engaging with non-Muslim Australians. In fact, they indicated they were keen on engaging with the very group of Australians likely to be prejudiced against them.

These participants, who said they see themselves as representatives of all Australian Muslims, not only want to be accepted as Muslims, but also say their identity can add value to Australian society.

BREAKING DOWN ISLAMOPHOBIA



Our research participants said they’re well aware not all Anglo-Australians hold negative attitudes towards them. But they also understand that certain groups of the population – mostly older in age and based in rural areas with little contact with Muslims – are more likely to have these prejudices.

It’s exactly this group many of our respondents want to engage with. They argue the negative views about Islam and Muslims are largely due to biased media coverage, or when people have never met a Muslim in person.

Some of these respondents even talked about how they seek opportunities to talk to Anglo-Australians about Islam to help break down the barriers between cultures.

They’re confident in their ability to change their perceptions after having had positive experiences in the past when encounters started negative, but evolved into something positive.

Often, our respondents didn’t take biased comments they received personally, stating they “do not take negative comments to heart”, “just ignore”, “walk away” and sometimes “laugh at it”. One participant described what he did in response to a woman criticising his political activism:

“I approached the lady very nicely and very gently to describe that I consider myself an Australian citizen, and it is my duty to stand up for my community. We had a very short conversation.

At the end of the conversation [...] she seemed very happy, she apologised for saying what she said [...] at the end it had a positive result.”

This was a key finding in our research: although the majority of our respondents anticipate prejudice against them from some Anglo-Australians, they believe in the power of contact, dialogue and exchange to transform negative attitudes and prejudices.

Even when such willingness was not expressed explicitly, this “inter-group contact” was still seen to be a good thing.

DIVERSITY ISN’T A THREAT

Diversity has the potential to generate deeper and more sustainable social glue that binds all Australians together through a shared commitment to inclusion, respect and intercultural understanding.

The key condition for this outcome is not suspicion, exclusion and mutual rejection. Rather, as our research shows, the key condition is empathy, mutual acceptance and meaningful contact involving everyone.

Our relatively multicultural policy can improve on mainstreaming the diversity agenda so all Australians – not only migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds – become stakeholders in the social cohesion challenge. This starts with creating the conditions for intercultural contact and exchange at the local level.

In fact, many local councils and cities across Australia are now introducing strategies for building social cohesion on the basis of improved contact, dialogue and exchange between all citizens, and not exclusively involving non-English speaking background migrants.

Similarly, some Australian schools have led the way in incorporating intercultural understanding in curriculums to help their students develop the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours to respect others from different communities.

Australia must go beyond accepting diversity, a well-established demographic fact, to enshrining the foundations for a genuinely inclusive and harmonious society.

[Ihsan Yilmaz is Research Professor and Chair in Islamic Studies and Intercultural Dialogue, Deakin University; Ana-Maria Blauc is Senior Lecturer in Social Psychology, Western Sydney University; Fethi Mansouri is Professor, Deakin University]

Popcorn lung: Teen first case of life-threatening vaping injury

KAREN BOSMA & SIMON LANDMAN
THECONVERSATION.COM

E-cigarettes first emerged in North America in 2004 — as a supposedly safer alternative to smoking traditional, carcinogenic, tobacco cigarettes, and as a potential means to help smokers quit smoking altogether.

However, with heavy marketing, an enticing array of flavours and the potential to inhale drugs other than nicotine, vaping has become increasingly popular, particularly among youth, attracting those who have never smoked before.

We recently published a report in the Canadian Medical Association Journal describing a case of severe, life-threatening airway injury related to vaping that occurred in a Canadian youth.

The 17-year-old, who had been vaping daily using a variety of flavoured cartridges and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC, the psychoactive compound found in cannabis), was hospitalized and required life support in the intensive care unit, including mechanical ventilation and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) — oxygenation of blood outside of the body.

FIRST CASE OF VAPING ‘POPCORN LUNG’

After ruling out other potential causes, we suspected the patient had bronchiolitis obliterans. This condition is also known as “popcorn lung” based on its initial description among microwave popcorn factory workers exposed to chemical flavourants.

He narrowly avoided the need

for a double-lung transplant, spent a total of 47 days in hospital and may have suffered long-term damage to his airways.

He is currently recovering from his lengthy intensive care unit stay and is abstaining from e-cigarettes, marijuana and tobacco.

ONE IN FOUR GRADE 12 STUDENTS

Vaping has rapidly increased in popularity in recent years. A study of Canadian youth aged 16 to 19 found that e-cigarette use among this group increased to 37 per cent in 2018.

In 2019, current data estimates that one in four Grade 12 students in the United States have used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days. The recent outbreak of cases of “e-cigarette, or vaping product use associated lung injury” (EVALI) has called into question the safety of vaping, and the risks that e-cigarettes pose, particularly to youth.

As of Nov. 20, 2019, 2,290 cases of EVALI have been reported in the U.S., with 77 per cent occurring in patients under 35 years of age. To date, there have been 47 deaths confirmed in the EVALI outbreak.

Researchers at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have worked diligently to identify the causative agent(s) responsible, and suspect that vitamin E acetate may play a role. They have not yet ruled out other chemicals of concern and acknowledge that there may be more than one cause of the outbreak.

Despite being branded as a safer alternative, e-cigarettes are known to contain harmful substances includ-

ing nicotine, vitamin E acetate, volatile organic compounds, heavy metals, ultra-fine particles and carbonyl compounds.

SAFE TO SWALLOW, NOT TO INHALE?

For instance, formaldehyde (group 1 human carcinogen) and acetaldehyde (possible human carcinogen) have been found in e-cigarette aerosols, and their concentrations vary between brands and within samples of the same product.

Of particular concern is the use of flavouring agents in e-cigarettes. There are over 7,700 e-cigarette flavours across 460 brands, with newer marketing practices emphasizing consumer choice and customization of flavours and nicotine content.

While many of these flavours are listed as “generally recognized as safe” under the U.S. Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, it is important to recognize that this applies to ingestion of these ingredients; aerosolization of flavours safe for swallowing may produce adverse health effects when inhaled into the lungs.

CHEMICAL DIACETYL EXCEEDS SAFETY LIMITS

Diacetyl (2,3-butanedione) is one example of such a compound that may be safe for ingestion but toxic when inhaled.

Diacetyl belongs to a class of organic compounds referred to as diketones, α-diketones or α-dicarbonyls, and is known for its characteristic buttery flavour. It is found naturally in some foods and also used as a synthetic flavouring agent in butter, cocoa, caramel, coffee, dairy products

and alcoholic beverages.

Occupational diacetyl inhalation is associated with decline in respiratory function and manifested as obstructive lung disease.

Importantly, it is a recognized cause of bronchiolitis obliterans, an irreversible pulmonary disorder of small airways resulting in obstructive physiology not reversible with bronchodilators.

Bronchiolitis obliterans is also known as “popcorn lung” based on its initial description in patient clusters of microwave popcorn factory workers exposed to diacetyl-based flavourants.

VAPING INDUSTRY NEEDS TIGHTER REGULATION

Diacetyl has been found in e-cigarette fluid at levels higher than recommended safety limits, including in some products where packaging clearly stated diacetyl was not an ingredient.

By publishing this Canadian case, we hope to raise awareness of the varying types of vaping-related lung injuries and the acute and chronic effects of vaping.

Further research into the safety and toxicity of e-liquid ingredients is essential. We must also push for tighter regulation of the vaping industry.

