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# Summit **T**IMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## State-level Children's Day celebration held at Chintan Bhawan

*Non-Sikkimese women married to Sikkimese to get all rights: CM*

**SAGAR CHETTRI**

**GANGTOK, 14 NOV:**

Sikkim paid rich tribute to the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on his birth anniversary today. Human Resource Development Department organised the State-level Children's Day Celebration to commemorate the 129th birth anniversary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru today here at Chintan Bhawan. The function had Governor Ganga Prasad as the chief guest while Chief Minister Pawan Chamling was present as the guest of honour.

On the occasion, the Governor urged people to commit towards



working for the welfare of children. He said that children are our future and greatness of any country is evaluated by the youth force in it, thus it is our duty to make sure that we create an atmosphere of construc-

tive development.

He mentioned that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had a special connection with Sikkim and also visited the State during his tenure as PM. He added that Raj Bhawan still has

a room by his name.

Speaking to students, the Governor encouraged them to work hard and be disciplined to achieve their desired goals.

He further stated that it is everyone's respon-

sibility to preserve the recognition that the State has got so far.

In his address, the CM stated that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been known as the creator of modern India. All major

democratic and other institutions in education, health and other areas have been started during his tenure as Prime Minister, he added.

He encouraged students to take inspiration from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other great leaders to do great things for the society, the state and the country.

CM stated that everyone works for survival but it is more important to work towards a bigger cause.

Speaking on Sikkim Organic Mission, he stated that scholars and learned persons should do research on organic farming to spread awareness across the world on its benefits for health and environment. Working on innovative ideas makes Nobel laureates, he said further urging students to be research scholars and eventually Nobel laureates.

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## Now a biopic on Bhaichung Bhutia



**MUMBAI, NOV 14 (PTI):**

Anand Kumar, best known for Sanjay Dutt-Vivek Oberoi starrer "Zila Ghaziabad", is working on former India football captain Bhaichung Bhutia's biopic.

Bhutia joins the pantheon of sports personalities such as Milkha Singh, Paan Singh Tomar, Mary Kom, MS Dhoni and Sandeep Singh to be immortalised on celluloid through a biopic.

Kumar has conceptualised the biopic, which will showcase the life of Bhutia. He is currently in the process of finalising

a director and lead actor for the film.

Bhutia is excited about the project and he believes the filmmaker is the right person to honour his journey.

"I am honoured that people feel that my journey is worth capturing for the big screen. I am certain that Anand will do justice to my story.

"I hail from a small town in Sikkim, but playing football for India wasn't my only dream. I always wanted to own a professional football club and I realised that dream

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## 1984 anti-Sikh riots: Delhi court convicts 2 for killings

New Delhi, Nov 14 (PTI): A Delhi court Wednesday convicted two persons for killing two men here during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

Additional Sessions Judge Ajay Pandey held Naresh Sherawat and Yashpal Singh guilty of killing Hardev Singh and Avtar Singh in Mahipalpur area of south Delhi during the riots.

The case was lodged on a complaint filed by Santokh Singh, brother of Hardev Singh.

Delhi police had closed the case in 1994 for want of evidence. However, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) on the riots reopened the case.

The court held both the accused guilty under various sections including 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder), 395 (dacoity) and 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means) of the Indian Penal Code.

Both the convicts were taken into custody after the judgment.

The court is scheduled to hear arguments on the quantum of sentence Thursday where the convicts may get a maximum punishment of death sentence and minimum punishment of life imprisonment.

## Sikkim beats Nagaland to register second Ranji Trophy win

*It's two in two for Sikkim thus far in Ranji Trophy plate division*

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 14 NOV:**

Sikkim today beat Nagaland by nine wickets in the plate division of the ongoing Ranji Trophy. This was Sikkim's second match out of the eight it is scheduled to play in the division. Having already beaten Manipur by an innings and 27 runs, with its latest win, Sikkim is now at the top of the plate division with 13 points.

Sikkim registered its second win playing at Sovima in Nagaland.

It was the partnership of 90 runs between Ashish Thapa and Milind Kumar, 174 runs between Milind Kumar and Bipul Sharma and 50 runs between



Padam Limboo and Milind Kumar in the first innings that helped Sikkim get a good total and put a lead on the scoreboard.

Yesterday, resuming on his overnight score of 78 in team total of 120/5, Milind hit

a stroke-filled 224 from 215 balls (31x4, 3x6) to steer Sikkim to 374 in 82.5 overs.

At the other end, some brilliant bowling by Ishwar Chaudhary, Bipul Sharma, Lee Yong Lepcha and Milind Kumar in both the Innings restricted the

opponents to just 179 runs in first innings and 273 runs in second innings.

In the Second Innings, the partnership between Nilesh Lamichaney and Faizan Khan of 61 runs and of 20 runs between

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## Thekong Munsolong remembered at Singzem hilltop



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA DIKCHU, 14 NOV:**

The commemoration of Munsolong was observed today at Singzem in Lingthem, Upper Dzongu. The government has proposed to install 60 feet tall statue of Munsolong at this hilltop where the foundation stone was laid by the Chief Minister during his visit to Lingthem in April earlier this year.

People from different areas attended the function to pay homage. The event was also attended by Deputy Speaker, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha.

The celebration had the "rumfaat" offering of prayers by Bongthings.

President, Munsolong Celebration Committee, Sonam Tshering Lepcha, on behalf of the public, expressed gratitude towards the CM and the area MLA for undertaking such major development in the area.

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## Trupti Desai says will visit Sabarimala temple on Nov 17; confrontation looms

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/NEW DELHI, NOV 14 (PTI):** Social activist Trupti Desai Wednesday said she would visit the Sabarimala shrine in Kerala along with six other women in the previously banned 10-50 age group on November 17 but it was stoutly opposed by a right wing activist, sparking fears of a fresh confrontation.

Desai, who spearheaded the campaign to allow entry of women to various religious places, including Shani Shingnapur temple, the Haji Ali Dargah, the Mahalakshmi Temple and the Trimbakeshwar Shiva Temple, announced the decision even as the Supreme Court once again

refused to stay its verdict which allowed entry of women of all age groups to the Lord Ayyappa temple in Sabarimala.

Union Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma, meanwhile, called for a "holistic approach" on the Sabarimala issue so that the sentiments of the people were not hurt, observing the Centre would intervene in the matter at the "right time" if required.

Asked by reporters if an ordinance was required to deal with the situation, Sharma said the Kerala government had to decide on the matter.

"The state government has to take a call on that (ordinance) and the central government, if required,

will definitely intervene at the right time," he said in Delhi.

The two-month-long Mandala Makaravillakku pilgrimage season in Sabarimala commences on November 17 and attracts millions of devotees from all over the country.

With no stay being given, it remains to be seen whether girls and women in the menstruating 10-50 age group will be able to enter the shrine after a 6-km arduous trek since attempts by some were foiled by protesters at the base camps in Nilakkal and Pamba when the shrine was opened for 8 days in two spells after the September 28 verdict.

Desai, in an email to Kerala Chief

Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, sought security as she apprehends an attack on her life during her visit to the shrine.

"We will not return to Maharashtra without darshan at the Sabarimala temple", she said adding "we have faith in the government that it will provide security for us."

It is the responsibility of the state government and the police to provide protection and take us to the temple as the supreme court has permitted all women to offer prayers at the shrine, she added.

The Chief Minister's office said they had received the e-mail and it has been sent to the officials concerned. Trupti has also sent a mail to Prime

Minister Narendra Modi to ensure security for her trip to the hill shrine.

Rahul Easwar, President of the Ayyappa Dharma Sena, which is among the organisations protesting against the entry of women of all ages into the shrine, said Ayyappa devotees would resist through 'Gandhian means', any attempt by Desai and her group to trek the holy shrine and offer prayers.

"We will lie down on the floor. We will protest and at all costs prevent them from offering prayers at the shrine", he said in Thiruvananthapuram.

The temple had witnessed a string of protests from the main

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# Joinings and meetings keep SKM busy

## SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 Nov:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha kept a busy day today receiving crossovers from SDF in West and South districts and holding meetings and outreach programmes in North Sikkim.

An SKM press release announces that Som Kumar Khewa and Dhan Hang Khewa left SDF and joined to SKM from Kolbotey ward, Tharpu GPU under Soreng Chakung constituency of West Sikkim. The release points out that the two are related to the HRDD Minister.

In South Sikkim, SDF CEC member DB Rai joined the SKM in the presence of CLC execu-



tive of Namthang Rataypani, the release adds.

Meanwhile, a door-to-door campaign in Dzongu saw SKM workers visit Rakal ward under

Mangshila-Tibuk GPU, North Sikkim.

Meanwhile, the women's wing of Daramdin constituency organised a constituency-level meet-

ing at the party office at Sombaria. The agenda included discussions on the upcoming Naari convention of the party scheduled to be held in the third

week of December.

At Namthang-Rataypani constituency, a ward-level committee was formed for Lower Nagi Ward this afternoon.

## UNESCO-MGIEP holds High Level Policy Forum on Guidelines for Digital Learning



GANGTOK, 14 NOV [IPR]: UNESCO-Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) organized a High Level Policy Forum (HLPF) at Vishakhapatnam on 14 Nov 2018.

Ministers and representatives of the governments of Canada, India, Malaysia, Egypt, Bangladesh, Bhutan,

Granada, Ghana, and Senegal along with industry representatives from Samsung, Microsoft, HP, Adobe etc participated in the discussions on evolving guidelines for Digital Learning for adoption at the Transforming Education for Humanity Conference.

Additional Chief Secretary, HRDD, GP Upadhyaya, was invited to attend both the High Level Policy Forum

and Conference by MGIEP in view of the project undertaken by Sikkim to embed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the Primary School Text Books and high emphasis on ICT by the State.

The meeting adopted the Vizag Declaration which will be presented to the 40th session of UNESCO general conference in 2019.

## Now a biopic on...

with United Sikkim (his football club)," Bhutia said in a statement here.

He will be involved in all the creative aspects of the film, the footballer-turned-politician said.

"I want the biopic to be as close to reality as possible. I was concerned about the writing process, but the moment I learnt that Anand has got Prashant Pandey (writer of 'Sarkar', 'Poorna' and 'Raid') on board, I was relieved," Bhutia said.

Kumar said the idea of making a film on football struck him during 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

"During the World Cup, I noticed that there has been a change in the sporting passion in India because a large section of India's youth is now inclined towards football.

"Young kids like the sport more than cricket. That's why I wanted to make a film on football," the director said.

He added Bhutia's story makes for a compelling film.

"He has won the Padma Shri and has been a role model for many young Indians, who follow the game of football," Kumar said.

Besides Bhutia, biopics on sports legends such as PT Usha, Mithali Raj, Saina Nehwal, PV Sindhu, Jhulan Goswami, Baloo Palvankar, Abhinav Bindra and Pulela Gopichand are also in the works.

