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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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*No  
immigrant  
tag on  
Sikkimese  
Nepalese*

**says SDF  
REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 30 NOV:**  
Sikkim Democratic Front has asserted that the government has been fulfilling all promises made in its manifesto and will fulfil those that are still pending as every work takes time. The SDF government has already removed the immigrant tag on Sikkimese Nepali community and fulfilled many other political demands with its continuous and tireless efforts, informs an SDF press release issued by its general secretary [press & publicity], Chudamani Mishra.

The release mentions that Limboo-Tamang communities of Sikkimese Nepali origin have already got tribal status from the Central government in 2003 and both communities have been enjoying benefits as a tribal community.

It is further added that Sikkimese people also got income tax exemption on the basis of Sikkim Subject. Tribal status is provided to any community only after a thorough study of religion, culture, cuisines and other details of that particular community.

On the same, SDF has said that it is not wise to raise the immigrant tag issue when Limboo and Tamang of Sikkimese Nepali origin have been enjoying tribal status and to talk about approaching the Court or the Centre for the same.

## With 445 HIV+ve cases, Sikkim cannot rest easy or stop combating stigma

**ARPAN PRADHAN  
GANGTOK, 30 NOV:**

The first HIV+ve case in Sikkim was detected in the year 1995, a decade since the Virus arrived in India. It broke the 3-figure mark in Sikkim sometime in the year 2008, and as of today, Sikkim has reported 445 cases of HIV/AIDS.

As far as prevalence rates go, Sikkim ranks very low, stands in the second-last position in fact as per the latest report of the National AIDS Control Organization which records that average HIV infected persons in the State [per

lakh population] stands at 0.05%. NACO has also felicitated Sikkim for the same with a certificate and memento.

The low prevalence rate notwithstanding, HIV remains a worry, and this ties in effectively with the theme for this year's World AIDS Day, "Know your Status", a theme which aims to convince more people to get tested for HIV and not limit such testing only to the high-risk groups.

World AIDS Day, falling on 01 December, is aimed to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. The Sikkim State AIDS Control Society



ety is all set to observe the Day with a variety of programme in Gangtok. This was informed

by the Project Director, SSACS, Dr Uttam Pradhan, at a press meet here today. The SSACS office here

will host awareness programmes and felicitation of various organizations and individuals working in the

field of AIDS control and awareness, it is informed.

"World AIDS Day is the day which focuses on

spreading awareness and eradicating the stigma associated with the disease," highlighted Dr Pradhan.

The purpose of observing the World AIDS Day is to educate people about HIV: on how to avoid catching the virus, to reduce stigma surrounding those who live with it, and to raise awareness and encourage people to have themselves tested for HIV, he added.

Each year, the campaign has a specific theme. The theme for this year is "Know your HIV status, Live Life Positively."

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## Workshop held on finding solutions to Gangtok's traffic problems

**GANGTOK, 30 NOV (IPR):**

The Urban Development & Housing Department, Government of Sikkim, conducted a consultation and workshop on finding short term and long term solutions to traffic problems in Gangtok at Chintan Bhawan today. Minister for UD&HD, N.K Subba was the chief guest for the day and Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), PD Rai was the guest of honour.

Deputy Mayor (GMC), Lashey Doma; Secretary, UD&HD, Ganga Pradhan; IG (Law & Order), Gyanendra. K. Verma; ASP (Traffic), Ongmu Bhutia; SP (East), Hemraj Rai; Chairperson, State Pollution Control Board, Dr. Gopal Pradhan, along with officials of various departments, Colonel G. Banerjee



and Colonel B.N Chetan from the 17th Mountain Division, representatives from Feedback Infra, National Highway & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), Urban

Mass Transit Company (UMTC), Mercedes Benz, the Truck Drivers Association were also present at the workshop.

Chief Town Planner (UD&HD), Devika Shar-

ma welcomed the gathering. MP (Lok Sabha), PD Rai, in the keynote address, applauded the work done so far by the government as well as welcomed feedback for mea-

sures to be implemented.

Minister (UD&HD) in his address encouraged more interactions and awareness programmes on traffic decongestion and urbanization. He also informed about the future projects of the government in providing solutions to tackle the traffic menace like widening of various roads at busy junctions and construction of pavements and foot-paths for efficient pedestrian movement, thus reducing car movements. Other projects in the pipeline include dismantling older structures like the BSNL building and converting it into taxi stoppage points.

Nitin Upreti of Feedback Infra gave a presentation

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**CAREER COUNSELLING and STUDY ABROAD**  
with Minds can Education, Noida

**04-06 Dec, 2018**  
**Hotel Rendezvous, Gangtok**

**4th Dec, 9.30 am-**  
Topic:  
(a) How to choose subjects for class II ( for class 9 and 10 students)

**4th Dec, 4 pm-**  
Topic:  
(a) Myths vs reality - Studying outside India  
(b) Which course / career stream to pursue after class 12 ( in India or Abroad )

**5th Dec, 9.30 AM**  
(a) How to plan your college / university education

**5th Dec, 4 pm-**  
(a) Myths vs reality - Studying outside India  
(b) Which course / career stream to pursue after class 12 ( in India or Abroad)

**WALK IN EVENT.**  
**FREE FOR ALL**

**For individual counseling, students have to register at Hotel Rendezvous counter from 1st Dec onwards**

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# WORLD AIDS DAY

## KNOW YOUR HIV STATUS



**"Live Life Positively"**

R.O. NO. 200/IPR/PUB/DIV/18-19  
Dated 29.11.2018

Organized by Sikkim State AIDS Control Society.



Supported by Sikkim Network of Positive People.



## Mangsari farmers trained on pest management

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 30 Nov:**

Mevedir organized a ward level training on Pest Management on 29 Nov at Magarjung ward under Mangsari GPU, West Sikkim in the presence of Bishnu Maya Chettri (Ward Panchayat), Trilochand Sharma (Horticulture staff) along with Mevedir Master Trainers, Subash Sharma and Renuka Chettri, a press release informs.

The training program started with Subash Sharma explaining the procedure of preparing home-made Herbal Spray. He informed the farmers that locally available resources like Eupatorium (Banmara), Artemisea (Titeypati), Dhatura (Dhokray), Lyonia (Angeri), Hattibar (Agave) have to be

chopped and diluted with cow urine, kept in a closed jar for seven days for fermentation. After this the spray is ready for use.

He informed that this solution is effective for controlling pests and saving the plant from attack by other pests. The farmers were also informed about the dosage of this herbal spray.

The next session was chaired by Renuka Chettri who briefed about the various ICS documentation like the farm inspection checklist, the maintenance of the Farm Diaries and the reason for maintaining the records of farm activities was also explained.

Before concluding, Bishnu Maya Chettri gave small speech regarding Organic Farming.

### With 445 HIV+ve...

The aim of this year's drive is to encourage people worldwide to get themselves tested.

This becomes important, as according to a report, very few people living with HIV are aware of their status. This also raises the risk of the illness spreading unknowingly on account of various reasons that causes HIV/AIDS.

Dr Pradhan said that people are afraid to take the HIV test because there is too much stigma around HIV testing and status. "On the occasion of World AIDS Day, we talk about some of the top reasons why people refrain from getting themselves tested for HIV," he added.

SSACS, in association with the Sikkim Mahila Patrakar Sangh, will be holding a candlelight vigil at Titanic Park the same evening. During the day, there will be street plays at various locations in and around Gangtok.

SSACS, in association with the Drug Users Forum of Sikkim, will also organize an awareness programme at Sikkim State Jail, informs Dr Pradhan.

He said that HIV/AIDS is like any other disease nowadays and everyone should come forward for the test without any fear.

Dr Pradhan also informed that the World AIDS Day is being observed in all four districts with a variety of awareness programmes and HIV-testing options in different locations.

The Red Ribbon Clubs will also play a vital role in organizing various awareness programme during the observance of World AIDS Day.

This is the 30th anniversary of World AIDS Day.

### Workshop held on...

on a Comprehensive Mobility Plan, based on a study made on Gangtok terrain and traffic movement. He provided possible solutions of decongestion through cable cars, creation of ring roads that help movement on inner ring road and outer ring road of Gangtok.

He also cited examples of cities all over the world like Suwon in South Korea, Bandung in Java, Indonesia and Medellin in Columbia whose topography resemble Gangtok in many ways and suggested the measures they have taken, like skywalks, eco-mobility festivals etc. to instil a sense of ownership to the public utilizing these public commute services.

Ankush Malhotra of UMTC provided a detailed presentation on Techno-Economic Feasibility of Cable Car as public transport. A study based on travel characteristic of Gangtok while keeping in mind the safety measures, he said that locations have been identified as stations and a model drawn for cable cars to implement as a mainstream public transport. He also cited various examples of cities from all across the globe who use cable cars as their mode of transport and concluded that it would work if integrated in co-ordination with other mode of public transport.

Kailash Pradhan of Architects of Sikkim gave a presentation on Ownership Model. He put forth the unique and peculiar ways of Gangtok town and stated that while this was a problem to find solutions for, it was also an opportunity to prove ourselves as concerned citizens with a sense of belonging. He presented a schematic connection draft made by architects and designers and suggested that a collaboration with a technical and financial team would bring about fruitful results. He stressed on the public taking responsibility and coming on board for infrastructural ventures.

Vijay Kalakala, Deputy General Manager- Mercedes Benz spoke on Safe Roads providing data of road fatalities and reminding the public to focus on feasible safety measures.

The interactive session had points put forward from stakeholders, traffic police administration, government officials as well as the public. UPHD as well as officials from the Motor Vehicle Department took the feedback so as to come up with solutions and measures.

In the post lunch session, the workshop was divided into six groups who each discussed various topics like traffic management, surface improvement solutions, alternative mobility solutions etc.

One member from each group presented their ideas and proposals after the discussion.

In conclusion, the MP (Lok Sabha) summarized the reports put together and stressed on sustainable development goals while also asking the stakeholders and entrepreneurs to work together in moving capital for efficient implementation of these measures. He ended his note reminding all that traffic congestion affects everyone and therefore all must act collectively and responsibly.

# Minister Ghatani chairs session at International Ambedkar Conclave

**NEW DELHI, 30 Nov (IPR):** Health Minister Arjun Kumar Ghatani, who is also an executive member of the Forum of SC / ST Legislators and Parliamentarians, addressed the International Ambedkar Conclave at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, today.

The two-day conclave was inaugurated by the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, in the presence of the Governor of Haryana, Satyadev Narayan, Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Thawar Chand Gehlot, MoS Social Justice & Empowerment Vijay Sampla, Former Dy Speaker Dr. Chiranjit Singh Atwal, Minister Social Justice Govt. of Gujarat Ishwarbhai Parmar, Member of Parliament Rajinder Pal Gautam, National Working President of Forum of SC/ST Legislators and Parliamentarians, Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal, and delegates from various states of the country.