[Karen Bosma is Associate Scientist at Lawson Health Research Institute and Associate Professor, Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, Western University; Simon Landman is Clinical Fellow, Department of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine at Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western University]

India, China spar over legacy of medicinal system

PAYAL BANERJEE

NEW DELHI, Nov 24 (PTI): India and China are at loggerheads over the legacy of one of the oldest systems of traditional medicine, known as Sowa-Rigpa, which has similarities with Ayurveda.

India has sought recognition of the ancient medicinal tradition as its “intangible cultural heritage”, a claim contested by China at a global forum, sources said.

Sowa-Rigpa is a traditional Tibetan system of medicine practised in India’s Himalayan belt. It is popular in Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal’s Darjeeling, Himachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Ladakh.

“India has approached the UNESCO seeking enlisting of the Sowa Rigpa as its ‘intangible cultural heritage’. China has raised objection to it,” an official said.



An Indian delegation is strongly pushing the country’s application based on detailed documents and evidence provided by the AYUSH Ministry which has been working closely with the Ministry of External Affairs on the matter, officials said.

The move comes in the backdrop of the Modi government promoting the traditional medicine

system, one of the oldest surviving medicine systems in the world.

The Union Cabinet on November 20 approved the setting up of the National Institute for Sowa-Rigpa (NISR) in Leh as an autonomous organization.

This is perhaps one of the first decisions taken by the Union Cabinet on Ladakh’s development after it became a Union

Territory on October 31 following the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir.

The theory and practices of Sowa Rigpa are similar to that of Ayurveda and include a few principles of the traditional Chinese system of medicine.

The fundamental text book ‘Rgyud-Bzi’ of Sowa Rigpa is believed to have been taught by Buddha himself and is closely

linked with Buddhist philosophy.

The establishment of the NISR as an autonomous body under the Ministry of AYUSH has been approved at an estimated cost of Rs 47.25 crore.

According to an official, setting up of NISR would provide an impetus to the revival of Sowa-Rigpa in the Indian sub-continent and provide opportunities for students of the traditional medicinal system not only in India but also from other countries.

It will be an autonomous national institute under the Ministry of AYUSH with the mandate of undertaking interdisciplinary education and research programmes in Sowa-Rigpa in collaboration with premier national and international institutes and facilitate integration of different systems of medicine.

Bengal by-polls litmus test for TMC, BJP ahead of 2021 Assembly elections

KOLKATA, Nov 24 (PTI): With Amit Shah’s pitch for a nationwide NRC exercise and the recent Ayodhya verdict having received mixed reactions from various quarters, the November 25 by-polls to three Assembly seats in Bengal will be a litmus test for the TMC and the BJP, ahead of 2021 state elections.

It will be the first electoral contest between the two parties since this year’s Lok Sabha polls, which saw the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerging as the main opposition in the state, with 18 of the 42 seats in its kitty, just four less than that of the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC).

Two of the three Assembly constituencies - Kharagpur Sadar and Karimpur - fell vacant post general election as the sitting MLAs contested and won Lok Sabha seats.

By-polls were necessitated in Kaliaganj following the death of Congress MLA Parmathanath Roy.

Congress nominee Dhitashree Roy, also supported by the CPI(M), will take on TMC’s Tapan Deb Sinha and BJP’s Kamal Chandra Sarkar in Kaliaganj.

In Karimpur, vacated by MLA Mahua Moitra after emerging victorious from Krishnnanagar Lok Sabha seat, the CPI(M)-Congress candidate Gholam Rabbi is contesting against BJP’s Jay Prakash Majumdar

and TMC’s Bimalendu Singha Roy.

Prem Chandra Jha of the BJP will take on Chitranjan Mandal of the Congress-CPI(M) alliance and Pradip Sarkar of the TMC in Kharagpur Sadar Assembly seat - vacated by MLA Dilip Ghosh after winning Medinipur Lok Sabha seat

The results will be declared on November 28.

Chances are likely that the saffron party’s masterstroke in Maharashtra and Haryana, along with the NRC proposal and the tabling of Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in Parliament, would cast a shadow on the November 25 by-polls.

The Ayodhya verdict, which cleared the way for construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site, might also have political ramifications, ahead of the 2021 polls.

On the back foot since the NRC in Assam left out over 19 lakh people, most of them reportedly Hindus, the Ayodhya verdict has provided the BJP in West Bengal fresh ammunition to polarise the electorate.

For the BJP, the challenge is to live up to its performance in the parliamentary polls, whereas the TMC will try hard to regain its lost political ground.

The by-polls will also decide if the Congress and the CPI(M), which have come together after three years, will remain relevant in

state politics.

The Congress had bagged two seats while the CPI(M) drew a blank in the Lok Sabha polls this year.

As the BJP increased its tally from two seats in 2014 to 18 seats in 2019 by bagging 40.5 per cent votes, the TMC witnessed a slump in its number of seats - down from 34 in 2014 to 22 this time.

“We are confident of winning all three seats in the by-polls. The people of West Bengal have made up their mind to defeat the TMC in 2021 Assembly polls in the state,” BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya said.

According to a section of state BJP leaders, the party’s failure to win majority in Maharashtra and Haryana Assemblies, with a resurgent Congress putting up a good show in the northern state, might have not gone down well with its ranks in West Bengal.

“In the Lok Sabha polls, we had swept Haryana and Maharashtra. But in less than six months, the Assembly poll results showed that Narendra Modi as the prime minister remains unchallenged at the national level, but the same cannot be said for the state leaders.

“We are a bit apprehensive that something similar may happen in West Bengal,” a senior state BJP leader said on the condition of anonymity.

Karimpur and Kaliag-

anj seats have a sizeable Muslim and Dalit population. Most of the Dalits in the two seats are descendants of refugees, who fled to India during Partition and the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War.

The exclusion of a large number of Hindus from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in neighbouring Assam is also a point of concern for the saffron party, which has promised to carry out the exercise in Bengal, if voted to power in 2021.

“The panic that followed the NRC exercise in Assam has taken the winds out of the BJP’s sails to an extent. So to counter the narrative of the TMC on the issue, we have come up with the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, by which all Hindu refugees will be accorded citizenship.

“It remains to be seen which narrative gets accepted in Karimpur and Kaliaganj,” the BJP leader said.

The Lok Sabha election results, earlier this year, showed that the BJP was ahead in Kaliaganj and Kharagpur Sadar, while the TMC in Karimpur.

In Kharagpur Sadar, which has a very high non-Bengali population, the Ram Mandir issue is expected to help the saffron party consolidate Hindu votes.

However, rebel BJP leader Pradip Kumar Patnaik, who has formed the BJP Bachao Committee and is fighting as an

Couple poison children, commit suicide in Tripura

AGARTALA, Nov 24 (PTI): A couple allegedly committed suicide in West Tripura district after poisoning their two children, police said on Sunday.

The incident has triggered a political slugfest in the state, with the CPI(M) and the Congress blaming it on unemployment and starvation, while the ruling BJP accusing the erstwhile Left Front rule for its alleged failure to implement poverty eradication measures.

“Prima facie, it seems 40-year-old Paresh Tanti and his 36-year-old wife Sajani had poisoned their five-year-old daughter Rupali and 11-year-old son Bishal and then hung themselves to a tree near their house in Sanyasipara village on Friday night,” Superintendent of Police Manik Das told PTI.

Police recovered the bodies on Saturday and sent them for post-mortem.