## Trupti Desai says will...

Opposition Congress, the BJP, RSS and right wing outfits against the CPI(M)-led LDF government's decision to implement the apex court verdict, lifting the centuries-old ban on the entry of women in the 10-50 age group.

The shrine had been opened for four days in October and two days this month for the monthly pujas when the protests were held.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi asked a lawyer, who on Wednesday sought stay on the court's Sabarimala verdict, to wait till January 22 when the Constitution bench will hear review petitions.

The matter was mentioned by lawyer Mathews J Nedumpara, who has filed the review on behalf of the National Ayyappa Devotees (Women's) Association.

The apex court on Tuesday declined a similar plea while agreeing to hear in open court a batch of petitions seeking review of its verdict.

The top court has fixed January 22 to hear all the review petitions.

## State-level Children's Day...

Talking about the administration, he said that it should be democratic and not personalized. Welfare schemes such as compassionate appointments, old age pensions, free medical facilities to BPL and APL people should be done at the Department level and should not require recommendation of the Chief Minister since it creates a lot of hassle for the common people.

He also announced that non-Sikkimese women married to Sikkimese men will get all the rights of a bonafide Sikkimese. He said that in Sikkim all men and women are treated equally and there is no gender discrimination.

He also instructed that signages in all places should be written in three languages, viz English, Devnagri and dominant local language of that particular place.

He mentioned that this decision was taken almost six months back but has not been implemented yet. On the same, he directed authorities to immediately implement the decision.

Speaking to bureaucrats, the CM stated that the administration should be democratized and not personalised and should be people-centric. He asserted that welfare schemes of the government should be implemented without harassing people. Policy decisions should be implemented properly instead of sending people for the recommendation of the CM.

On the occasion, students of Lumsay Junior High Song presented the welcome song which was followed by patriotic song. A song was presented by teachers of Deorali Girls SSS dedicated to students. A talk on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was presented by Hishey Wangchuk, a student of Bojoghari SSS.

The celebration also witnessed a prize distribution ceremony of essay competition on organic farming, in which Sayal Chhetri of Namthang SSS received the first prize and Bishal Ramudamu of Yangang SSS and Hussel Zangpo of Buriakhop SSS got the second and third prizes respectively.

## Sikkim beats Nagaland...

Ashish Thapa and Nilesh Lamichaney, took Sikkim to a comfortable victory. Sikkim made 81/1 in the second innings from 25.4 overs and took the match.

These wins have brought the confidence among the players and they are hungry for more wins in the upcoming matches.

Sikkim will be facing Uttarakhand next at KIITS Cricket Ground, Bhubaneswar, Odisha on 20 November.

Sikkim is playing Ranji Trophy for the first time in the history of Indian domestic cricket along with the other Northeast states, Puducherry and Uttarakhand in the plate division along with Bihar which is back to the Ranji after 18 years.

## Thekong Munsolong...

He also highlighted that although Lingthem was an inaccessible area earlier, it is now experiencing a tourism boom with the development of different infrastructure in the area.

He also made it a point to highlight the delayed carpeting of the road to Lingthem and remarked that any further delay would prove the lackadaisical attitude of the contractor.

Lepcha history records that Munsolong had visited this place so it was auspicious to install a statue at this Singzem hilltop, said Namgyal Lepcha, one of the residents.

# Children's Day at Mamring School



## SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 NOV:

Today on the occasion of the 129th Birth Anniversary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of

India, Mamring Senior Secondary School, East Sikkim, celebrated Children's Day in the school premises, a press release informs.

A colourful program

was organised for the students of the school by the teachers and administrative staff of the school. The programme started with a warm welcome speech by Vice Principal, I P Khatiwara.

Inter House Dance and singing competition including Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali dance and singing competition was held. A ramp walk by teachers and students was also held. Solo songs by students as well as teachers were also presented in the program.

Balloon bursting, cock fighting, sweet picking, book balancing, etc were some of the events held for the students. Prizes were also distrib-

uted to the winners of the culture and sports competitions.

Winner of the dance competition was Red House represented by Trishna and group with Nepali Maruni Dance and 2nd position went to Green House represented by Dawki and group with Bhutia Dance. In the singing competition, Lhamit Lepcha of Yellow House secured 1st position and Jiwan Dahal of Blue House stood 2nd, the release informs.

Staff of the school also presented their cultural dance items.

Delicious meal prepared by the teachers and staff of the school were served to all the students.

# COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN SCHOOLS OF SIKKIM: A NEW DIMENSION IN SCHOOL-SOCIETY RELATION

SURAJ KUMAR SHARMA

Education takes place not only in the schools but also within the families, communities and society. Parents and families cannot be the only group of people for children's education as long as these children interact with and learn from outside their families. Community is a part of the society and education is the counter part of the both. School is the social institute where consciously designed learning experiences are provided with the objective of achieving social aim at large over a period of time. The relation between school and community is inevitable. Neither a school can exist in isolation nor can a better society be thought upon without the existence of school in it. Both the school and the community are working in the same direction for the proper development of the children and the community supporting the school. Community and society support school in upbringing, socializing and education of the children that live in their society.

Involvement of community in development and improving quality of education in schools is not new. According to a policy brief from the National Education Association (NEA), "When schools, parents, families and communities work together to support learning, students tend to earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer and enroll in higher level programmes." It is well known to all that community involvement is an integral part of a successful educational framework. Most of the educationists all over the world have agreed that involvement of community in school activities plays a very vital role in promoting education in terms of quality and quantity. It is assumed that community involvement and empowerment has the potential to make major contribution in educating people, enriching their quality of life. Consistent community involvement and engagement at all levels of the schools have significant short and long term benefits. Tracing back the history of community involvement in education, it is found that most of the schools at the initial stages were initiated by the community which received different kinds of contribution from the community like land, funds, volunteer teachers, labours, construction materials etc. This is the reason for the reasonable level of progress achieved in the field of education with the direct involvement of the community.

Improving quality of education is essential to achieving goal of Universal access to education. Without active involvement of the community in school management quality improvement is not possible. Providing the facts, feeling and experiences of the community people to the students could be the best help in the teaching learning process for to increase

the deeper understanding of students while at project work. Community people can play as an actor of promoting quality education in this sense. Successful schools build connections to parents and communities as a way to strengthen relationship in support of the students, and as a way to better understand students so that teaching can be tailored to them as individuals communities offer a wide range of resources that are valuable to school and the families they serve.

The Government of India from time to time has conceived and implemented a number of interventions that involves various stakeholders for improving the access and quality of education. One of such intervention is the constitution of School Management Committee (SMC) which is also mandated by the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009. The idea behind the formulation of SMC is to involve communities to take an active role in the planning, implementation and monitoring of developmental programmes for the school. It creates a feeling of ownership among the primary stake holders (parents) and helps in building the partnership and networking between the school and community. It helps in mobilising public awareness as well as building a strong sense of ownership of government policies and programmes. The basic idea behind the SMC is to increase the responsibilities of community stakeholders in the functioning of the school. The SMC also work towards enhancing parents community participation in the school functioning and provide mechanisms for more effective management at school level. It also provides a platform where community and school pool resources for better management of the school.

Right after the independence, all the governments at centres and the states has been stressing upon the greater involvement of the local self government in the education system. In many instances, the panchayats and other community leaders play a greater role in functioning of the school without disturbing its basic nature and working system. It is seen that wherever the members Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) has played their role properly, significant development has been seen in the sphere of education in the area.

## COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN SCHOOLS OF SIKKIM

There was time when people use to contribute their time and money for building resting shed, install idols and statues in various places in memory of their beloved ones, feed people during various social occasions, offer donations in charity and many more. Since quite a time, there has been a paradigm shift in the attitude of the people as a result of which people are now contributing the same in school and students. Of late, people across Sikkim have realized their pivotal role in bringing about significant changes in the

functioning of schools to bring about qualitative change by involving themselves in various spheres. This in fact have eased the task of school administrator as well as the management to a large extent since people across different spheres of life come forward and offer their contribution. These contributions has helped to add some resources to the existing infrastructure in the schools as well as motivated others to think of various ways to help the school in one way or another. These generous hearts include individuals as well as parents association, mother association, School Managing Committee members and sometime independent members of our society. Infrastructure development in the form of construction of midday meal shed in school in memory of someone's beloved family members, mini parks and play areas for kids, construction of multipurpose halls, hand wash basin, boundary fencing, providing CC cameras, PA systems are the major contribution of members of our society towards our schools. Development of classroom especially pre-primary classrooms by providing play materials, kids friendly furniture and toys, sometime even television sets with CDs and DVDs, has invited the attraction of parents and children to enroll more in government schools keeping in view the availability of the resources which are at par with that of reputed public schools in many cases. Many members or group provides special food items in midday meal on their special occasions. It is to be worth mentioning here that almost every requirement of schools is being addressed by the community every now and then and the numbers of such generous hearts are increasing every day.

The society needs such people who can bring about significant change in the quality and standard of life of all individuals which ultimately helps to build a better society. The chain of such changes has been already initiated and it must go on. It is now our moral obligation to pay off the debt to the community by producing human resource that would make our society a better place to live in. Also, it is our duty to acknowledge the contribution of these generous hearts publicly so that they can feel proud of themselves as a change maker in the society.

In order to have the most positive impact on the academic and wellness outcomes of students, it is imperative that schools and communities work together through a collaborative and comprehensive approach. Community partners can help schools prepare students for college, career, and citizenship by offering additional opportunities, supports, and enrichment for young people. Strong school-community partnerships are essential for a world-class, 21st century education.

(The writer is Headmaster, Government Secondary School, Lingi Paiyong, South Sikkim.)

# A home away from home

**NITESH R PRADHAN**  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOV:

**D**enzong Kunga Khangsang (DKK) Bhawan located in the national capital not just houses patients and their caretakers but also gives them support like getting appointments with hospitals.

Since its establishment by the state government in 2010, the bhawan regularly sees visitors arriving from Sikkim and is usually houseful.

In charge and Nurse, Neelam Rasaily, who was also honored by the union government with Florence Nightingale Award for her services says that the rooms are available at very nominal rate of 300 to Rs 75

with dormitory as a free service.

Patients and their visitors can cook their own food in the shared kitchens provided to them

The bhawan is located at Green Park extension, one of the prime residential areas of Delhi near AIIMS and Safdurdurg hospitals.

A vehicle is also provided by the government for ailing patients to go to the hospital at specific timings.

"We should be thankful that such a service is being rendered by the state government in a city like Delhi," says Neelam Rasaily.

She further adds that relatives and visitors of the patients should also

take ownership of the bhawan and maintain strict cleanliness as it is meant for ailing and recovering patients whose immunity and resistance is already very low.

She along with two nurses Juni Lepcha and Sarita are helped by some locals who are part of the house keeping team.

They have urged the visitors not to smoke or drink in the rooms or in the vicinity of the bhawan which may have an adverse effect on patients.

