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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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'Sikkim Summit for Tribal Status 2018' book released

State Govt actively pursuing tribal status demand for 11 left out communities: CM

NITESH R PRADHAN GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

A book titled "Sikkim Summit for Tribal Status 2018" which is a post conference document was released today in the capital in a function organized by Eleven Indigenous Ethnic Communities of Sikkim [IECOS] in collaboration with Social Justice, Empowerment & Welfare Department and Sikkim Commission for Backward Classes.

"If Atal ji would have been the Prime Minister, all left out communities



would have been tribals by now," said Chief Minister Pawan Chamling while addressing the gathering as chief guest.

Mr Chamling stated that his government has actively pursued the demand with the centre since the time of former

PM, PV Narsimha Rao, till the present Modi government.

"It is now upon us to keep up the momentum and justify our claims without diluting our stand," he expressed.

Mr Chamling further stated that the demand

for tribal status emanates from historic perspective of Sikkim where the Nepalis of Sikkimese origin enjoyed equal rights with other Sikkimese.

"There is a need to awaken collective consciousness of the country when it comes to viewing

the Nepali community and a need to break the notion of attaching the community with the country of Nepal," he added.

Highlighting social justice as the hallmark of his government, he stated that his government

has given every possible facility to the left out community.

On Tribal status to the remaining 11 left out communities, the CM said the people belonging to these communities must come together unitedly and present a strong case, based on the unique history of Sikkim as also their own tradition and customs.

"Just as we placed our case on IT exemption based on our unique identity of being Indian Sikkimese possessing SSC/CoI, this too should be pleaded on similar lines with the Central Government," he stated.

Mr Chamling also stressed on the separate history that Sikkimese Nepalese and entire Sikkimese have which, he said, makes us unique from the rest of the community.

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FAI selects three Sikkimese for AMF Futsal U-20 C'ship



REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

Three Sikkimese players, Ashwin Rai [Gangtok], Boxer Pradhan [Pendram], Sanjay Bhutia [Gangtok], along with coach of the Indian team, Bishal Chettri, who also hails from Gangtok, have left for Colombia to participate in the Asociación Mundial de Futsal [AMF] Futsal U-20 Championships 2018 slated to be held at Valledupar in Colombia from 18-26 Nov.

The Futsal Association of India [FAI] selected the Sikkimese players to represent India in the Futsal U-20 World Cup.

Speaking to Summit-Times, President, Futsal Association of Sikkim, Remon Chettri, said that the squad will be competing against the likes of Brazil, Argentina and other international teams in the U-20 World Cup at Valledupar.

Mr Chettri informed that these boys participated in the youth nationals in Bangalore recently where Sikkim finished 4th in the table.

Following the youth nationals, five boys were selected for the AMF Championship camp out of whom three were selected for the national team.

The People's Studio, a space to experience art from the eight NE States

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

Artem, a Gangtok-based magazine that celebrates the works of artists from the NE States and any work-of-art inspired by the region, today announced the launch of "The People's Studio" scheduled to be held on 18 Nov at Kazi Road in Gangtok.

The People's Studio will be a multi-functional space hosting art and photography exhibitions, writing workshops, poetry readings, film screenings and other artistic events. The place also doubles as a library and reading room, a press release informs.

Along with a regular fixture of well-known



names from the world of art, the People's Studio will be a space where people from all walks of life can come together to foster creative discussions.

The event on 18 Nov will commence with a po-

etry workshop by Tibetan poet-activist, Tenzin Tsundue, on the theme of 'Writing and Resistance'.

Through the workshop, Mr Tsundue will help writers resist their inner conflicts and chart

out a personal path of creativity. Mr Tsundue is the author of four books and winner of the first-ever Outlook-Picador Award for Non-Fiction in 2001.

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Rhenock College preps girl students with self defense skills

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

The valedictory function of a 40-days-long Self Defense Programme for girl students organised by Rhenock Government College and sponsored by Rastriya Uchhtar Siksha Abhiyan under Human Resource Development Department was held on 16 Nov in Rhenock, a press release informs.

The Self Defense Programme was inaugurated by founding Vice Chancellor of Sikkim State University, Professor Gopal Kumar Niroula Chhetri, on 04 Oct.

30 students of Rhenock College underwent rigorous training of self defense skills under Kara-



te master, Kula Hari Rai.

During the valedictory function, the students presented a karate demonstration of Kata [Karate skills], Bong Kai [its application skill] and sparring.

The event also featured a poetry recitation

on women's empowerment by Fifth Semester student, Mahendra Rai.

Principal of the college expressed joy and satisfaction over the positive outcome of the training which has led to growing personality and

confidence among the girl students, she remarked.

While congratulating the students on their achievements, she also announced more such events in the upcoming semester and urged the

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NOVEMBER 2018

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9th National Extension Education Congress concludes



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

The 9th National Extension Education Congress [NEEC] 2018 on "Climate Smart Agricultural Technologies: Innovations and Interventions" concluded today at College of Agricultural Engineering and Post Harvest Technology [CAEPHT] in Ranipool, East Sikkim in the presence of Governor Ganga Prasad as chief guest. A press release informs that the NEEC-18 was jointly organized by Society of Extension Education [Agra], Central Agricultural University [Imphal], ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region [Meghalaya] and ICAR-NRC for Orchids [Pakyong, East Sikkim].

The programme was also attended by CAU Vice Chancellor, Professor M Premjit Singh, DDG [Agricultural Extension], Division of Education, Krishi Anusandhan Bhawan, Dr. NS Rahtore, CAEPHT Dean, Professor PP Dabral,

Organising Secretary, Professor Mahendra S Seveda, and General Secretary, SEE Agra, Professor Jitendra K Chauhan.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said that agricultural scientists have huge responsibility in developing the country. Citing quotes of Mahatma Gandhi, he stated that 'Bharat' lives in villages.

"Scientists are the experts in improving livelihood of the village people by bringing innovative technologies for development in agricultural sector," he expressed. Vice Chancellor, CAU, Prof Singh, said that CAU has been striving hard in the field of research to improve the quality of agricultural products while adding that organic farming is the need of the hour.

On the occasion, some scientists were also awarded for their achievements in their fields.

Panchagavya and FPE preparation training for farmers at Kamerey



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

International Panacea Limited [IPL] organized Ward level training programme at Kamerey Ward on preparation of Panchagavya and Fermented Plant Extract [FPE] at Central Pandam in East Sikkim, a press release informs.

Block Technology Manager, Assistant Technology Manager and farmers from Kamerey Ward under Budang-Kamerey

GPU, along with IPL field functionaries, attended the programme.

Field Executives of Central Pandam, Anupa Sharma and Usha Dhakal, demonstrated the preparation of Panchagavya and FPE to help promote growth and immunity in plant system.

The participating farmers extended gratitude to thanked to IPL Field Executives for providing information on remedy for seed treatment.

Rhenock College preps...

students to participate and take full advantage of these opportunities.

The trainees, along with others students who have contributed through their art and social service towards the development of the college, were also felicitated with certificates on the day.

The Principal also extended her gratitude and felicitated the coach and expressed hope for his support in future as well.

One of the trainee students, Muskan Rai, expressed her deepest gratitude towards the HRDD, its officials and RUSA for their support in facilitating such a programme.

She also thanked the college for providing support and encouraging the students to participate in such programmes and their Karate coach for teaching them all the necessities of self defense.

'Sikkim Summit for...

He further urged intellectuals from the community to do more research on the history of Indian Nepali community and highlight its rich contributions to the country.

On the day, the CM also announced the construction of a statue as a tribute to the freedom fighter, Late Vandey Pokhrel and added that a road will also be named after him.

DASSH to hold 'Run with Doctor for TB-Free Sikkim'



SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

Doctors Academic Society of Singtam Hospital [DASSH] is all set to organise 'Run with Doctor for TB Free Sikkim' on 25 Nov in an initiative to generate wider awareness on Tuberculosis and combat the stigma and discrimination attached to it.

670 runners from different walks of the life have already registered for the run and more are likely to join, it is informed. This 14

KM run will be flagged from Singtam District Hospital complex with participants running to Majhitar and back.

DASSH member Dr Mayal P Lepcha informs that the organisation is all set to organise the event with 760 runners from different parts of the State including doctors and members of medical fraternity, students, members of different sports associations and other registering their names.

Dr Lepcha stated that

DASSH was formed in 2015 with the objective to continue medical education and keep updating knowledge of doctors.

She added that the organisation has also been organising free medical camps and other social works and providing a platform to young doctors to showcase their talents and skills.

Dr Lepcha thanked Chief Minister Pawan Chamling for his vision and initiatives to make Sikkim TB free.

Likewise, State TB

Officer, Dr DS Kerongi, mentioned that Sikkim has total of 1,360 TB patients at present. He added that although the numbers look low in the national context, it was a serious issue as per the population of Sikkim.

He added that Sikkim has more MDR cases and it has been mostly affecting the productive age group. TB is a serious concern, he stressed, and everyone needs to work in the better coordination to control and to make Sikkim TB free.

Speaking on the event,

Legal Services Camp conducted in Tarku



SUMMIT REPORT

NAMCHI, 17 NOV:

District Legal Services Authority [South] and Taluk Legal Services Committee [South] in co-ordination with Sikkim State Legal Services Authority organized a Legal Services cum Awareness

Programme at Horticulture Conference Hall in Tarku Zero Point, South Sikkim today.

A press release informs that the camp was conducted to spread awareness about welfare legislations, schemes and strengthen the com-

munity's access to the schemes being implemented by the Legal Services Authority and other departments of the State Government.

The programme aimed at identifying and connecting people to welfare schemes to

ensure that fruits of the welfare schemes are passed to the eligible people while also understanding legal needs of the people especially the senior citizens and widows, and addressing their legal problems by giving appropriate legal advice.

Today's camp mainly focused on NALSA [Legal Services to Senior Citizens] Scheme, 2016, Widow Pension Scheme, Unmarried Pension Scheme and Old Age Pension Scheme.