“Tanti had taken loans from two financial institutions and was unable to pay the instalments. He had also bought a piece of land, but could not obtain the

deed papers. We are investigating the case,” Das said.

The CPI(M), in a statement issued on Sunday, alleged that the incident happened due to lack of work and food.

“The couple was forced to commit suicide after poisoning their kids. The state is reeling under acute shortage of work and food since the BJP-IPFT government came to power. There have been incidents of children being sold and hungry people hitting the streets,” it said.

The CPI(M) alleged that beneficiaries of the area where the incident took place had not availed even a day’s work under MGNREGA since Durga Puja festivities.

It said a two-member delegation of the party led by former state minister Pranab Debbarma had visited the area on Saturday.

“Paresh Tanti had borrowed Rs 80,000 from financial institutions but was unable to pay the instalments due to lack of work. On the other hand, because of the absence of earnings, his children and wife re-

mained without food,” the CPI(M) statement said.

A Congress delegation led by Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) convener Subal Bhowmick also visited the area on Sunday.

“They have died due to poverty. There is no employment in rural areas. Moreover, Tanti had a burden of bank loans which he could not repay. We urge the BJP-IPFT government to generate more jobs to save the poor from starvation,” Bhowmick told reporters.

BJP spokesperson Nabendu Bhattacharya, on the other hand, put the blame of the deaths on the erstwhile Left Front government.

“The BJP-led government’s emphasis has been on strengthening the rural economy and work is being provided under MGNREGA.

“If the Tanti family had died of poverty then CPI(M) should be made responsible for it because, in their 25 years of rule, they did very little for eradicating it. We are trying to improve the situation,” he said.

Govt extends ban on Bodo insurgent group NDFB



NEW DELHI, Nov 24 (PTI): The Centre has extended the ban on Assam-based Bodo insurgent group NDFB for five more years for its involvement in a series of violent activities, including killings, extortion and for joining hands with anti-India forces.

In a notification, the Home Ministry said the National Democrat-

ic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) has been indulging in illegal and violent activities intending to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India in furtherance of its objective of achieving a separate Bodoland.

“Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Unlawful Activities (Pre-

vention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967), the central government hereby declares the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, along with all its groups, factions and front organisations, as an “unlawful association”, the notification said.

A Home Ministry official said the ban comes into effect immediately and it will continue for five years.

CAG flags irregularities in Mizoram tourism project

AIZAWL, Nov 24 (PTI): The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has detected “wasteful expenditure” to the tune of Rs 2.41 crore by the Mizoram government for the integrated development of eco-tourism circuit project at Thenzawl in Serchhip district.

The CAG report said the state tourism department had awarded a contract to a Delhi-based consultancy firm before getting approval of the project from the Centre and extended “undue benefit” to the company.

Union Ministry of Tourism had accorded approval for the project at a cost of Rs 48.30 crore in November 2014, according to the report.

The state government awarded the work relating to preparation of detailed project report (DPR), architectural designs and drawings and monitoring of the project implementation to the consultancy firm in September 2013, more than a year before the Centre’s nod for the programme, the CAG report said.

“An amount of Rs

2.41 crore, being first instalment of the cost of the project, was released for preparatory works,” the report said, adding that the work was to be commissioned by November, 2016.

The state government, in March 2015, had appointed Mizoram Tourism Development Authority (MTDA) as the implementing agency for the project and transferred the entire amount of Rs 2.41 crore to it.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU), signed between the Mizoram government

and the consultancy firm in April, 2015, had stipulated that Rs 96.59 lakh (40 per cent of the payment) would be paid to the consultant as retainer on signing of the agreement, the report said.

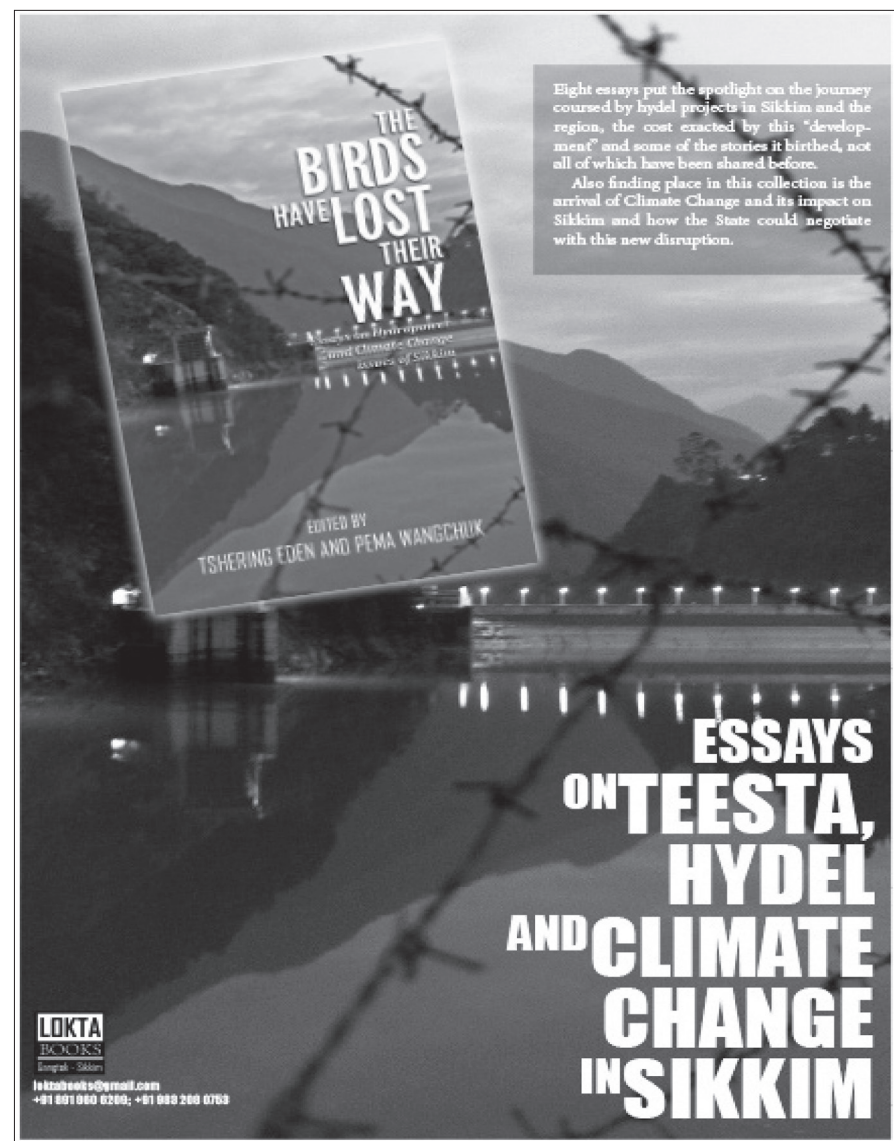
An amount of Rs 72.45 lakh (30 per cent) would be paid on submission of detailed specifications and an equal amount as last instalment during the course of construction of work.

“The MTDA, however, disbursed the entire amount of Rs 2.41 crore to the consultant on April 24, 2015, April 28,

2015 and December 2, 2015,” the CAG report said.

While the retainer fee was paid on signing of the MoU, the next payment was made within four days, which suggested that the preparation of detailed specifications were completed within four days, the CAG report said.

Further, the project monitoring service fee of Rs 72.45 lakh was released to the firm even without commencing the project, indicating that “the state government gave undue benefit to the firm”, it added.