Ms Rasaily adds that there have been complaints from neighbours that visitors and relatives accompanying patients smoke, drink and litter in the nearby park.

She further adds that such irresponsible acts can only malign the reputation of the state which has now started getting nationwide recognition in terms of "Swachhta".

The Home department is the concerned authority looking after the bhawan and any patient or their relatives can contact the department to avail the facility.

Patients and their accompanying relative or friend can stay in the bhawan till the treatment process is completely over, she informs.

"I appeal to all residing in the bhawan and future parties coming here to think of it as their own home and stay responsibly," she says.

# Minister Subedi inaugurates Cooperative Mart



**REBYNA RANA**  
GANGTOK, 14 NOV:

**M**inister for Cooperation department cum RMD department, SB Subedi inaugurated the Cooper-

ative Mart, located below Lall Bazaar flyover, today on the eve of National Co-operative week celebration.

The mart is a unit of Sikkim Women's Cooperative Society Gangtok which was set up in 2001.

# DLSA organizes legal awareness programme on Children's Day

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
GANGTOK, 14 NOV:

**D**istrict Legal Services Authority, East and Taluk Legal Services Committee, East, organised Legal Awareness Programme on the occasion of Children's Day at Government Sichey Secondary School today, a press release informs.

The Authority also commemorated "Legal Services Day" falling on 09 Nov and Legal Services Week w.e.f 09-16 Nov.

The program was chaired by District & Sessions Judge, East cum Chairperson, DLSA, East, Jagat B. Rai, Ld. Judicial Magistrate, East cum Secretary, DLSA, East,



Ranjeeta Pradhan and Ld. Advocate, Zola Megi as a Resource person.

The programme highlighted various legal matters and topics such as POC SO Act, Juvenile Justice Board Act, Free Legal

Aid, Human Trafficking & Immoral Trafficking along with other various child rights.

The children were also informed about good touch and bad touch, and they were also

urged to be good and law abiding citizens of India. Importance of observing Children's Day and Legal Services Day were also explained to the students of the said school, the release adds.

# Grameen Patrakarita Puraskar 2018 to be awarded to Kushhang Leewang

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
GANGTOK, 14 NOV:

**P**ress Club of Sikkim has decided to confer 'Grameen Patrakarita Puraskar' this year on journalist Kushhang Leewang, informs a press release from PCS.

Mr. Leewang is a West district correspondent for local English dailies, Sikkim Reporter and Sikkim Express.

Mr. Leewang's reportage from West Sikkim has earned him the award instituted by Raj Bhawan to encourage rural reporting in the state. Mr. Leewang's name was shortlisted from



among several entries submitted before the PCS executive committee on 06 Nov. He will

be presented the award during the National Press Day celebration on 16 Nov. The award honours commendable work done by journalists specialising in rural reporting. Each year, one journalist is awarded on the occasion of National Press Day. The award comprises of a memento, a citation and a cash award.

Mr. Leewang, based in Gyalshing, West Sikkim, entered the field of journalism in 2013. He has raised several rural issues during his journalistic stint, the release mentions.

# Left, Cong mull no confidence against WB govt

**KOLKATA, Nov 14 (PTI):** The Left Front and Congress are mulling a joint no confidence motion against the TMC government in West Bengal in the coming session of the assembly, sources in the two parties said on Wednesday.

The no confidence motion will be brought against the "misrule" and "lawless situation" in the state, according to them.

The assembly session will begin from November 16 and continue till November 29.

"We are jointly planning to bring a no confidence motion against the state government. Democracy has ceased to exist in Bengal and unemployment is on a rise in the state.

Misrule by TMC has led to a lawless situation in the state," Leader of Opposition Abdul Mannan said at a press conference.

He was joined by Left Front legislative party leader Sujan Chakraborty.

After the assembly session begins on November 16, the Left and the Congress will submit the no confidence motion under rule 185, Mannan said adding "We hope that the motion will be accepted by the speaker".

# Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat team calls on Governor



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
GANGTOK, 14 NOV:

**G**overnor Ganga Prasad today granted audience to a group of 50 youths from Delhi under Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat - Inter State Youth Exchange Program at New Raj Bhavan, informs a press release.

The exchange program between the twin states Delhi and Sikkim from 01 to 15 Nov is being conducted by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Sikkim Unit.

Additional Chief Secretary to Governor, Dr. K Jayakumar, NYKS State Director Nabin Kumar Naik, District Youth Coordinators of NYKS Sikkim and other officials were present on the occasion. It may be mentioned

that the group, in the last fortnight have travelled across the state and have organised various events and special cultural shows. A brief highlight of the exchange program was provided by NYKS State Director Nabin Kumar Naik in his address. The group also presented a colourful cultural programme in honour of the Governor, the release mentions.

The Governor while addressing the participating youths lauded the efforts of NYKS Sikkim for successful conduct of the exchange program. He urged the youths to use their learning from Sikkim such as cleanliness, pollution control, and environmental conservation towards improv-

ing overall health of the State of Delhi.

He also asked the youth to understand the duties and responsibilities of citizen in a democratic society. Stating that balancing rights and duties will help us to be real citizens of this country, the Governor underlined the need to learn and assimilate the diversity, culture, history, geography of our country to inculcate the national character from within.

This is the foundation towards making Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, the Governor stated. He also urged the youth to be ready to shoulder the responsibility of transforming the country into New India. He further called upon the youth to remember how Late Sardar Patel had worked towards integrating 562 princely states into Ek Bharat and seriously think how we can transform our country into Shrestha Bharat.

Earlier in the programme, the Governor handed over the certificates of participation and appreciation to various organisations and individual acknowledging their contribution to make the exchange programme a success.

# World Diabetes Day observed at Singtam

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
SINGTAM 14, NOV:

**A** team of doctors and staffs from District Hospital Singtam lead by Dr Manna Pradhan observed

World Diabetes Day here at Mandi Bazaar today.

Dr Dwarika Niraula, Dr Chultian Lepcha, District Health Education Officer, Sonam Bhutia accompa-

nied by ASHA members conducted the programme.

The team also interacted with local people regarding the cause of diabetes, symptoms, and

the necessary awareness to control diabetes. A stall was set up displaying medicines and a quiz competition was also held on the day.

# SummitTIMES

## Young & Vulnerable

*The wrong people appear to be catching 'em young. And we don't mean the cops*

A 13-year-old finds himself among cops. The "routine checking" of vehicles which appears to be the stop-and-frisk standard that passes for policing in the State allegedly found the lad in possession of Spasmo-Proxvovon, a common prescription drug of abuse.

The incident immediately raises several flags, starting with the disconcerting confirmation that it appears has become "routine" for cops to suspect even 13-year-olds to be peddlers. That has to be the case, because by a recent admission of Sikkim Police, they are mindful of differentiating between peddlers and addicts and it is unlikely they have reached such levels of mindful concern that they are pulling out minors from jeeps to counsel them. So the kid was obviously "intercepted" on suspicion of being a peddler and even interrogated to ferret out the source of his supplies. As for the supplies, in this case from a while back, he had six capsules of SP, a volume that anyone can purchase over the counter in Siliguri. There is also the possibility that these were prescriptions he had picked up for someone because six is neither enough for a peddler nor even a day's supply for a habitual user.

The incident also raises the much bigger worry on the age of initiation among the young to begin experimenting with substances of abuse. If the kid is indeed a user, then Sikkim better start deploying more than just cops to combats "drugs". There have been instances when much younger children have turned up in school under the influence of prescription drugs. These would earlier be dismissed as one-off incidents of a ragging gone bad or copy-cat experimentation. But, if children as young as those who have barely stepped into the teen-years are into the habit without alarm bells having gone off everywhere, one worries about how deep disinterest has seeped into societal conscience.

The police action should also have everyone shuddering at the thought that there is a very real possibility that the very young are being used as 'mules' to transship substances of abuse. Agreed, six capsules do not a consignment make, but the fact that cops picked the child out from a jeep-full of passengers suggests that this mode of smuggling is being used and that even the police are aware of it now. Maybe the teen was being used as a 'mule' because his age would not rouse suspicion among the personnel manning the checkpoints who have become rather effective interceptors of substances of abuse. Maybe this was a dry run. Too much speculating? Can there be too little hyperventilating when it comes to news-reports of a 13-year-old "caught" with drugs in a vehicle coming into Sikkim?

The vehicle was stopped, the lad picked out, checked and the substances confiscated. While the fact that children as young as 13 are abusing or are being abused as couriers might come as a shock for the sanitised distance that most readers have from such incidents, but, as already mentioned, the fact that the cops thought it necessary to check, suggests that this is not a very new strategy of the peddlers or even a very young age for people to use. Given the increased policing at the check-posts, peddlers have constantly been devising new ways to ferry in contraband - from using women as couriers to filling tyres and tubes with contraband to opting for keeping it in plain sight on the dashboard, hoping that the obvious would be overlooked, they have tried everything; and the cops have learnt to expect ingenuity in how drugs are brought in. But the desperation of the peddlers is not necessarily a positive. For one, the fact that they continue bringing in stuff despite the risks [SADA is a cruel act] is proof that addiction has not gone down in Sikkim, neither have addiction levels.

The deployment of innocents as couriers or the conversion of minors into the habit is also suggestive of the depths of depravity the business is willing to fall to. This should worry everyone concerned. The children are already disadvantaged in Sikkim where an elder generation pursues different priorities and rarely makes the time or funds for the young. The underprivileged, who should be receiving more societal attention, are left exposed to the wily mechanisations of peddlers and their ilk and hence vulnerable to exploitation as couriers or initiated into addiction. Both of these are happening and a blatant abuse of what children deserve plays on. The fact that at a time when government schools across the state are having their final exams, a 13-year-old was "caught" with "drugs" at an inter-state check-post raises too many more distress flags than the State is apparently willing to even notice.

A closer introspection by the State and its people is urgently required to question how such young children are being left exposed to the temptation of drugs...

### WRITE US:

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## Explainer: Why Sri Lanka is sliding into political turmoil, and what could happen next

MICHAEL BREEN  
*theconversation.com*

This week, Sri Lanka's Supreme Court made a dramatic intervention in the country's deepening political crisis, a move that may prevent it from sliding further into democratic dysfunction and possible political violence.

The three-judge panel overturned the unilateral action by Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena to illegally dissolve the parliament last week. The ruling means that parliament could reconvene as soon as Wednesday (November 14).

Jubilant supporters of sacked Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe celebrated the decision outside the heavily guarded Supreme Court building in the nation's capital, Colombo. It is being seen as one of the most significant rulings in Sri Lanka's history.

### HOW SRI LANKA GOT TO THIS POINT

The Supreme Court ruling is the latest twist in a tense political drama that has engulfed the nation since late October, when Sirisena sacked Wickremesinghe and installed civil war strongman Mahinda Rajapaksa in his place. He then called for a snap election on January 5 - an election now in considerable doubt.

