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SummitTIMES

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ECI reduces Golay's disqualification period allowing him to contest by-elections

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:**

A day after Sikkim Krantikari Morcha and Bharatiya Janata Party entered into a pre-bypoll alliance and seat-sharing arrangement and a day before the last date to file nomination papers for the upcoming by-elections, the Election Commission of India reduced the period of disqualification to a duration which will allow SKM president, Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay], to contest even the upcoming by-elections.

Deciding on Mr Tamang's request that the ECI invoke powers invested in it to reduce the period for which politicians convicted under the Prevention of Corruption Act are not allowed to contest elections, the ECI, in an order passed on 29 Sept, Sunday, "in exercise of the powers vested upon it under Section 11 of the RP Act, 1951" reduced the "disqualification attracted on the Applicant by virtue of Section 8 of the RP Act, 1951 to 1 year and 1 month."



This period of one year and one month since the date of his release from jail is almost exactly the time since when Mr Tamang completed his jail term in August last year.

What this latest order of the ECI means is that Mr Tamang can now contest elections. Since he had earlier announced that only one family member will sit in the Assembly at a time, it was

believed that his son, Aditya Golay, would resign from Soreong-Chakung and Mr Tamang will contest from there. However, given the timing of the ECI relaxation, the nature of seat-sharing between SKM and BJP in which SKM has kept the only general seat going to polls for itself and the by-elections which have already been called, it is almost certain that Mr Tamang will file nomi-

nation papers to contest from Poklok-Kamrang.

The ECI order, signed by Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora and Election Commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra has been roundly criticized by a section of the political parties in Sikkim which are seeing this as a quid-pro-quo arrangement between SKM and BJP.

BJP, which despite having been convincingly

rejected by the electorate here in the Assembly elections, has since become the second-largest party in the Assembly after 10 SDF MLAs defected to it recently. Now, with the party in office supporting its candidates in the Assembly elections, the move is being seen as a forced backdoor entry gifted to it despite the public mandate which conveyed otherwise.

Meanwhile, in his application seeking a reduction in his disqualification period submitted to the ECI in June 2019, Mr Tamang had argued that the stricter disqualification rules were not in place at the time when the offence for which he was eventually convicted were committed and that he should not be penalized for the delay in the Court case.

He had also supported his request by arguing an "implied pardon" by the Governor when the Governor administered him the oath of office as the Chief Minister.

Mr Tamang had also invoked Article 371F and Sikkim's special status in his defence.

HSP to contest by-elections disturbed by latest political 'developments'



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:**

Hamro Sikkim Party has announced that it will be contesting all three seats at the upcoming by-elections in the State. A four-member committee of the party decided this given the present political scenario in the State. HSP working president, Bhaichung Bhutia, is also likely to contest from the Gangtok constituency, going up against BJP's YT Lepcha and SDF's Rinzing Ongmu.

Addressing a press conference here today, HSP president, Dr Bina Basnett, explained that the party was moved to take a stand given that the manner in which SKM and BJP have come together has made a mockery of public mandate.

It was time for the electorate of the three constituencies going for by-elections to set aside party-loyalties and make a statement against the latest political development when they go to vote on 21 October.

HSP is disturbed by the back-door entry into Sikkim provided to the BJP by the SKM, Dr Basnett said.

She stated that although HSP had declared to extend support to Sik-

kim Krantikari Morcha, SKM's capitulation to BJP was too unethical for such support to continue.

She also roped in Sikkim Democratic Front into such criticism because 12 of its MLAs sold the public man-

SDF candidates win the by-elections, there is nothing suggesting that they also not join BJP. He alleged that even the crossover of 10 SDF MLAs into BJP camp was bargained by the SDF president Pawan Chamling.