In his inaugural address, the President of India congratulated the



Forum for organizing the International Ambedkar Conclave and stressed the incredible role played by Dr BR Ambedkar in framing the Constitution of India and underlined the preamble, directive principles and fundamental rights as its key components.

He drew attention to the importance of women's participation in the democratic process and also called for proper coordination between organizations working for economic reformation of the weaker sections of the society.

He urged the house to extend support towards upliftment of underprivileged and marginalised sections of population who have been left behind in journey of development and progress of the country.

Minister Mr Ghatani, after sharing the dais with the President of India in the inaugural session, chaired a technical session on the Constitution and Role of Judiciary.

In his deliberations, he shared that the judiciary worked as a balanc-

ing wheel which keeps the equilibrium between fundamental rights and social justice.

He proposed the establishing of 24X7 helpline number to report and address the issue of atrocities which was unanimously welcomed by the house with a huge round of applause.

He took the opportunity to speak on the implementation of political, religious and educational rights in the state of Sikkim.

He added that the state govt, under the

leadership of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, ensured social justice to every community along with political rights. The State Government, he informed, has established Atrocities Court for the protection of the rights of the SC community.

He detailed the benefits and vision of Dr Ambedkar Student Scholarship Scheme implemented in Sikkim dedicated to the district topper students of class V from the SC community.

He also highlight-

ed the Chief Minister's Meritorious Scholarship Scheme (CMMSS) implemented in Sikkim since 2010 to provide a prestigious educational platform in renowned public schools of the country to meritorious students of the State.

He also came out with various suggestions to encourage entrepreneurship in the field of Tourism, Health Care, Industrial Sector, Education, initiation of SC/ST youth exchange programme.

He also urged the forum to adopt suggestions put forth by speakers from various backgrounds and drew attention to the responsibility of citizens, cooperation of bureaucracy and implementation of constitutional rights.

Minister Mr Ghatani also handed over copies of the book titled, "Pawan Chamling: Champion of Social Justice", Bhim Chetna (literary magazine), and Sikkim Herald to the President of India, Union Ministers and other delegates.

## Dzongu BRG meets to discuss NNM

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**DZONGU, 30 Nov:**

A meeting of the Block Resource Group (BRG) of Dzongu was held yesterday in the office of SDM-Dzongu.

The State Government has directed for a Block Convergence Plan (BCP) on implementation and monitoring of National Nutrition Mission by a committee headed by the SDM as chairperson, BDO Dzongu as vice chairperson and having representatives from line departments. The committee is required to monitor the National Nutrition Mission and ensure proper outreach

through awareness and counselling to reduce the rate of anaemia, malnutrition, stunting and low birth weight.

The main issue discussed at the meeting was network connectivity issues in Dzongu to upload progress on project's dashboard. The SDM, Dzongu, TD Bhutia, and Zilla member Nimkit Lepcha decided to put up a proposal highlighting the network connectivity issues with the DRG for approval in the next meeting and also requested all the line departments to come together to make the mission successful.

## BJP questions intent and logic behind recent slew of sops

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 30 Nov:**

Bharatiya Janata Party, Sikkim Pradesh, has rejected the recent policy decisions of the Sikkim Democratic Front Government as eyewash and shallow gimmicks announced with an eye on the approaching elections.

The Sikkim-BJP president, DB Chauhan, in a press release issued today, contended that the SDF Government has failed to hear the public's pains for the past four years and was now making such announcements such as one family-one job, janta mela and other schemes to

cover up for its failings through the term.

Questioning the State Government's move to provide 17,000 jobs within this year, BJP-Sikkim has questioned where the vacancies were found so suddenly and so near the elections.

It has also questioned whether the one family-one job scheme will be extended to families aligned to Opposition parties.

BJP also wants to know the status of the government jobs, financial position to appoint 17,000 new employees, legality of creating so many posts, the release adds.

## Legal services camp on child rights held at Boomtar

**GANGTOK, 30 Nov (IPR):** A legal Services camp was organized by District Legal Services Authority, West, in coordination with Sikkim State Legal Services Authority under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority at District Prison, Boomtar, Namchi, South Sikkim.

The program was chaired by Chairperson cum District & Sessions Judge, Jiwan Kr.Kharka, I.D. Secretary cum Chief Judi-

cial Magistrate, Subarna Rai, Ex-Officio Chairperson cum Judicial Magistrate, Zamyang Choden Bhutia, panel advocates, Pujan Kharka and Bishal Pradhan.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act & Sikkim Anti-Drugs Act were discussed in brief along with various other child rights. The program concluded with an interactive session which witnessed the participation of many local residents.

## Foundation Stone laid for SC/ST Students' Hostel at ATTC

**GANGTOK, 30 Nov (IPR):** HRDD Minister RB Subba laid the foundation stone of a 48-bed SC/ST Hostel funded by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) at ATTC, Bardang, today.

The Principal Chief Engineer and other officials of the Engineering Wing, HRDD, presented the building and site plan of the proposed structure.

The Minister wished the very best to the Principal, ATTC, and all faculty members and hoped the new infrastructure would be a welcome addition for further development of ATTC.

He also hoped that this hostel would also help in fulfilling the



dream of the Chief Minister of providing technical and professional education free of cost to even the most underprivileged sections of the society.

ATTC has established a name for itself in providing good quality

technical education with 100% placement, the Minister added.

Other dignitaries who attended the ceremony and Bhumi Puja were Area MLA, Gopal Baraily, Additional Chief Secretary, HRDD GP Up-

adhyaya, Principal Chief Engineer, HRDD BS Gautam and his team, Special Secretary cum Director, Higher & Technical Education, HRDD DK Pradhan and other officials of the HRDD, Government of Sikkim.

## Teesta-IV HEP organizes multispecialty free health check-up camp



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 30 Nov:**

Teesta-IV HE Project in association with District Health Department, Mangan and Panchayat, Tingchim Chandey organised a multispecialty free health check-up camp on 27 and 29 Nov.

A press release informs that these medical camps were organised after conducting a detailed base line survey for entire GPU to determine the ailments the population was mostly suffering with. The base line survey was conducted by Teesta-IV with the help of Self Help Group (SHG) of the GPU over a period of two months and based on the findings of the survey these two medical camps were organised initially for two most affected wards i.e Tadong ward and Mola ward.

A team of specialist doctors led by Dr. Chultin Lepcha (Respiratory Medicine) from District Hospital, Singtam, Dr Upashna Gurung (Psychiatry), Dr Subhash Tamang (ENT), Dr. Ringzing D Bhutia (Dental) and Dr. Jennifer (GDMO, Dikchu) from District Hospital, Mangan provided consultation to about 170 patients on 27 Nov and about 100 patients on 29 Nov including children from adjoining schools. The prescribed medicines were arranged by NHPC Limited and were distributed free of cost to the patients, the release mentions.

The Medical Camps were inaugurated by T. Bhutia [Upadhyaksha, North] at Mola ward and S.Bhutia [Panchayat President at Tadong ward] in presence of officials from NHPC Limited

and Health Department.

Speaking on the occasion, Ramesh Mukhiya, GM (I/c), Teesta-IV HE Project thanked all the visiting doctors from state government and local public for facilitating the successful conduction of camps. He informed that review camps shall also be organised shortly to ascertain the impacts of these two camps and improvement gained from the treatments.

On this occasion, the Psychiatry Department of District Hospital, Mangan organised a talk on "Community Mental Health Problems" where in the specialists in this field, Dr Upashna Gurung and Sangam Sharma (Psychologist) delivered comprehensive awareness about the diseases and primary ways to tackle the same.

## Subsidised LPG price cut by Rs 6.5; mkt price LPG cut by Rs 133

**NEW DELHI, Nov 30 (PTI):** Domestic cooking gas (LPG) price Friday was cut by Rs 6.52 per cylinder on account of tax impact on the reduced market rate for the fuel. A 14.2-kg subsidised LPG cylinder will cost Rs 500.90 in the national capital from midnight tonight as against Rs 507.42 currently, Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the country's largest fuel retailer, said in a statement. The price reduction comes soon after six consecutive monthly hikes in rates since June. Prior to this price cut, rates had gone up by Rs 14.13 per cylinder since then. Subsidised LPG rates were last hiked by Rs 2.94 per cylinder with effect from November 1.

IOC said non-subsidised or market priced LPG rates have been cut by a steep Rs 133 per cylinder to reflect fall in international oil rates and strengthening of the rupee. It will now cost Rs 809.50 per 14.2-kg bottle in Delhi.

All LPG consumers have to buy the fuel at market price. The government, however, subsidises 12 cylinders of 14.2-kg each per households in a year by providing the subsidy amount directly in bank accounts of users.



**Gangtok on Saturday, 01 Dec**

**Temp:** 18°C/09°C  
**Forecast:** Sunny to partly cloudy with a little rain in the evening, then a shower in spots

**Sunrise:** 06:05 AM  
**Sunset:** 04:42 PM

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**

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**18-member SAKO team all set for Senior National Kickboxing C'ship**

**SAGAR CHETTRI**  
**GANGTOK, 30 Nov:**

An 18-member Sikkim Association of Kickboxing Organisation (SAKO) is all set to represent Sikkim in the prestigious Senior National Kickboxing Championship 2018 to be held from 02 to 05 Dec at Kolkata, West Bengal. The team will be leaving for the championship on Saturday morning. The team will be led by Binam Gurung as the team coach and SAKO general secretary cum chief technical director, Bidhan Ballav Subba will also accompany the State team to the championship.

The State team members are Mona Hang Limboo, Krishna Kumar Rai, Vivek Rai, Ith Hang Limboo, Pawan Subba, Puran Gautam, Ajay Rai, Rakesh Rai, Lak Tshering Sherpa, Bijay Limboo, Rahul Chowdhary, Rahul Sharma, Preety Kumar Gurung, Rajesh Rai, Srijana Chettri, Phur Deeki Sherpa, Mandira Karki and Barsha Rai.

In a small function here at Paljor Stadium conference hall this evening, SAKO president Bhim Bahadur Subba and other executive members expressed their best wishes to the team by offering khadas.

## HSP delegation calls on Union Tribal Affairs Minister, place LT seat demand



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 30 NOV:**

A delegation of Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP) on Friday called on Union Tribal Affairs Minister, Jual Oram at New Delhi. The HSP delegation had HSP office-bearers Bhaichung Bhutia, Dr. Bina Basnett, D.S. Limboo and Biraj Adhikari. Bhaichung Bhutia informed that the HSP team submitted the

demand of Limboo-Tamang Assembly seats to the Union Minister and urged the Centre to place the bill regarding LT seats in the coming winter session of the Parliament.