India complete formalities in 47 minutes, record 12th successive series win at home

TAPAN MOHANTA

KOLKATA, Nov 24 (PTI): An untested pink ball was not able to reduce the glaring gulf between the two teams as India bulldozed Bangladesh by an innings and 46 runs in their first ever day-night Test to record their 12th home series win in a row.

With Bangladesh resuming their second innings at 152 for six on day three and trailing India by 89 runs, it was simply a matter of time for the home team to complete formalities.

The Virat Kohli-led side eventually completed the job in less than 50 minutes for their fourth straight innings victory, becoming the first team to achieve the feat.

Barring Mushfiquir Rahim (74), Bangladesh batsmen were once again found wanting against high quality pace bowling, folding up for 195 in 41.1 overs. They were bowled out for 130 on day one.

For the second time in the series, the match finished well inside three days. India had hammered Bangladesh by an innings and 130 runs in the series-opener in Indore.

With the resounding win, India also extended their lead in the World Test Championship by collecting 120 points from the two-match series, taking their overall tally to 360 from seven games.

“Only your belief can make you win. With the way these guys (pacers) are bowling now, they can pick up wickets anywhere. Even the spinners. These guys are very hungry and I feel we are in the right kind of space and everyone is enjoying playing in this team,” said Kohli at the post-match presentation.

Resuming on 59 with the team’s score of 152/6, Mushfiquir batted in aggressive fashion, smashing Ishant Sharma and Ravindra Jadeja for two boundaries each in their respective overs.

Umesh Yadav brought an end to Mushfiquir’s innings when he mistimed a hit, which was taken easily by Ravindra Jadeja. Mushfiquir’s valiant innings had 16 boundaries in it.

Retired hurt on 39, Mahamudllah did not come to bat as India sealed the victory in style with Yadav (5/53) having Al-Amin Hossain caught behind.

Yadav finished with a match haul of 8/81, while Shami had a terrorising effect despite taking just 2/36 in the first innings.

Ishant looked unplayable with his in-swing and the legcutter-like delivery that he finished with a match haul of 9/78 wickets including 4/56 in the second innings.

Eden Gardens played the perfect host for the historic game with packed crowds on all three days bringing back memories of the times when Test cricket was more popular. However, the lack of competition on the field was nowhere close to the hype surrounding the game.

Deontay Wilder blasts Ortiz to defend title, then confirms Tyson Fury rematch

LAS VEGAS, 24 Nov [AP]: One rematch down, one to go for Deontay Wilder. Wilder landed a vicious right hand to stop Luis Ortiz in the seventh round Saturday night to retain his heavyweight title and set up a lucrative rematch with Tyson Fury in February.

Wilder’s punch came out of nowhere in a fight he had done little in up until that time. It landed flush on the face of Ortiz, who crumpled to the canvas and was unable to get up at the count of 10.

The sudden ending came after a lackluster first six rounds in which Wilder did little. But the devastating power that has gotten him knockouts in all but two of his fights came through again.

“I finally found my measurement and I took the shot,” Wilder said. “I had to play around with him. I had to calculate certain moves.”

The fight was a rematch of a bout last year when Wilder stopped Ortiz on the 10th round. It



set up a 23 February fight against Fury that has already been signed.

Wilder fought cautiously for the first six rounds, finding himself in the hole on the cards of the three ringside judges. Two gave him just one of the six, while a third gave him two rounds. The Associated Press had Ortiz pitching a shutout.

Wilder began to pick up the pace in the seventh round, then caught Ortiz with the right hand that brought the fight to an end at 2:51 of the round.

“My intellect is very high in the ring and no one gives me credit,” Wilder said. “I think I buzzed him with a left hook earlier in the round and I took it from there.”

Ortiz (31-2) didn’t protest the ending, but said he thought he beat the count.

“I was clear headed when I hit the canvas,” he said. “When I heard the referee say seven I was trying to get up but I guess the count went a little quicker than I thought.”

Wilder (42-0-1, 41

knockouts) displayed the massive power that has made him a force in the heavyweight division, but won no style points in winning the fight. He did little until the big punch that ended the fight, wary of the power that Ortiz showed when he hurt him in their first fight in March 2018.

Wilder made at least \$3m for the fight, but figures to make much more when he and Fury meet in a rematch of their fight a year ago that ended in a disputed draw. His win helped

clarify the top of the heavyweight division, though, which will be sorted out further when Anthony Joshua and Andy Ruiz Jr meet on 7 December in their title rematch in Saudi Arabia.

“Next we have Tyson Fury in the rematch,” Wilder said. “Then I want unification. I want one champion, one face and one heavyweight champion – Deontay Wilder.”

Wilder said before the fight that he would end it with a knockout, and he was a 4-1 favorite going in. Oddsmakers had made the over/under for the fight at seven full rounds, and Wilder’s right hand made winners of the under with just nine seconds to spare.

The 40-year-old Ortiz, who left Cuba to pursue a pro career, seemed to baffle Wilder with his southpaw style. He was also able to get off combinations quickly when Wilder punched first.

“Ortiz is one of the best in the world,” Wilder said. “You have to give him that.”

Gareth Bale cameo wins back some hearts as Real Madrid come out on top

SID LOWE

MADRID, 24 Nov

[THEGUARDIAN]: Gareth Bale came on, got whistled and helped make a goal, in that order. There was no forgiveness, although some of the anger slowly subsided, but there was football – and that is something.

The Welshman made his first appearance for Real Madrid for seven weeks, five days after provoking fury by celebrating his country’s qualification for Euro 2020 behind a banner that read “Wales. Golf. Madrid. In that order”, and did so with a reminder that he still has a part to play. He might prefer golf, as the joke goes, but he’s better at football.

Introduced with just over 20 minutes to go, Bale helped create the third goal and finally secure victory for Real Madrid. He came on to whistles and they continued with every touch, albeit with ever decreasing intensity. Eventually, there was even some applause, as he almost scored a late fourth at the end of an enjoyable game that keeps Madrid level at the top of La Liga.

Real Sociedad were a goal up inside two minutes, and it was a gift.



Sergio Ramos turned and, blind, played the ball back towards Thibaut Courtois. Instead of it reaching the goalkeeper, it found Willian José, lurking by the six-yard box, and he stepped past Courtois and scored.

In those opening minutes, the best Real Madrid player on the field was Martin Odegaard – on loan to the visitors – and he had a wonderful opportunity to put his side 2-0 up but for once his touch was poor, although his scuffed shot did find Willian José who should have scored from close range. It was also Odegaard who then drew a sharp save from Courtois after another slick

move from deep.

But the home side grew, and took a step up. Fede Valverde has given a dynamism to Madrid’s midfield that it badly needed and he helped pull them back into this match. Luka Modric ended up playing a part in all three Madrid goals before being withdrawn to an ovation. And then there was Eden Hazard, in shape now, starting to look like the man Madrid signed.

On 36 minutes a curled free-kick from the right, delivered by Modric, found Karim Benzema, who scored – with his chest. And if Sociedad had led within two minutes of the start of the

first half, Madrid were just as quick in the second. Modric controlled a difficult ball, falling from high, and dropped it off for Valverde, whose shot deflected off Mikel Oyarzabal, changed direction and flew into the net. Madrid had the lead, but this was not over yet.