Clear stand on Darj-Sikkim merger chatter, Bhaichung demands of Darj MP

HSP's Bhaichung Bhutia demanded today that the Darjeeling MP, Raju Bista, clear his stand regarding Gorkhaland issue. On the same, he mentioned that there were rumours that the Darjeeling MP has been advocating Darjeeling-Sikkim merger as a permanent solution for the Gorkhaland demand and stated that this was totally unacceptable. "We welcome the demand for Gorkhaland, but merger is not the solution. So, the Darjeeling MP should clear his stand and stop hiding it from the people," he said.

date without the consent or consultation with the people.

The HSP working president, Bhaichung Bhutia, added that the party's decision to contest the by-elections was also driven by the belief that there was no opposition in the State since SKM, SDF and BJP all appear to be on the same side.

He insisted that both SKM and SDF were being controlled by the BJP.

He went on to speculate that given the recent trend, even if all three

He also questioned the propriety of SKM giving two seats to BJP. Convinced that BJP will beat SKM in the near future, he appealed to SKM supporters to vote for HSP in the interest of Sikkim and its issues.

He assured that HSP will never go against the interests of the people of Sikkim and always stay loyal to the State and its people.

Likewise, HSP spokesperson, Biraj Adhikari, informed that Bhaichung Bhutia was likely to contest from Gangtok.

Govt bans export of onion with immediate effect

NEW DELHI, SEP 29 (PTI): The government on Sunday banned the export of onion to increase availability of the commodity in the domestic market and contain rising prices.

"Export of all varieties of onions...is prohibited with immediate effect," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), an arm of the commerce ministry which deals with exports and import related issues, said in a notification. The DGFT on September 13 had imposed a minimum export price (MEP) of USD 850 per tonne to curb its shipments and help bring down rising domestic prices.

The MEP is the rate below which no exports are allowed.

Retail onion prices have skyrocketed to Rs 60-80 per kg in Delhi and some other parts of the country due to supply disruption from flood-affected growing states like Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, to give relief to consumers from high prices, the central government is offloading 50,000 tonnes of buffer stock of onion across the country.

The Centre last month had also warned of strict action against hoarding of onion amid supply disruption due to floods in parts of major growing states - Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Goa beats Nagaland to lift Agape Cup

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:**

Goa today lifted the 5th Agape Cup 2019, a national-level Christian football tournament, after outplaying Nagaland 2-0 in a keenly contested final here at Paljor Stadium.

13 States had participated in this three-day championship organized by Sikkim Christian Sports Coalition in collaboration with Sports Coalition of India on the theme 'Growing Together in Harmony'.

The final day also featured the felicitation of former Indian football team skipper, Padma Shree Bhaichung Bhutia by the organizing committee.

The final match had Sports & Youth Affairs Minister, Kunga Nima Lepcha, as the chief guest accompanied by Forest Minister Karma Loday Bhutia, Agriculture & Horticulture Minister Lok Nath Sharma and Political Secretary to the Chief



Minister, Jacob Khaling, as guests of honour among other dignitaries.

West Bengal was adjudged as the Most Disciplined Team while the Man of the Final Match trophy went to Xavier Pius of Goa.

The final day also included performances by the Sikkim Choir and Paljor Namgyal Girls School choir and a Taekwondo demonstration and traditional medley dance by PNG School students along with Singhey Dance and Yak Dance by artists from the

Culture Department.

The final day started with an opening prayer by Fr Rev Robin Kalikotey and concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by the organizing committee treasurer, Arthur Targain, and closing prayers by Rev J Lepcha.

The final day was also attended by Education Department Secretary, MT Sherpa, Sports & Youth Affairs Department Secretary, Kuber Bhandari, pastors, leaders and members of different churches of in and

around Gangtok.

The tournament had kicked-off on 27 September and teams from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Gujarat, Nagaland, Assam, Odisha, Jharkhand, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Sikkim had participated in this tournament.

It is informed that the shortlisted players from the tournament will represent the country at the upcoming United World Cup to be held in Japan in 2020.