"The meeting was fruitful and we informed the minister on various issues of Sikkim," he said.

Meanwhile, the party has also condemned the

statement of Sikkim Democratic Front spokesperson, Bhim Dahal claiming that the SDF government has already removed the tag of immigrants from Sikkimese Nepalese. The party has argued that the statement is false.

An HSP press release states that SDF formed the government in 1994 with the promise to remove the tag of immi-

grants but soon forgot about this issue in its 1999 election manifesto.

On the same, the party has said that excluding it from the manifesto does not mean that the immigrant tag has been removed.

The release further states that the HSP hopes to give a good fight to the ruling party by bringing all opposition parties together.

## Training of Trainers on impact of Climate Change on water sector

**GANGTOK, 30 NOV**

**(IPR):** UNDP-SDC in collaboration with Rural Management and Development Department (RMDD), Government of Sikkim organized a three-day Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on "Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation Planning in Water Sector in Himalayan region" from 28 to 30 Nov.

While inaugurating the programme, Additional Chief Secretary, Dr. K Jayakumar, the chief guest spoke about the necessity of such capacity building programme for sustainable planning for management and efficient uses and planning of water resources in the state. Dr. Jayakumar also shared about strengthening the Panchayati raj institutions for increasing community resilience and also introducing emerging concepts like Water panchayats in this region.

Welcoming the par-

ticipants from various departments, State Project Manager UNDP, Dr. Surajit Baruah spoke briefly about the various climate adaptation initiatives being undertaken with state nodal agency that is Department of Science Technology and Climate Change and other sectoral departments in focal sectors Water, Forests and Disaster Risk Reduction under UNDP-SDC project on Strengthening State Strategies for Climate Actions in the state.

One of the major outcomes envisaged under the project is to increase the capacities and capabilities of state government departments to initiate appropriate climate adaptation and mitigation actions and to mainstream climate change in state plans and policies. It is also to help the state government to operationalize State Action Plan on Climate Change in Sikkim.

Secretary Rural Management and Development Department, C.S. Rao highlighted the efforts of RMDD in successfully implementing the Dhara Vikash (Spring-shed Development Programme) for reviving many critical water sources (springs and lakes) for ensuring water security. He appealed to all the concerned departments to join hands with RMDD for upscaling and improvisation of Dhara Vikash to cover more areas. Additional Secretary RMDD, Sarika Pradhan gave a detail account of the initiatives taken by RMDD on Dhara Vikash (Spring-shed Development Programme) with support from other agencies since its genesis way back in the year 2008 which has been recognized as one of the best practices of the state. In the backdrop of Spring-shed Management becoming a national policy, she

also highlighted the need for the State to prepare and build human resource and build capacities to meet the emerging needs for imparting training in the days to come.

While conducting the three-day training, Dr. Sandhya Rao of INRM New Delhi, gave a detailed presentation on the climate change impacts on water resources from national, state and to local level. Dr. Rao mentioned about various modelling techniques and presented SWAT model and its interpretations with regards to state scenario. She also discussed the various assessments like IPCC AR4 and AR5 with regards to climate change impacts and the vulnerability assessment and adaption options.

Mr. Sanjeeb Pradhan Technical Expert Water & Forest concluded the valedictory session with way forward and presented the vote of thanks.

## Legal services camp on child rights held at Boomtar



**GANGTOK, 30 NOV**

**(IPR):** A legal Services camp was organized by District Legal Services Authority, West, in co-ordination with Sikkim State Legal Services Authority under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority at District Prison, Boomtar, Nam-

chi, South Sikkim.

The program was chaired by Chairperson cum District & Sessions Judge, Jiwan Kr. Kharka, Ld. Secretary cum Chief Judicial Magistrate, Subarna Rai, Ex-Officio Chairperson of National Legal Services Authority at District Prison, Boomtar, Nam-

chi, South Sikkim.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act & Sikkim Anti-Drugs Act were discussed in brief along with various other child rights. The program concluded with an interactive session which witnessed the participation of many local residents.

## SKM govt will pay farmers in dollars says Golay



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 30 NOV:**

On the second day of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's Parivartan Sankalp Yatra, SKM president PS Tamang [Golay] interacted with the people of Okharey Nagi, Pureybotey, Lower Okhrey, Ghare-ri Dara, Lower Tikpur, Beyong and Lungyam

on Friday.

People of these areas expressed their grievances regarding the lack of proper marketing of their organic produce due to which they have been facing acute loss, informs an SKM press release.

Farmers further complained of incurring huge losses due to wild

animals damaging their crops. The release adds that as per local people around 850 farmers have been working as labourers at Kupup due to losses incurred in farming. SKM has accused the government of not working on any demands for compensating farmers for such damages.

Mr Tamang stated that after forming the government, SKM will provide payments to farmers for their organic produce in dollars.

On the day, the SKM president inaugurated a block-level office at Ribdi. The release informs that former panchayat secretary, Lakpa Navi Sherpa and Asarman Lepcha and Sukmaya Lepcha of Lower Okhrey officially joined SKM party.

### TIPS FROM MINDSCAN EDUCATION

# The Importance of Early Career Counselling

With thousands of colleges nationwide / worldwide, how does a student decide where to apply? There are many factors to consider - ranking, location, size, academic offerings etc. But when a teenager looks for colleges with a specific subject / stream in mind, what has led her to select that major in the first place?

As a school student it is hard to know what one wants to study, let alone what career to pursue. In some cases a student decides to follow in the footsteps of a parent or a favorite person. Many students, on the other hand, seek a broad-based education without knowing how it could connect with their life and work post-graduation.

Many secondary school students would benefit from personalized early career counseling. There are several excellent questionnaires that guide stu-

dents toward career fields based on their personalities, interests, and skills. Additionally students can research on salary ranges, work environments, required training, and anticipated growth in each occupational field.

With these tools:

1. A student will learn about several jobs that she's never heard of before, & will discover that her personality is better suited for engineering than for teaching.

2. Another may realize that her chosen career path is relatively low-paying, and she should consider that when deciding how much to take out in student loans.

3. Still another student may save a lot of time by choosing his major from the get-go, rather than studying something else for a couple of years.

Ultimately early career counseling can guide students onto paths that are profitable for them as

unique individuals, with their own personalities, talents, goals, constraints, likes and dislikes. If a student discerns during secondary school that she wants to become a veterinarian, she will focus her college search on institutions that will prepare her for that. Another teen realizes he wants to become a visual artist, so he is going to apply to art schools. Others may discover that the training they would need for their chosen path is offered at community colleges, trade schools, or apprenticeship programs, and would thus decide to forego the four-year university, at least for now.

Of course most teenagers are not ready to commit themselves to one specific career at this stage in their lives. We must be wary of pressuring secondary school students to choose before they have the insight, experience, and exposure to do so.

Furthermore, we must avoid viewing college as simply a means to the end of a well-paying job. Particularly in this economic climate, students and, especially, parents are understandably concerned about their "return on investment." If they are going to spend a certain amount per year - is their student going to graduate with job offers that justify that expenditure? Yet college is about much more than career preparation. It is about self-discovery, development, relationships, independence, and growing in the areas of critical thinking and problem solving. The cost of college may well be "worth it," even if the student is unemployed afterward.

So let's keep in mind that college truly is about personal development and acquiring a broad-based education, not just about getting a high-paying job afterward. But with that

thought in mind, let's push for more and earlier career counseling for our teens. They need exposure to the myriad of occupational options before them. They must reflect on their personalities and abilities, likes and dislikes, and how those would fit with various career paths. If this education and self-reflection is done throughout secondary school, students will enter their college search process more focused. The chaos of choosing amongst thousands of colleges can be reduced when one knows what one is looking for. Calm confidence and focused ambition will serve students very well as they apply for and begin their college degrees.

[Mindscan Education will be holding free workshops and seminars at Hotel Rendezvous, Gangtok, on 04 and 05 December covering career counseling and study abroad options]

### Inter Departmental Football Tournament

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 30 NOV:**

Social Welfare Department and Sadar Thana registered victories on Friday in the ongoing 6th Inter Departmental Football Tournament 2018 here at Paljor Stadium. Social Welfare Department registered an easy 4-0 victory over Buildings Department to secure three more points in the league round.

In another match of the day, Sadar Thana thrashed the State Bank of Sikkim 8-nil to get the full three points in its last league match.

### SANGSINGMA SEWA

The Sangsingma Sewa of Late Lachi Maya Wanemphago, who left for her heavenly abode on 26/11/2018, falls on 04/11/2018.

All friends, well wishers and relatives are requested to join us in offering prayer for the departed soul at our residence at Phago Niwas, Tibuk Basti, Mangshila, North Sikkim.

We would also like to express our gratitude to those who stood by us in our time of bereavement and regret our inability to thank them individually.

**Ash Raj Wanemphago (Husband).  
Raj Bahadur Wanemphago, Tej Hang Wanemphago & Lok Bahadur Wanemphago (sons).**

Cont. 7432039042, 8768923609, 7872949931.



### HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM TASHILING SECRETARIAT GANGTOK

Ref No. GoS/HRDD Adm/2018/678/01

Date: 30/11/18

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

For & on behalf of Governor of Sikkim, Deputy Director/IT, Human Resource Development Department, Government of Sikkim, seeks proposals from reputed and experienced registered Company/Proprietorship firm/ Partnership firm in India to participate in competitive bidding for implementation of "Smart Classrooms (including Supply and Installation of software solution, IT and non-IT equipment (Site preparation, electrical/ UPS with required wiring etc.), commissioning, integration and maintenance" for a period of 03 (three) years in the border areas of Sikkim.

The RFP document may be downloaded from e-procurement portal www.sikkimtender.gov.in.

Sd/-

**Dy. Director/IT**

Human Resource Development Department  
Government of Sikkim.

R.O. No. 522/IPR/Pub/Classi./18-19  
Date: 30.11.18



# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

## In Pursuit of Happiness

...no, not mercenary materialism

And no, this is not a moral science lesson. It will however begin with reference to an international conference the State Government had organized several years back on “Science, Spirituality and Education” with the Dalai Lama as a special guest and speaker. The conference was motivated by a felt need to work on school curriculums in a way that would tease out more empathy and deeper engagements from students and deliver Sikkim the much-needed involved citizenry for the future.