At one end, Rodrigo’s weak header failed to trouble Álex Remiro; at the other, neither did Odegaard’s shot worry Courtois. From the position he was in, alone by the penalty spot, and given how well he was playing, it should have done.

Next, Hazard shot into Remiro’s arms. Then Willian José failed to get a good connection

barely six yards out. At that very same moment, Bale was heading to the touchline, ready to come on. The Bernabéu whistled long and loud. The referee, meanwhile, did not when, just then, Odegaard appealed for a penalty after Ramos handled.

Bale came on. The overwhelming majority let their feelings be known. His first touch was whistled, his second even more loudly. And they whistled him again when he escaped up the right and looped a cross to the far post for Benzema to head down for Modric to score the third. As Benzema and Modric celebrated, Valverde and Casemiro headed to Bale, embraced him and brought him across to join the rest.

With every touch now, the whistles were quieter. Adnan Januzaj escaped Ramos and hit the side-netting before Courtois made a superb save from Alexander Isak, but this game was won. For Bale, though, there was time for more. He flashed a ball across the six-yard box with five minutes to go and then almost scored in the very last minute, drawing applause. It was timid, but it was a start.



the middle.

Most teams might have fallen back a little out of respect, cut out some of the adventurous stuff in favour of keeping a few more men behind the halfway line. But the thing about Frank Lampard’s Chelsea is that

they are equally capable of such rapier thrusts and they know it. So when Mahrez rather dozily lost the ball a few minutes later Emerson and Tammy Abraham moved it swiftly across to the right, where Willian was charging into the area. His shot, too, was narrowly wide and City had also been warned.

Perhaps the home side did not pay sufficient heed quickly enough. When Willian drove a perfectly weighted crossfield pass from right to left City’s newly restored right-back João Cancelo, one of five changes Pep Guardiola made after the defeat at Anfield, was

Jamie Vardy orchestrates commanding win for Leicester at Brighton

PAUL DOYLE

BRIGHTON, 24 Nov

[THEGUARDIAN]: Brendan Rodgers insists he is not targeting any particular position in the league but his team are Liverpool’s closest pursuers and show no sign of relenting. This was their fifth win in a row and they fully deserved it.

“We’re not shying away from anything but it’s only 13 games in,” replied Rodgers when asked whether his side could bridge the gap to the league leaders. “I’m happy [to be asked the question] so long as you’re still asking it in April.”

This win may not be as eye-catching as their last one on the south coast – it would have been some going to surpass that 9-0 at Southampton – but it was deeply impressive in a different way. Here Rodgers’ team had to show a broader range of qualities, with patience and defensive diligence allied to multifarious attacking. Jamie Vardy, almost inevitably, was at the forefront of the attacks, creating the breakthrough goal for Ayoze Pérez before completing the victory by netting from a penalty.

Rodgers named the same starting lineup for the fifth match in a row and his team began with the conviction of a side who knew they had the wherewithal to plunder a fifth straight win. Graham Potter has introduced a more enterprising style of play at Brighton but for the first 20 minutes here they were forced to play as if managed by Chris Hughton in particularly pessimistic mood, with nearly every player retreating behind the ball as the visitors hogged possession from the start.

It was not sterile possession, Leicester creating so many early chances that they should have been ahead before Brighton got going. Leicester probed from all angles but the inquisition was particularly challenging from the left, where Ben Chilwell and Harvey Barnes wrought havoc. Less than two minutes had elapsed when Barnes sent over a cross that Solly March let bounce, only for Pérez to nip in and head the ball against

the upright from five yards.

One minute later Barnes fired over after a short corner. Vardy tested the goalkeeper again in the seventh minute, this time with a glancing header from a free-kick by Chilwell. The goalkeeper pushed it over the bar.

Barnes’s finishing was not of the same calibre as the rest of his play. In the 28th minute he had an effort deflected wide after good work by Pérez and four minutes later he drilled a shot wide after a pull-back by Vardy.

As the half wore on Brighton got more to grips with their opponents and began to worry them at the other end, where Caglar Soyuncu was imperious – except in the 41st minute, when Shane Duffy was somehow allowed to meet an Aaron Mooy corner. From five yards out Duffy, normally so reliable, nodded over.

Vardy almost made Brighton pay immediately, haring after a through ball from Maddison and clipping it over the keeper at the edge of the box but his shot was off-target.

Brighton began the second half better, Leandro Trossard banging a shot inches over the bar. As the hosts pushed their vulnerability to counterattacks increased. Leicester are lethal from those and Vardy’s menace remains undimmed. Three times he was sent racing through and each time he unselfishly teed up his teammates. Pérez and Maddison missed two of those chances but in the 64th minute Pérez made no mistake, sweeping into the net from close range after Vardy’s fine service.

A slight shunt from Adam Webster sent the substitute Demarai Gray to the ground in the box with 10 minutes left. Mat Ryan made a terrific save from Vardy’s penalty but Maddison headed in the rebound, only for the referee to order a retake after VAR found encroachment. This time Ryan dived the other way but Vardy stuck to his preferred side to complete an authoritative win.

Manchester City leave Chelsea with duelling scars after high-class hoot

PAUL WILSON

MANCHESTER, 24 Nov

[THEGUARDIAN]: There was a great deal of swash and buckle in this game. Encounters between top-four sides are often dull, cautious affairs but Chelsea and Manchester City at the moment could not be boring if they tried.

True, there were enough defensive mistakes to drive both managers mad and remind everyone they were not necessarily watching the most refined level of football but in terms of entertainment the evening was a high-class hoot. Each side knew they were capable of

hurting the other and took it in turn to launch precision strikes of increasing audacity so that long before the end both defences were left with the footballing equivalent of duelling scars.

It was great to watch – exactly what one might expect with so much attacking quality on show – and the pick of an attractive bunch might just have been the man who missed City’s defeat by Liverpool, Riyad Mahrez. Quite possibly playing only because Bernardo Silva was suspended, Mahrez took on the Chelsea defence directly to put City in front and al-

most repeated the trick early in the second half.

Just four minutes of an absorbing contest had elapsed when Fernandinho looked up with the ball at his feet in his own half and threaded a pass right through to Sergio Agüero just outside the penalty area. The striker had dropped short because he knew Kevin De Bruyne was about to run beyond him and with a first-time pass he played the midfielder clear on goal. De Bruyne’s shot rolled just wide of an upright but it was a warning to Chelsea: out of nothing two smart passes had opened them up through

hind in their last game. This time they managed to retrieve the situation before half-time. De Bruyne deserved a lot of credit for the equaliser because he started the move on the halfway line before finishing it from the edge of the area, though Chelsea will feel aggrieved that not one but two deflections allowed their opponents to get back on terms.

Mahrez’s goal to put his side in front was much more like it, the winger taking on and beating Kovacic and Emerson with a diagonal run into the area before slotting a shot past Kepa Arrizabalaga.

Fortunate to get accepted by audience: Vidyut Jammwal

MUMBAI, Nov 24 (PTI): Actor Vidyut Jammwal says he is happy people recognise him as 'Commando' and believes acceptance from the audience is the best thing an outsider like him can ask for.

Vidyut established himself as the next generation action hero with 2013 action drama "Commando", which grew to become a franchise. The second installment came in 2017 and now he is gearing up for the third chapter, to be released on November 29.

The actor, who made his debut with 2011 Telugu film "Shakti", entered Bollywood the same year -- as an antagonist in "Force", featuring John Abraham in the lead.