Passang Sherpa wants voters to boycott BJP, SKM and SDF at by-election

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:**

Passang Sherpa, who had contested the recent Lok Sabha elections as an Independent from Sikkim and has been a frequent commentator on social and political issues, has appealed to voters when they cast their votes at the upcoming by-elections at the three constituencies.

These parties, he argued to-

day, deserved such rejection because they are directly involved in horse-trading.

He alleged that the SKM-BJP alliance and seat sharing was a clear instance of horse trading.

SKM sold two BL seats to the BJP in exchange to have the disqualification period waived for its president, PS Tamang [Golay] to continue as the Chief Minister.

The pre-poll political alliance was a blatant insult to the BLs, he

alleged, and urged the Sikkim voters to either choose an alternative or refrain from casting their votes insisting that the main political parties here have sold their soul and morals to serve their petty political interests.

He also threatened to protest on the streets if the situation worsens, adding that Sikkimese people will not accept with BJP's ideology or its assurances after what they have seen been done to the Kashmiris.

Restaurants

linked with chitto DELIVERY

Shuffle Momos

Khan Uncle

Yummy Tummy

Food Court

Bibliotheque

Hill's Bakery

Selvi's Bistro

K3 Cafe

Bhutia Kitchen

Apna Dhaba

Loafing Around

Namkhading

FROM 10AM-9PM

To order now

97340 14831

89723 92600

BJP fields Venchungpa and Lepcha



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 29 SEPT: Bharatiya Janata Party is fielding Sonam Tshering Venchungpa, recently acquired from the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, from Martam-Rumtek and YT

Lepcha from Gangtok constituencies for the upcoming by-elections in the State. The two constituencies were left for BJP by the SKM in a seat-sharing arrangement announced on Saturday.

Saudi Arabia to invest USD 100 billion in India

NEW DELHI, SEP 29 (PTI): Despite reeling under the impact of worst ever attacks on its oil installations, Saudi Arabia has said that it is looking at investing USD 100 billion in India in areas of petrochemicals, infrastructure and mining among others, considering the country's growth potential.

Saudi Ambassador Dr Saud bin Mohammed Al Sati has said India is an attractive investment destination for his country, the world's biggest oil exporter, and it is eyeing long-term partnerships with New Delhi in key sectors like oil, gas and mining.

"Saudi Arabia is looking at making investments in India potentially worth USD 100 billion in the areas of energy, refining, petrochemicals, infrastructure, agriculture, minerals and mining," Al Sati told PTI in an interview. The envoy said more than 40 opportunities for joint collaboration and investments between India and Saudi Arabia across various sectors have already been identified, adding the current bilateral trade of USD 34 billion will undoubtedly continue to increase.

He said Saudi Arabia's biggest oil giant Aramco's proposed partnership with Reliance Industries Ltd reflected the strategic nature of the growing energy ties between the two countries. The envoy said investing in India's value chain from oil supply, marketing, refining to petrochemicals and lubricants is a key part of Aramco's global downstream strategy.

"In this backdrop, Saudi Aramco's proposed investments in India's energy sector such as the USD 44 billion West Coast refinery and petrochemical project in Maharashtra and long term partnership with Reliance represent strategic milestones in our bilateral relationship," he said.

The envoy said the vision 2030 of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman will also result in significant expansion of trade and business between India and Saudi Arabia in diverse sectors. Under vision 2030, Saudi Arabia plans to diversify the Saudi economy while reducing its economic dependence on petroleum products.

Saudi Arabia is a key pillar of India's energy security, being a source

of 17 per cent or more of crude oil and 32 per cent of LPG requirements of India.

A series of drone and missile attacks on oil facilities of Saudi Aramco on September 14 knocked out half of its daily oil production, severely impacting the global oil market.

Notwithstanding the attacks, Al Sati said Saudi Arabia will honour its commitment to invest in India's oil and gas sectors.