The Dalai Lama had charmed the audience with his ready wit and open mind and set the conference on course by suggesting that the participants deliberate over how common sense, and not necessarily religious regimen, if harnessed with conscious empathy could deliver an education which inculcated moral ethics. Individual moral ethics, he stressed would link together to deliver genuine social empathy which would in turn manifest in more compassionate societies peopled with citizens with a stronger sense of universal responsibility and calmer dispositions. Strife and an unbridled pursuit of material acquisitions, whether at the individual or the nation-state level, have come to define the 21st century which has now almost made a virtue out of mercenary materialism. Proof of this faulty prioritization is apparent in how “happiness” is now increasingly being sought in acquisitions and not so much in the satisfaction derived from contributing to the world. While the former results in competition and hence conflict, the latter is a more personal experience which in not in competition with anyone else and hence does not lead to strife. Also, as societies get more and more obsessive with acquiring more to be happy, they can also slip into depression when they cannot gather enough ‘benefits’. Sikkim should understand this phenomenon well because it has to be accepted that apathy - that listless lack of interest and refusal to get excited or engage - underlines social response and engagement here.

This apathy does not necessarily stem from denial or oppression, but is born from an inferred sense of loss over not having acquired enough. Even as this manifests in listlessness in outward behaviour; internally, the mind is agitated and it is perhaps in this internal disquiet that Sikkim can find the reasons to explain the high suicide rates, addiction and other social challenges, including corruption and even the universal inurement towards dishonesty. Obviously, what has happened in Sikkim, as in societies across the world, is that the pursuit has been for a warped interpretation of happiness, one that is incomplete.

Sikkim requires to seek out answers on how to address the paradox of so many social ills haunting a land of such few material worries. Expecting solutions to be provided and executed by someone else or the government would doom the possible solutions to failure because social course-corrections require social engagement, not governmental or even divine interventions. To return to what the Dalai Lama has often said, Change depends on individual action. Divine intervention, he stresses, is fine so long as it was for individual consolation, but for change and betterment, it was individual action that is needed. This proactive engagement needs to be internalised by Sikkim at the individual, then community and governance levels. A generation groomed with a stronger sense of universal responsibility will also be one with a clearer sense of self and more importantly, with more respect for the aspirations and needs of others. That is the kind of generation which Sikkim needs to reach out for and chalk up as resolution for the New Year...

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

# Climate change and migration in Bangladesh – one woman’s perspective

SONJA AYEK-KARLSSON  
*theconversation.com*

Sahia got married when she was 15 years old – and saw her husband for the first time on their wedding day. Her sense of humour is apparent as soon as we meet: “He is a good husband. I was lucky, but at the same time he must have exaggerated his status a bit to my parents,” she says, laughing. “His market value was put up slightly over his actual value.”

She has agreed to talk to us about the ways climate change and environmental stress are influencing people’s lives. She says that after their wedding, she moved in with her husband and father-in-law. Her new home was Singpur – a riverside village in central Bangladesh, only a couple of hundred kilometres from the capital, Dhaka. She had been living here for about a year when she witnessed her first home collapsing into the river.

“One day we found cracks in the floor as the land had started to get pulled into the water. We realised that this was a bad sign. The cracks kept growing deeper and deeper for each day that passed.”

Riverbank erosion usually happens slowly, but occasionally a larger chunk of land suddenly falls into the water. This is what happened the day Sahia lost her first house. As soon as she noticed how deep the cracks were in the ground, she started carrying out their belongings to safety. A few hours later, the house was gone.

Sahia and her family moved in with her husband’s uncle for a while. But it was not long before his house was swallowed by the river, too. They moved into an abandoned house after this, but they are still living too close to the river, Sahia tells me in a worried voice.

Sahia’s husband was a fisherman so the family got by on what he managed to catch. They were managing, until one day everything changed.

“My husband used to catch fish, but when the fish got some disease he had to stop fishing ... Nowadays, there is hardly any fish left in the river ... There used to be tons of fish, but when the fish started dying from that disease people stopped eating them ... All the big and good fish disappeared.”

Once their main income stopped sustaining them, the family felt forced to change livelihood. They decided to migrate seasonally to work in a brick factory in Aliganj, further up the river.

Nowadays, they leave Singpur for six months every year during the rainy season, to avoid being there when the village is flooded.



“The man who brought us there [to the brick factory] gave us some money, and with that money we managed to survive the six months in Singpur. What we earn we use to feed our family. They usually pay us on a weekly basis, around 2,000-4,000 taka [£20-40]. After feeding my family, consisting of six family members, we manage to save about 1,000 taka [£10] or so per week. That amount is our family’s whole savings per week.”

When the family return to Singpur, they live on their savings from the brick factory. The work is hard and dangerous. The children miss out on school to work in the factory and it is only a matter of time before someone ends up getting hurt or sick from the hard work. Their savings would not sustain the whole family through a crisis.

The shift of livelihood has not only been hard on Sahia physically. Before the factory work, she was a housewife like the rest of the women in Singpur village. Working outside of the house as a woman has brought social stigma on her.

“In this village, if you work outside you end up losing your honour... After observing us some people said: ‘The women out there are working! What do they know about work?’ We see those people, we hear them, but we do not fear their words anymore. We work to survive.”

I can see that she is watching me. My hair, which is tied up in a bun, and the clothes I am wearing. We are two women not that different from one another in a lot of ways, but we are living two completely different lives in very different parts of the world. She says:

“I am actually not that old. It is the hard work that made me look like this. Did you not see my husband? Nobody thinks I am his wife after meeting him.”

Her husband is young, in his late twenties or early thirties. When I first met Sahia I thought to myself that she must be about a decade older than me. It turns out that we are about the same age. She had to make the necessary sacrifices in her life to sustain her family.

When I return to the village a year later, I immediately head off to find her. I have thought about her throughout the year. I ask the people I met on my way there, but nobody seems to know anything. I reach the area where her house used to stand, but it is gone. It has fallen into the river. I ask her neighbours if they know where she is, where the family went, but nobody seems to know what has happened to her.

*[the writer is Senior Researcher at UNU-EHS and University of Sussex, University of Sussex]*



## Why daily doses of nature in the city matter for people and the planet

ANNE CLEARY  
*theconversation.com*

The environmental movement is shifting away from focusing solely on raising awareness about environmental issues. Many environmental agencies and organisations now also aim to connect people with nature, and our new research suggests daily doses of urban nature may be the key to this for the majority who live in cities.

Every year in the United Kingdom the Wildlife Trusts run the 30 Days Wild campaign. This encourages people to carry out a daily “random act of wildness” for the month of June. The International Union for Conservation of Nature recently launched its #NatureForAll program, which aims to inspire a love of nature.

This shift in focus is starting to appear in environmental policy. For example, the UK’s recent 25-year environment plan identifies connecting people with the environment as one of its six key areas. Similarly, in Australia, the state of Victoria’s Biodiversity 2037 plan aims to connect all Victorians to nature as one of two overarching objectives.

The thinking behind such efforts is simple: connecting people to nature will motivate them to act in ways that protect and care for nature. Evidence does suggest that people who have a high nature connection are likely to display pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours.

### LOOKING BEYOND THE PARK

What is less clear is how to enhance an individual’s nature connection – that is feeling that they are a part of nature. Over half of all people globally, and nine out of ten people in Australia, live in urban environments. This reduces their opportunities to experience and connect with nature.

Our new study may offer some answers. A survey of Brisbane residents showed that people who experienced nature during childhood or had regular contact with nature in their home and suburb were more likely to report feeling connected with nature.

The study used a broad definition of urban nature to include all the plants and animals that live in a city. When looking to connect urban residents with local nature we need to take a broad view and look “beyond the park”. All aspects of nature in the city offer a potential opportunity for

people to experience nature and develop their sense of connection to it.

The study also looked at the relationship between childhood and adult nature experiences. Results suggest that people who lack childhood experience of nature can still come to have a high sense of nature connection by experiencing nature as an adult.

There have been focused efforts on connecting children to nature, such as the Forest Schools and Nature Play programs. Equal effort should be given to promoting adult nature experiences and nature connection, particularly for people who lack such experiences.

### THE BENEFITS OF NATURE EXPERIENCE

We still have much to discover about how an individual’s nature connection is shaped. We need a better understanding of how people from diverse cultural and social contexts experience and connect to different types of nature. That said, we are starting to understand the important role that frequent local experiences of nature may play.

In addition to boosting people’s sense of nature connection, daily doses

of urban nature deliver the benefits of improved physical, mental and social wellbeing. A growing evidence base is showing that exposure to nature, particularly in urban environments, can lead to healthier and happier city dwellers.

Robert Dunn and colleagues have already advocated for the importance of urban nature experiences as a way to bolster city residents’ support for conservation. They described the “pigeon paradox” whereby experiencing urban nature, which is often of low ecological value – such as interactions with non-native species – may have wider environmental benefits through people behaving in more environmentally conscious ways. They proposed that the future of conservation depended on city residents’ ability to experience urban nature.

As new evidence emerges we need to build on this thinking. It would seem that the future of our very connection to nature, our wellbeing and conservation depend on urban people’s ability to experience urban nature.

*[the writer is Research Fellow, School of Medicine, Griffith University]*



# India, Nepal resolve technical issues on Pancheshwar dam: Water commission



**PITHORAGARH, NOV 30 (PTI):** All technical issues related to the long-awaited Pancheshwar dam in Uttarakhand have been resolved between India and Nepal, Chairman of the Central Water Commission, S Masood Hussaini,

said Friday.

Pancheshwar dam on river Mahakali in Champawat district of the state is likely to address the power and irrigation needs of the two neighbours. The multi-purpose project has been

hanging fire for the last 35 years.

"Only non-technical matters like sharing of water, cost of project as well as some provisions of the Indo-Nepal water treaty are to be resolved between the two coun-

tries now, he told reporters here. Hussaini was addressing the media in Champawat following the first site survey by the team of experts after WAPCOS submitted the second Detailed Project Report (DPR) last year.

"There were over 250 objections on the DPR prepared by WAPCOS. The objections were on things like height of the dam, hydrological design and other technical details. However, they have been sorted out by experts of both the countries," he said. The CWC chairman also heads the high powered technical committee of experts on the Pancheshwar project. It was constituted by the Union water resources ministry and has over 35 members including 3 experts from Nepal. Water and Power Consultancy Services (WAPCOS) Limited is a public sector organisation under the ministry of water resources, river development and Ganga rejuvenation.

## Guild seeks Imran Khan's help for Pak publishers' participation in Kolkata Book Fair



**KOLKATA, NOV 30 (PTI):** The Publishers and Booksellers Guild, the organiser of the International Kolkata Book Fair, has written to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan to facilitate participation of his country's publishers in the 2019 edition of the fair.

The Guild wrote to Khan on November 28, seeking his intervention to facilitate the participation of six publishers to the fair, an annual event which began in 1976 and is considered the world's largest in terms of footfall. It had written to National Book Foundation of Pakistan in September, inviting it to participate in the fair, which begins from January 30 next year.

If everything goes as per plans, this will be for the first time that publishers from Pakistan will participate in the book fair, Guild secretary Tribid Chatterjee told PTI on Friday.