"Commando" was my first film as a hero and I have been fortunate my character received so much love from the audience. It's rare for an actor's first film to go on to become a franchise. Even today when I step out, I am referred to as 'Commando' by people. That is special to me," Vidyut, 38, told PTI in an interview.

He has since straddled Telugu, Tamil and Hindi films, including "Baadshaho" and "Jungle".

"For an outsider, the most important thing is that the audience should love you. I have worked very hard and I am glad the audience has got me back to the theatres. I feel blessed there are people who watch my films, love and respect me, feel inspired by me."

In the first "Commando" film, Vidyut's title character, Karan Singh Dogra fought for love, while in the second one, his fight was against corruption and black money.

The latest installment is about saving the country.

"There is intel that an attack is being planned that will cause huge devastation and the task at hand is to stop and neutralise the treat," the actor said.

Post "Commando 3", Vidyut will be seen in "Khuda Hafiz", which is based on true events.

Seven of top-10 cos lose Rs 76,164 cr in m-cap; TCS worst hit

NEW DELHI, Nov 24 (PTI): Seven of the 10 most valued domestic firms suffered a combined erosion of Rs 76,164.3 crore in market capitalisation last week, with TCS taking the biggest knock.

From the top-10 pack, only Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), HDFC and SBI witnessed gains in their market valuation for the week ended Friday.

The market capitalisation (m-cap) of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) dropped Rs 39,118.6 crore to Rs 7,76,950.02 crore.

Kotak Mahindra Bank's valuation tumbled Rs 10,410.2 crore to Rs 2,99,602.51 crore and that of Infosys tanked Rs 7,174.59 crore to reach Rs 2,95,174.92 crore.

How street protests across Middle East threaten Iran's power

MARTIN CHULOV LONDON, 24 Nov [THEGUARDIAN]: Turmoil in Baghdad, paralysis in Beirut and flames of unrest in Tehran; it has been a bad few months for Iran at home and elsewhere in the Middle East, where more than a decade of advances are being slowed, not by manoeuvrings on battlefields or legislatures – but the force of protest movements.

Early last week, Iran went dark for four days by closing its internet connections down. Even for the country's autocratic leadership, this was a drastic step. But such are the stakes for a regime that is increasingly facing obstacles across its hubs of Shia influence. And those who laud Iran's rise, as well as those who fear it, sense it is at a loss over how to respond.

The reaction to relentless anti-government protests in Iraq, which along with Lebanon is essential to Iran's foreign projection, has so far been straight from a well-worn playbook. The initial weeks of the popular uprising were met with placatory speeches from Iraqi leaders, and a passive stance from security forces. But that changed in late-October and, since then, more than 300 people have been killed and thousands wounded as Iraq's leaders – directed by Iran's generals have changed tack.

Gone is any notion of

compromise. Instead, the din of bullets, grenades and sirens have become a soundtrack to demonstrations in Baghdad demanding the overthrow of the entire political system. While the protests are aimed at domestic issues – the insatiable graft of its leaders and widespread lack of opportunities for the young central to them – the post-Saddam years have seen Iran embed itself in nearly all aspects of Iraqi governance.

Its role as overlord has also raised the protesters' ire – just as it has in Lebanon, where Iran's most important arm of its foreign policy projection, Hezbollah, plays a dominant role in the country's affairs.

Since the US-led invasion that ousted the Iraqi leader and especially since the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq in 2011, Iran had methodically consolidated itself in both countries. The war in Syria gave its regional gains even more impetus, as did the war against Isis, which allowed its proxy forces to establish footholds in the plains of western Iraq and eastern Syria as they helped defeat the terror group.

As Isis crumbled from late 2015, each area became a platform for a regional project that would finally allow Iran to fulfil long-held ambitions to consolidate a presence on the shores of the Mediterranean and



the northern frontier of Israel. Iran took a stake in the Syrian port of Latakia, established a foothold on the Syrian Golan Heights, and an overland supply line from Tehran through the ruins of Iraq and Syria and onwards to Lebanon.

Friend and foe alike saw the developments as a priceless strategic gain for Iran's projection towards Israel and influence in the Arab world. Proxies in Baghdad and Beirut were not shy in touting what the land corridor meant for Iran's ambitions. "This has established a historical presence for the Islamic Republic on Arab soil that will change the course of the region," a senior member of the Iraqi militia, Asa'ib ahl al-Haq, told the Observer in late August. "The Zionists know this, and they fear it."

Regional intelligence officials and Iraqi militia leaders say the overland route itself is a mishmash of roads along

the Iraqi/Syrian border, where a firm road is yet to be carved. Israeli airstrikes in the area have proven disruptive as have the chaotic departure – then re-arrival – of US troops, and the still simmering presence of Isis. Beyond the border area though, the paths to Damascus and west to Beirut, or northwest to Latakia are less problematic. "It becomes harder to monitor where things go from there," said an official in Baghdad.

Over the past eight years, western diplomats have continually wrestled with what the unravelling of Syria meant for Iran, and for Hezbollah, which has played a prominent role in stabilising Bashar al-Assad since early 2013. Under the direction of Major General Qassem Suleimani, of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, Hezbollah and Shia militia proxies from Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan swung the war in Assad's favour, strengthening Iran's arc

of influence. By earlier this year, Iran held a whip hand in four capitals outside Tehran, and was building even further momentum.

But Donald Trump's decision earlier this year to overturn the nuclear agreement, the signature foreign policy deal of Barack Obama, and reimpose even tougher sanctions on Tehran marked a seminal moment. The sanctions regime amounted to an economic war, which many on the Iranian street railed against as a grave injustice imposed by a capricious foe who only several years earlier had wanted to do business.

With Iran's economy now withering, some Iranians having revolted at a fuel price hike. And with its sources of projected influence under pressure elsewhere, Iran's leaders are facing a reckoning, perhaps like no other in the post-Saddam period. Its gains, for now, remain secure.

"I'd say that Iran

has undoubtedly used the chaos in Syria to strengthen its control over the strategic routes leading to Lebanon," said one western diplomat. Syria has allowed Iran to make enormous progress in terms of military capacity transfers. For Hezbollah Syria has become a sort of backstage storage for sensitive military equipment.

Sir John Jenkins, one of Britain's longest-serving regional ambassadors, who led missions in Baghdad, Riyadh, Damascus, and East Jerusalem, said: "There was a time when Iranian pretensions to defend the oppressed and punish the corrupt resonated more widely in the region. But what is left is only a distant, fading echo of this – as many Shia scholars warned would happen. We see the consequences in the reactions of Iraqi, Lebanese and now Iranian Shia protesters who are tired of being instrumentalised and want a better life now not in some Khomeinist paradise.

Iran can impose its will now only by massive violence. That might still work for the moment. And the regime has revolution-proofed itself by the construction of an interlocking system of praetorian guards. But the community of true believers is shrinking. Just look at religious observance inside Iran. It's collapsed. And any real moral authority that the

revolution might once have had is gone.

"Syria was a massive turning point. Iraq is another now. And we're beginning to see protesters talk to each other across national boundaries. It's a process of erosion. The last true believers are probably those on the European left who think Iran is a bastion against US neo-liberal oriental-

ist-inflected neo-colonialism. That says it all. "Iran has become normalised – just another repressive Middle Eastern state ruled by greedy self-serving elites who can't even imagine let alone countenance what peaceful political evolution would look like."