The programme was launched by Chairperson, DLSA [South], Jyoti Kharka, in the presence of Ld. Chief Judicial Magistrate [South], So-

nam Denka Wangdi, Secretary, DLSA [South], Urvashi Pradhan, Ld. Panel Advocates, Social Welfare Officer, Nakul Rawat, Block Development Officer, Temi BAC, Krishna Kumari Gurung, Para-Legal Volunteers, Panchayat President & members of Tarku Tanak GPU and people from Lower Tarku, Karma Gaon, Upper Tanak, Lower Tanak, Middle Tarku, Upper Tarku and Temi GPU, South Sikkim.

Around 134 people attended the camp including 56 beneficiaries. The attendees interacted with the officers and representatives of the departments for advice and guidance.

First Level Checking of EVMs and VVPATs concludes for East district

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

First Level Checking [FLC] of Electronic Voting Machines [EVMs] and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails [VVPATs] for the upcoming elections in East district concluded on 16 Nov with Additional District Collector, East, Jamyang Bhutia, as the FLC in-charge.

A press release received from the office of the District Collector, East informs that 1,020 EVMs and VVPATs were checked and certified thoroughly in the presence of representatives of political parties, Bharat Electronics Limited [BEL] engineers and Election officials in a span of 20 days.

Six Ballot Units, eight Control Units and 26 VVPATs were found defective during the FLC process. All rejected cases will be replaced by BEL.

As per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India, 2% mock poll of 1000 votes in 23 machines and 1% mock poll of 1200 votes in 11 machines were successfully conducted on 16 Nov, the release adds.

The DC East who is also the District Election Officer has extended gratitude to Chief Electoral Officer, Sikkim and CEO staff for their support and guidance during the FLC process. He has also thanked political parties, District Collectorate staff, East District Election Staff, NIC staff and BEL engineers who have worked hard even during the Diwali holidays.

All security provisions like CCTV, web casting, armed police deployment, frisking, etc., were done. After FLC, all EVMs and VVPATs will be stored in sealed warehouses for use during elections under 24x7 security. Some of the EVMs and VVPATs are separately earmarked for training and awareness purposes in coming days,

Police arrests four SKM youth, party alleges SDF conspiracy



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 17 NOV:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has accused the Sikkim Democratic Front of conspiring against SKM to defame the party owing to the increasing popularity of SKM party.

On the same, the party has further alleged that the arrest of four SKM youth from Gangtok by the police on 16 Nov was a conspiracy of the ruling party against the "sincere and dedicated" SKM youth.

The police arrested four persons from Gangtok on Friday in an alleged case of extortion on the written complaint filed by a contractor,

Thupden Thinley Bhutia, of Gangtok at Sadar Thana on 15 Nov.

The police arrested Kunchock Rapden Bhutia, Tenzing Dorjee Bhutia, Amen Mothey and Pema Samdup Bhutia, who were produced in Court today and later released on bail.

It is informed that the contractor has filed a three w-page FIR complaining that they had demanded Rs 10 lakh from him as "youth percentage" for the ongoing widening of Kazi Road on Thursday evening and threatened to obstruct the works if he failed to pay the amount.

Addressing a press

conference here today, SKM spokesperson, Jacob Khaling, stated that youth who were arrested were sincere and dedicated youths of SKM party from Gangtok who have been working honestly and sincerely since 2009.

"Seeing the honesty, sincerity and works of these youths, the ruling SDF party has tried to defame them and SKM party through conspiracy by using paid workers," he said.

He has strongly criticised and condemned the attempt of the ruling party to defame SKM and its youths.

Mr Khaling alleged that the government has provided the work

of the widening of Kazi Road which cost Rs 57.83 lakhs without any tender and in violation of the PWD code and manual with job order on 13 Jun this year.

Mr Khaling alleged that to pay back this favour to the ruling government, the contractor has made false allegation of extortion to SKM youths.

"We strongly condemn such act of the ruling party and I would like to request SDF party to do the politics of policies and programmes and not to do political conspiracy to play with the future of youths," Mr Khaling urged.

State level Inter School Band Competition

REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 17 Nov:

Boys of Jorethang Senior Secondary School, South Sikkim and girls of West Point Senior Secondary School, East Sikkim were adjudged winners of the State level Inter School Band Competition organised by State Project Office, Samagra Shiksha under Human Resource Development Department. A total of seven schools from the State had participated in the competition held at West Point SSS ground in Tathangchen today.

While West Point SSS bagged the first position in girls' category, Sirwani SS [East] and Yuksam SSS [South] secured the second and third positions respectively.

Likewise, in the boys' category, Jorethang SSS [South] bagged the first position with Sonam Choda Memorial SS [North] and Singtam SSS [East] taking the second and third positions respectively.

The winners received cash prize of Rs 5,000 with cash prize of Rs 3,500 and Rs 2,500 for the second and third position holders along with



certificates.

The winning schools will now represent the State in the Zonal round slated to be held in Guwahati next month.

The programme was attended by Director [Accounts], HRDD, HP Sharma, as chief guest accompanied by State Project Officer [SS, HRDD] cum Director [Primary Education], Bhim Thatal, along with other dignitaries and officials.

The competition was judged by Subir Rasaily [senior artist working with the Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department], Abhi Purna Bahadur Gurung [Pipe Band Master of Sikkim Police Band], and Prem Lal, JCO [Pipe Band Instructor with 18th battalion Dogra Regiment].

The State level Inter School Band Competition 2018 was organised with the aim to inculcate

spirit of patriotism and unity amongst school students that comes with performing in the band. The tune of the band was based on patriotic songs, classical "dhun" and folk tunes.

Chief guest Mr Sharma said that the students of various participating schools showcased great enthusiasm and zeal and added that the band sequel was very impressive. He stated that such events

motivate students to channel their energy towards constructive activities.

He also thanked the band instructors for molding the students so well and urged them to give their best in the Zonal round.

Both the band masters of the winning schools expressed their happiness and thanked their trainers. They also assured to perform well in the Zonal round.

ATMA-East conducts training on farm machinery for educated unemployed youth



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 17 Nov:

In a move to make educated unemployed youth technically sound in maintenance and repairing of farm equipment, Agriculture Technology Management Agency [ATMA], East in association with State Agriculture Technology Management & Extension Training Institute [SAMETI], Food Security & Agriculture Development Department, Government of Sikkim and National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management [MANAGE], Hyderabad, Government of India is conducting a six-day Skill Training of Rural Youth [STRY] training programme on "Repair and Maintenance of Farm Equipments" from 16-21 Nov, a press release informs.

Fifteen educated unemployed youths from Gangtok Block are participating in the training programme which has Rachna Gurung [Deputy Project Director, ATMA-East] and Pratima Shilal [Block Technology Manager, ATMA-East]

as Course Director and Course Coordinator respectively. Divisional Engineers, Reep Lepcha & Passang Tamang, have been invited as resource persons.

The inaugural day of the programme on 16 Nov was attended by Director, Agriculture Department, Sherab Bhutia, as chief guest and Superintendent Engineer, Jeewan Chettri, as special guest.

Speaking on the occasion, DPD, ATMA-East, Ms Gurung, mentioned that such training programmes are the need of the hour as rural youths should have technical knowledge on repairing and maintaining farm machineries. She also informed that a detailed report on the impact of the training will be accessed after six months and the same will be provided to the concerned departments as well.

Superintendent Engineer, Agriculture Department, Mr Chettri, while addressing the

participants, said that in order to save time and manpower, farm machineries are provided to beneficiaries. He encouraged the youths to come forward and adopt smart agriculture by using modern farm machineries. He further urged the participants to make proper use of farm machinery issued by the department.

Director, Agriculture Department, Mr Bhutia, threw light on various new technologies of farming. He also highlighted on some of the schemes of the department for the farmers. He expressed happiness towards the initiatives taken by ATMA-East for the welfare of the farmers and added that such skill training programmes will uplift the farming community of the State.

The programme concluded with a technical session where-in participants were introduced to basic knowledge of farm machineries.

Two-day Review-cum-Workshop on various Health Programmes concludes



GANGTOK, 17 NOV (IPR):

Two-day Review-cum-Workshop on various Health Programmes under Health Care Human Services and Family Welfare Department concluded today here in the capital Gangtok, this evening. The concerned Minister, Arjun Kumar Ghatani chaired the concluding session alongside Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Vishal Chauhan, Mission Director National Health Mission, Dr Bimal Kr. Rai and Director Dr. Uttam Pradhan.

The training programme was attended by the Chief Medical Officer (West), Dr Tsheten Namgyal, Medical Officers from all Primary Health Centres including newly recruited General Duty Medical Officer (GD-

MOs) from all districts. The programme included topics on RM-NCH+A (Maternal Health, Child Health, PCPNDT Act, Anemia, Mukta Bharat, Proud Mother Scheme, RBSK, RKS, NPPCD, Immunisation, IEC, Non Communicable Disease, ASHA, CATCH, HIV AIDS, PMJAY, RNTCP etc.

Health Minister, Mr Ghatani, in his valedictory address, congratulated the newly recruited GDMOs and highlighted the stress given to the health sector by the state government to provide quality health services through medical professionals. He also advocated on the ongoing recruitment in the health deptt and latest development in the status of designated post so as to ensure best medical services in various spheres.

He also underlined ongoing infrastructural development and upgradation of technical equipments in the health sector including in AYUSH to provide holistic health care services. Further, he touched upon upgradation of PHCs to CHC under the criteria of aspirational district particularly for West District. All most all the PHCs running in rented building before 1994 have been awarded with their own infrastructure so far, he added. He also emphasised on globally admired concept of HPV Vaccine administered to 9-14 years of girl child in the state of Sikkim under great leadership of the Chief Minister Pawan Chamling.

The Health Minister advised Medical Officers to prescribe required medicines and

to submit a list of pharmaceutical drugs before the authority which are not available as per the guideline. He also urged concerned officials to install medical facilities for kidney dialysis in district hospitals. Instruction was also given to concerned officials to prepare guidelines for newly amended SADA. In his concluding remarks, the Health Minister asked the Head of the various departments under Health Services to put extra efforts for early completion of their respective wards in technical aspects and overall for the upcoming 1000 bedded Multi Speciality Hospital at Sichey so that the historic infrastructure will be inaugurated on stipulated timeframe of December 2018.

During the meeting a special T-Shirt was launched dedicated to "Run for TB free Sikkim" organised by Doctors Academic Society of Singtam Hospital on 25 November 2018.