"Book lovers and readers here have immense interest about books written by authors and writers of Pakistan and we have been seeking Pakistani publishers to participate in our fair for a long time," he said.

There are at least five

publishers from Pakistan who have expressed interest to participate in the fair with their publications but could not due to visa issues, he said.

"This year five to six publishers from Pakistan have already applied for visa. We are quite hopeful of a positive outcome," Chatterjee said.

He said, "We will write to the ministry requesting to look into the matter. We have written to Mr (Imran) Khan to facilitate the passage of the publishers as best as he can. I am sure he will understand the sentiments of book lovers".

He recounted Khan's 2012 visit to the Kolkata Literature Festival, a highlight of the book fair and the euphoria it created among book lovers.

Khan, also the former captain of Pakistan cricket team, had then spoken for over 50 minutes on 'Captaining a nation'.

"I remember that we had to switch off the power to save Mr Khan from fans and there was a massive chaos after his session. I still remember how he had expressed his surprise over the enthusiasm of the book lovers. He had said the fair could be the dream venue of any author and publish-

er and this prompted us to write to him seeking help to bring Pakistan publishers to the fair," he said. Chatterjee said he had written to National Book Foundation secretary Ishtiaq Ahmed in September inviting them to participate in the 43rd International Kolkata Book Fair.

"We are hopeful this year Pakistan-based publishers will be able to come here," he said and referred to authors and writers from New Delhi and National Capital Region crossing the border and participating in literary festivals organised in Pakistan.

Guatemala would be the theme country of the 43rd International Kolkata Book Fair next year to be held at the Central Park Mela Complex in Salt Lake in the city.

The fair, which will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, will also be participated by countries like the UK, the US, Russia, China, Japan, Vietnam apart from 11 Latin American nations and Bangladesh.

Iran is to participate for the first time in the popular book fair, which will conclude on February 10.

## Calcutta HC refuses to stay mayoral election

**KOLKATA, NOV 28 (PTI):** The Calcutta High Court Friday refused to stay the scheduled election of West Bengal minister Firhad Hakim as the mayor of the city. Hakim has been chosen as the mayor designate of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) by councillors of the ruling Trinamool Congress following Sovan Chatterjee's resignation from the post on a direction by party supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

An opposition CPI(M) councillor had moved the high court, challenging Hakim's scheduled election on the ground that he was not an elected councillor from any of the wards of the KMC.

Refusing to pass any interim stay, Justice Debangshu Basak directed the state and the KMC to file affidavits in opposition to the petition of CPI(M) councillor Bilkis Begum.

The petitioner was directed to file her affidavit in reply within another week. The matter would be taken up for further hearing on December 17, the court directed.

The petitioner challenged the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (Second Amendment) Bill, 2018, which was passed by the West Bengal Assembly recently.

The amended act, to which the governor has given his assent, enables a person, who is not an



elected councillor, to be made a mayor of the KMC. The person would have to be elected within six months to continue in the post. The amendment facilitated the taking over of Firhad Hakim, who is not a councillor, as the mayor of KMC. Hakim is a minister in the West Bengal cabinet.

The councillor prayed for the nullification of the amendment, claiming that the amended act is unconstitutional.

Appearing for the petitioner, senior counsel Bikash Bhattacharya submitted that a mayor of the city is elected from among the elected representatives. The Constitution does not provide for a non-elected person to head a local or municipal body, Bhattacharya, himself a former mayor of the city from the CPI(M), submitted. He claimed that the Assembly did not have the authority to

change the laws governing the election of a mayor to a civic body.

Appearing for the state, Advocate General Kishore Dutta submitted that since the Constitution did not expressly prohibit the election of a non-member of the municipal body to the post of mayor, it could not be termed unconstitutional.

While the AG claimed that "a prohibition cannot be assumed", Bhattacharya submitted that "it cannot be done unless there is an enabling provision." Senior counsel Sakthinath Mukherjee, appearing for the KMC, submitted that the Constitution provided that a state legislature will legislate on all matters relating to election in a municipal body. Stating that there is no bar on the legislature in legislating on matters related to the election in a municipal body, Mukherjee submitted that prohibition is to

be expressed and cannot be inferred. Justice Basak asked whether a mayor, who is not an elected representative, could vote on any issue in the House, to which Mukherjee said the right could be exercised only after he was elected from one of the wards in the municipal corporation.

The Trinamool Congress, which has a huge majority in the KMC with 122 seats out of a total 144, has elected Firhad Hakim as its leader in the municipal body.

The Left Front has 14, BJP 5 and the Congress 2 seats, while one seat is vacant. While Hakim has filed his nomination for the mayor's post from the TMC, councillor Meena Devi Purohit, a former deputy mayor of the KMC, has filed as a BJP candidate.

Election for the post of mayor to KMC is scheduled to be held on December 3.

## EC orders repoll in Ajasora polling station in Mizoram

**AIZAWL, NOV 30 (PTI):** The Election Commission Friday ordered repoll at Ajasora polling station in Tuichawng Assembly constituency of Mizoram for non-functioning of EVMs on the polling day, an election official said.

The repoll will be conducted on December four, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer H Lianzela said. Over 300 voters could not exercise their franchise in the polling station due to persistent EVM snag on November 28, he said.

The Ajasora polling station belongs to the Chakma dominated Assembly constituency in Lawngtlai district of the state.

## People in Arunachal dist told to return ammo kept in store

**ITANAGAR, NOV 30 (PTI):** Days after three children were killed in a blast while toying with a live bomb at Arunachal Pradesh's Anjaw district, army authorities have requested people in the region to return all live mortar shells they might have collected from a nearby firing range.

Army personnel, along with district administration officials, have been going from door to door to request locals, who have, so far, responded positively to the initiative and given up the ammunition they had been holding, defence spokesperson Col Chiranjit Konwer said Friday. "Over the last two days, 554 shells submitted by the villagers were destroyed by the Army at Nara Tiding firing range," Konwer



said. Two girls, aged between eight and 10, and a two-year-old boy were killed Saturday when a shell they had picked up exploded at Chirang village in Anjaw district.

The Nara Tiding firing range, bordering China, is used by the Army,

the Indo Tibetan Border Police, and other security agencies for field exercises, the defence spokesperson said.

"The range has a number of villages in its vicinity. Despite warnings, villagers gather ammunition and shells from

the range," he said.

The initiative by the Army and the district administration, which has received appreciation from various quarters, will prevent accidents, such as the one that occurred on Saturday, Konwer added.

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.

**THE BIRDS HAVE LOST THEIR WAY**

EDITED BY  
TSHERING EDEN AND PEMA WANGCHUK

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

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# Bajrang, Vinesh, Pooja get Grade A contracts; Sushil, Sakshi in Grade B

**AMANPREET SINGH GONDA (UP), NOV 30 (PTI):** Star wrestlers Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat were included in the top Rs 30-lakh Grade A along with Pooja Dhanda as the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) on Friday rolled out its revolutionary central contracts system for the grapplers. It was expected that Bajrang and Vinesh, who won the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games gold medals this year, will be kept in the top grade.

Pooja had become only the fourth Indian woman to win a medal at the World Championship recently. Two-time Olympic medallist Sushil Kumar and Rio Olympic bronze medallist Sakshi Malik, who are struggling with form for quite some time, could not make the top Grade.

They will figure in the Grade B, which will offer a financial support of Rs 20 lakh for one year. The contracts will be reviewed after one year.

WFI is the only Indian Olympic Association-affiliated National Sports Federation to offer contracts to its athletes and only the second after the BCCI. The announcement was made by WFI President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in the presence of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Aditya Nath, who inaugu-



rated the senior National Championship at Nandini Nagar here.

"Grapplers could move up or down after review in the grades," said Singh.

WFI Assistant Secretary Vinod Tomar said the contract will come in effect from November 15.

"The wrestlers will be paid on quarterly basis. It will give them self dependency," said Tomar adding that no one is required to furnish details on how the fund has been spent.

It has been learnt that wrestlers, after signing the contract with WFI, will not be allowed to take any other financial support from other organisations like JSW.

Asked about the de-

cision to put Sushil and Sakshi in Grade B, Sharan Singh said, "Sushil changed the face of the sport in the country with his two Olympic medals. We have to have him in the list despite the fact that he is not competing much. 'Sakshi's performance is also going up and down but wrestlers can jump into the next category with good performance."

Vinesh hailed the move saying it will give a huge boost to the sport at the junior level.

"It is good for the junior wrestlers. It will be an added motivation. There will be medal, fame and support. It's really a good incentive for the Cadet and junior level wrestlers," Vinesh

told PTI. Vinesh said the support will also help established stars like her. "The budget will shoot up now and we can use it for more exposure in terms of training and competitions abroad. We can plan better now without worrying about funds. I plan to compete in at least 5 tournaments, specially the UWW ranking events, next year," she said.

Sakshi, who is enduring a tough time, said she was a tad "disappointed" for not featuring in the top grade.

"Yes, I was expecting to be in top grade but once I again start performing strong, there is a good chance to get upgraded to the top bracket," she said. Talking

about her lean patch, Sakshi said, "I was winning in last 4-5 seconds earlier but now I am losing at the same time, giving away points in the last few seconds. I think I am getting puzzled. I am working on mat. We are not machines, performance can go up and down." The C category, offering support of Rs 10 lakh, features Sandeep Kumar, Greco Roman grappler Sajjan Bhanwala, Vinod Om Prakash, Ritu Phogat, Sumit Malik, talented Deepak Punia and Asian Games bronze medallist Divya Kakran.

The D category, which will give Rs 5 lakh support, will have Rahul Aware, Naveen, Utkarsh Kale, Sachin Rathi, Greco Roman's Vijay, Ravi Ku-

mar, Simran, Mansi and Anshu Malik.

There are four wrestlers in category E for Rs three lakh support: Navjot Kaur, Kiran, Harpreet Singh and Jitendra Kumar. Categories from G to I will have 30 gold medallists each from Under-23, Junior, Cadet and Under-15 National championships.

Category F wrestlers (U-23) will get Rs 1,20,000 per year, Category G (Junior) Rs 90,000, Category H (Cadet) Rs 60,000 and Category I (U-15) Rs 36,000 every year.

"Wrestlers in the G to I categories will be upgraded to next Grade when they win gold medals at the Asian and World level," said Tomar.

## Bowl in tandem and knock them over: Ashwin's plan for Australia

**CHETAN NARULA**

**SYDNEY, NOV 30 (PTI):** Partnerships will hold the key not just in batting but bowling as well during India's Test clashes with Australia as the hosts cannot really be blown away in a single burst, visiting off-spinner R Ashwin said Friday.