"There is huge untapped potential available in merchandise trade, particularly in non-oil trade and we are enhancing cooperation in economic, commercial, investment, cultural and technological fields," the envoy said. Asked about Saudi Arabia's plan to issue initial public offering of Aramco's stock, being seen as world's largest IPO, he said it will open up the company to the wider world.

"Consistent with the vision 2030 goals, Saudi Aramco is pursuing new opportunities toward creating a world-leading downstream sector in Saudi Arabia," he said.

On future energy ties with India, he said the bilateral energy ties have grown beyond the supply of crude oil, refined products and LPG to a more comprehensive partnership that focuses on investments and joint ventures in petrochemical complexes and cooperation in exploration.

"India's invitation to Saudi Arabia to invest in its strategic petroleum reserve reflects the trust and goodwill the two countries share," he said.

Talking about 'Vision 2030', Al Sati said Saudi Arabia is working towards transforming its economy and looking at a post-oil age of world-class technological research, start-up and entrepreneurial vigour. "The entire development strategy of the kingdom rests on three pillars - to build a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation," he said.

"The World Bank too has ranked the kingdom as the fourth largest reformer within G20. The number of foreign investment licences granted in Saudi Arabia in the first quarter of 2018 increased by 130 per cent," he said. The envoy also talked about Saudi Arabia's new residency permit scheme for qualified international expatriates.

TPTL transmission line affected demand compensation

WANGCHUK BHUTIA MANGAN, 29 SEPT:

Affected people from Ramthang-Tanek, Namok-Swayem, Mangshila-Tibuk and Thingchim-Chandey Gram Panchayat Units of North Sikkim have expressed their dissatisfaction with the Teesta Valley Power Transmission Ltd. (TPTL) for not having

provided adequate compensation for loss suffered by standing crop by its high tension line which runs through the GPUs.

The affected people met at Thingchim today and discussed what they see as inconsistencies in disbursing compensation and how some villagers have been re-

ceiving step-motherly treatment.

"At the time of installation of high tension lines we were told that we will be compensated for damage to our standing crop which falls under the transmission line and not for the land. Now, TPTL is randomly cutting trees from our land and when we ask about

compensation they are saying that the compensation will not be paid," said San Bahadur Subba of 4th Mile, Mangshilla.

The people have alleged that the TPTL reneged on commitments made prior to the installation of the high transmission line above their lands. "We request the concerned authorities to

look into the matter and solve the problem as early as possible," Mr Subba added speaking for all the affected people.

The affected people have also resolved to meet the Chief Minister to seek justice.

TPTL is a joint venture between Teesta Urja Ltd and Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. The

company is a subsidiary of TUL and has completed the work of construction of 400 kV Double Circuit Quad Moose Transmission Line from Mangan in Sikkim to Kishanganj Pooling Station in Bihar so as to wheel out electricity generated at Teesta Stage-III HEP and other hydel projects here.

Block-Level Child Protection Committees formed in North Sikkim



MANGAN, 29 SEPT [IPR]:

The North District Child Protection Unit organized a daylong District Level Workshop on Child Rights-cum-Formation of Block Level Child Protection Committees for North Sikkim here at the DAC Conference Hall on Sunday.

The programme was attended by District Collector, North, Tenzing T. Kaleon, Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee (CWC), North, Mingma Doma Bhutia, District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), North, Wendy Lepcha, State Adoption

Resource Agency (SARA), Project Officer, Peter Rai, police personnel, BDOs, Zilla Panchayat members and CDPOs.

The DC acknowledged and appreciated the formation Block Level Child Protection Committees in the district and said that the workshop was very important for all stakeholders and for general awareness on child rights, sexual abuse and other laws which protect children. He called on the people to take the matter such as child sexual abuse and Children in Conflict with

the Law very seriously.

DCPO Ms Lepcha explained why Block Level Child Protection Committees were required and emphasized the need to generate awareness on Protection of Children from Sexual Offence (POCSO) Act and Juvenile Justice Act 2015.

She mentioned the two categories of children are given service by DCPU and CWC in the district - Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and Children in Conflict with Law.