CMO West, MO Ravangla PHC and MO Sang PHC also presented their feedback and expressed gratitude to the department for organising the workshop. The programme concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by Director, Dr Uttam Pradhan.

SCSC holds discussions on upcoming All Sikkim Inter Church Football Tournery



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 17 Nov:

The preliminary meeting of Sikkim Christian Sports Committee [SCSC] was held at the conference hall of Paljor

Stadium on 16 Nov.

The meeting, which was chaired by SCSC secretary, Andrew Chettri, discussed various agendas related to the upcoming 7th edition of the

All Sikkim Inter-Church Football Tournament 2018 scheduled to be held from 07-12 Dec at Paljor Stadium.

An SCSC press release informs that the main objective behind the Inter Church Football Tournament was to promote local talents at a higher level. The theme of the seventh edition of the tournament is "Play for glory to maintain Harmony, Peace and Unity".

The release informs that the tournament will

have around 32 teams this year.

The last date to register is 01 Dec, with the fixture to be drawn on 05 Dec.

Gangtok on Saturday, 17 Nov
Temp: 20°C/06°C
Forecast: Times of sun and clouds, not as warm; a couple of afternoon thundershowers
Sunrise: 5:57 AM
Sunset: 4:44 PM



SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Children Still Labour

...and we still don't really care

Yes, we had Children's Day recently. What we also have coming up is the Universal Children's Day on 20 November. That day is observed to mark the UN's adoption of the Declaration of Children's Rights in 1959. The Convention is a legally binding treaty that obliges governments to "respect, protect and fulfill" child rights through their legislation and policies. Child Rights include the right to life, health, education, participation, and protection from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. All the rights of the children are equally important and reinforce each other.

Now, let's look at what India has achieved sixty-nine years since it gained Independence and fifty-seven years since the Declaration of Children's Rights was passed. Back in the year 2001, when the Census of India counted child labour for the first time, the data suggested that 12.6 million of our minors were engaged in the work-force we know as child-labour. Even at that time, statistics for the informal labour force contended that the number of under-14 year olds – the "hidden workers" – made to work was as large as 60 million. Since then, the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act has been amended to ban the employment of children in any kind of work. This, admittedly, has had only limited impact and NGOs working on child labour issues believe that as many as 20 million continue to be employed in private homes. And now that the rallies and awareness drives to protect children from labour have dried up, horror stories crop up occasionally, like in the case of the runaway who strayed into Dikchu some weeks ago or the children rescued from shops (where they were employed) more recently.

With some shops in some corners of the state openly flouting the rules, the presence of minors as servants in homes is also noticeably present even though hiring such help is now a criminal offence. Look around Sikkim, by how much do you think has the number of minors employed as domestic servants gone down since the Act was amended? As per the Childline India Foundation, a group that works for child rights, 11% of the workforce of India is made up of child labour! This is shamefully shocking because what this reflects is that one in every ten workers in India is a child!! Counting children employed as domestic help and supposedly treated like "family", how do you think Sikkim fares in this statistic? Is enough being done to "respect, protect and fulfill" the rights of the underprivileged and marginalised children that the nation has undertaken to ensure?

Children who make it to school on a regular basis, no matter how deplorable the condition of the schools, are actually privileged. It is the army on the streets which rummages through trash to pick a livelihood, the domestic servants engaged in household chores when they should be playing with friends, who need to be reassured that they are still important and that their problems are being addressed, one tiny step at a time. Or scratch that. That would be plain hypocrisy. No one is really concerned.

WRITE US:

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

Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

Why I quit my day job researching happiness and started cycling to Bhutan

CHRISTOPHER BOYCE
theconversation.com

I'd had enough. It was October 2017, and I'd been wondering what the point of my job was for far too long, and while I'm sure there was something meaningful somewhere and to someone in what I was doing day-to-day, it had certainly lost meaning for me. For all the good that writing another academic research paper would do, I thought I might as well be cycling to Bhutan.

The idea of cycling to this small country nestled in the Himalayan foothills is one I'd had for many years. Bhutan is famous for deciding to value its population's happiness and well-being over economic growth. As an academic researcher focused on understanding happiness and well-being, the journey looked to me to be something of a pilgrimage.

Before I quit, I'd spent more than ten years at different universities, trying to understand what the most important contributors were to well-being. But what I found was that I was burnt out. Given the nature of my research, the irony of this was not lost on me. I needed to do something different. I wanted to travel; to explore and understand happiness through a non-academic lens. But I wanted to connect the research I'd been doing over the years with what was happening, or indeed not happening, in the world.

PURPOSE AND MEANING

When I began my research, I was motivated by the importance of the subject. Most people I knew wanted to be happy and so, I thought, my research might help people to do that. I did what academics are incentivised to do: publish in the best peer-reviewed journals (indexed by academic readership and citation counts), as well as bring in research funds. I also did things such as engage with people outside of academia that might not ordinarily read my research – the public, the media, governments, policymakers – things I wasn't always incentivised to do, but nevertheless did because they contributed to a personal sense of purpose and meaning.

When it comes to living happy and fulfilled lives, we humans need meaning, we need purpose. People who feel there is a deeper purpose and meaning in what they are doing in their day-to-day lives tend to be happier, healthier, and more satisfied. Research shows, for example, that a life orientated towards meaning brings greater satisfaction than a life oriented toward hedonic pleasure. Those that have a strong sense of purpose in life live longer, and having a strong sense of purpose may be just as good for your health as engaging in regular exercise. Some would even conceive that purpose is, by definition, a key aspect of happiness itself.

Work is an important source of purpose and meaning for many people. When people get made redundant or become unemployed, much of the loss in well-being they experience is often due to the loss of purpose and meaning, rather than the loss of income. Even if there is no deeper personal purpose and meaning in the actual work itself then there is much to value in our daily social interactions and the structure that work provides us, although they are easily overlooked.

It is purpose and meaning that helps people get up each day and it doesn't necessarily have to be specifically about work. Purpose and meaning can take many different forms and is deeply personal. It might be looking after family, following a hobby, passion, or faith. Purpose and meaning is also an important source of resilience, helping people get through the difficulty and challenges that are an inevitable part of life.

The importance of purpose and meaning is well recognised. In the UK, for example, one of the four questions that the government's Office for National Statistics asks in its Well-Being Survey is: "Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?" To which people are asked to respond on a scale from zero "not at all" to ten, "completely". In the UK the mean score to this question is about 7.8, suggesting people feel their lives are relatively worthwhile. However, there is variation around this mean. Around 15% of the population answer a score of six or less on this question and this level has been relatively stable.

WALKING THE TALK, BEING AUTHENTIC

It has always felt important to me to apply my research findings to my own life. My research consistently showed that once basic needs are met, having more money is only weakly related to happiness and well-being, relative to other things such as relationships, health (mental and physical), and our personality characteristics. Taking this on board, I have decided not to take better paying jobs or strive for promotion (one of my first ever published papers demonstrated that promotion can have detrimental effects on one's mental health) for the sake of it. Instead, I tried to create a life where I had more space to focus on those aspects of life I knew to be the most important for well-being.

Another important contributor to our well-being is something psychologists term authenticity. Authenticity reflects our tendency to live in line with our beliefs and values rather than the demands of others, of society. So in following what I believed to be true from the research I and others were doing I was doubly rewarded; I was happier.

Nonetheless, the longer I spent in academia the more I began to question the wider relevance of my research. I began to realise that a lot of debates around happiness could sometimes be shockingly



misleading such as the extent that money can buy happiness – which too often gets overstated. Gazing out beyond the academic world, I saw a society that seems to act, whether consciously or not, as if the most important thing is to keep the economy perpetually growing, regardless of the ill effects that endless consumption has on the planet and people's mental health.

I felt despondent. What was the point in writing another academic paper? Perhaps, I thought, I ought to be doing something a bit different. Not only to rediscover meaning and purpose, but to continue striving for an authentic existence and, through that, perhaps a little more happiness too. It was then that I finally decided that it was time to leave my full-time job at the university and to start my cycling odyssey to Bhutan.

A KINGDOM OF HAPPINESS

We might not hear about them very often, but there are actually many places in the world where economic growth is not so overtly favoured above other things. It might be just a few people who have decided to live together and put their well-being above economic gain; there are small communities, towns and cities already doing this. But in the case of an entire country – Bhutan – the stated central aim of government is to increase happiness and well-being.

In 1972, the fourth king of Bhutan, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, first expressed the idea in an interview. He said: "Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross Domestic Product." Initially, Gross National Happiness was a concept rooted in the country's spiritual traditions, and government policies would be evaluated based on their supposed influence on well-being rather than its economic effect.

Back in 1972, however, there was little in the way of reliable metrics to compute the influence of a policy on well-being. So the idea of increasing happiness remained more of a philosophical concept. Nevertheless, the happiness concept became embedded in the policy-making process. Some of the decisions that arose from this approach included a ban on television (up until 1999), making tobacco illegal, and restricting tourism to preserve the country's culture.

The Bhutanese have since developed a Gross National Happiness Index to measure the country's collective level of well-being – this has been the government's goal since its constitution was enacted in 2008. The index has direct links to policy making and it is meant to provide incentives for the government, non-governmental organisations, and businesses to operate in ways that increase the happiness index. For example, environmental protection is enshrined in its constitution, which puts a limit on profitable industries such as logging.

Yet Bhutan is by no means the happiest place on Earth, despite its focus on happiness. Finland topped the UN's 2018 World Happiness Report and Bhutan came in at 97 out of 156 countries. A number of factors are at play here, but Bhutan has been criticised for having a top-down focus on what constitutes happiness. It also suffers from considerable poverty, human rights abuses and many other issues that numerous countries face.

Nevertheless, the case of Bhutan continues to inspire conversations as to what should be the purpose of society and how countries can measure success. Bhutan also illustrates what might just be possible if there were the political will.

THE JOURNEY, NOT THE DESTINATION

Against this backdrop, I set off from the UK in October 2017 with the barest of essentials packed onto a bicycle and my route, you might say, has been circuitous. As I write I am in Canada, and it was important for me to travel across South and North America, as I wanted to pass through other places that, much like Bhutan, are exploring new ways of living and where the economy does not necessarily dominate political and social life.