India and Australia begin a four-match Test showdown from December 6 in Adelaide. Ashwin said India got good bowling practice in the ongoing warm-up game ahead of the first Test here. Cricket Australia XI finished day three on 356-6 with Ashwin taking 1-63 from 24 overs and Mohammed Shami picking 3-67 from 18 overs.

"You have to stitch together partnerships even when bowling and it's very important to ascertain your role to get what you can out of the game," Ashwin said at the end of day's play. "It's very important to soak together good partnerships as a bowling group then try and knock them over. You won't blow oppositions away, it might happen once in a while - but you have to get your noses ahead and keep it ahead," he said. Ashwin said he expects the wickets to be flat, which would require his teammates to play "smart cricket through the series."

Ashwin said bowling in partnerships will be of paramount importance especially since India will be missing a fifth bowler in injured Hardik Pandya.

Indian bowlers did well in England and South Africa but considering the nature of pitches, they are in for a long haul. Ashwin has his plans ready for the challenge. "As a spinner it's important to stick it out there in the first innings, if I get some help in the second innings then try to pitch in. That's similar to how I came here last time, I had a very good series and that was one of the turning points in my career," he said.

"It's more about getting your noses ahead in Australia. Every hour, the game can get away from you really fast in the field. We have some quality batsmen who can take the game away from them. On his own bowling effort in the practice game, Ashwin said he is

quite pleased with the results he got. "In practice matches, you are looking to get something out of it for yourself. I think we got pretty much what we wanted to get out of it.

"I thought the ball came out pretty well (off my hand). I haven't played an international game for a while so it felt good the way it came out. In the next 4-5 days I will prep up a bit more for the game," he said. Proceedings on Friday were overshadowed by an ankle injury suffered by young batting sensation Prithvi Shaw, who landed awkwardly on his left leg while fielding early in the morning session, and was subsequently ruled out of the first Test in Adelaide.

"He is feeling a bit sore and it has swollen up a little bit. I hope he recovers fast. He has not spoken much. It has hit him pretty hard. He is a young boy who has come to play in Australia for the first time..." he said.

"It's unfortunate, what's happened, but these things happen... it's an opportunity for someone else. I believe everything happens for a reason," added Ashwin.

The off-spinner will be in direct competition with Australia's Nathan Lyon during the series. Ashwin said the duo cannot replicate each other's styles but expects an interesting duel with his counterpart.

"I also watch his videos. We started our Test careers at the same time so obviously mutual admiration is there. He has done well over the last couple years and he is bowling well. "The ball is coming out well off his hand. What can I learn? Probably drop the ball at the right spots and probably as the series goes on look forward to a good competition," he said.

He did not comment on the troubles in the Australian camp owing to the after-effects of the ball-tampering scandal.

"There are a lot of headaches when you play international cricket, personally and for the teams you are part of, so it makes no sense to try and get your heads into another dressing room.

"That's for them to mind their own cricket..." Ashwin said.

## AIFF to soon launch pilot project with FIFA

**MUMBAI, NOV 30 (PTI):** The All India Football Federation (AIFF) will "very soon" launch a school-level project along with the games world governing body FIFA, a top official said Friday.

The project, 'schools league', will be launched on a pilot basis, AIFF General Secretary Kushal Das said.

"When we had the U-17 FIFA World Cup (in India in 2017), we also started a programme called 'Mission XI Million', which was a school contact programme, and we touched about 15,000 schools across the country.

"And very soon we (AIFF) are going to do a project with FIFA called 'the schools league', it will, of course be, a pilot project," he said.

"We (AIFF) are basing our data on the Mission XI Million project and it should be launched very soon, by March -April," Das said at the Star Sports India Football Forum 2018 organised by SportzPower.

Das gave the information when he asked what has the AIFF done to change the football culture in India.

The AIFF and the local organising committee for the FIFA U-17 World Cup India 2017, with the support of the Centre, had last year initiated the Mission XI programme to bring at least 11 million school children to play the game in the run-up to the World Cup.

Noting that their experience under the Mission XI Million in Ut-

tar Pradesh (UP) was good, Das hinted that the schools league could focus on the northern state.

"Actually our experience with Mission XI Million in UP was very very good, so may be we will focus the school league in either Lucknow or one of the (UP) cities to start off and let's see how it goes, informed Das.

However, Das did not elaborate on the details about the new project to be started by the national football body.

The AIFF general secretary shared the work done by the federation to take the sport to nook and corners of the country.

"Three years back we started the U-15 league and two years back we started the U-13 league and these are national leagues.

"So now we have U-13, U-15 and U-18 youth leagues.

The number of teams has increased significantly from about 50 teams three years back to 280 team (now). So, in that sense, we are trying to broad-base football," Das said.

"We have a team from Kashmir playing in the I-League this year and the response of the fans is fantastic.

"We have also started the baby leagues (between) age groups 6-12 and they have got 99 leagues registered with AIFF and the numbers will grow," he added.

At the event, different stakeholders debated on various topics related to Indian football and the road ahead for it.

## With Powar on way out, Indian women's team hopes for controversy-free future

**NEW DELHI, NOV 30 (PTI):** The feud between senior India women's cricketer Mithali Raj and Ramesh Powar is heading towards an end without any intervention from the administrators with the coach's three-month interim tenure ending Friday. With the conclusion of Powar's term, fresh applications will be invited by the BCCI for the job and in all likelihood, the former India spinner will not be considered even if he applies.

"His contract is coming to an end today and there is little chance that he will be brought back," a top BCCI official told PTI. The Indian women's team has had its fair share of controversies and the latest one was triggered after Mithali was dropped from the playing XI for the World T20 semifinal which the side lost to England by eight wickets.

Mithali alleged that Powar was

"out to destroy her" while the coach countered her by questioning the "conduct" of the team's seniormost player, saying that she threatened to retire on being denied the opening slot and threw tantrums. Powar was appointed in August after Tushar Arothe quit following differences with the senior players over training methods.

After Powar's departure, it remains to be seen how T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur and ODI captain Mithali bury their differences.

It will be a massive mental challenge for the 35-year-old to put the past behind. India's next assignment is the tour of New Zealand in January and under a new coach, the team would hope to steer clear of more controversy.

"It will be interesting to see how Harman and Mithali get along after whatever happened in the West Indies. It is imperative that they get along well for the team's

sake. Otherwise, there will only be more issues in the dressing room," said another BCCI official. Harman has not yet spoken on the Powar-Mithali face-off but had defended the team management's decision of dropping Mithali for the all-important semifinal despite her senior teammate scoring fifties in the previous two innings.

Mithali has already expressed her desire to sort out the differences with the T20 captain.

"I am of the opinion that Harman and I are senior players and our issues, if any, should be sorted out by the two of us by sitting across the table. "As India's 50-over captain, I value Harman as one of our best players and will always want to ensure that the two of us perform our best for India," Mithali had written in a detailed explanation to BCCI when the controversy first broke out.

## Coalgate: Court convicts ex-coal Secretary H C Gupta, 5 others including two bureaucrats

**NEW DELHI, NOV 30 (PTI):** A Delhi Court Friday convicted ex-coal secretary H C Gupta in a corruption case relating to allotment of coal blocks in West Bengal during the previous UPA regime at the Centre.

Five others, including one retired and another serving public servant -- K S Kropcha and K C Samria -- were held guilty for various offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act and Indian Penal Code.

Gupta, who was the Coal Secretary from December 31, 2005 to November 2008, has already been convicted before this in two other cases of coal block allocation in which he has been sentenced to jail for two and three years respectively. He is out on bail in both the cases.

Kropcha, who was then the Joint Secretary, Ministry of coal, retired in December 2017 as the Chief Secretary of Meghalaya. He has also been convicted and sentenced to two years in another coal block allocation scam and has been on bail. Samria then held the rank of Director in the Ministry of coal and is now

working as a Joint Secretary in Ministry of Financial Affairs. He has already been convicted and sentenced to two years jail term in another case and has been out on bail.

All the convicted persons were taken into the custody on the order of the court and were sent to judicial custody till December 3 when Special CBI Judge Bharat Parashar will hear the arguments on sentence which entails maximum punishment of seven years in jail.

The case pertains to alleged irregularities in allocation of Moira and Madhujore (North and South) coal blocks in West Bengal to Vikash Metals and Power Limited (VMPL). An FIR was lodged by the CBI in September 2012.

VMPL, its managing director Vikash Patni and authorised signatory Anand Mallick were also convicted.

All have been held guilty for the offences under Prevention of Corruption Act and IPC, including sections 420 (cheating) and 120-B (criminal conspiracy). Prosecutors said Gupta has been accused in 12 cases of alleged

irregularities in coal block allocation scam. The CBI has filed charge sheets in connection with alleged irregularities in 40 cases of coal block allocations during the UPA-1 and UPA-2 regime.

On July 25, 2014, the Supreme Court had approved appointment of Additional Sessions Judge Parashar as special judge to exclusively deal with all coal scam cases.

Till now the special court has decided six such cases.

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is accused in one case relating to the allocation of the Talabira II/III coal blocks in Odisha, in 2005 to Aditya Birla Group company -- M/s Hindalco.

On March 11, 2015, the special court had summoned Singh and five others as accused.

Besides Singh, former Coal Secretary PC Parakh, Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla and two others were also summoned.

The trial court order, however, was stayed by the Supreme Court on April 1, 2015, after Singh approached the top court for the relief.

His plea is still pending before the apex court. In the present case, the court had on August 19, 2016 framed charges, including cheating and criminal conspiracy against Gupta, the two public servants, the firm and its two officials. They all had pleaded not guilty and claimed trial. All the accused are out on bail.

It had said, "Charge for the offences under sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 409 (criminal breach of trust by public servants), 420 (cheating) of IPC and also under sections 13(1)(c) and 13(1)(d) (criminal misconduct by public servants) of the PC Act has been framed against all the accused..."

The court had put on trial all the accused in the case in which the CBI's closure report was earlier rejected by the court, asking the probe agency to further investigate the matter.

The other two coal scam cases in which Gupta was earlier convicted related to Kamal Sponge Steel and Power Ltd (KSSPL) and Vini Iron and Steel Udyog Ltd (VISUL). Kropcha and Samria were also convicted in KSSPL case.



# High tension G20 opens, dominated by Trump quarrels

**BUENOS AIRES, Nov 30 (AFP):** G20 powers open two days of summit talks on Friday after a stormy buildup dominated by tensions with Russia and US President Donald Trump's combative stance on trade and climate fears.

Trump and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin will be among the world leaders gathering amid high tension over an array of world issues including the Ukraine conflict, trade with China and relations with Saudi Arabia.

But the two will not sit down together after Trump abruptly cancelled a planned meeting, citing Russia's recent seizure of Ukrainian ships and sailors.