In Lebanon, where a broad sectarian movement has taken to the streets as the country's economy collapses around them, the narrative that the government and its patrons abroad supports their aspirations has broken. Under grave pressure too is a political system that has sustained a weak state, now exposed as untenable. In Beirut and Baghdad, protesters appear to have crossed a point of no return; they have more to lose by leaving the streets than they do by staying there.

The western diplomat said: "This is something Iran has never faced before. How it responds will determine whether its achievements survive."

At Trump impeachment hearings, 'American Dream' looms large

WASHINGTON, Nov 24 (AFP): As impeachment hearings play out in Washington, high-level officials, many of them immigrants or children of immigrants, who have testified before Congress are being forced to defend their loyalty to the United States.

Ukrainian-born Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Vindman, a National Security Council expert, rebuffed attacks by proudly stating at the proceedings: "The uniform I wear today is that of the United States Army." Like many of his peers who have testified, he embodies the "American Dream," as an immigrant who rose to the top.

Having displayed exemplary service to their country, they boast of patriotic gratitude for the United States, which

gave them opportunity -- and for some, refuge from oppression.

But that attitude has given them little cover from attack as they participate in the impeachment investigation against Donald Trump, spurred by a phone call in which he asked Ukraine to investigate one of his potential 2020 presidential election opponents.

Vindman, whose family fled anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union to New York when he was just three, has been subject to sharp criticism from the president and his allies.

As a respected member of the White House National Security Council, he testified before the House Intelligence Committee on Tuesday wearing his dress blue uniform displaying his

combat infantry badge, campaign ribbons and a Purple Heart received for wounds suffered by a roadside bomb in Iraq.

Following his testimony, which touched on the pressure the president's cohorts had placed on Kiev, Trump cast doubts on his allegiance.

One guest commentator on the conservative TV channel Fox News even accused him of being a spy for Ukraine.

During the hearing, an attorney for the House Republicans questioned him at length about the fact that a Ukrainian official had offered him the position of minister of defense in Kiev. Vindman explained that he never knew if the offer was serious and immediately declined.

Repeating multiple times that he is an Amer-

ican, he told the Intelligence Committee that "as a young man I decided I wanted to spend my life serving the nation that gave my family refuge from authoritarian oppression."

Two day later, former national security council expert Fiona Hill, who was Vindman's superior, echoed the same message.

Almost "everyone immigrated to the United States at some point in their family history. And this is for me what really makes America great," said Hill who was born in England and became an American "by choice" in 2002.

"This country has offered me opportunities I never would have had in England. I grew up poor with a very distinctive working-class accent. In England in the 1980s

and 1990s, this would have impeded my professional advancement," she said.

She herself has been described by far-right detractors as a "globalist" and "mole" of George Soros, the billionaire philanthropist who is often the subject of anti-Semitic campaigns.

Hill joked about the matter but said she was furious that the former ambassador to Kiev, Marie Yovanovitch, who was born in Canada to parents who fled the Soviet and Nazi regimes, suffered such attacks.

Yovanovitch was called back to the United States in May, after a smear campaign orchestrated by Donald Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani. Her absence, Democrats say, gave Trump and his allies freer rein in the

country.

Less than an hour into the hearing, the president erupted spectacularly on Twitter with an attack on the highly regarded former envoy.

Asked what effect Trump's tweet might have on her and other witnesses, Yovanovitch appeared unnerved.

"It's very intimidating," she told the panel, after also speaking of her "gratitude for all that this country has given my family and me." US ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland, whose parents fled Nazi Germany first to Uruguay and then to Seattle in the United States, grew up in a family that he said "was eager for freedom and hungry for opportunity."

In an editorial Will

Bunch of the Philadelphia Inquirer called out what he said was a "subliminal theme" running through the proceedings: that immigrants fleeing oppression "became zealous defenders - only to see a dangerous demagogue threaten to drag their country into a muck."

Adam Schiff, chairman of the Democratic-controlled House committee conducting the impeachment inquiry, said that "the few immigrant stories we've heard just in the course of these hearings are among the most powerful I think I've ever heard."

"You and Colonel Vindman and others are the best of this country and you came here by choice and we are so blessed that you did," he told Hill.

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VIDEO NEWS SECTION

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EFFORTLESSLY ELEGANT: Miami looks good on Pete Davidson and Kaia Gerber, who have been putting their blossoming romance on full display during their romantic getaway. After enjoying a beach-filled day and packing on the PDA for onlookers, the dynamic duo got dolled up on Saturday evening to attend a friend’s wedding

In Bollywood, if you’ve talent and work without ego, you’re in for a long haul: Richa

MUMBAI, NOV 24 (PTI): In her more than a decade long career in Bollywood, Richa Chadha has realised that one can’t afford to lose the hunger of doing better work, because the only way to keep going forward in the industry is to remain grounded and keep aside ego. Though “Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!” in 2008 marked her first on-screen appearance, it was four years later with “Gangs of Wasseypur” where Richa emerged as a breakout star. Over the years, the actor keeps close to her what she has learnt from the industry: to never be complacent. “Bollywood has taught me that if you have talent and are ready to work without massive ego, complications, if you can keep sane and keep working, then you’re in it for

a long haul,” Richa told PTI in an interview. “I’m very inspired by people like Ranveer Singh who, in his mega-stardom, still goes out and works as hard as he did in his first. That hunger to do better shouldn’t ever die. The minute someone gets complacent it reflects,” she adds. Being a part of the film industry gives one an opportunity to interact with the masses through one’s work, but what being a movie actor also does is to completely strip off anonymity from the person, something which Richa grapples with. “There was a certain mystery and enigma to stars earlier. Now, even if you go to grab a coffee, there will be people waiting to click your picture. That mystique is gone. I just want to act and don’t like this

loss of anonymity. I just don’t. I think it’s a relatable concern. “What if one just wants to be an actor? I know I’m not alone in feeling this way... I don’t enjoy this loss of anonymity that’s why I keep to myself. I have a huge rich social life which is full of people from outside,” she adds. Which is why the actor almost always gravitates to parts which aren’t like her. This was one of the prime reasons why she took up the part of Zarina Malik in “Inside Edge”, where she plays an actor, a “typical star”, who loves fame, attention and the spotlight of the industry. “I love playing her because I’m not like that. I love peeping into an actor who can be insecure, ambitious, peeping into that mindspace of how it must be because I’m so far from it in real life.

Billie Eilish Has Something to Say to the “Grown Men” That Booed Her After Appearing on Jimmy Kimmel

Billie Eilish isn’t here for grown men acting childish.

Earlier this week the 17-year-old breakthrough artist made an appearance on Jimmy Kimmel Live and opened up about dealing with fame at such a young age, being nominated for several Grammys (and breaking records doing so), performing at the 2019 American Music Awards (where she’ll perform for the first at an award show) and on why she’s looking forward to turning the big 1-8. While her interview with Jimmy Kimmel went smoothly, the same could not be said for what happened after her appearance. On Saturday morning, the “Bad Guy” singer took to Instagram to give a piece of her mind to the “grown men that booed me and called me a ‘little bitch’” after she left JKL. After she left the studio, Eilish said she was swarmed by a group of paparazzi who booed her after she refused to take photos and sign autographs. It was all caught in a video that has been shared online—but there are always two sides to a story. “The only reason I’m making this video is that I saw a video of this all happening and I just wanted to clarify what actually happened... because if you watch the video it looks like I’m walking by a bunch of fans and completely ignoring them and not saying ‘Hi’ to them, which is not what happened,” the Highland Park native clarified via an Instagram Story. Further, she explained that there were two different groups of people waiting for her to take pictures, sign autographs and meet the singer. She went on to specify that one group of people were mainly fans but the other was paparazzi and what she refers to as “eBay-ers.” What are “eBay-ers,” you ask? According to Eilish, they’re people who wait outside after appearances like these to get her autograph but aren’t really fans, rather they just go on and sell her autograph’s online after the fact. The singer went on to explain that because of people like this, she’s now enforced a no-signing autographs policy that her fans respect and that she’d much rather “get a hug and talk” with her fans than have them sell her autographs online.