In Costa Rica, for example, there's a real emphasis on "pura vida" or the pure life. Citizens live long and happy lives (comparable to that of financially rich countries) on levels of income that are much lower. I met many a living example of what I'd seen in the research – happiness that comes from relationships, good health, and being in connection with ourselves and nature. Once basic needs are met, money adds little to well-being and I met many people with not very much; but enough to be able to help me as I passed through their village or town on my bicycle.

I also wanted to visit Canada, which has an exemplary national index of well-being that was de-

veloped in conjunction with citizens. It was developed as a bottom-up process with clear and direct links to policy. From a research perspective we know that autonomy and having a voice is important for well-being and I have learnt from personal experience how important it is to feel heard.

And, of course, there were many places in between that I wanted to visit that felt important to help me understand happiness more deeply: communities intent on happiness, natural wonders of the world, and various cities with something to contribute.

I've flown some of the way (across oceans) but cycled most of it in a bid to make the journey authentic and purposeful. Not only did I think cycling would be good for my own well-being (physical and mental) but because it is a form of travel that has minimal ecological impact and therefore would not harm the well-being of those around me. Plus, my experiences travelling on a bicycle before I began this journey showed me that it is a fantastic way to meet people. It is a fairly unusual form of travel in some parts of the world and it draws interest and builds connections.

People can often make a place. I knew that the people I met would form an important part of my trip and I wanted to create long lasting connections, which are of course an important component of a happy life. These connections have come through sharing experiences of what it means to be happy – sharing my own research and personal experiences of happiness and also being willing to hear about the experiences of others, from the people I have met in the street and the plazas to the people making policy decisions.

There are many people who are interested in implementing programmes and happiness policies into their own lives and the lives of others as a means to genuinely promote happiness and well-being in the area where they live.

When I spoke with people involved in policy decisions in Costa Rica, for example, we discussed the country's involvement in the Wellbeing Economy Alliance. This is an organisation that resembles the G7 group of countries, but rather than a focus on the size of the economy, these countries – including Costa Rica, Scotland, New Zealand and Slovenia, among others – aim to promote well-being.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

My journey has been undeniably amazing on a personal level. Each day can bring something different, unexpected, challenging, and that demands a lot psychologically. Suddenly I might find myself in the home of a person I met in a plaza sharing food with their family. The next day I could find myself sitting in my tent alone but in the company of a beautiful night sky. There have been some truly special moments and, through these, I have often felt happy and learnt many interesting things about myself. For example, that I am much more than just an academic, and that sometimes what we perceive ourselves to be can limit what we can be.

Yet it has not been easy, and has definitely not been a holiday. My journey has involved a substantial amount of physical effort and at times deep challenge. About two months into my trip I got bitten by a street dog in a tiny village in Peru. The need to deal with the physical effects aside (treating the wound, getting to a hospital, getting vaccinations), the experience really affected me psychologically.

I wanted to come home. I was struggling to find the emotional strength I needed to get through. I felt alone. But I persevered and I put my ability to do so down to eventually finding the support I needed (both locally and from back home), as well as having that clear sense of purpose.

I'm glad I persevered with the journey as all the other experiences I've since that incident and the people I have met have been enormously enriching and given me a greater feeling of wholeness. Plus, an important part of happiness is dealing with adversity and building resilience for when difficult things happen, as they inevitably do.

Now, I'm in Canada and, in truth, I'm surprised I've made it this far. I often wonder whether I'll ever actually make it to Bhutan; there are many more mountains to climb and seas to cross. Lately, I've been having a difficult time on the road – it's been a year and I deeply miss the surroundings of home, friends and family.

Maybe I don't actually need to go all the way to Bhutan. Maybe what I've done is enough. Either way, I can rest assured that happiness is found in the journey – not the destination.

[the writer is Research Fellow at the Behavioural Science Centre, University of Stirling]

China begins reconstruction of Sino-Nepal friendship bridge damaged in 2015 quake



SHIRISH B PRADHAN

KATHMANDU, Nov 17 (PTI): Chinese authorities have commenced the reconstruction of the Sino-Nepal "friendship bridge" that links the Himalayan nation with Tibet and was damaged in the massive 2015 quake.

The earthquake that struck Nepal on April 25, 2015 severely damaged the bridge in Rasuwagadhi along the Nepal-China road, that had been a major trading route between Kathmandu and Tibet.

Nepal and China signed an agreement on June 21 this year and

the Chinese authorities started work on the bridge that will replace the earthquake-damaged bridge in Rasuwagadhi border.

The new bridge is being constructed just five metres north-east from the damaged bridge.

Chief District Officer of Rasuwagadhi, Krishna Paudel said the construction work of the bridge started on Chinese side a few days ago.

The construction of the bridge that is an important link to China would complete by May 2019, according to officials.

BJP accused of attacking CPI(M) workers and MLA in Tripura

AGARTALA, Nov 17 (PTI): The opposition CPI(M) in Tripura has alleged that 35 of its party workers, including the MLA of Kamalassagar constituency, were attacked in different parts of the Bishalgarh sub-division on Friday.

CPI(M) workers Saturday took out processions in Agartala against the alleged attack on Friday.

The party, in a statement issued on Friday night, alleged that the ruling BJP workers attacked their supporters, activists and leaders in different parts of the Bishalgarh sub-division, including the MLA of Kamalassagar constituency, Narayan Chowdhury.

The ruling BJP said that the CPI(M)'s allegation was false and baseless.

"This is their propaganda model to give false statement to turn false into truth. Nothing such has happened in Bishalgarh," the BJP spokesperson in Tripura, Ashoke Sinha, said on Saturday. "Our chief minister Biplab Kumar Deb has strongly directed police to be neutral and take appropriate actions



against the hoodlums, irrespective of any party affiliations.

The allegations are completely false and baseless," he said.

According to the CPI(M)'s statement a meeting was organised at a hall at the party's office in Bishalgarh, to commemorate the November Revolution.

The programme was scheduled at 2 pm. CPI(M) politburo member Manik Sarkar, the former chief minister of Tripura, was the main speaker, it said.

workers were assaulted, it said. Bijon Dhar, Tripura party unit secretary and central committee member also said that Narayan Chowdhury was attacked.

He also said that Manik Sarkar, who was among those present at the meeting, was not attacked.

He (Sarkar) in fact stayed back at the Bishalgarh party office for about two hours to ensure that the party members and supporters who attended the meeting reached their homes safely.

"A group of miscreants pelted stones at the MLA's vehicle at Rastar Matha in the evening when he was returning home. Then a few activists of CPI(M) accompanying him fled the scene in fear. But no one was injured in the incident. I also went to the residence of the MLA, but he was not at home at that time. I would meet him again," the Sub-divisional Police Officer (SDPO) of Bishalgarh, Mihir Lal Das, said.

Das denied that CPI(M) workers were not allowed to enter the meeting hall at Bishalgarh on Friday.

FIELDWORK REFLECTIONS



A fieldwork to remember

MONGFING LEPCHA

While talking about anthropology, fieldwork is an important aspect that defines the subject. Fieldwork is conducted to gather data or to find the answers to the questions based on research. In order to initiate a fieldwork, a lot of preparation is required which gives the researcher an outline of how to proceed the research systematically. However, there can be incorporation of some methods and steps which is entirely based on the situation in the field area.

For instance, sometimes a researcher might have to stay more than the stipulated time in the field area and sometimes the researcher might have to end fieldwork soon if all the required data is already collected. As a researcher, every fieldwork which I conducted is always a different and a memorable experience. Among all fieldwork experiences, this article shares the experience of a day-long fieldwork conducted while documenting an important occasion of Lepchas which is the Pano Gaeboo Achayok's Birth Anniversary celebration. It is the day when the last Lepcha King was born some hundred years back. For Lepchas, Pano Gaeboo Achyok is an epitome of a true legend and to pay him respect his birth anniversary is celebrated every year on 20th December at Kalimpong, West Bengal.

Although the fieldwork was conducted to gather data for a documentary film based on the legendary figure of the Lepchas, this article focuses on the experiences of the fieldwork. Unlike other fieldworks this fieldwork was a unique experience because of many reasons but the time frame to conduct the research being the most important one. Since it is only a day long occasion so everything important and relevant had to be covered within a day.

The documentary film was made by me and fellow researcher Ms. Rongnyoo Lepcha with the assistance of two professional videographers. What inspired us to prepare the documentary was that, over the time the occasion has managed to become much more than an occasion which started as a birth anniversary celebration of the King. The occasion is seen as a symbol of unification among Lepchas. Also, my fellow researcher had completed her thesis on Pano Gaeboo Achyok, and looking at the importance of the occasion among the Lepchas, the idea of preparing a documentary on it stroke us because in that way we could know the people's perspective of the occasion, how it is celebrated and so forth.

Because our fieldwork was to cover a day-long event and the data had to be collected within that time frame, we had to plan everything accordingly. To conduct any fieldwork, financial assistance is required and since this was making of a documentary, we had to look for a financial source. So we put an application and approached the Mayel Lyang Lepcha Development Board and Indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association. Our application was accepted and they agreed to provide financial aid. After that we contacted the videographers and confirmed the project date.

As the day of the occasion approached, we planned

out things to be covered for the documentary. Although the occasion was on 20th of December, our fieldwork had already begun on 19th of December. We met early on 19th and arranged for a modest accommodation for the videographers. As soon as they arrived in the evening, we started the video shooting of the preparation which was going on at the venue in Mela Ground, Kalimpong. It was late in the evening and people (volunteers) who had come from near and far places were selflessly preparing for the big day. We interviewed few people on that day who were full of enthusiasm and looking forward for the next day. By interviewing them we were clear that no one was there without the knowledge of the occasion. They knew exactly the purpose they were there and the cold winds of winter did not bother them to what they were doing. Some were arranging the stage, some preparing meals for the people gathered, some practicing their songs and dance in the corners. We continued the shooting and the interview and wrapped it up by eight at night.

So, on the main day which is on 20th of December 2017, we started early. Every year, a huge rally is set out by the Lepchas which start from 10th mile, Kalimpong till the venue in the heart of the town. The participants are Lepchas from all over the places. The rally started with the Lepcha anthem. The gathering was surprisingly huge. Young and elders all were in colorful traditional attire along with smiling faces all set out to witness yet another great celebration of oneness. Since the gathering was huge our team had to split up into two. When I was in the rally along with the people and I could actually see how strangers in similar attire were comfortable with each other. They were singing, talking, laughing and most importantly praising the King who had somehow brought them together in one platform to feel that oneness. After more than an hour of walk we finally reached the venue. The entire venue was covered with the colorful attire. The occasion at the venue started with Lepcha anthem which was again magical. For a moment it felt like the hymn of the anthem sung by thousands of people might have penetrated the skies and reached the heavens.