Sirisena cited a conspiracy to have him assassinated as a key reason for his actions. But he had no constitutional basis for either the dissolution of parliament or the removal of a sitting prime minister.

The president's move to dissolve parliament came just days before it was scheduled to reconvene and vote on which of the two men claiming to be prime minister should be actually

recognised as holding the job.

Sirisena and Rajapaksa had tried but failed to induce enough MPs to switch sides. Dissolving parliament, however unconstitutional, became their only path to self-preservation. **SO... WHO IS THE PRIME MINISTER?**

Sri Lanka has a long democratic tradition dating back to British colonial times. It has seen many ups and downs, including a brutal 25-year civil war that ended in 2009 and the rise of an authoritarian-style leader in Rajapaksa (who served as president from 2005 to 2015).

But never before have Sri Lanka's constitution and its democratic principles been so undermined.

Since his sacking, Wickremesinghe has continued to claim he is the legitimate prime minister with the support of the majority of parliament.

But Rajapaksa has thus far appeared to have the confidence of the president and key state institutions. **WHY WAS WICKREMESINGHE SACKED?**

The possible return of Rajapaksa had ignited deep concerns within Sri Lanka and abroad.

It was only three years ago that his own party split and aligned with the major opposition parties to propose Sirisena as a consensus presidential candidate.

Ironically, Sirisena's election heralded a new "Yahapalana" coalition government, a term meaning "good governance". But things did not go according to plan.

Sirisena and Wickremesinghe were unable to work together and none of their key promises were met. Meanwhile, the economy went backwards.

The coalition seemed doomed

when local elections in February were dominated by a new party, established by the Rajapaksa family.

The final straw was the alleged assassination plot against Sirisena, apparently involving neighbouring India. The plot was raised in Cabinet, but Sirisena was unhappy with the response and acted by sacking Wickremesinghe, claiming his life was in danger.

It was the policy differences between Sirisena and Wickremesinghe, however, that was really at the heart of the discontent. Sirisena declared that if Wickremesinghe returned, he would "not stay one hour longer".

### SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Sirisena initially said he suspended parliament last week to allow his "new government" to appoint a Cabinet and present a budget.

Yet, it was allegedly done to provide enough time for the Rajapaksa camp to bribe MPs to his side. One MP claimed to have recorded Rajapaksa's henchmen offering him US\$2.8 million.

Meanwhile, crowds have taken to the streets in support of each side, while Wickremesinghe has remained holed up in the prime minister's official residence, surrounded and protected by supporters and fellow parliamentarians. Two people have been killed.

History suggests that Rajapaksa would have succeeded in convincing enough of those who opposed him to switch sides. But this is no ordinary power struggle.

### WHY IS RAJAPAKSA'S POSSIBLE RETURN SO FRAUGHT?

Rajapaksa's presidency was punctuated by his controversial response to the civil war and abhorrent end of the conflict, which saw tens of thou-

sands of innocent people killed.

His rule was increasingly authoritarian, nepotistic and corrupt. At one point, his family controlled more than half of Sri Lanka's budget, and he'd succeeded in amending the constitution to grant himself more powers and the prospect of a presidency for life.

And this is leaving aside the geopolitical implications of his presidency and possible return to government. Some commentators have portrayed the current crisis as a power struggle between India and China. And it is certainly true that India would prefer Wickremesinghe, and China, Rajapaksa.

During his time in office, Rajapaksa sought Chinese investment to build a major port in Sri Lanka, leaving the country in serious debt. Unable to pay back the Chinese loans, Sri Lanka was forced to hand over the port to China on a 99-year lease.

Given this history, it's not surprising China was the first of only a few countries to recognise the Rajapaksa prime ministership.

But in the end, this is really about domestic politics. And whatever happens, a return to violence is a real possibility. The Supreme Court's intervention has stopped Sri Lanka's democracy going over the cliff for now. But it remains on the edge.

Rajapaksa's strategy will be to delay a confidence vote in parliament for as long as possible, and to redouble efforts to convene a majority. But if he fails, he may be tempted to use force to get his way, and Sri Lanka's democratic deficit will become a gaping chasm.

*[The writer is McKenzie Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Melbourne]*

## Education does not always equal social mobility

LOUIS VOLANTE & JOHN JERRIM  
*theconversation.com*

Educators around the world, particularly those in secondary schools, often default to a compelling story when they are trying to motivate their students: Work hard, achieve well and you will secure a successful future with attractive job prospects.

This is currently the conventional wisdom across much of the Western world, with strong links drawn between education, meritocracy and upward social mobility.

But what does the research suggest about intergenerational mobility? Do children from poorer backgrounds have the same potential to realize their dreams if they achieve high standards in their education systems?

In fact, education is important but not enough to change inequities around the world. Intergenerational mobility, referring to changes in social status for different generations in the same family, is far from normal.

### THE AMERICAN DREAM IN DENMARK

Public health researchers Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett argued outcomes in social mobility and education are significantly worse

in rich countries with more inequality, that is, with populations that show larger gaps between the wealthy and the poor. For example, the United States and United Kingdom have close associations between fathers' and sons' incomes, compared to countries such as Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway.

Wilkinson went so far as to jokingly comment in a TED talk "if Americans want to live the American dream, they should go to Denmark." **GREAT MOBILITY?**

The relationship between national levels of income inequality and lower levels of intergenerational mobility is known as the Great Gatsby Curve. The Great Gatsby is the hero of the same-titled F. Scott Fitzgerald novel, who first appears as the enigmatic host of roaring parties in his waterfront mansion. Later, he is revealed as the son of poor farmers. The curve thus seeks to measure how much a person can move up in social class in a given society.

A 2015 study used cross-national comparable data from the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) to shed new light on the role of education in relation to this curve: the study examined the relationships between a person's education, their parents' education

and labour-market outcomes such as income.

In countries such as Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, the results suggested that parental education had little additional impact on a child's income; it was the child's level of education that mattered.

But in France, Japan, South Korea and the United Kingdom, the impact of parents' education on their offspring was substantial. In these countries, the children whose parents came from a low education group earned 20 per cent less than children whose parents had higher levels of education, even though these individuals held the same level of qualification in the same subject area.

Collectively, this research suggests that a range of social mobility exists across different countries in relation to how much education a person gets. Equal education does not always mean equal opportunity.

### BENCHMARK MEASURES

In a globalized economy, reliance on patronage and nepotism has little use. Rather, the global economy requires countries to maximize their human resources, regardless of the social status of particular individuals or groups, to remain competitive.

Not surprisingly, governments are increasingly concerned with addressing socioeconomic disadvantages within school systems so that they are able to maximize their nations' human capital and promote intergenerational mobility.

Indeed, policymakers around the world have shown an affinity for the results of international benchmark measures such as PIAACC and the Programme in International Student Assessment (PISA). They often rely on such measures to assess the performance gaps that exist among students of different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Ideally, countries strive for high performance and small achievement gaps, since the latter is a sign of an effective education system. Not surprisingly, some countries seem to be doing a better job at promoting better educational outcomes for students coming from lower socioeconomic groups.

For example, PISA 2015 results indicated that more than 30 per cent of economically disadvantaged students in Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore and Slovenia were considered "academically resilient." This means they performed at high levels despite

coming from the bottom quarter of the socioeconomic status classification system.

While the apparently better-performing countries may take pride in their outcomes, it is worth noting that a high global ranking does not necessarily capture how inequities manifest nationally. For example, Canada has a noticeable gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous education outcomes.

### POLICY FOR EQUALITY

When one considers the capacity of education to influence social mobility around the world the results appear to be mixed. We need more research to understand exactly how some countries seem to provide more equitable opportunities in schools and society, and for whom.

Where there are disparities, governments need to consider more policy options across multiple sectors — to create a situation where equal abilities and qualifications translate to equal prospects and outcomes. Failure to do so casts doubt on our cherished notion of meritocracy.

In other words, in many countries education will only equal social mobility with further government intervention.

*[Louis Volante is Professor of Education, Brock University; John Jerrim is Lecturer in Economics and Social Statistics, UCL]*

## Mamata slams Centre for delay in clearing proposal to rename West Bengal

**KOLKATA, NOV 14 (PTI):** Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee slammed the Centre on Wednesday for allegedly dragging its feet in clearing a proposal to rename West Bengal to "Bangla", a proposal unanimously passed by the state assembly in July.

Banerjee said the BJP has been changing names of historical places and institutions unilaterally "almost every day" to suit its "interests" but when it comes to Bengal, the attitude is totally different.

On July 26, the assembly passed a resolution unanimously to change the name of the

state to "Bangla" in the three most-spoken languages Bengali, Hindi and English and sent the proposal to the Union Home Ministry.

Banerjee's government had proposed to rename the state on three earlier occasions.

It suggested "Paschimbanga" in 2011, which was turned down by the Centre. In 2016, it proposed "Bengal" in English, "Bangla" in Bengali and "Bangal" in Hindi, which too was turned down. Finally, it proposed the name 'Bangla' in July this year.

"It is pending there

(with the Home Ministry) for a long, long time," Banerjee said in a statement.

"After Independence, there have been changes in the name of a few states and cities, like Orissa to Odisha, Pondicherry to Puducherry, Madras to Chennai, Bombay to Mumbai, Bangalore to Bengaluru etc, keeping in view the sentiments of the state and local language. Those are genuine," she said.

The West Bengal Assembly had passed a resolution to change the name of the state on the basis of local senti-

ments related to "our mother tongue, Bangla", she added.

"The Union Home Ministry advised us to use the name Bangla in all three languages. Accordingly, our assembly passed a unanimous resolution to change the name of the state to 'Bangla' in all three languages and sent it to the Union Home Ministry again," she said.

On reservations from some quarters that Bangla would sound very similar to Bangladesh, she said names should not create a hurdle as "there is a Punjab in our neigh-

bouring country as well as in India".

Criticising the BJP, she said a political party with "zero strength" in the state cannot decide on changing the name of that state.

The proposal to change the name was made only after a resolution was passed unanimously by the state assembly in accordance with the constitutional obligations and federal structure, which should be respected, she said.

"The people of Bengal must get a positive response immediately," Banerjee said.

## Karan Johar apologises for hurting sentiments of the Northeast



**MUMBAI, NOV 14 (PTI):** A day after Karan Johar was trolled on social media for allegedly "insulting" the culture and the traditional headgears of the people of the Northeast, the filmmaker apologised Wednesday for his "purely unintentional" remarks.

The director uploaded a video clip on Instagram on November 10 shot on the sets of reality talent show "India's Got Talent", where he, along with Kirron Kher and Malaika Arora Khan serve as jury.

After being severely

criticised for his comments, Johar replied to an Assamese journalist, saying he would like to apologise in case he had hurt any sentiments.

"You are absolutely right and I would like to apologise if I have hurt any sentiments.

"It was purely unintentional and came from a place of no knowledge which is absolutely no excuse. I am extremely sensitive to the different cultures of our land and I am very sorry," he wrote on Twitter.