Protesters have vowed mass rallies to harangue the world leaders gathering in crisis-hit Argentina, where recent violence between rival football fans raised questions about the police's ability to control unrest.

Trump landed in Buenos Aires on Thursday after stoking tensions by calling off the Putin meeting over the Ukrainian ships.

"I look forward to a meaningful Summit again as soon as this situation is resolved!" Trump wrote on Twitter. His decision came as a US probe into Russia's role in Trump's election campaign intensified.

Investigator Robert Mueller revealed that former top Trump aide Michael Cohen had admitted di-

rect communications with Putin's office. The Kremlin said it "regrets" Trump's decision to scrap the meeting. Trump aimed to start the summit with a victory for his "America First" trade agenda, by having trade negotiators sign a successor to the North American free trade pact NAFTA, the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

Trump declares it a victory on behalf of the US workers he claims were cheated by NAFTA.

Trump also has China in his sights as he prepares to meet President Xi Jinping on the G20 margins. The United States has cast talks Saturday with Xi as a deadline for China to cave on key trade concerns of Trump.

The US leader has slapped USD 250 billion in tariffs on the Asian power and threatened more to come in January. The G20 summit will be accompanied by an array of diplomatic initiatives with several bilateral meetings, including ones involving Putin, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel was to miss the summit's opening after her plane was forced to make an emergency landing in Cologne due to what she called a "serious" a technical problem. She eventually took off on a flight from Madrid bound for



Buenos Aires on Friday.

Her temporary absence could complicate French President Emmanuel Macron's attempts to build a European front against Trump at a meeting of EU leaders attending the G20 on Friday morning.

Macron on Thursday rejected those who wish to confront economic challenges by being "belli-cose, isolationist and closing down borders." Among the other leaders at the summit will be Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the

focus of tensions over the murder of one of his prominent critics in October. Macron said he would raise the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi with the crown prince on the sidelines of the summit.

G20 sources said climate change was emerging as the biggest stumbling block to agreement on a joint communique when the summit concludes on Saturday.

Trump has yanked the United States out of the landmark Paris climate accord. His opposition to

collective action stands in defiance of scientists' increasingly urgent warnings that policy action is desperately needed to counter the climate threat. Macron meanwhile warned that France would refuse to move forward on a trade accord with South America's Mercosur bloc if Brazil's incoming far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro, also pulls out of the Paris climate accord.

With a major UN meeting on climate change starting next week in Poland straight after the G20,

UN chief Antonio Guterres said in Buenos Aires that "this is a make-it-or-break-it moment."

Two major summits this year, of the Group of Seven democracies and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, ended without the once-routine statements.

"Will we even have a communique? It really is an open question," said former Canadian negotiator Thomas Bernes, a senior fellow at the Ontario-based Centre for International Governance Innovation.

Following the USMCA signing, and once Argentina's President Mauricio Macri has opened the first of the summit's two days, a mass protest is planned in central Buenos Aires on Friday afternoon.

Argentines are grappling with soaring inflation and unemployment. An economic crisis has led to a deeply unpopular bailout from the International Monetary Fund.

"There's a lot of people who don't have houses and don't have work. They are not focusing on the people who have needs," barber Ariel Villegas, 47, said at one protest Thursday outside the Argentine Congress building.

The government is vowing zero tolerance of violence as it hosts its biggest ever international gathering. It says it has won promises from the protest organisers to keep the streets calm.

## UK amends new weapons bill to allow status quo on possession of kirpans

ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, Nov 30 (PTI):

The UK government has confirmed an amendment to a new weapons bill going through the Parliament to ensure that it would not impact the right of the British Sikh community to possess and supply kirpans, or religious swords. The Offensive Weapons Bill 2018 completed its various readings in the House of Commons this week and has now moved to the House of Lords for approval.

It involves a new offence of possessing certain offensive weapons in public and places new restrictions on the online sales of bladed articles and corrosive products in attempt to crackdown on rising knife and acid-related attacks in the country. "We have engaged closely with the Sikh community on the issue of kirpans. As a result, we have amended the Bill to ensure that the possession and supply of large kirpans for religious reasons can continue," a UK Home Office spokesperson said on Thursday.

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs led a delegation to the UK Home Office in recent weeks to ensure that the kirpan remains exempt when the new bill becomes law.

"I am pleased to see the government amendment and look forward to seeing an accompanying set of documentation, which reflects the importance of not criminalising the Sikh community for the sale or possession of large kirpans," said Labour MP Preet Kaur Gill, Chair of the APPG for British Sikhs. Gill, the first female Sikh MP in the House of Commons, was accompanied by APPG vice-chairs Pat McFadden and Dominic Grieve at a meeting with UK Home Secretary Sajid Javid and Home Office minister Victoria Atkins to discuss changes to the Offensive Weapons Bill, which would maintain status quo in continuing to legally safeguard the sale, possession and use of large kirpans.

## Saudi ready to help India to meet its growing energy demands: Prince to PM Modi

**BUENOS AIRES, Nov 30 (PTI):** Saudi Arabia has offered India to supply oil and petroleum products it needs to meet its growing energy demands during a meeting between Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, official Saudi media reported on Friday.

The two leaders met at Salman's residence in the Argentinian capital Buenos Aires on the sidelines of the G-20 summit.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the horizons of bilateral co-operation between the two friendly countries in the various political, security, economic, investment, agricultural, energy, cultural, and technological fields, Saudi Press Agency reported.

In the investment field, they discussed the investment opportunities in the infrastructure through the Public Investment Fund, as well as opportunities in the agricultural field with the aim of replacing agricultural imports from other countries to the kingdom with Indian agricultural imports.

In the field of energy, they discussed the kingdom's readiness to supply India with all of its needs of oil and petroleum products, as well as Saudi Aramco's investment in refineries in India, especially the large refinery on the western coast of India



and in the field of crude oil storage, the report said. The import of crude oil by India forms a major component of bilateral trade with Saudi Arabia being India's one of the largest suppliers of crude oil, accounting for almost one-fifth of its needs.

India has a refining capacity of 232.066 million tonnes, which exceeded the demand of 194.2 million tonnes in 2016-17 fiscal.

According to the International Energy Agency, this demand is expected to reach 458 million tonnes by 2040. During the meeting, the two leaders also discussed investment in solar energy through the Soft Bank Vision Fund and through the Saudi compa-

nies which will build solar energy projects. In the military field, they discussed strategies to localise military industry and cooperation in the field of military manufacturing in both countries, the report said.

They also reviewed what has been accomplished during the previous two years in the area of bilateral relations. The two sides reviewed the available opportunities to export the Saudi non-oil products to India, and ways to develop bilateral trade through sustainable arrangements, especially in strategic commodities such as Saudi fertilizers as well as promoting the exchange of investment in the industrial sector; it said.

## Two policemen killed in Lanka;suspicion on LTTE's former deputy leader Karuna

COLOMBO, Nov 30 (PTI):

Two policemen were shot dead while manning a road block in eastern Sri Lanka after which a leader of the main Tamil party alleged that banned LTTE's former leader Karuna could be involved in the incident.

The incident happened on Thursday night when four policemen manning a roadblock at Vavunathivu in Batticaloa district were shot at, killing two of them, the police said. Ranjith Madduma Bandara, the minister in charge of the police in the ousted government, said that one of the policemen killed was a Tamil from the north and the other was a Sinhalese from the south of the island.

The police chief has ordered an investigation into the policemen's murder. MA Sumanthiran, spokesperson of Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has raised doubts about the hand of the for-

mer LTTE deputy leader Karuna, who was a deputy minister during the previous regime of Mahinda Rajapaksa between 2010-2015.

"Since the events of October 26, Karuna Amman has come out of the cold and started speaking. According to our information, we have serious suspicions about those who have been rejuvenated since October 26," he said in Parliament. Sri Lanka is witnessing a political crisis since October 26 when President Maithripala Sirisena sacked Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and replaced him with Rajapaksa.

Sirisena later dissolved Parliament, almost 20 months before its term was to end, and ordered snap election. The Supreme Court overturned Sirisena's decision to dissolve Parliament and halted the preparations for snap polls. Both Wickrem-

esinghe and Rajapaksa claim to be the prime ministers. Wickremesinghe says his dismissal is invalid because he still holds a majority in the 225-member Parliament.

Sumanthiran went on to charge that Douglas Devananda, a minister in the purported government of Rajapaksa, had been behind some incidents of threats in the north since he was appointed prime minister.

Since 26 October, Karuna was seen to be active in social media. He was thought to be influencing Tamil legislators to back Rajapaksa in his unsuccessful bid to prove his majority in the floor of the House of parliament. Both Devananda's Eelam Democratic Peoples Party (EDPP) and Karuna's armed groups were thought to be behind incidents of human rights abuses during the Rajapaksa's tenure which ended in 2015.

## World shares mixed ahead of Trump-Xi meeting at G-20 summit

BANGKOK, Nov 30 (AP):

World share prices are mixed ahead of a meeting between Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping at the Group of 20 summit this weekend.

The DAX in Germany fell 0.6 per cent to 11,235.69 and France's CAC40 lost 0.5 per cent to 4,981.48. Britain's FTSE 100 sank 0.8 per cent to 6,983.30.

The outlook for US trading was clouded, with the future contract for the Dow Jones Industrial Average down 0.2 per cent at 25,337.00 and S&P 500 futures down 0.3 per cent at 2,735.20. Japan's Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.4 per cent to 22,351.06 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong added 0.2 per cent to 26,506.75.

The Shanghai Composite index jumped 0.8 per cent to 2,588.19, while India's Sensex was flat at 36,153.04. South Korea's Kospi fell 0.8

per cent to 2,096.86 while the S&P ASX/200 in Australia tumbled 1.6 per cent to 5,667.20 on heavy selling of financials and consumer goods companies.

Shares rose in Taiwan and Singapore but fell in Indonesia.

The working dinner meeting between Trump and Xi could bring a breakthrough in a bruising trade war that has the US and China imposing punitive tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of each other's exports.

Analysts are not optimistic about prospects for improvement a month before US tariffs on Chinese goods are due to ramp up.

"As investors shift their attention to the upcoming G-20 Trump-Xi meeting this weekend, Trump has hinted that he is very close to 'doing something with China' on trade," Mizuho Bank said in a market note.

"Though a comprehensive agreement is still unlikely, agreeing on a framework for future talks together with a delay in implementation of a 25 per cent tariff hike on USD 200 billion of Chinese imports" would "constitute a good outcome."

A measure of China's factory activity slipped to its lowest level in more than two years in November, adding to pressure on Beijing amid the tariff battle with Trump.

The China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing said Friday its monthly purchasing managers' index declined to 50 from October's 50.2 on a 100-point scale on which numbers above 50 indicate activity is increasing. It blamed weak domestic demand for the latest decline.