On reaching the venue, we immediately continued our interviews with different people. Meanwhile, many things were happening on the stage such as speeches, offering of prayers by the different religious leaders, dance, songs, skits, felicitations, etc. We caught hold of different people and requested them for a short interview which they did not deny. Our interview with the people was a random one meaning that we planned to interview anyone who was there. We came across small children and thought to interview them as well, asking them about the occasion and why they had come there. To our surprise they confidently answered us about the King and that they were happy to be there and would continue coming every year. So it was quite clear that the occasion had managed to live even in the younger generation without losing its sanctity.

We also witnessed a group dance performed by thousand male and female volunteers from different

nooks and later interviewed few of them. We came to know that the dance was practiced separately by the different village groups in their own villages and later synchronized just the day before the main event. Among the participants were enthusiastic young



boys and girls and elderly men and women who were so interested and happy being a part of the iconic performance. We interviewed the Bongthings who were there to offer prayers to the spirit of the King and other deities as explained to us. Later, we interviewed the people who had set up food stalls, book stalls, who had organized lotteries to raise funds for the village clubs etc. we also interviewed the volunteers who were managing the food for everyone. They were the self help groups who were working relentlessly to prepared food for the thousands of people gathered. They had also organized a team who later were engaged in cleaning the venue which was a very thoughtful approach.

Finally, the day ended with cultural event and display of fireworks. Although the crowd gradually decreased by the end of the day due to obvious reasons, the one day occasion witnessed the presence and participation of Lepchas who were from different states and countries. When asked about what could be some changes that have come about, most replied that every year there are more participants and it's the only occasion where religion does not draw a boundary among the people. The sense of belonging to a community, of being a Lepcha is the only feeling that is seen and which has added more meaning to the occasion which now is not just celebrating King's birth anniversary but an occasion of celebrating being Lepchas.

[the writer is Research Scholar, Department of Anthropology, Sikkim University]

EC orders removal of Chhattisgarh public relations dept chief

New Delhi, Nov 17 (PTI): The Election Commission Saturday asked the Chhattisgarh government to transfer one of its senior officials who was allegedly caught on tape offering money for sting operation against opposition Congress leaders in the poll-bound state.

The commission has directed that S Rajesh Toppo, secretary and commissioner of public relations in the state government, be transferred from his present post "in context of alleged statements made by him", a spokesperson said.

"The commission observed that such state-

ments indicate partisan behaviour apart from use of uncivilised language unbecoming of a senior civil servant," the spokesperson said.

Toppo was allegedly caught on tape asking a journalist to film a video of Congress members abusing one of their senior leaders.

The official is purportedly heard saying that he is willing to spend some money for the sting video. The second phase polling in 72 assembly constituencies in Chhattisgarh will be held on November 20. The first phase polling in 18 seats took place on November 12.

36 Ekalavya model residential schools to be set up in Meghalaya: Oram

Shillong, Nov 17 (PTI): Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram Saturday announced establishment of Ekalavya model residential schools in 36 blocks of Meghalaya at the cost of Rs 20 crore each. He said the project of constructing the 36 schools will be completed in three years.

"The Tribal Affairs Ministry is contemplating to establish 36 Ekalavya model residential schools in Meghalaya.

These model schools will be constructed at the cost of Rs 20 crore each," Oram said while addressing a function at the St Anthonys College here.

Established under the Tribal Affairs Ministry, the Ekalavya model residential school (EMRS) is a Government of India scheme for model residential school for tribals identified under the Scheduled Tribes across the country.

The Union Minister also informed that the Centre has sanctioned the construction of two such schools, one in Samanda in East Garo Hills while another school in Nongpoh (Ri Bhoi district), the construction of which will start shortly.

"Presently, 192 such schools are currently operational all over the country," he said, adding that the government in-

tends to construct over 500 such schools in the country. The construction of these schools is in line with the government's commitment to provide the best quality education to the tribal children in their own environment.

"To realise this mission, it has been decided that by the year 2022, every block with more than 50 per cent ST population and at least 20,000 tribal people, will have an ekalavya model residential school," he said.

The Union Tribal Affairs minister said the Ekalavya schools will be on par with Navodaya Vidyalayas and will have special facilities for preserving local art and culture besides providing training in sports and skill development.

He said the Union Tribal Affairs budget has increased from Rs 800 crore in the 1990s to more than Rs 5000 crore this year. "The allocation for the ministry has gone up by more than 10 per cent in the Union Budget from Rs 4827 crore in the year 2016-17 to Rs 5329 crore in the 2017-18," he said.

Oram was here to inaugurate the Rev Fr D J Wollaston Annexe building of St Anthonys college along with Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma.

Avoid confrontation with Kohli, du Plessis tells Australia

MELBOURNE, Nov 17 (PTI): South African captain Faf du Plessis offered tips to Australia ahead of their big-ticket clashes against India: avoid confrontation with Virat Kohli and give him “silent treatment”.

Du Plessis on Friday said that his team gave India captain Kohli the “silent treatment” in an attempt to keep him quiet when the two teams squared off earlier this year.

“There are guys like that in international cricket (who enjoy the confrontation). We feel like that when we play against someone like Virat Kohli, he wants to get into the fight,” the Protea said.

Du Plessis’ South Africa beat India 2-1 in the series but Kohli emerged as the top run-getter with an aggregate of 286

from three Tests at an average of 47.66.

“There’s one or two guys in each team around the world that we as a team discuss before playing against them. We’re like, ‘better not say too much to him because you’ll get him going’”

Kohli has been in imperious form throughout the year. The world no 1 Test batsman notched up 593 runs against England in the five-match series and followed that up with three back-to-back hundreds against the West Indies in the One-day International series.

Du Plessis said, “He’s an amazing player. We gave him the silent treatment and he still scored runs in South Africa, but we felt like it was not huge runs he scored the one hundred there in Centurion when the wicket was slow.

UK minister blocks export of unique Indian painting of ‘Trumpeters’

ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, Nov 17 (PTI): Britain’s arts minister has imposed an export bar on a unique water-colour painting depicting a traditional musical performance in mid-18th century northern India in an attempt to find a UK buyer for the 550,000-pound artwork.

Michael Ellis, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, is hoping a museum would be interested in acquiring ‘Trumpeters’ by Nainsukh of Guler (1710-1778).

The painting is described by experts as a delicate miniature of a “rarely found calibre”, showing seven village musicians on a terrace, striking differing poses and faces, while energetically blowing the exceptionally long Pahari horns called Turhi, in the hill region of northern India. It has been categorised as a fine example of Nainsukh of Guler’s trademark gift of detailed observation and complex directional composition.

“Nainsukh’s artistic influence has been felt around the world for generations and this piece demonstrates the outstanding aesthetic importance of his work,” said Ellis. “I hope that this piece can be kept in the UK, not only for its beauty, but to help further the study of Indian art and history,” he said.

The artist is considered to be one of the most acclaimed of the Pahari Movement, a major and popular genre of Indian miniature painting during the period.

Some of his other works are exhibited in

public collections in the UK, including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum.

The miniature is an example of the colour and light of India which inspired its first owner, renowned artist Winifred Nicholson (1893-1981), whose works have been exhibited in world-leading galleries including the Tate.

“Nainsukh of Guler’s beautiful miniature of musicians is a masterpiece unparalleled in North Indian art. But the exuberant gestures and puffed-out cheeks of the trumpeters bear a remarkable resemblance to the trumpeters depicted some 300 years earlier by the Italian Renaissance artist Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) in his series of paintings, now in Hampton Court, showing the Triumph of Caesar. “These paintings were repeatedly reproduced as prints over the coming centuries, initially by Mantegna himself. Did Nainsukh see, and was he influenced, by the prints when preparing this watercolour?” said reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA) member Peter Barber.

RCEWA, which made the recommendation to defer the export licence on the painting, said it offers a British gallery, museum or library the opportunity to acquire the piece. Like the Mantegnas, it would then remain in the UK and the connections between two great works of Asian and European arts could be further investigated.

Ballad of Ousmane Dembélé: £100m victim of football’s fat greasy hands

BARNEY RONAY
the Guardian

Sympathy for Ousmane Dembélé: looking from a distance at the struggles of the world’s most destructively overpriced 21-year-old footballer, it is hard to detect a great deal of this out there right now.

This week Dembélé’s troubled time at Barcelona reached another minor point of crisis. The player and his agents were called into a meeting with the club hierarchy, where Dembélé was urged to pull his socks up and the club hierarchy was urged to stop leaking stories to the press, a story that was immediately leaked to the press.

This is of course nothing new. Football has always eaten its young, and the Camp Nou has always been a hard place to go. Like Dembélé, Diego Maradona was also a stripling when he signed for Barcelona back in 1982. Like Dembélé he was the most expensive young player in the world. And like Dembélé he found it ruinously hard.

Early on Maradona raged against the manager Udo Lattek, who insisted he kicked medicine balls around for hours on end, the bigger the fixture coming up, the heavier the medicine balls. Maradona struggled with Catalan culture, struggled with his “imbecile” of a chairman, who constantly briefed against him. He struggled with the overly physical Barcelona style.

Eventually his ankle was snapped (“it sounded like a piece of wood splitting”) in a horrible challenge by Andoni Goikoetxea. After writhing in agony for a few moments the most expensive footballer in the world was eventually carried off the Camp Nou pitch on a blanket and driven to hos-



pital in a small borrowed van after it turned out there were no ambulances. Compare this, if you will, to the case of Dembélé, whose own experience at Barcelona has involved being ferried into town like a junior princeling of the intergalactic regal elite, transferred from seven-star sealed interior to elite training complex via helicopter gunship dressed only in yak-fur robes and a solid gold hat. It isn’t fashionable to feel sorry for Dembélé in these circumstances, to accept a 21-year-old multimillionaire might feel lonely or lost in Catalonia. At the very least surely Dembélé has a man to do that for him, a team of junior aides whose duty it is to look out of the window with a sad expression, to take shifts wandering disconsolately from room to room in his shuttered and gated mansion.