Johar also said that he had deleted the post in question from his In-

stagram. The aforementioned clip showed Kher wearing a spiked bamboo Arunachalee hat and the director exclaiming, "Oh my god, what is that on your head?"

To this Kher replied, "People from Arunachal Pradesh have brought it for me and they have got this for you," showing him an Assamese Japi, a traditional hat made of bamboo, dried leaves and pieces of coloured cloth.

When the actor-politician asked why Johar was not wearing the Japi, he says, "Because you have guts, I don't."

## HC seeks views of Centre, WB on report over preventing sexual offences against pupils

**KOLKATA, NOV 14 (PTI):** The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday asked the Centre and the West Bengal Government to convey their views on proposed guidelines to prevent sexual offences against pupils in educational institutions affiliated to central and state boards in West Bengal.

Justice Nadira Pathery directed handing over of a report of a court-appointed amicus curiae to the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) and asked him to get the views of the central government for implementation of proposed measures for ensuring a safe environment for students in educational institutions.

ASG Kaushik Chanda was asked to convey the views of the Centre to the court on Thursday with regard to schools under CBSE and ICSE boards.

The Additional Advocate General of West Bengal was also directed to express the views of the state government, which also has separate boards of secondary and higher secondary education under which many schools are affiliated.

Hearing a case re-

lating to alleged sexual misconduct against two physical education teachers of a city-based school, Justice Pathery had appointed lawyer Firoze Edulji as amicus curiae to assist it in the matter and formed a panel of educationists to suggest steps and guidelines for schools for preventing incidents of sexual assault on pupils.

The panel included educationists from six leading schools in the city, the chairperson of West Bengal State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) and representatives of UNICEF and National University of Juridical Sciences.

The amicus curiae submitted a 100-page report to the court on Monday suggesting formation of a nodal body under the SCPCR, which would work for spreading awareness among school staff, sensitise parents and set up a syllabus for awareness material for staff, students and parents.

It also suggested stringent background check of a person before appointing him/her to any position in a school.

## International cherry blossom fest begins in Shillong

**SHILLONG, NOV 14 (PTI):** The Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Wednesday inaugurated the 4-day India International Cherry Blossom festival, a tourism festival that highlights the pink cherry flowers blooming all over the city in early November.

Similar festival is also held in Japan but it is celebrated in the spring when the cherry trees bloom.

"The Cherry Blossom Festival this year is being elevated to international status with the participation of the Government of Japan through its delegates. Its significance goes beyond the blooming of cherry trees as it creates a space for mutual exchange of culture and ideas," he said while addressing at the inaugural event of the festival.

The chief minister said the festival provides a platform to celebrate the autumn season and this celebration will provide a mosaic of sports, culture and culinary delights of Meghalaya, North East India beside partners from Japan.

He said that the Indo-Japan collaboration has taken a leap forward

because of the efforts that have been made by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe.

"This festival represents one of the ways of strengthening that (Indo-Japanese) relationship further," he said.

The chief minister also said that the festival will give a big boost to tourism not just in Meghalaya but in the entire North Eastern region and expressed hope that the state witnesses more visitors than the impressive footfall at the festival held last year.

Ambassador of Japan to India Kenji Hiramatsu said the festival is symbolic of the friendship between India and Japan and provides a channel for people to people and cultural exchanges between India and Japan which will in turn promote stronger bonds between the two countries.

Events including sky diving, painting and drawing competition, dog show, storytelling, fashion show and kids show competition among others were part of the show.

## Odisha CM announces free smartphones for women SHGs

**BHUBANESWAR, NOV 14 (PTI):** To make women digitally empowered in Odisha, the state government will provide free smartphones to all the women self-help groups under Mission Shakti programme, chief minister Naveen Patnaik said Wednesday.

Stating that women in Odisha have come a long way, the next ceiling to be broken is the digital one, Patnaik said.

"Digital empowerment will further accelerate the socio-political and economic empowerment of women," he said.

The chief minister made the announcement at a seminar on women entrepreneurship at the Make in Odisha Conclave, 2018 here.

"My dream is to see that every woman has access to knowledge economy. As a first step, my government will digitally empower all the six lakh Mission Shakti groups with a smart phone," Patnaik said.

Stating that women empowerment was something "very close" to his heart, the chief minister said that he was happy that the second edition of the Make in Odisha conclave had focused on women entrepreneurs.

"No household, no society, no state and no country has ever moved forward without empow-

ering its women. From the day, I assumed office in 2000, my government has always been conscious of the great role women can play, especially in a state like Odisha which had challenging socio-economic indicators," Patnaik said.

As soon as he took over in 2000, Patnaik said he started Mission Shakti as a project in 2001, which has transformed into a movement with 70 lakh women, 6 lakh groups, Rs 5,000 crore savings and Rs 2,000 crore annual bank exposure.

"There is no habitation in the state without a Mission Shakti group. Almost every second household has a member in Mission Shakti. We have had the highest drop in maternal mortality rate. Our infant mortality rate is better than the national average. Our institutional delivery is a record 90 per cent," he said.

Recalling his discussion with the collector of a tribal district, Patnaik said that banks compete with each other to finance Mission Shakti groups and the repayment rate is 95 per cent.

"My government honours their sincerity by providing SHGs loans at one per cent the Mission Shakti loans, he said urging the bankers to meet the credit requirement of Mission Shakti groups

## HC directs North 24 Parganas police chief to appear before it on Nov 26

**KOLKATA, NOV 14 (PTI):** The Calcutta High Court Wednesday directed the Superintendent of Police (SP) of North 24 Parganas district to appear before it on November 26 to explain the police's failure to record the statement of two police constables in connection with a murder case.

A division bench comprising justices Joymalyo Bagchi and R K Kapur directed the SP to supervise investigation into the case as the investigating officer (IO) failed to carry out the court's direction to examine the police personnel and record their statements, who were on guard duty at the premises of an accused.

The investigating officer has also been summoned to appear before the court on November 26, along with the SP. The bench directed that statements of the two constables be now recorded before

a magistrate. Asim Bhattacharya was murdered in Bongaon in North 24 Parganas district on July 13.

Rakesh Bairagi, a resident of the area, was accused of complicity in the murder of Bhattacharya and applied for anticipatory bail before the high court.

His lawyer Suman Shankar Chatterjee said that Asim Bhattacharya was an accused in the murder of Rakesh Bairagi's son Himangshu on March 9, 2014.

Seeking anticipatory bail for Rakesh, Chatterjee claimed before the court that he was falsely implicated in the murder of Asim Bhattacharya as the latter was an accused in his son's murder.

Chatterjee said that on February 2, 2015, the high court had directed the district police to provide police protection in the residence of Rakesh Bairagi following his son's murder.

## Malda hospital ransacked after patient's death

**MALDA (WB), NOV 14 (PTI):** Panic gripped Malda Medical College & Hospital on Wednesday when a mob, infuriated by the death of a local doctor for alleged medical negligence, went on the rampage causing damage to the property, police said.

To bring the situation under control, large number of policemen have been posted at the hospital premises,

they said.

Kayim Ali (50), a resident of Sujapur under Kaliachowk Police Station, was admitted to the hospital on Tuesday afternoon. He was admitted to the infectious disease ward of the hospital where tests conducted on him showed that he had low platelet count.

Ali needed blood transfusion urgently but the hospital delayed it, his family members said.

When they protested the delay, the security guards of the hospital attacked them on Tuesday night, they alleged.

After Ali died Wednesday morning, the situation turned worse, said Purnendu Kundu, Inspector-in-Charge Englishbazar Police Station.

He said the hospital authorities have not filed any written complaint and no arrests have been made.

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

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

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

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# Mary Kom eyes historic sixth gold as World Championship begins Thursday

PHILEM DIPAK SINGH

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14 (PTI):** Celebrated boxer MC Mary Kom will aim for a historic sixth gold at the AIBA Women's World Championships, the build up of which has been marred by a row over lone Kosovan boxer's participation and poor quality air in the national capital.

The 10th edition of the championships, set to be the biggest ever with more than 300 participants from 72 countries, is being held in the backdrop of boxing's uncertain Olympic future in the aftermath of controversial Uzbek businessman Gafur Rakhimov's election as President.

Commensurate with its status as global power in women's boxing with the third most number of medals in the history of the event, India is hosting the championships for the second time after 2006 when the country topped the table with eight medals (4 gold, 1 silver, 3 bronze).

The 10-member Indian team, which is a mix of seasoned and young boxers, is unlikely to repeat the 2006 feat but is expecting at least three medals, including a gold.

The 35-year-old Mary Kom, who is India's biggest hope, is tied with Katie Taylor on five gold medals and one more will make her the most successful



woman boxer in history since the Irish pugilist has turned a Pro. The 'Magnificent Mary', who will fight in the 48 kg, will also look to win her second gold in front of the home crowd.

She has enjoyed a stellar year so far, claiming gold medals at the Commonwealth Games, the inaugural India Open and the International Tournament in Poland.

However, the 2012 Olympics bronze medalist is aware that the road to gold will not be easy.

"There are boxers who are still playing in my category since 2001. I know them very well. The new boxers are tougher and smarter, they are

faster. I will use my experience. The past boxers are more or less the same, I know them," Mary Kom said.

Another veteran who will be seeking her second gold at the championships will be Mary Kom's Manipur state-mate L Sarita Devi who will feature in 60kg. She has five Asian titles besides winning gold in 2006 here.

The other eight in the team are Pinky Jangra (51 Kg), Manisha Maun (54 Kg), Sonia (57 Kg), Simranjit Kaur (64 Kg), Lovlina Borgohain (69 Kg), Saweety Boora (75 Kg), Bhagyabati Kachari (81 Kg) and Seema Poonia (+81 Kg).

The 10-day championships, which run till November 24, will feature a host of Olympic and World Championship medalists.

Italy's Alessia Mesiano will be defending the featherweight title she won two years ago, while 2016 silver medalists Kaye Scott of Australia, Thai Peamwilai Laopeam, Russia's Anastasiya Beliakova are gold medal contenders.

Other gold medal contenders include Virginia Fuchs (51 kg) of United States, Lin Yu Ting (54 kg) of Chinese Taipei, Yin Junhua (57 kg) of China, Mira Potkonen (60 kg) of Finland, Gu Hong (69 kg)

of China, Nouchka Fontijn (75 kg) of the Netherlands, Wang Lina (81 kg) and defending champion Yang Xiaoli (+81 kg), both from China.

The build-up to the tournament was, however, marred by the controversy of Kosovo boxer Donjeta Sadiku's participation in the global event.

India does not recognise Kosovo -- a disputed territory in South Eastern Europe -- and the government is yet to grant visas to the boxer and her two coaches.

The Indian Olympic Association fears that the country may lose out on hosting major international sporting events in future, if the lone boxer from Kosovo will not be allowed to compete at the championships.