The DCPO urged the gathering to actively

participate in the fight against child sexual abuse and encouraged them to report such cases to the competent authority immediately. She also informed them about the toll-free child helpline number 1098 and asked the BDOs to create child-friendly GPUs.

SARA PO, Mr Rai, gave a brief introduction to the fundamental principles governing adoption in India.

CWC Chairperson, Ms Bhutia, in turn, spoke about the Child Welfare Committee and how it works.

EVMs randomized for by-elections in South



NAMCHI, 29 SEPT [IPR]:

The first randomisation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs) for the upcoming By-Elections for Poklok Kamrang assembly constituency was held at the conference hall of the DAC here today in the presence of Returning Officer South, Ragul K, representatives of political parties along with the election officials.

The entire process of randomisation was done through EVM Management System as per the directions of the Election Commission of India. In this session, the RO informed those in attendance about the proce-

cedure of randomisation of the EVMs and VVPATs.

After the randomisation, the EVMs and VVPATs were shifted to the strong-room set up in the annex building of the DAC.

In addition, 24x7 adequate security measures have been made for the strong-room where the machines have been kept under guard. Fire emergency vehicles are also stationed at the strong-room premises to avoid any untoward incidents and CCTV cameras as installed at different locations.

In South district, a total of 42 EVMs and VVPATs have been allocated to Poklok Kamrang Assembly Constituency.

SSC wants people to vote for independents, reject parties

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:

Sikkim Subject Committee vice-convener, Nawin Kiran Pradhan, has appealed to the people to vote for independent candidates instead of candidates from political parties at the upcoming by-elections.

He asserted that the people of Sikkim need to give a clear message that they were still conscious about their rights and not blind to the political compromises of Bharatiya Janata Party, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha and Sikkim Democratic Front.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Pradhan alleged that SKM has sold the decorum and independence

of Sikkim by vacating two constituencies for the BJP. The SKM-BJP alliance has defiled Sikkimese politics, he insisted, while adding that 10 SDF MLAs crossing to the BJP had started the mockery of the mandate of the people.

Mr Pradhan alleged that PS Tamang [Golay] cannot legally become the CM as per law but has become one due to the blessings of the BJP and the present political situation in the State has unraveled due to the same reason.

He alleged that BJP has been trying to form the government in Sikkim using unethical means and it was time for the people to take notice.

Minister chairs NSS meeting

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:

A meeting of the National Service Scheme [NSS] was held under the chairmanship of Sports & Youth Affairs Minister Kunga Nima Lepcha here on Saturday. The meeting discussed various NSS activities and programmes implemented at 97 institutions in the State, a press release informs.

The meeting was also attended by Secretary, Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kuber Bhandari, NSS Regional Director, Gol, Deepak Kumar and State NSS Officer, Doma Tshering Bhutia and other officials.

The Minister urged that more student and youth oriented programmes such as capacity building, life skill training, adventure

sports and cultural festivals be explored in the State to help NSS volunteers of universities, colleges and schools develop the personality, learn life skills/soft skills and understand dignity of labour and responsibilities.

Likewise, NSS Regional Director thanked the Minister and Department officials for supporting NSS activities and for the fruitful discussions. He assured to extend full support towards nation-building programmes in the State for NSS volunteers and programme officers, it is informed.

The release adds that the Regional Director also visited Modern Senior Secondary School and West Point SSS and interacted with NSS volunteers there.

Vegetable Producer Groups formed at Duga and Pakyong Blocks



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:

Vegetable Producer Groups from among SHGs of Duga and Pakyong blocks under the State Rural Livelihood Mission were organized at all five wards for Budang-Kamerey GPU of Duga Block and Aho Yangtham, Kdamtam at Pakyong Block today.

The meeting was attended by RDD Commissioner-cum-State Mission Director/SRLM Dr P Senthil Kumar and the Mission Team of SRLM, including Project Manager, Livelihood, BPMs, DPMs, APMs and other block staffs, PRI functionaries and Krishi Sakhis, a press release informs.