If so they will have been working overtime. It is 15 months now since Dembélé was plucked out and beamed down at the Camp Nou for a fee close to £100m. Since when he has played 90 minutes just four

times and scored 10 goals. Information from Football Leaks tells us Dembélé has been paid £15m in basic wages in this time, with £9m siphoned off to “intermediates”, transformed in not much more than a year from promising Rennes teenager to one-man sporting mega-industry.

At moments like these football looks like a real-time social experiment, a quest to find out what we can do to these human beings, how much of this irradiating weirdness a 21-year-old athlete can take. What shapes will it bend him into, what wounds will it gouge out? Dembélé had started the season well before he was dropped. He even lit up a one-sided Clásico last month, passing beautifully, surging away from defenders with such easy grace it isn’t hard to see how with some time to steep and strengthen he really could bloom into a headline star of the next decade. Late on he did he something horrible to Nacho: turning, twisting back and then just easing past his man in a way that left Na-

cho looking lost, baffled, confused as to his basic purpose in all this wide green space.

But something hasn’t been right. Bad vibes have been present from the beginning. There have been reports of turning up late for training, of going missing in club hours. The talk is of a bad attitude, of abandoned Spanish lessons, poor diet. Don Balon called Dembélé “Sad, apathetic, unwilling and excessively individualistic”, suggest he goes to bed in the wee hours, a devotee of “the console and fast food”.

What to make of this? How seriously to take what sound like some fairly off-the-shelf, and indeed uncomfortably generic criticisms of a young man living abroad without his family for the first time? Who is really looking after this precious, superheated 21-year-old?

The Dembélé story has always been a saga of interests and agents and endless friction among the Dembélé sporting-industrial complex. He fell out with Rennes in the process of moving from youth to first team, fell out with

Rennes again when he left, and fell out with Dortmund when he left them. But then football has nagged and snapped and grabbed at Dembélé with its fat greasy hands from the start, to the extent Dortmund actually praised him for his steadfastness in refusing the various big money offers during his very brief time as a shooting star at Rennes.

And so we hear he might be off again, out there being monetised once more like no other 21-year-old talent has ever been monetised before. There is a suggestion Barcelona might finance a move to bring Neymar back by shifting Dembélé on, emphasising the basic pointlessness of the entire exercise: Neymar moves to Paris Saint-Germain to please a Qatari sport-washing project. Dembélé is uprooted in return for strangulating amounts of money. Everyone stagnates, everyone treads water, everyone gets paid. Liverpool has been suggested a possible destination for Dembélé, a sensational signing should Jürgen Klopp manage to pull it off. For now the ballad of Ousmane Dembélé will remain a story that only really reveals its sadness in outline. Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel? Who actually thinks it could be a good idea to hurl such vast, disorienting skips full of money at a teenager, then expect him not to be alarmed by this?

Is there any point in even asking these rather old fashioned-sounding questions? We will, of course, find out. Huge amounts of additional cash will now be thrown at the problem, with all the usual cuts and bonuses. And in the end flux is good. Moves are good. Everyone wins here – everyone, that is, who matters.

Irish boxer pursues dream after freak dental mishap

PHILEM DIPAK SINGH

NEW DELHI, Nov 17

(PTI): Rose Ceire Smith

means it when she says she is made of stronger stuff. A boxer is supposed to be in any case, more so when she is representing her national team in a World Championship.

But what bookends the Irish’s assertion, more than the upper cuts, the hooks and the jabs in the ring, is the manner in which she recalled a freak dental mishap, which ended in a surgery to remove an instrument that found its way into her gut.

“The incident happened five years back and it had affected my boxing then, but it is over now and I have moved on. I am happy about that,” a calm and composed Smith said after winning her 51kg first round bout against Gabriela Dimitrova of Bulgaria here.

In October 2013, Smith had ended up swallowing a sharp dental instrument during

a root canal treatment due to the negligence of the doctor.

She sued the dentist and the Health Service Executive.

The 25-year-old claimed she was told it would pass through her system but instead it lodged near her hip only centimetres from her femoral artery. The instrument was eventually removed in September 2014 through surgery.

Smith, an elite boxer of Ireland, recovered from that surgery but it hampered her preparations for the 2016 Rio Olympics as she failed to qualify. A settlement was reached in the case early this year and Smith, the national champion of Ireland in her weight category, was happy that the controversy was over.

Smith said she had felt abdominal pain while competing during 2014 and the negligence of the dentist caused harm to her career. “I am from Cavan (in Ireland), made of

stronger stuff. It has no impact on me now and I am national champion of Ireland. I have completed my university study also in sports science from Dublin University. I got my degree just last week,” she said.

Smith began boxing when she was 17 and became one of the first female boxers in the High Performance Unit of Ireland as a teenager.

“The studies over, I will be a full time boxer, I am going to train full time and hope to have some wonderful achievements,” she said.

Talking about the bout, she said, “It was a good fight, tactical fight, between boxers of almost similar styles and I am happy to start on a winning note.

“The atmosphere here is very good. I am enjoying in New Delhi. I reached here a few days earlier to acclimatise to the conditions. In the few days remaining here, I hope to be successful.

Facebook investors want Zuckerberg to step down as company’s chairman following report



WASHINGTON, Nov 17

(PTI): Facebook investors

have called on the company’s chief executive Mark Zuckerberg to step down as chairman following reports that the company hired a public relations firm to smear its critics, a media report said on Saturday.

The New York Times recently published a report revealing that Facebook at times smeared critics as anti-Semitic or tried to link activists to billionaire investor George Soros, and tried to shift public anger away toward rival tech firms.

It also said that the company also used a Republican public relations firm, Definers Public Affairs, to help repair its battered reputation following intense criticism of the social media platform’s handling of a scandal over Russian interference in the 2016 US elections and the Cambridge Analytica scandal, The Telegraph reported.

Jonas Kron, a senior

vice president at Trillium Asset Management, a US investor which owns an 8.5m stake in Facebook, last night called on Zuckerberg to step down as board chairman in the wake of the report, the paper said.

“Facebook is behaving like it’s a special snowflake,” the paper quoted him as saying.

“It’s not. It is a company and companies need to have a separation of chair and CEO,” he said.

The attack on Zuckerberg is set to complicate the daunting challenge facing Sir Nick Clegg, Facebook’s new global head of policy and communications, who joined last month and has been asked to conduct a review of Facebook’s use of lobbying firms.

Definers allegedly encouraged the depiction of Facebook’s critics as anti-Semites and had published news articles criticising Facebook’s competitors.

The business has also been accused of attempt-

ing to encourage journalists to report that anti-Facebook groups were linked to Mr Soros, the paper said.

In a call with journalists on Thursday, Zuckerberg denied knowing that his business had hired the firm.

“As soon as I learned about this, I talked to our team and we are no longer working with this firm,” he said.

Kron said the new revelations about Facebook’s use of Definers offered fresh reasons for Mr Zuckerberg to relinquish his dual role as chairman and chief executive.

“The latest report should remove any lingering doubts that some may have had,” he said.

Zuckerberg has retained a high level of control over the social networking business which he founded in 2004 due to his combined role and his ownership of a stake representing 60pc of the company’s voting shares, the report said.

Gold rebounds on wedding season buying, global cues

New Delhi, Nov 17 (PTI): Gold prices spurted by Rs 135 to Rs 32,150 per 10 grams at the bullion market Saturday on wedding season demand amid a firm trend overseas. Silver also traded higher by Rs 250 to Rs 38,150 per kg on the back of increased offtake by industrial units.

Traders said besides increased buying by jewellers in the wedding season, a firm trend in the overseas market, where weakness in the dollar raised the precious metal’s safe-hav-



en appeal, pushed gold prices higher. Globally, gold edged up by 0.67 per cent to USD 1,222.10 an ounce and silver gained 0.84

per cent to USD 14.49 an ounce in New York on Friday.

In the national capital, gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per

cent purity traded higher by Rs 135 each to Rs 32,150 and Rs 32,000 per 10 grams, respectively. The precious metal had tumbled Rs 235 Friday.

Sovereign, however, remained steady at Rs 24,800 per piece of 8 grams. In line with gold, silver ready rose by Rs 250 to Rs 38,150 per kg and weekly-based delivery jumped Rs 205 to Rs 37,023 per kg. On the other hand, silver coins remained flat at Rs 73,000 for buying and Rs 74,000 for selling of 100 pieces.

UN committee condemns rights violations against Rohingya

UNITED NATIONS, NOV 17 (AP): A key UN committee overwhelmingly approved a resolution Friday strongly condemning the continuing “gross human rights violations and abuses” against Rohingya Muslims who are treated as outsiders in Myanmar and were victims of a brutal campaign by the country’s military.

The General Assembly’s human rights committee approved the resolution by a vote of 142-10, with 26 abstentions. It is virtually certain to be formally adopted by the 193-member world body in December.

Among those voting against the resolution were Myanmar neighbours China, Cambodia and Laos along with Russia. Bangladesh, which hosts 1.1 million Rohingya refugees, voted in favour. The resolution expresses deep concern that violence by Myanmar’s military against the Rohingya has forced over 723,000 people to flee to Bangladesh since August 2017.

It urgently calls on Myanmar’s government to end discrimination and provide a path to citizenship for the embat-



tled minority.

Buddhist-majority Myanmar has long considered the Rohingya to be “Bengalis” from Bangladesh even though their families have lived in the country for generations. Nearly all have been denied citizenship since 1982, effectively rendering them stateless, and they are also denied freedom of movement and other basic rights.

The latest crisis began with attacks by an underground Rohingya insurgent group on

Myanmar security personnel in August 2017 in northern Rakhine State.

Myanmar’s military responded with a brutal campaign and is accused of mass rape, killings and the burning of thousands of homes. The resolution, sponsored by the 57-nation Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the European Union and Canada, reiterates “deep distress” at reports that unarmed Rohingya are still being subjected to excessive use of force and rights violations by

Myanmar’s military and security forces, including killings and rapes. The resolution expresses “grave concern” at the findings of the UN fact-finding mission on Myanmar, which concluded that some top Myanmar military leaders should be prosecuted for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide against the Rohingya. It strongly condemns all rights abuses set out in the commission’s report and calls for “a full and independent

investigation” of human rights abuses against the Rohingya and other minorities. Turkish Ambassador Feridun Sinirlioglu, speaking on behalf of the OIC, called the commission’s findings “devastating”.