But after greeting the group that was mainly made up of fans, she walked over to the group that was mainly “eBay-ers” and paparazzi. No one in that group, however, wanted to really interact with her so she walked away. “I started to walk away because I realized none of these people actually cared about anything that had to do with me as a person,” Eilish said on Instagram. “I walked over there only to say Hi, only to hug people and I got pictures of me shoved into my f--king face. I got no love whatsoever, so I left and then I got booed and [got] called a little b-tch and got told I was going to lose my Grammy nominations.” That’s clearly no way to treat a person and Eilish had some strong words for those that disrespected her after her JKL appearance. “The fact that people can switch up like that... damn,” Eilish continued. “They wait outside for you and then immediately they don’t get what they want and they boo you and f-cking curse at you. I’m like, ‘Bro, I’m 17.” While she didn’t let her emotions get the best of her, she said she “turned around ready to f-cking pounce.” But ultimately, she gets the last word. “To the grown men that booed me and called me a ‘little b-tch,’ I hope the best for you. I hope you find someone else that you use to make money off of and belittle,” Eilish added. “All the best. Love you paparazzi.”

Tyler Cameron Reportedly Packed on the PDA With Kylie Jenner’s BFF Anastasia Karanikolaou

Is The Bachelorette’s Tyler Cameron ready to hand out a rose to a new love interest? The reality TV personality was spotted getting flirty with Anastasia Karanikolaou (aka Stassie Baby) on Friday night at the West Hollywood nightclub, Hyde. If Stassie’s name sounds a bit familiar, it’s because she happens to be Kylie Jenner’s best friend. In fact, the two gal pals attended the Los Angeles Clippers game earlier in the evening. And while it’s unclear if the Keeping Up With the Kardashians star joined Stassie at Hyde after the basketball game, a source tells E! News the 22-year-old influencer hit it off with The Bachelorette alum, who also happened to be at the same sporting event. “Stassie and Tyler met up at the Clippers game last night and were hanging out for a bit,” the insider shared. “They had met in passing before at a few events in LA, but this was the first time they truly hung out and vibed with one another.” According to the source, the duo decided to “keep the night going” after the game so they headed to the popular nightclub afterwards. “Stassie arrived with her friend Kelsey and met Tyler inside. They were at the same table at the club and several bottles of Don Julio 1942 tequila and champagne were brought out,” the insider dished. “Tyler and Stassie were dancing together to hip-hop music and we’re showing a lot of PDA.” The insider continued, “He was holding her. They were whispering in each other’s ears and talking the entire night. It was very apparent they were into each other. Tyler leaned in and kissed her neck at one point, and also definitely kissed her cheek in public.”

Won’t happen again: Sam Hunt after DUI arrest



LOS ANGELES, NOV 24 (PTI): Singer Sam Hunt has apologised to his fans in the wake of his arrest in Nashville on charges of driving under the influence. The singer took to Twitter on Saturday to post his apology. “Wednesday night I decided to drive myself home after drinking at a friend’s show in downtown Nashville. It was a poor and selfish decision and I apologize to everyone who was unknowingly put at risk and let down by it. It won’t happen again,” he wrote. Hunt, 34, was taken into custody on Thursday and the charges against him also included possession of an open container, according to Variety. The police said that the singer’s vehicle was swerving in and out of his lane and travelling the wrong way down the northbound lanes of Ellington Parkway. When officers stopped him, he reportedly had bloodshot eyes, smelled of alcohol and had two empty cans of beer in the passenger seat. According to the arrest warrant, Hunt’s blood alcohol content was .173. The legal limit in Tennessee is .08.

ARIES: The future is promising, Aries. Trust. What the Universe is offering right now: a giant cup of blessings that are helping you align with the life you want to create for yourself. Let love continue to be the secret ingredient, wild one. An ingredient that fills you with joy and motivation every time you feel like you’re losing the plot. Tip: Be cognisant of the opportunities being offered to you. **TAURUS:** The Universe is offering you the gifts of financial security, stability and steady growth. Dependability is a super power, one that is making you alluring to the right kind of opportunities. Teach your inner bull when to stay still and when to take charge. Tip: You are experiencing steady growth. **GEMINI:** What was once the centre of your Universe, may now seem lacklustre. The storm has served its purpose,

Gemini. The path has been cleared for you to make a fresh start. In order to walk down this road, you must leave the past behind. Internalise the lessons being taught to you. Continue to act from a space of higher wisdom rather than fear. Tip: A new pathway is opening up for you. **CANCER:** If not now, then when? The air is rife with opportunities that will help manifest your dreams into your reality. Be creative, Cancer. Give yourself permission to visualise. Being cognisant of what is being offered to you will help you act in time. Tip: The time to manifest your best life is now. **LEO:** What a wonderful feeling to be in alignment, Leo. You are exactly where you need to be, and doing exactly what you are meant to do. The Universe is rewarding for the work you have put in. Keep an eye out for the big, fat pay-

check you deserve. Remember, this is your chance to up the money game. Tip: Trust that you will be rewarded fairly for your efforts. **VIRGO:** This week finds you exactly where you belong—on the top of your game. Expect many breakthrough moments, but don’t get complacent about your long-term goals. You are in charge of manifesting those larger-than-life ideas in your reality. Tip: This is the week to manifest those larger-than-life ideas in your reality. **LIBRA:** Take a step back and survey what you have sown. This is a time to review rather than act. Which areas of your life have you been ignoring? What are the dreams that need to be nurtured? Realign with awareness, wild one. This is also a time of gestation for some. Tip: Review your progress and make changes accordingly.

SCORPIO: What are you going to do with all that money in the bank? You have created both wealth and security for yourself. Now is the time to kick back and enjoy the fruits of your labour. Generosity is a virtue, wild one. Be sure to share the abundance with those who helped you get where you are today. Tip: This is a time of financial security. **SAGITTARIUS:** Your current energy brings the case of the great Norse God, Odin, to mind. He hung from the World Tree for nine whole days in order to gain wisdom and understanding. Of course, we are not suggesting you experiment with something as extreme, but you can embrace the delays and look for silver linings. Tip: Find the silver lining. **CAPRICORN:** Oh, the perils of micromanaging! See how and where you need to detach. This will help you focus on what’s really important and put your

best work out. Thinking about expanding the team to take the load off? Tip: Delegate where you need to. **AQUARIUS:** Rest up, Aquarius. Let go of the idea of what productivity looks like. Understand the importance of doing nothing in order to create something. This is the secret to restore mental balance and be the most creative version of yourself. Tip: Understand the importance of doing nothing at all every once in a while. **PISCES:** You know that no great work of art can be created without retreating into ‘shunya’, the womb space, the beginning and end of all creation. This week, you are learning the importance of listening to your inner wisdom and being receptive to the cosmic currents of inspiration. Understanding the balance between ‘doing’ and ‘being’ promises to change your life, Pisces.