Dr Senthil explained the various schemes and programmes under the SRLM and its significance with regard to upliftment of the rural economy through par-

ticipation of the villagers, especially the women, through formation of Self Help Groups.

At the outset, he highlighted the significance of the Pancha Sutra of NRLM and the importance of following the pancha sutra in their activities. He also explained the different funds available for SHGs, including Start Up funds, Revolving Funds and CIF funds and encouraged all members to take full benefit of these provisions.

He then focused on the formation of Vegetable Producers Groups and after detailed discussion on the importance of formation of PGs, the process, membership and advantages of PGs, the vegetable producing members of various wards agreed to form Vegetable Producer Groups in their respective wards.

KUTSE SHEGU

The kutse Shogu of our beloved mother late Karma Doma Bhutia who left for heavenly abode on 12th August falls on 29th September, 2019.

All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers to the departed soul at our residence Penlong Bazaar, East Sikkim.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude towards those who extended their support during our time of bereavement..



Khittu Tshering Bhutia (son) 9434127474
Tenzing Bhutia (son)
Sonam Nedup Bhutia (son)
Tshering Dorji Bhutia (son)
Lazey Bhutia (daughter in law)
Layzey Bhutia (DAUGHTER)
Chunki Bhutia (daughter)

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Sikkim Newar Guthi to celebrate silver jubilee in grand manner

NITESH R PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 27 SEPT:

Sikkim Newar Guthi is completing 25 years and plans to celebrate the milestone in grand fashion with the festivities stretching for more than a month.

The Guthi was formed with the express aim to conserve the traditions and culture of the community.

Various competitions such as Ethno Newar Aachar (pickle) making

competition, Newar Folk Dance, Newar Musical Instrument, Essay and Poetry Competitions etc. are being organized.

Auditions for a Talent Hunt are being organized at various places in Sikkim starting from Rongli (East) on 29 September, and then moving to Soreng (West), Singtam (East and South) and Gangtok (East). The finals are scheduled for Manan Bhawan on 09

November 2019.

Youth Awareness and Legal Awareness Programmes at district level are also being organized.

To commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi awareness and cleanliness drives will also be held at all branches of the Guthi on 02 October.

To motivate youths and to make them aware of the traditional dresses, ornaments,

traditions and culture, a Facebook-driven Bhaju Sikkim and Maiju Sikkim contest is also being organized. This year the upgraded version will include ramp walks, Q&A, talent show round, etc.

Grand cultural programme like Awards and Felicitations, Launch of Silver Jubilee Edition Souvenir magazine "Smarika" and Quarterly Magazine "PAU", launch of Sikkim Newar Guthi website and

other musical and cultural programme will be held on 10 November.

The celebrations will end with a Grand Musical Evening being organized at Manan Bhawan on 10 November 2019 with artists from within and outside the State performing. All events will be held in an eco-friendly manner without the use of plastics or other non-biodegradable substances.

World Tourism Day at Bermiok Tokal School

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 29 SEPT:

World Tourism Day was celebrated at Bermiok Tokal Senior Secondary School on 27 Sept with events including a cake-cutting ceremony and cultural performances by students of tourism stream.

Class XII student, Priti Chettri, made presentation on the theme

of the year, "Tourism and Jobs: A bright future for all," while the chief guest, PK Dong, emphasised the necessity of developing will and skill for securing jobs in a service industry like tourism.

Principal PR Sharma presided over the function during which students also organized an exhibition-cum-sale of their culinary skills.

Chennaiyin FC conduct AIFF Baby Leagues in city

CHENNAI, SEP 29 (PTI): ISL franchise Chennaiyin FC on Sunday kicked off a week-long All India Football Federation (AIFF) approved Baby Leagues in the city.

More than 750 kids from seven schools are expected to participate across the Under-6, Under-7 and Under-8 age groups in the initiative that will be conducted across four venues, to promote football at the grassroots level.