He said “people have been trapped in a vicious cycle of violence and forced displacement” for years in Myanmar and the events of August 2017 against the Rohingya are “only the latest episode of this cycle.” “Without a comprehensive strate-

gy, reaching an enduring solution to this crisis is impossible,” Sinirlioglu said.

He said the OIC believes the only solution is the voluntary return of the Rohingya to their homes with their basic rights “guaranteed” but he said this will not be possible “without holding the perpetrators responsible for their crimes.” Myanmar’s UN ambassador, Hau Do Suan, called the resolution “politically motivated and one-sided and discriminatory”. He accused the global media and human rights champions of concentrating on Myanmar and Rakhine state where the remaining Rohingya live when money could be better spend helping starving people in Yemen and elsewhere.

“Adoption of this and other ill-intentioned, selective and politically motivated resolutions will not help at all our efforts to solving the issue of Rakhine state, but would rather lead to further polarization and escalation of tensions among different religious communities in the country,” Hau said.

“It will only aggravate distrust between the people of Myanmar and the international community,”

CIA believes Saudi Crown prince ordered murder of Khashoggi: Report

LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, NOV 17 (PTI): The CIA has concluded that Saudi Arabia’s powerful Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman ordered the murder of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul, contradicting the Saudi government’s assertions that he was not involved, according to a media report.

The death of Khashoggi, a onetime insider turned critic of the crown prince and a resident of the US, has spurred a wave of international anger against Saudi Arabia and its ruler. Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist, was last seen entering the kingdom’s consulate on October 2 to obtain paperwork for his marriage.

Saudi Arabia had offered a series of contradictory explanations for Khashoggi’s death. After repeated denials, Saudi Arabia finally admitted Khashoggi had been murdered at the compound but blamed it on a “rogue” operation.

American officials have expressed high confidence in the agency’s assessment, which is the most definitive to date, allegedly linking Saudi Arabia’s crown prince to the killing, according to The Washington Post.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) found that 15 Saudi agents flew on government planes to Istanbul and carried out the killing at the Saudi consulate, the report said, adding that it could complicate President Donald Trump’s efforts to preserve US ties with one of the closest American allies in the region.

“The accepted position is that there is no way this happened without him being aware or involved,” a US official familiar with the CIA’s conclusions, told the daily.

Saudi Arabia has denied any such linkage. Fatimah Baeshen, a spokeswoman for the Saudi Embassy in Washington, said that the claims in the CIA’s “purported assessment are false. We have and continue to hear various the-

ories without seeing the primary basis for these speculations.”

According to the report, it is CIA assessment that the crown prince who is the defacto ruler of the country would survive the crisis.

Officially Saudi Arabia has blamed the brutal murder of Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul to rogue elements. Khashoggi was forcibly restrained and injected with a large amount of a drug resulting in an overdose that led to his death, alleged the Saudi prosecutors, who has sought death penalty for 11 of its officials.

Turkish investigating agencies provided the CIA an audio recording that proves the brutal murder of Khashoggi. After his killing, one of those involved in it called Saud al Qahtani, then one of the top aides to Mohammed, and informed him that the operation had been completed, according to people familiar with the call.

A conclusion that the crown prince was responsible for the murder of Khashoggi could endanger the US relationship with Saudi Arabia, The Wall Street Journal said.

“The assessment that the Crown Prince ordered the murder is not surprising but it significantly undermines the administration’s effort to whitewash the Saudi prince,” Bruce Riedel, a former top CIA and White House official, who is now at the Brookings Institution think tank, told The Wall Street Journal.

“It raises the question why the crown prince has not been sanctioned by the Treasury Department, Riedel said.

“The CIA just concluded that MBS, the Saudi Crown Prince, ordered Khashoggi’s killing. Every literate person knows that MBS continues to order the killing of thousands of civilians in Yemen. It’s time for the US to stop supporting MBS’s war in Yemen. Congress must act,” Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna said in a tweet on Friday.

Protectionism ‘doomed to failure’: China’s Xi says in swipe at US

PORT MORESBY, NOV 17 (AFP): Protectionist actions are short-sighted and doomed to fail, Chinese President Xi Jinping said Saturday ahead of an APEC summit at which US-China trade tensions are likely to take centre stage. In a major speech, Xi also stressed that there would be no winners from a trade war or a new cold war amid increasing rivalry between the world’s top two economies. “Attempts to erect barriers and cut close economic ties work against the laws of economics and the trends of history. This is a short-sighted approach and it is doomed to failure,” Xi told business leaders on the sidelines of the summit.

“We should say no to protectionism and unilateralism,” Xi said, in a veiled swipe at the “America First” policies of Donald Trump’s administration. APEC members the US and China have become embroiled in a trade war that experts warn could be catastrophic for the global economy, with the world’s top two powers going head to head.

The pair have imposed tariffs worth billions of dollars of each other’s goods and there is little sign of an immediate easing in tensions, with both sides threatening to step up action if necessary. Xi said the world should “uphold the WTO-centred multilateral trading system, make economic globalisation more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all”.

With concerns growing that rivalry between the US and China could

escalate, Xi warned against going down that road. “History has shown that confrontation -- whether in the form of a cold war, hot war or trade war -- will produce no winners,” he said.

“We believe that there exist no issues that countries cannot resolve through consultation,” said the Chinese leader, as long as negotiations take place in a spirit of “equality” and “mutual understanding.”

Xi also defended his country’s massive “Belt and Road” infrastructure initiative amid attacks that it is akin to “chequebook diplomacy” to further Chinese interests in the region. “It is not designed to serve any hidden geopolitical agenda, it is not targeted against anyone and it does not exclude anyone... nor is it a trap as some people have labelled it,” he said.

Speaking at the same forum, Australia’s prime minister also issued a passionate defence of free trade and lashed out at protectionist trends battering the global economy. “Tit-for-tat protectionism and threats of trade wars are in no one’s interest measures and undermine the authority of the global and regional trade rules that benefit us all,” said Scott Morrison.

US President Donald Trump has decided to skip the APEC summit, which some critics say has left the stage free for China to bolster its influence in the region.

In contrast to Trump, Xi arrived two days before the summit, opening a new road and a school in Port Moresby and holding talks with Pacific Island leaders.

Number of missing jumps to more than 1,000 in California fire



LOS ANGELES, NOV 17 (AFP): The number of people missing in a devastating wildfire in northern California jumped to more than 1,000 on Friday, authorities said, as the remains of eight other victims were found by rescuers. Butte County Sher-

iff Kory Honea said the number of missing had soared from 631 on Thursday to 1,011 on Friday as more reports of missing were being sent in and as emergency calls made when the fire broke out on November 8 are being reviewed. The eight additional victims

brings to 71 the number of people who have died in the so-called Camp Fire.

Three other people have died in southern California in a another blaze dubbed the Woolsey fire. Honea underlined that the list of missing was constantly fluctuating and it did not

mean that all those on the list were presumed dead. “I want you to understand that this is a dynamic list,” he said.

“The information I am providing you is raw data and we find there is the likely possibility that the list contains duplicate names,” he added.

Take a weight off: Tears, joy as kilo gets historic update

VERSAILLES (FRANCE), NOV 17 (AP): In a historic vote, more than 50 nations unanimously approved an overhaul of the international measurement system that underpins global trade and other human endeavours, uniting Friday behind new definitions for the kilogram and other units in a way they fail to do on many other issues.

Scientists, for whom the update represented decades of work, clapped, cheered and even wept as delegates gathered in Versailles one by one said “yes” or “oui” to the change, hailed as a revolution in how humanity measures and quantifies its world.

Updated definitions for the ampere, kelvin and mole also were approved Friday. The redefinition of the kilogram, the globally approved unit of mass, was the mostly hotly anticipated change.

For more than a century, the kilogram has been defined as the mass of a cylinder of platinum-iridium alloy kept in a high-security vault in France. That artefact, nicknamed “Le Grand K,” has been the world’s sole true kilogram since 1889.

Now, with the vote, the kilogram and all of the other main measurement units will be defined using numerical values that fit handily onto a wallet card.

Those numbers were read to the national delegates before they voted. The update will take effect May 20.

Scientists at the meeting were giddy with excitement: some even sported tattoos on their forearms that celebrated the science.

Nobel prize winner William Phillips called the update “the greatest revolution in measurement since the French revolution,” which ushered in the metric system of meters and kilograms.

The Grand K and its six official copies, kept together in the same safe on the outskirts of Paris and collectively known as the “heir and the spares,” will be retired but not forgotten. Scientists want to keep studying them to see whether their masses change over time.

The update will have no discernable impact for most people. Bathroom scales won’t suddenly get kinder and kilos and grams won’t change in supermarkets. But the new formula-based definition for the kilogram will have multiple advantages over the precision-crafted metal lump that set the standard from the 19th century to the 21st, through periods of stunning human achievement and stunning follies, including two world wars.

Unlike a physical object, the formula for the kilo, now also known

as “the electric kilo,” cannot pick up particles of dust, decay with time or be dropped and damaged, but will be easier to share.

“If we stay where we are, and someone did accidentally drop the kilogram or if there was a contamination that we couldn’t control, then the whole system has got no head. We’re in chaos,” said Barry Inglis, a scientist from Australia.

“That’s the thing that’s really been worrying us, I think, for maybe 15 years or more is just how vulnerable the system is, by depending just on that one little piece of platinum-iridium.”

The redefined kilo is expected to allow for more accurate measurements of very, very small or very, very large masses and help usher in innovations in science, industry, climate study and other fields.

In humankind’s efforts to quantify and understand the world, stretching back centuries to when ancient Babylonians measured mass with stones, the vote marked a major milestone, scientists agreed.

“Those units, those constants chosen now, include everything we know, everything we have always known and provide that springboard for us to go pursue those things that we don’t know,” said Jon Pratt of the US National

Institute of Standards and Technology.

He said Friday’s gathering “was just leaving me in a puddle of tears.”

Updated definitions for the ampere, kelvin and mole also were approved Friday. Humanity uses seven main measurements units: the meter for length, the kilogram for mass, the second for time, the ampere for electric current, the kelvin for temperature, the mole for the amount of a substance and the candela for luminous intensity.