The International Olympic Committee had recently sent letters to international federations not to award major events to Spain after athletes from Kosovo were not allowed to participate under their own flag at the Karate World Championships there.

Delhi's deteriorating air pollution was also a topic of discussion in the run-up to the tournament though it was a mixed bag for the boxers. Some participants expressed concern at the poor quality air while others felt it will not impact much as boxing was basically an indoor sport.

## Sindhu, Sameer enter second round of Hong Kong Open

**KOWLOON, Nov 14 (PTI):** Olympic silver medalist P V Sindhu and Sameer Verma notched up contrasting wins on Wednesday to progress to the second round of the Hong Kong Open World Tour Super 500 tournament, here.

Sindhu, seeded third, continued her consistent run as she recovered from a mid-game slump to surpass Thailand's Nitthachon Jindapol 21-15 13-21 21-17 in the opening round which lasted a little over an hour.

It was Sindhu's fourth win over the Thai player.

Sindhu, who won three major silver medals this season -- Commonwealth Games, World Championship and Asian Games -- will take on Ko-

rea's Sung Ji Hyun next.

The 23-year-old from Hyderabad has a superior 8-5 head-to-head record against the Korean.

In the men's singles, Sameer, who clinched the Swiss Open and Hyderabad Open this year, saw off another Thai Suppanu Avihingsanon 21-17 21-14 to set up a clash with China's Olympic champion Chen Long.

However, former Singapore Open champion B Sai Praneeth was stunned by Khosit Phetpradab of Thailand in a 62-minute opener.

Praneeth had a 3-0 record against Khosit ahead of the match but it didn't matter as he went down fighting 21-16 11-21 15-21 to bow out of the tournament.

## Athlete commits suicide at JLN premises, SAI orders internal inquiry

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14 (PTI):** Parvinder Chaudhary, an 18-year-old athlete who represented India at international level, committed suicide by hanging himself from a ceiling fan at the capital's Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, prompting the Sports Authority of India to order a "departmental inquiry".

Chaudhary was found hanging from the ceiling fan in his hostel room at the athletics academy of JLN stadium.

"We have ordered a departmental inquiry as the incident happened in our premises. The inquiry will be headed by Secretary SAI Swarn Singh Chabra and it should be completed within a week," SAI Director General Neelam Kapur told PTI.

Hailing from Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh, the athlete was brain dead by the time he was rushed to the Safdarjung Hospital, and could not be revived.

Apparently, he took the extreme step after an argument with his father over monetary issues, the top SAI official said. His fellow trainees and staff at the stadium were

shocked as the athlete showed no signs of depression while training through the day.

Kapur said, "Preliminary it seems a family matter related to monetary issues. What we came to know is that the boy had an argument with his father in the morning on phone after which his sister came to meet him in evening. He took the step in front of his sister after threatening her. She came out screaming and our staff immediately went there and brought him down."

Parvinder, who was residing in room No.69 of JLN Stadium hostel since November 2016 and was training for 100 and 200 metre races, came back to his room at 5.30 in the evening and committed suicide half an hour later.

"It is a very sad and tragic incident. We are extending all possible help to the family and have arranged for the transportation of his body to Aligarh.

"Our officers will also accompany his body to ensure smooth conduct of his last rites."

## No plans to grant MFN status to India: Pak govt

**M Zulfqernain LAHORE, Nov 14 (PTI):** The Pakistan government has said it has "no immediate plans" to grant Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India.

Asked whether the government was considering granting MFN status to India and that Prime Minister Imran Khan was keen to hold peace talks with the Indian government, Adviser to the Prime Minister for Commerce, Textile, Industry and Investments, Abdul Razak Dawood said, "No such plans at the moment".

"At present we have no immediate plans to grant MFN status to India," he said here at an event on Tuesday.

However, he said Pakistan is working out free trade agreements with different countries, especially China, and hopes to complete the second FTA with China by June, 2019.

Pakistan is yet to award the MFN status to India and it maintains a negative list of 1,209 items which are not permitted to be imported from India.

As per a World Trade Organisation rule, every member of WTO is required to accord this status to other member countries. India has already granted this status to all WTO members, including Pakistan.

Under the MFN status, a WTO member country is obliged to treat other trading nations in a non-discriminatory manner, especially with regard to customs duty and other levies, but Pakistan is yet to transition fully to MFN status for India.

Pakistan allows only 137 products to be exported from India through the Wagah border land route.

## Rooney excited to see what 'fearless' England are capable of

Burton-on-Trent (United Kingdom), Nov 14 (AFP): Wayne Rooney will make his final farewell as England's greatest ever goalscorer in a friendly against the United States on Thursday, but is excited at what a young squad can achieve under "fearless" coach Gareth Southgate in the years to come.

Rooney, 33, made the last of his 119 international appearances midway through England's World Cup qualifying campaign two years ago.

In contrast to his prime when a "golden generation" disappointed at major tournaments and never made it beyond the quarter-finals, Southgate's charges surpassed expectations by making it to the semi-finals of a World Cup for the first time in 28 years in Russia.

"Fearless," said Rooney when asked what set Southgate apart from the other five England managers he played under.

"Because a lot of the other managers didn't really give the youth the opportunity to express themselves and come into the team and have an impact."

Rooney insisted he has no regrets on retiring from international football a year before the World Cup, but admitted even he was surprised at how quickly Southgate's squad matured into contenders to be world champions. "I saw over two years ago the talent we had with the young players," he added.

"I believed those players, maybe not in the World Cup but the one after that, would be good enough to have a go at it.

They proved me wrong by doing so well in this World Cup."

England carried on the momentum from their World Cup campaign by inflicting Spain's first competitive defeat on home soil for 15 years in a thrilling 3-2 victory in Seville last month.

Should Luis Enrique's men fail to bounce back with victory in Croatia on Thursday, England will have the chance to progress to the inaugural Nations League semi-finals by beating the Croats at Wembley on Sunday.

However, the long-term target remains success at Euro 2020 with the extra incentive of the semi-finals and final to be played at Wembley.

"Myself along with all you guys (media) are of the opinion the squad is

growing, getting better. I'm excited to see them in the next tournament," added Rooney.

While the former Everton and Manchester United striker brings down the curtain on his England career, Southgate has the chance to test some of those at the end other end of their international career against the States.

Jadon Sancho, 18, is in line for his first start after starring in Borussia Dortmund's 3-2 win over Bayern Munich on Saturday.

Rooney himself burst onto the international scene as an 18-year-old at Euro 2004, but admitted he didn't always enjoy his England career as he should have after that tournament given the burden of expectation to perform he shouldered.

## It's long journey ahead for young Nihal: Chess great Anand

TAPAN MOHANTA

**KOLKATA, Nov 14 (PTI):** Indian chess great Viswanathan Anand sees signs of greatness in Nihal Sarin but says it's a long journey ahead for the impressive 14-year-old since there has been a trend of players struggling to replicate success as they age.

Sarin did exceedingly well by forcing a draw with five-time World Champion Anand in the eighth round of the Tata Steel Chess Rapid tournament here.

Currently ranked world number one in the U14 category, Sarin finished the rapid section of the tournament with just three points with six draws and three defeats but impressed with the calm manner in which he tackled the pressure of playing some of the biggest stars of the game.

"Going by the evidence so far, I would not rule it out (Nihal becoming a world champion in future). It's a long journey forward," Anand told PTI in an interview.

"At the end, he is just 14. I felt that he would really struggle in this tournament and he would be a bit out of place. It seemed the opposite. He seemed quite comfortable here. Not fully there, but he's a huge talent what I've seen of him."

Sarin, who became the 12th-youngest GM in chess a few months back, has a rating of 2576 in



classical chess.

Impressed with India consistently churning out talented chess players, Anand said it seems there is a "movement" but was baffled what happens to them when they start maturing.

"The problem with young talents is that you have an impression but they outgrow it very fast. I have no idea about what happens 10 years down the line. Not everybody's growth is going to be linear but we have got enormous depth of talents. Some of them will break through," Anand said.

Apart from the Thrissur boy Sarin, India also has seen the rap-

id rise of Chennai's 13-year-old R Praggnanandhaa who hit the headlines by becoming the second-youngest Grandmaster in chess history this year.

"I think what we have already is a movement. It's steadily producing lots and lots of players, and slowly the movement is taking the game of chess forward in India. I'm very happy with the steady growth that we have had."

Asked if a parallel can be drawn between Sarin and the reigning world champion Magnus Carlsen, Anand said, "Some results are comparable but Magnus was ahead at this stage. But his (Nihal's) under-

stand in everything seemed to very high at the moment. But it's a long journey."

"Magnus was playing amazing things when he was 14. He won the C group when he was 13 and then progressed into the B group and so on."

Playing white, Sarin opted to play safe and went for Catalan opening against Anand. After a series of exchanges, Sarin had a rook and bishop against Anand's rook and knight. Anand used his vast experience and defensive skill to salvage a draw with great effort by sacrificing his knight.

"It should be noted that he did not lose a single game with the white pieces. In fact, I don't even think anyone came close to beating him when he played with white. He impressed me a great deal here," Anand, playing in India for the first time since losing to Magnus Carlsen in the world championship battle of 2013, said. "Against me he played a line, which is as solid as it gets. There was not much space for me to try anything. It seemed to me he was dangerous enough and I could not gauge that and it did not work out well," he recalled about their eighth round exchange on Sunday.

"I should have played something else with black but the problem I was not feeling very comfortable. I didn't know what to aim for."

Anand, who won his second World Rapid Chess Championship last year, has been struggling for form in speed chess. He endured last-place finishes at St Louis Rapid and blitz meet.

"My results have fluctuated much more than I would have liked. Over long stretches, it's basically I like playing chess. I like studying chess. You just realise that a result here or there does not matter. You keep doing what you have always done -- to keep working and to keep learning new things."

"I'm disappointed but there there comes a time when you have to stop explaining and simply focus on playing chess. One loss you can try to explain it, but if it becomes a pattern, just keep playing hoping that you will comeback."

Anand however is not giving up and said he still has hopes to fight for sixth world championship title by finishing in the top two of the World Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia from November 4-30, 2019.

The top two finishers of the World Cup qualify for the Candidates Tournament for the World Chess Championship 2020.

"My focus will again shift to the World Cup. Because that would be the next big event to try to qualify for the Candidates (tournament)," he said.

## Pence says Myanmar's handling of Rohingya 'without excuse'

**SINGAPORE, NOV 14 (AP):** Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi has rebuffed criticism over her government's treatment of its ethnic Rohingya Muslims. US Vice President Mike Pence told Suu Kyi on Wednesday that the violence, which led more than 700,000 of the country's Rohingya minority to flee for Bangladesh since August 2017, was "without excuse."

Pence also said Myanmar's arrests and convictions of two Reuters journalists was "deeply troubling" to millions of Americans.

Pence and Suu Kyi met on the sidelines of the annual summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Singapore. Pence said the meeting was at Suu Kyi's request.