"The Baby Leagues are a fantastic initiative by the AIFF to ensure more and more kids take up the sport at a really young age, and at Chennaiyin FC it is our duty to implement that endeavour," said Vita Dani, the team's co-owner.

"Given our thriving grassroots structure and

youth teams, we believe we possess the expertise and efficiency to implement the same in the right manner."

Participation is free of cost in the Baby Leagues and is open to both boys and girls. Every participant is registered with the AIFF at the nascent stage of their development and is nurtured going forward while also helping the likes of Chennaiyin FC in identifying local talent. Every player is also rewarded with a participation certificate from CFC.

The matches in the Baby Leagues are played as five-a-side and three-a-side games, with each player gaining exposure by playing a minimum of three matches. The teams will be guided by CFC-trained coaches.

Fill vacant posts in hospitals, demands HP Nurses Assn

SHIMLA, SEP 29 (PTI): The Himachal Pradesh Staff Nurses Association on Sunday asked the state government to fill the vacant posts of nursing superintendents, matrons and ward sisters in the state's medical colleges and hospitals.

In a statement issued here, the association's president Aruna Luthra and its general secretary Sita Thakur said the posts must be filled

immediately to ensure better health services to patients.

They also demanded that the vacant posts of assistant nursing director should also be filled without any further delay.

The representatives also thanked Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur and Health Minister Vipin Parmar for appointing batch-wise staff nurses recently.

Hyderabad FC unveils team jersey for ISL season 6

HYDERABAD, SEP 29 (PTI): Hyderabad FC, Hero India Super League's newest entrant, on Sunday unveiled its black and yellow coloured Jersey for the 2019-20 season.

The event was graced by prominent Bollywood actor Venkatesh Daggubati along with co-owners of Hyderabad FC, Varun Tripathi and Vijay Madduri, head coach Phil Brown and the players.

The jersey sports a contemporary look and is inspired by the traditional Nizami Sherwani and the city's architecture. Along with the new

jersey, the club also introduced the Hyderabad FC team, which will be representing the city in the ISL.

Speaking on the occasion, Tripuraneni said, "We are very excited to unveil our new jersey that represents the rich culture of the city. The team is all geared up to hit the field and face challenges like true sportsmen."

"With the club in place, we look forward to building a concrete path for development and uplift the sports culture of the city."

Clean-up drive at Pakshep Lapsah Dara



SUMMIT REPORT

MANGAN, 29 SEPT:

Continuing their tradition, the North Sikkim Youth Welfare Organisation and Royal North Brothers carried out a

cleanliness drive under their "Clean Hamro Tourist Attraction Spots" initiative on Saturday.

This time, the team cleaned Pakshep Lapsah Dara view point with sup-

port from Northern Riders Long Way to Go Brothers, a motorcycle club.

The organisers also extended gratitude towards DFO North and Range Officer, Mangan, for their support.



Mangan inspection against single-use plastic

SUMMIT REPORT

MANGAN, 29 SEPT:

Mangan Nagar Panchayat carried out an inspection of shops here to check against any usage of single-use

plastic which is to be banned from 02 October onwards. The inspection was led by Municipal Executive Officer, Tempo Tashi Bhutia, and single-use plastic seized from shopkeepers still using it.

RTI activist who faked own death gets life-term



NOIDA (UP), SEP 29 (PTI):

An RTI activist who had faked his death in 2014 to live with his girlfriend in Bengaluru has been sentenced to life by a court in Greater Noida for killing a mentally challenged man.

The District and Sessions court, Surajpur also slapped a penalty of Rs 50,000 on Chandra Mohan with judge Niranjana Kumar holding him guilty of murder, tampering with evidence and fraud.

Mohan, aged around 45 years, had a bitter relationship with his wife and wanted to live with his girlfriend Preeti Nagar, in her 30s and

had killed a mentally challenged man whose charred body was found inside the car of the accused, Harish Sisodia, assistant government counsel in the court said.