Of the seven, the kilo was the last still based on a physical artefact, Le Grand K.

With time, as the science behind the new kilo definition becomes more accessible and affordable, the update should also mean that countries won’t have to send their own kilograms back to France to be checked occasionally against Le Grand K, as they have done until now, to see whether their mass was still accurate.

“We future-proofed the system,” said Martin Milton, director of the International Bureau of Weights and Measures.

The bureau is the guardian of the system, as well as of Le Grand K and its copies, which are stored in a vault that requires three keys, kept by three different people, to unlock. Very rarely have they seen the light of day.



GWEN THE PRINCESS! Songstress Gwen Stefani gets the full Disney treatment during a performance at Disneyland in California.

We are throwing world's biggest mouse party to celebrate 90 years of Mickey: Disney executive

NEW DELHI, NOV 17 (PTI): Walt Disney once said, "I hope we never lose sight of one thing—that it was all started by a mouse" and as Mickey, the beloved cartoon character, turns 90, the company is throwing "the world's biggest mouse party". Mickey Mouse first appeared in 1928 cartoon film "Steamboat Willie" and since then, he has been an inseparable part of many lives.

"We are pulling out all the stops. We are celebrating not just around the company but around the world. We have the world's biggest mouse party going on at all our theme parks around the world, which will stretch over twelve months," Dana Jones, director of enterprise franchise management at the Walt Disney Company, told PTI.

Fans can also get their own Instagram moment with the ongoing "Mickey: The True Original Exhibition" in New York. The immersive experience is inspired by Mickey's iconic status and his impact in popular culture.

"This is an experiential exhibition, which is a very Instagram-able event and blends fine art with the things that we can see, touch and feel. We hope that it will travel to other places as well," Jones said. India also features in the company's grand plans for Mickey's

birthday celebrations.

"India is one of the important markets for us. We have a great short cartoon that Mickey did a couple of years ago in which he was in India speaking in Hindi. Mickey showed the world that India has a special place in his heart. 'There's not a country in the world where Mickey is not known and not loved. And we're focusing as much as possible on India... We are really trying to highlight the relationship Mickey has with India,' Jones added.

Mickey is the largest character franchise in India with over 30 million products sold in 2017. To build a connect with the younger generation, Disney launched 'Stay Fit with Mickey & Minnie' programme in 3000 schools in metro cities such as Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai.

"We are always looking for new content opportunities for Mickey. The great thing about Mickey is that he lives in a cartoon version of our world so the opportunities to have adventures with him and his friends are endless," Jones said. With such storied life, it seems that everything that is to be explored has already been explored in Mickey's life but Jones said the company has always tried to keep the cartoon character relevant.

ARIES: Things have probably been going well lately in the love and romance department, Aries. You find that communication has improved, and the witty banter is invigorating and educational. Today there may be a blip on the radar. You may have been so caught up in the good parts that you failed to take care of the details and do the actual work needed to make things run smoothly.

TAURUS: You may be feeling emotionally good, Taurus, but unfortunately the people around you don't seem to share this feeling. Your first instinct may be to sacrifice yourself in order to make the path easier for the next guy. Remember that other people need to learn how to do things on their own. If someone is in a bad mood, let them be in a bad mood. You may be better off spending

the day alone.

GEMINI: There's an advantage to joining people in a social or family situation, Gemini. Your role today is to bridge communication gaps. Be aware of details that need doing, but don't feel like you have to do them all yourself. This is a good time to delegate responsibility. Keep track of who is in charge of what or you could end up taking up the slack for a job that someone else is supposed to do.

CANCER: Calm down and get organized before you spread your ideas to others, Cancer. This is especially true when it comes to love and romance. As soon as this topic comes up, you tense up and erupt inappropriately. Ground yourself and find your center of balance - literally and figuratively - before you proceed. Don't worry about getting the upper hand. What you need to do is join hands.

LEO: You've reached a climactic time of year regarding love and romance, Leo. This is the time when your dream finally materializes or you realize that all your efforts are failures. It all depends on how you played your cards over the past few months. This is one of those moments of reckoning when you face reality. You must bring your craft to the landing strip and check in with mission control.

VIRGO: Your emotions are solid and you feel good, Virgo. At the same time, you may be tongue-tied. You're having a hard time expressing your true feelings in the way you'd like to, especially when it comes to love and romance. Perhaps you have so many thoughts that you don't know how to sort them out, or which to disclose and which to keep hidden.

LIBRA: Matters of love and romance should be going well, but

try not to overdo it, Libra. Be careful of getting so caught up in the fantasy of romance that you fail to take care of the details. Today is a good day to get the foundation solid before you start building. If you've already started building, you may need to stand back and consider areas in which some extra support beams may be necessary.

SCORPIO: This is one of those days when the road forks in several directions and you must decide which way to go, Scorpio. This usually isn't hard. You just go with the flow. But now things are flowing in multiple directions and you need to figure out which way to go. Stick with the way that seems most natural. Remember that whatever choice you make will be the right one.

SAGITTARIUS: Your plane is fueled, your bags packed, and you

have clearance from the control tower, but for some reason, Sagittarius, you just can't seem to get off the ground. Perhaps there are details of the trip that you haven't taken into account. People are firing questions at you, and you don't have all the answers. This is especially true when it comes to matters of love and romance.

CAPRICORN: The person who is most organized and stable will win the race, so let it be you, Capricorn. Be careful, though. Other people may try to distract you from your work. You may be in the middle of an important project and decide to take a break. Before you know it, the phone rings and suddenly you're trapped with no escape. The break that you hoped would take no more than five minutes has turned into a big interruption.

AQUARIUS: Your brain is buzz-

ing in high gear, Aquarius. Anyone else would get dizzy trying to process even a fraction of the things that filter through your head in one day. The key for you is to not speak every single thought aloud but to keep your processing internal. People want to hear your final decision, not the process you went through to reach it. You will save everyone a lot of time if you do.

PISCES: You may have a hard time relating to people in social situations, Pisces. Perhaps you're frustrated at hearing the same shallow conversations over and over. While you mingle with dozens of different people, all you can think about is how nice it would be if you could be home in front of the TV. Your best plan is to avoid situations that you know you won't enjoy. There's no sense in torturing yourself.

Ad guru Alyque Padamsee dies at 90

MUMBAI, NOV 17 (PTI): Veteran ad maker and theatre personality Alyque Padamsee died Saturday at the age of 90.

Padamsee was the former Chief Executive of advertising firm Lintas in India and helped it to become one of the top creative agencies in the country. He later became the regional coordinator for Lintas in South Asia.

He will be best remembered for iconic campaigns such as 'Lalitaji' for Surf, 'Cherry Charlie' for Cherry Blossom Shoe Polish, MRF's 'Muscle Man', the Liril girl in the waterfall and 'Hamara Bajaj' for the auto major.

He also played the role of Jinnah in the Richard Attenborough's award-winning film "Gandhi" and was also awarded the Padma Shri award in 2000.

Condolences started pouring in on Twitter for the ad and theatre veteran and were led by President Ram Nath Kovind, who tweeted, "Sorry to hear of the passing of Alyque Padamsee, creative guru, theatre personality and doyen of our



ad industry. My condolences to his family, friends and colleagues."

"Saddened to learn that Alyque Padamsee is no more. Alyque was a renowned actor & activist who shared my love for Mumbai. We worked together on several initiatives & despite his age & ill health, I always found him

energetic & uncompromising in pursuit of his ideals. RIP," Congress leader Milind Deora tweeted.

Photographer Atul Kasbekar also tweeted, "Saddened to hear of the passing of advertising doyen #Alyque Padamsee When he was head of Lintas he'd given me some of my early breaks in adver-

tising photography. Ever grateful for the break and opportunity."

Actor Boman Irani also tweeted that Padamsee gave him the first break in theatre.

Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Derek O'Brien tweeted, "Goodbye, Alyque Padamsee. #RIP For our generation, you were the #advertising Creative Director we could only aspire to be. Your Big Ideas (like this commercial) will live forever." He tagged an Liril soap advertisement.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Preeti Sharma Menon said, "I am deeply saddened by the demise of Alyque Padamsee. The world knows him for his creative abilities but I know him for his values, for his ability to stand up for causes, his ability to inspire people to fight for justice."

"A mentor to the Aam Aadmi Party, he will be sorely missed by us. He was always there to help us strategize and help us communicate better. I pray he is at peace and pray for strength to all those will be deeply saddened by his loss," she added.

Guwahati Theatre Festival kicks off



GUWAHATI, NOV 17 (PTI): The Guwahati Theatre Festival has kicked off with the idea to present the best of Indian theatre to the discerning audience here and has gone on to become a much awaited event in Assam's annual cultural calendar, organisers said.

The third edition of the three-day festival began on Friday evening with 'Laughter Therapy', featuring television actor Mona Singh of 'Jassi jaisi koi nahin' fame, and three more plays are scheduled to be staged over the next two days, Festival Chairman Sunit Jain told PTI.

"We began with the passion and idea of facilitating people to witness and be enthralled by a plethora of top-notch stage artists of the country," said Jain.

In the previous editions, noted theatre personalities such as Shabana Azmi, Arundhati Nag, Bhavna Pani, Vinay Pathak, Ranvir Shorey, Rajat Kapoor, Neil Bhoopalam, Saurabh Shukla and Kalki Koechlin took part in the festival.

"The Festival has fired the imagination of the people and given our dear city a certain character," he added.

The festival will feature 'Detective 9-2-11' Saturday and on the concluding day it will have two plays-- 'Foreign Body' and 'Stories in a Song'.

Directed by Atul Kumar, 'Detective 9-2-11' is a gripping, nerve-wracking but thoroughly exhilarating escape drama featuring Neil Bhoopalam, Sukant

Goyal and others. 'Foreign Body', a 100-minute play in English language, is a solo show by Imogen Butler-Cole about hope, healing and forgiveness after sexual assault.

'Stories in a Song' tells stories of musical forms such as kajari, thumri, dadra, khayal, remixes and more and is directed by Sunil Shanbag.

Theatre workshops conducted by Namit Das and Atul Kumar for schools and college students respectively are also a part of the ongoing festival.

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