Suu Kyi said only Myanmar was in a position to explain what happened and how it saw things, just as Americans could best understand what is happening there.

## Israeli Defence Minister resigns; accuses Netanyahu of surrendering before Hamas

**HARINDER MISHRA**

**JERUSALEM, NOV 14 (PTI):** Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman resigned Wednesday and called for early elections, accusing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of "capitulating to terror" and surrendering before the Islamist group Hamas over a Gaza ceasefire agreement.

Over 460 rockets and mortar shells were fired at southern Israel in 25 hours on Monday and Tuesday, according to the Israeli army.

The Iron Dome missile defence system intercepted over 100 of them. Most of the rest landed in open fields, but dozens landed inside Israeli cities and towns, killing one person, injuring dozens more, and causing significant property damage.

In response, the Israeli military targeted approximately 160 sites in the Gaza Strip connected to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror groups, including four facilities that the army designated as "key strategic assets". As news of a ceasefire between the Israeli government and Hamas -- which controls the Gaza Strip -- broke, Lieberman's office put out a statement saying any claim that he had backed ending Israel's offensive was "fake news".

"I didn't look for reasons to quit," Lieberman said at a hurriedly called press conference.

"I tried to remain a loyal government member in the cabinet, keep differences internal even at an electoral cost. The two turning points were the millions of dollars in cash delivered to Gaza by Qatar and the ceasefire Israel agreed to with Hamas on Tuesday, the ultra-nationalist leader said. "There is no other definition, no other significance, but a capitulation to terror. What we are doing now as a country is buying short-term quiet at the cost of our long-term security," the defence minister said.

# Sri Lanka's Parliament passes no-confidence vote against Prime Minister Rajapaksa

**COLOMBO, NOV 14 (PTI):** Sri Lanka's Parliament on Wednesday passed a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa who was installed by President Maithripala Sirisena in a controversial move, a day after the Supreme Court overturned the presidential decree to dissolve Parliament and hold snap polls.

The Parliament on Wednesday met for the first time since October 26, when President Sirisena sacked prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, installed Rajapaksa in his place and suspended the Parliament plunging the island nation into a constitutional crisis.

Parliament Speaker Karu Jayasuriya announced that a majority of the 225-member assembly supported the no-confidence motion against Rajapaksa, the former strongman.

"According to the voice, I recognise that the government has no majority," Jayasuriya announced in the House as Rajapaksa supporters protested.

He gave the ruling after the no-confidence motion was taken for a vote. The Speaker calculated the votes based on the voices he heard as Rajapaksa supporters disrupted the proceedings.

Jayasuriya later adjourned the House until 10 am Thursday.

Speaker Jayasuriya has officially written to President Sirisena asking him to take further constitutional action on the issue.

A copy of the motion with 122



signatures of Parliamentarians, who have expressed lack of confidence in Prime Minister Rajapaksa and his cabinet, has been sent to President Sirisena.

The Speaker's office said that the Speaker has requested the President to take the next step under the Constitution.

Speaking after the no-trust vote, ousted prime minister Wickremesinghe claimed that his government had been restored after extra constitutional action by President Sirisena to sack him as the premier.

"We will now take steps to ensure that the government in place before October 26 will continue. I wish to inform all government servants and police that you should not carry out illegal orders from the purported government that has failed to demonstrate the confidence of the people," he said.

Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP) Deputy Leader Sajith Premadasa told reporters that the Government headed by Rajapaksa clearly lost the floor test.

He said Prime Minister Rajapaksa must now step down as he does not have majority support in Parliament.

However, Dinesh Gunawardena and Vasudeva Nanayakkara, both Rajapaksa's senior aides, said Speaker's action was illegal.

Housing Minister Wimal Weerawansa said the floor test in Parliament was illegal and so Rajapaksa will continue as Prime Minister, further deepening the political crisis that has paralysed the government for nearly three weeks.

The Parliament session on Wednesday morning comes a day after the Supreme Court on Tuesday overturned President Sirisena's controversial decision to dissolve Parli-

ament and halted the preparations for snap polls on January 5.

In its ruling, the apex court had said Sirisena's dissolution of Parliament will be suspended until December 7 and it will consider all the petitions filed on the President's decision next month before giving a final ruling.

After the court verdict, Speaker Jayasuriya summoned Parliament's session for Wednesday morning.

Sirisena had dissolved Parliament after it became clear that he lacked support from lawmakers to install Rajapaksa as the new Prime Minister following his sacking of Wickremesinghe as premier.

While sacking prime minister Wickremesinghe, president Sirisena had also suspended Parliament till November 16. He, however, advanced the convening of the House to November 14 amid international and domestic pressure against the move.

Major political parties, including the United National Party and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna and an election commission member Ratnajeewan Hoole, on Monday dragged Sirisena to the Supreme Court, challenging his decision by filing fundamental rights petitions against the move, which they said violated the Constitution.

Sirisena dissolved Parliament last week, almost 20 months before its term was to end, and ordered snap election on January 5, plunging the country's into an unprecedented

political and constitutional crises.

Wickremesinghe has maintained that his sacking by Sirisena was unconstitutional and illegal and he was still the prime minister. He had demanded that Parliament be convened to hold a vote among the lawmakers to decide who enjoyed majority support in Parliament to be the Prime Minister.

As pressure grew and both sides claimed they had the numbers, the President dissolved Parliament and called for elections.

Rajapaksa needed the support of minimum 113 parliamentarians in the 225-member House to prove his majority. Sirisena on Sunday stoutly defended his move to dissolve Parliament, saying it was taken to prevent clashes among rival lawmakers. He said there were reports that politicians would clash during the floor test, which was due on November 14.

Rajapaksa, 72, who ruled Lanka for a nearly decades from 2005, was unexpectedly defeated by his deputy Sirisena in the presidential election held in January 2015 with the support from Wickremesinghe's UNP.

However, the power-sharing arrangement between Sirisena and Wickremesinghe became increasingly tenuous on several policy matters, especially on issues like the economy and security. And subsequently, Sirisena abruptly ousted Wickremesinghe and replaced him with Rajapaksa.

## Trump celebrates Diwali, leaves out Hindus in tweet

**LALIT K JHA**

**WASHINGTON, NOV 14 (PTI):** President Donald Trump celebrated Diwali at a White House ceremony but surprisingly omitted mentioning Hindus - the largest community in the world that celebrate the festival of lights - in his tweets, drawing severe criticism from netizens forcing him to redo his tweet.

Trump hosted Diwali celebrations in the historic Roosevelt Room of the White House which was attended by prominent Indian-Americans, Indian-origin administration and diplomatic officials.

Diwali was celebrated across the world on November 7.

In his first tweet, he forgot to greet the Hindus.

"Today, we gathered for Diwali, a holiday observed by Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains throughout the United States & around the world. Hundreds of millions of people have gathered with family & friends to light the Diya and to mark the beginning of a New Year," Trump said in a tweet as he posted along with



a YouTube link of the White House event.

The alert netizens were quick in identifying that he missed greeting the 'Hindus'.

"It is a major Hindu holiday," CNN's Congressional correspondent Manu Raju said in a tweet. Trump soon deleted his first tweet, and replaced it with another one.

"Today, we gathered for Diwali, a holiday observed by Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains throughout the United States & around the world. Hundreds of millions of people have gathered with family & friends to light the Diya and to mark the beginning of a New

Year," Trump said in his second tweet which again missed mentioning the Hindus.

"So after initially not including Hindus in his first Diwali tweet, Trump deletes that tweet and reposts another message. And still leaves out Hindus...," Raju said, as he was joined by several others on the social media.

Soon, the president deleted his second tweet and came up with the third one.

"It was my great honour to host a celebration of Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Lights, in the Roosevelt Room at the @WhiteHouse this afternoon. Very, very special

people! Trump said in his third tweet.

The White House did not respond to questions on the series of tweets by the president and the criticism that he did not mention the Hindus in his tweets.

"President Trump leaves out Hindus in Diwali tweets," Time magazine said in an article.

Trump had also mentioned Hindus in his November 7 Diwali greetings.

"Known as the Festival of lights, Diwali is a joyous and spiritual time marked by many Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, the president had said in his Diwali greetings last week.

## Over 8,400 hate crime incidents reported in US in 2017: FBI

**Washington, Nov 14 (PTI):** Over 8,400 hate crime incidents - including 24 against Sikhs, 15 against Hindus and over 300 against Muslims - were reported in the US in 2017, according to an FBI report.

The report released on Tuesday is topped with 1,678 hate crimes committed against the Jews. In all, as many as 8,437 hate crimes were recorded in the year 2017. Nine anti-Buddhist hate crimes were also registered last year, the report said.

According to the report, a total of 24 anti-Sikh, 15 anti-Hindu

and 314 anti-Muslim hate crimes were reported in the US. The Sikh Coalition, a community-based organisation that defends Sikh civil rights, said that in 2017, it received 12 anti-Sikh hate crime cases and tracked a total of 24 anti-Sikh hate-related incidents nationwide.

"This figure alone is under representative of the problem since many individuals impacted by hate do not report the incidents.

"For the reported cases to law enforcement, a historical challenge is that agencies routinely fail to identify bias during investigations.

Even when they do, they often do not report it to federal authorities, so the data never shows up in the statistics," it said.

"Even with incomplete data, this new report shows our elected officials that hate in America is thriving and profoundly impacting the safety and well-being of minority communities nationwide," said Sim Singh, Sikh Coalition senior advocacy manager. He said politicians were culpable when they drive divisive policies and "bigoted political rhetoric" that routinely puts lives at greater risk.

There are approxi-

mately 500,000 Sikhs in the US. In the wake of the 2012 Oak Creek, Wisconsin massacre inside a gurdwara, the FBI finally agreed to begin tracking anti-Sikh hate crimes in 2015.

There has been a rise in racism and crimes against South Asian Americans since the November 2016 election of President Donald Trump, first Indian-origin US Senator Kamala Harris said recently, calling on Americans to stand united and speak the truth to deal with these issues.

Indian engineer Srinivas Kuchibhotla was killed in Kansas in Midwestern US in February last year.

## India votes against UNGA draft resolution banning death penalty

**YOSHITA SINGH**

**UNITED NATIONS, NOV 14 (PTI):** India has voted against a UN General Assembly draft resolution on the use of death penalty, saying it goes against the statutory law of the country where an execution is carried out in the "rarest of rare" cases.

The draft resolution, taken up in the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian, Cultural) of the General Assembly Tuesday, was approved with a recorded vote of 123 in favour, 36 against and 30 abstentions.

India was among the countries that voted against the resolution, which would have the Assembly call on all States to respect international standards on the rights of those facing death penalty and ensure that it is not applied on the basis of discriminatory laws or as a result of discriminatory or arbitrary application of the law.

First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN Paulomi Tripathi, giving the country's explanation of vote, said the resolution sought to promote a moratorium on executions with the aim of abolishing death penalty.

"My delegation has voted against the resolution as a whole, as it goes against statutory law in India," she said.