But investors often see such news as a signal more market-boosting stimulus may be coming.

South Korea's central bank lifted its benchmark rate by a quarter of a per cent to 1.75 per cent despite a sluggish job market and tepid growth.

The Bank of Korea's governor, Lee Ju-yeol, said the rate increase would help stabilise financial markets amid government efforts to contain surging housing prices in capital Seoul and rising consumer debt levels.

Benchmark US crude lost 22 cents to USD 51.23 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 2.3 per cent to finish at USD 51.45 a barrel on Thursday.

Brent crude gave up 8 cents to USD 59.83 per barrel. It edged up 1.3 per cent to USD 59.51 a barrel in London.

The dollar slid to 113.45 yen from 113.48 yen on Thursday. The euro slipped to USD 1.1373 from USD 1.1391.







**COOL STYLE!** Model Tyra Banks mixes all the prints during a day out in The Big Apple.

## Amazon Prime Video announces new original series 'Four More Shots Please!'

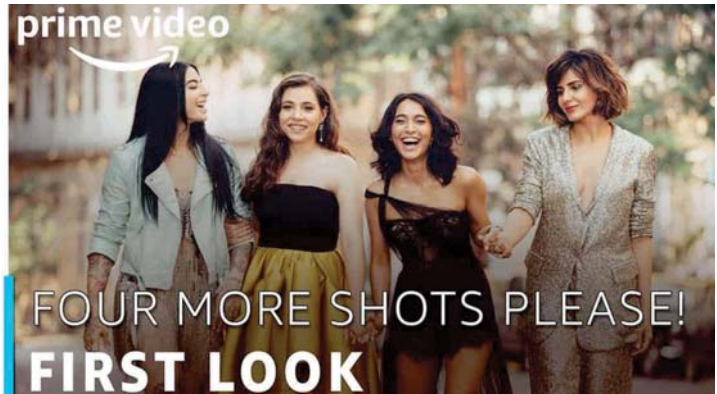
**MUMBAI, NOV 30 (PTI):** Amazon Prime Video Friday announced their upcoming Original series titled "Four More Shots Please!"

The series revolves around the lives of four young urban Indian women. In the first season, this 10-part comedy, drama and romance series is anchored in the unceasing friendship between the four women and revolves around their relationships, work-life conflicts, ambitions and anxieties as they deal with being women in the India of 2018.

Created in collaboration with Rangita Pritish Nandy and produced by Pritish Nandy Communications, the show is directed by Anu Menon.

Vijay Subramaniam, Director and Head, Content, Amazon Prime Video, India said in a statement, "Four More Shots Please!" reflects the voices of the generation of Indian women who are independent in mind, body and thought. It's a story that hasn't been told yet in India and we're glad to have the perfect partners in Pritish Nandy Communications bringing this series to fruition. Rangita Pritish Nandy's vision and Anu Menon's direction has truly transformed the story into a must watch series that is very entertaining and relatable to all our customers." The series, which is helmed by a predominantly women cast and crew, stars Sayani Gupta, Kirti Kulhari, Bani J and Maanvi Gargroo in the lead roles.

Prateik Babbar, Neil Bhooplal, Lisa Ray, Milind Soman,



Amrita Puri and Sapna Pabbi are also part of the ensemble cast. Devika Bhagat has penned the series with dialogues by Ishita Moitra, "It's a funny, exciting, magical show full of wit, humour and insight into a generation that refuses to take itself for granted. Rangita, creator of the show and Anu, director for the first season, take you on a roller coaster ride through the lives, loves and ambitions of these four women who choose to take the road less travelled by.

"And yes, there are some great guys too on the show. They will take your breath away for they are today's new age men. So no, it's not just a show about women. It's all about us and our wonderful times. It's about liberation from the past," Pritish said.

The series will be available on the streaming platform from January 25, 2019.

### Tom Hanks in talks to join Disney's live-action 'Pinocchio'

**LOS ANGELES, NOV 30 (PTI):** Hollywood star Tom Hanks is in early negotiations to play the fatherly figure Geppetto in Disney's live-action adaptation of its classic animated story "Pinocchio".

Paul King is directing the film to be produced by Andrew Miano and Chris Weitz, reported Variety. King, Weitz, and Simon Farnaby have written the most recent draft of the film.

The original animated movie revolves around living puppet who, with the help of a cricket as his conscience, must prove himself worthy to become a real boy.

### 'Daredevil' cancelled by Netflix



**LOS ANGELES, NOV 30 (PTI):** Streaming giant Netflix has decided to cancel Marvel's "Daredevil" after three seasons.

The superhero drama, which starred Cox as the titular vigilante who operated as lawyer Matt Murdock by day, had kicked off Marvel TV's streaming universe.

The project led to the launches of "Jessica Jones", "Luke Cage", "Iron Fist", and "The Punisher".

"Marvel's Daredevil will not return for a fourth season on Netflix. We are tremendously proud of the show's last and final season and although it's painful for the fans, we feel it best to close

this chapter on a high note. We're thankful to our partners at Marvel, showrunner Erik Oleson, the show's writers, stellar crew and incredible cast including Charlie Cox as Daredevil himself, and we're grateful to the fans who have supported the show over the years.

"While the series on Netflix has ended, the three existing seasons will remain on the service for years to come, while the Daredevil character will live on in future projects for Marvel," the company said in a statement to Deadline. The move comes on the heels of Netflix cancelling "Iron Fist" and "Luke Cage" last month.

## OG K-Pop Star Rain Tells Us All About His Next Big Move

**K**-pop star, actor, businessman: Korean celebrity Rain has done it all.

From trailblazing performances on stage and screen, as well as having one of the hottest bodies in the business, the 36-year-old performer is a household name in this part of Asia, but his star turn in the 2009 Hollywood action-thriller Ninja Assassin also catapulted him onto a global stage.

Sitting down with the talented multi-hyphenate for an exclusive interview at the reopening of jewellery house Cartier's ION Orchard store, he talked to us about his extraordinary longevity in the business, his personal philosophy when it comes to watches and jewellery, and his next big move.

Breaking into the entertainment industry in 1998 as part of a boyband, it was clear that Jung Ji-hoon was meant for greater things. He quickly embarked on a solo career in 2002, riding the Hallyu Wave that has impacted the global entertainment industry, and released seven albums and 28 singles in the following years.

Of his remarkable staying power in the industry, he said, "The most important thing is that you have to work hard."



While still active in the entertainment industry, Rain has also added another accomplishment to his résumé in recent years: CEO. In 2015, the performer officially set up his own entertainment agency, R.A.I.N Company, that has teams to manage singers and actors, as well as a partnership with leading Hollywood agency, William

Morris Endeavor Entertainment, to handle United States affairs on behalf of the Korean firm. The star has officially turned into a bona fide star maker.

"I have a new idol project in the making," Rain said. "We are in the midst of preparing this idol group for everyone."

Exciting times ahead indeed.

**ARIES:**Harmony: interrupted? Love planet Venus makes a rare opposition to disruptive Uranus today, pitting your own needs against those of a relationship. You could feel a bit suffocated, like you're losing your individuality by being part of a duo. But no need to overturn the entire union, Aries, or to stir up drama as a way of creating space.

**TAURUS:**Anxiety alert! Today, buried emotions could make you a bundle of nerves, possibly even affecting your health. A stressful Venus-Uranus opposition could trigger subconscious worries, wearing you down and tempting you to reach for your old vices. If you've been sticking to a new healthy lifestyle, put in reinforcements so you don't self-sabotage. No, one smoke or sugar binge won't kill you—but why unravel

your own progress? Talk to someone, meditate, listen to music. Find a healthy outlet.

**GEMINI:**Running hot and cold? Today's disruptive Venus-Uranus opposition could turn your passionate feelings from fire to ice. Maybe you've gotten a little TOO caught up in a dramatic situation and understandably, you need to take a step back. But don't make things even more complicated by suddenly going radio silent or cutting someone off.

**CANCER:** Work-life balance is a figment of fantasy today as a chaotic Venus-Uranus opposition disrupts your inner peace. You could get a surprise assignment that leaves you working late, even scrambling over the holidays. Maybe you can't stop obsessing over some work drama.

**LEO :**Pushing buttons? Today,

you could say something incendiary just to get a reaction or a jab in at someone. But thanks to a tense Venus-Uranus opposition, those words could hit below pretty strongly below the belt, taking this grudge match farther than you intended. You're trying to make a point here, Leo, not to be cruel. If you can't say something nice—or at least, be diplomatic—you might be better off saving this convo for another day.

**VIRGO:** Envy alert! The emerald-eyed monster could be your surprise houseguest today. A Venus-Uranus opposition rattles your confidence, provoking a wave of jealousy. Consider this a warning: your swagger may be built on other people's approval rather than on legitimate self-worth. Notice what triggers you about a friend or peer.

**LIBRA :**Need some breathing

room? You don't have to disrupt the harmony of your bonds just to get a little "me" time. Today, a rebellious Venus-Uranus opposition could find you stirring up drama. Somehow, it might seem easier to pick a fight and blame the other person than to courageously assert your needs or admit something controversial (e.g., you need to flirt with other people, even when you're monogamous). Newsflash.

**SCORPIO:**Simmer down, o' stressed-out Scorpio. Today's Venus-Uranus opposition can throw you into a tailspin of anxiety and overreaction. You want answers and you want them now! Alas, no amount of will-power and obsessing gets you the intel any faster. Take a step back. Consider whether you're trying to force an outcome, instead of trusting the universe to provide.

**SAGITTARIUS:**You know that friend who always points out what could go WRONG with every plan or idea? (Yeah, that one.) Don't go to this person for advice today. Sag. A chaotic Venus-Uranus opposition finds you easily riled up and roped into someone's hysteria. You need to remain calm and objective, and the simplest way to do so is to avoid the drama queens.

**CAPRICORN:** You rarely let anything get in the way of duty, especially when you've given your word. However, today's Venus-Uranus opposition could bring domestic drama that turns your plans upside-down. A female relative in particular could need your help...and her timing couldn't be worse. Capricorn, prepare to cancel your other plans if need be. Dilemma: You may be stressed about making a bad im-

pression at work.

**AQUARIUS :** Devil's advocate is not an unfamiliar role for you, Aquarius. You get a kick out of controversy and riling people up a little bit. But today's Venus-Uranus opposition warns against playing this role, especially if your comebacks are a little TOO honest. Why so aggressive? Do you have a bone to pick? It's not your job to call people out on their so-called hypocrisy at every turn, Aquarius.

**PISCES :**Is your money acting funny? Today, your finances could be a little shaky, or there could be an undercurrent of tension at the office. You might be tempted into a regrettable impulse splurge. Today's Venus-Uranus opposition practically guarantees buyer's remorse if you don't absolutely love your purchase.

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