"In India, the death penalty is exercised in 'rarest of rare' cases, where the crime committed is so heinous that it shocks the conscience of the society. Indian law

provides for all requisite procedural safeguards, including the right to a fair trial by an independent Court, presumption of innocence, the minimum guarantees for defence, and the right to review by a higher court," she said.

The draft resolution's passage followed an intense debate and Singapore introduced an amendment on behalf of 34 countries that reaffirmed the countries' sovereign right to develop their own legal system.

The Committee then approved this amendment by a recorded vote of 96 in favour to 73 against, with 14 abstentions.

India voted in favour of this amendment. By its terms, the Assembly would reaffirm the sovereign right of all countries to develop their own legal systems, including determining appropriate legal penalties, in accordance with their international law obligations.

Tripathi said every State has the sovereign right to determine its own legal system and appropriate legal penalties and it was in this context that India voted in favour of the amendment but has voted against the resolution as a whole.

Singapore's delegate decried the draft resolution's "one-size-fits-all" approach to a delicate question, which seeks to impose a particular vision of the world onto others.

The representative

of Singapore said the amendment aimed to ensure respect for the diversity of views.

The amendment is simple and neutral and it does not take a position on the substance of the draft resolution, nor make judgments about State policies, Singapore said.

Tripathi said the Indian laws have specific provisions for commutation of death penalty in the case of pregnant women and has rulings that prohibited executions of persons with mental or intellectual disabilities, while juvenile offenders cannot be sentenced to death under any circumstances.

Death sentences in India must also be confirmed by a superior court and an accused has the right to appeal to a High Court or the Supreme Court, which has adopted guidelines on clemency and the treatment of death row prisoners, she said.

Tripathi said "poverty, socio-economic, psychic compulsions, underserved adversities in life" constituted new mitigating factors to be considered by courts in commuting a death sentence to life imprisonment.

She also said the President of India in all cases, and the Governors of States under their respective jurisdictions, have the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or, to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of death penalty.

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**NYC STRUT!** Model Chrissy Teigen was seen wearing black on black leather jacket and ripped jeans while out in NYC.

## I felt invisible growing up: Viola Davis

**NEW YORK, NOV 14 (PTI):** Oscar winner Viola Davis has said she felt "invisible" in her formative years.

The 53-year-old actor said her lack of self-belief stemmed from a long line of women who did not have a voice.

"You know, I came from a story where I didn't feel just less than or I just didn't have a voice or not pretty. I felt invisible. I came from a long line of women who felt invisible. And they're the ones who attempted to throw me an invisible rope.

"Courage is just fear said with prayers. And I feel that it takes a great deal of courage to hit bottom and feel invisible and then to share one's story. But it's in the sharing of the story in front of people who have empathy that kills shame. And once that shame is killed, guess what? You're running," Davis said in her address at Glamour's 2018 Women of the Year awards.

The "How to Get Away with Murder" star received one of Glamour's Women of the Year honours.

In the wake of the #MeToo uprising, she said, it is necessary for the change to come from within.

"When I look at the zeitgeist today and look at what is happening with women in terms of sexual assault, in terms of poverty, in terms of politically what's happening, I think to myself the change and the shift that needs to happen is the internal. It's finding the courage to own



# 'Game of Thrones' final season to air in April 2019

**LOS ANGELES, NOV 14 (PTI):** Summer of 2019 is bound to be ice-cold for the real world as the final season of "Game of Thrones" gears up to hit HBO next April.

The network is yet to reveal the specific airdate of the season premier of the eighth and last installment of the epic fantasy series, EW reported.

HBO dropped a video on Twitter Monday teasing the plot of the much-awaited chapter via a recap of the previous seasons. The 1.15 minute-long clip, however, did not feature any new footage.

"Every battle. Every betrayal. Every risk. Every fight. Every sacrifice. Every death. All for the throne," it said.

The channel's official account also shared multiple images promoting the final season, with the hashtag #ForTheThrone on the microblogging site.

The photographs highlighted key events from the past showcasing characters - both alive and dead.

The stills revisited earlier turnarounds in the life of Daenerys Targaryen, Jon Snow, Tyrion Lannister, Cersei Lannister, The Night King, Bran and Arya Stark, including a shot from the Battle of Bastards. They also remembered departed characters such as Eddard and Catalyn Stark, Joffery Baratheon and Hodor.

The first episode is written by Dave Hill and directed by David Nutter.

Filming for season eight began in October 2017 and wrapped 10 months later.



## Pedro Pascal may lead new 'Star Wars' TV series



**LOS ANGELES, NOV 14 (PTI):** Pedro Pascal has reportedly been offered to headline "Star Wars" TV series "The Mandalorian".

Sources told Variety, the "Narcos" star has been finalised for the role and the talks are underway.

Written by Jon Favreau, the series is set after the fall of the Empire and before the emergence of the First Order. It follows the laborious effort of a lone gunfighter in the outer who reaches of the galaxy far from the authority of the New Republic.

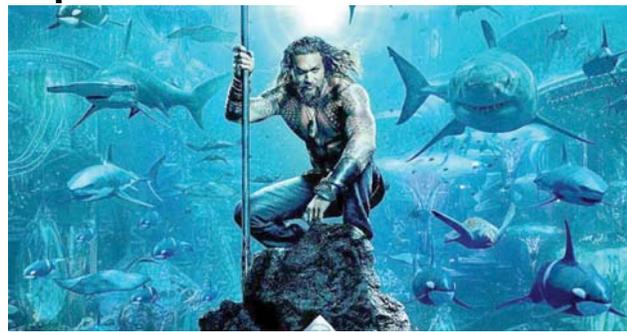
Dave Filoni, who has worked on "Star Wars: The Clone Wars" and "Star Wars: Rebels," will direct the first episode of the series.

Taika Waititi, Bryce Dallas Howard, Rick Famuyiwa and Deborah Chow will direct other episodes.

The series is expected to premiere on the Disney streaming service, Disney+, to be launched in 2019.

Disney also announced a prequel series on the "Rogue One" character Cassian Andor, played by Diego Luna.

## 'Aquaman' to release in India before US



**MUMBAI, NOV 13 (PTI):** Warner Bros is set to release "Aquaman" in India on December 14, a week before the movie hits the US theatres.

The film, directed by James Wan, features Jason Momoa plays Aquaman.

The movie is the origin story of half-human, half-Atlantean Arthur Curry and takes him on the journey of his lifetime -- one that will not only force him to face who he really is, but to discover if he is worthy of who he was born to be.

Momoa, who is best known for playing Dothraki leader Khal Drogo in "Game of Thrones," said Aquaman has been his toughest role till date.

"Aquaman is the hardest movie I've done in my life, physically, and I had two stunt doubles. Both of them got hurt, and so did I. The sheer amount of stunts and action in this was insane," he said.

The film will release in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu across cinemas in India in 3D and IMAX 3D.

A special extended five minutes footage of "Aquaman" will be played with "Fantastic Beats: The Crimes of Grindelwald".

"Aquaman" also features Amber Heard as Mera, Willem Dafoe as Vulko, Patrick Wilson as Orm/Ocean Master and Nicole Kidman as Arthur's mom, Atlanna.

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**SEPARATE HOSTEL FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.**

**ARIES** : Today you're likely to feel like the powerful creature you are, Aries. Your physical energy is high, and you look and feel great. Your intellect is sharp, so if you indulge in any kind of learning process, you will benefit greatly. Your creative energy is also high, so it's a good day to work on artistic projects. In the evening, you will feel especially romantic, so plan an intimate encounter with a special someone!

**TAURUS** : Your intuition should be very high right now, Taurus, as is your power of manifestation. Today you need to try to curb your thoughts and only think beautiful things, because you might find that whatever you think about seems to manifest! Some powerful dreams and visions can open up new lines of intellectual exploration for you that can have a potent effect on your immediate

future. Go to it.

**GEMINI** : Your immediate goals and wishes might suddenly appear to come together today, seemingly of their own accord. This might be strange, Gemini, and perhaps a bit frightening, but your inner power is especially strong now, and your higher self is manifesting what you've worked long and hard to achieve. At times like this, it's important to remember those who helped you along the way. You will want to acknowledge them as well as yourself.

**CANCER** : If you've been working toward manifesting extra money in your life, Cancer, you will probably see it happen today. Copious physical and emotional energy gives your inner power of mind over matter a special impetus, and you might see the results you've wanted in finance and other matters. Professional interests should also be going well, as

well as any personal projects. Keep up the good work!

**LEO** : Obstacles that you encountered in attaining your cherished goals could suddenly seem to melt away, clearing the way to make your dreams come true, Leo. This could involve physical health, plans for travel and education, and self-expression. You could also feel especially passionate now, so a romantic evening with that special someone would be particularly enjoyable. You feel great, so look your best, too!

**VIRGO** : A lot of activity could occur at home today, Virgo. Perhaps you will have visitors or do some work on the house. Your intuition is particularly strong right now, and you could pick up too much of the thoughts and feelings of others, even strangers. You will probably be most in tune with your family. Take care to guard your thoughts. Today

you might find that whatever you think of could actually manifest

**LIBRA** : Whatever goals you've been trying to reach may finally become reality today, Libra. Finalizing everything could involve a lot of running around in the car and meeting with other people, but you're likely to feel exhilarated all the same. Powerful people could prove to be of valuable help to you. As a result, matters should be going very well right now. Make the most of it!

**SCORPIO** : Events over which you seem to have no control seem to be coming together to make things happen for you, Scorpio. You might find this a bit frightening, but don't let it get to you. Go with the flow. You've worked hard for what's happening today, and you deserve to enjoy the results. The exhilaration you feel could manifest as abundant physical energy.

This could be too much of a good thing. Don't overdo

**SAGITTARIUS** : Your energy is probably high today, almost to the point where you feel you might be able to run a marathon! Seriously, Sagittarius, you're probably thinking in terms of getting out of town for a while. Exercising or participating in sports could also be appealing. You might direct some of this energy into creative projects. Take care not to overdo it. You could still get too tired

**CAPRICORN** : Your inner power is probably at an all-time high, Capricorn. You should be feeling especially confident. You're likely to have a stronger influence on others than usual. You could exercise the power of mind over matter. You could think of something only to have it happen at some point during the day. Today you should guard your thoughts and

be careful what you wish for. You just might get it

**AQUARIUS** : Some fascinating conversations with friends, relatives, and others close to you could take place today, bringing new ideas your way, Aquarius. You have both the physical energy and the inner power to make things happen, so you should make the most of it. Carefully consider your needs and aspirations and formulate a plan of action to make them a reality. The results might surprise you!

**PISCES** : Your career and financial goals should be within your grasp, Pisces. Both your physical energy and inner power are operating at their peak, making this an ideal day to make clear plans. Also, if you've been working to improve your health, you might see some definite results. If not, this is a great day to start a new health and exercise regimen. Go to it!