"Chandra Mohan's car was found charred on the Noida-Greater Noida Expressway in May 2014 and a badly burnt body was found inside. It was presumed that he had died. But in 2015 Chandra Mohan was arrested from Bengaluru where he was found living with Preeti under an assumed identity," the counsel said.

"Further probe revealed Chandra Mohan

had picked up the desolate stranger on the highway, killed him and left him inside the car before setting it on fire," he added.

The court also awarded a six-month jail term to his girlfriend after she was found guilty under IPC section 202 (intentional omission to give information of offence by person bound to inform).

Mohan has also been sentenced jail terms ranging six months to 10 years for fraud, forgery of documents and criminal conspiracy, among others, with all punishments running concurrently.

14 die in rain-related incidents in UP



LUCKNOW, SEP 29 (PTI):

As many as 14 fresh rain-related deaths were reported from across the state, the Uttar Pradesh government said on Sunday. In an official statement, the state government said that six persons died in separate incidents of wall collapse in Fatehpur, Mirzapur, Rae Bareilly and Chandauli while three persons perished in Ghazipur due to lightning strike and house collapse.

One person each died in house collapse in Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Ballia and Ayodhya and snakebite claimed one life in Kaushambi.

Eight persons were injured in the incidents in Fatehpur, Kaushambi, Ghazipur and Ayodhya.

The Central Water Commission's Upper Ganga Basin Organi-

sation, Lucknow in a statement informed that Ghaghra river is flowing above normal at Elginbridge, Ayodhya, and Turtipar in districts of Barabanki, Faizabad and Ballia respectively.

Sharda river is flowing above normal at Paliakalan, Sharda nagar in Lakhimpur Kheri.

Ganga river is flowing above severe situation at Ballia and Ghazipur, while Gomti is flowing above normal situation in Jaunpur.

Sai river is flowing above normal situation at Rae Bareilly.

Meanwhile, train services on the Ballia-Chhapra section of the North Eastern Railway (NER) were disrupted due to heavy rain on Sunday even as efforts were on to resume normal operations by late night,

officials said. "Owing to heavy rain at around 4.15 am, we got information about deposition of mud on the tracks on the Chhapra-Ballia section. This has disrupted rail traffic on the route," Public Relations Officer, NER, Mahesh Gupta said.

Gupta said seven trains on this section have been cancelled and another six diverted, while the long-distance trains are moving on the Chhapra-Bhatni-Mau route. "Efforts are on to repair the track. Normal traffic will resume by late night," he said.

Meanwhile, the meteorological department in a statement issued in Lucknow said rain/thundershowers are "very likely" at a few places in eastern and western Uttar Pradesh on September 30.

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PUBLIC ADVISORY

In addition to the Public Advisory published in the local newspaper, vide R.O. No. 570/IPR/PUB/CLASSI./18-19 dated 03.01.2019, it is reiterated and brought to the notice of all concerned that a B.Ed Degree course is conducted only through Regular Classes as per NCTE norms. A regular B.Ed candidate has to pursue the course by attending the classes for two years as a regular student in an NCTE approved Institution under a UGC recognized University.

Correspondence/ Distance B.Ed course is allowed only through IGNOU on a pan India basis.

Any other mode of obtaining B.Ed Degree other than the process mentioned above shall be treated as non-admissible. Any institution running unauthorized study centres for imparting B.Ed course shall be liable for action as per norms.

Director
Exams, Scholarship & Text Book Section
Date: 19/09/2019

R.N.No. 201/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20

Date: 20.9.2019

Quality Education on the Agenda

Study and evaluate, then replicate best practices

For quite a while now, politicians, bureaucrats, teacher associations and even student groups have been speaking of the need for government schools in Sikkim to impart quality education. An academic session is about to go into holiday mode, again, and will return with the full force of exam fever and then end for the year. Quality Education deliberations will get mothballed again, so here goes another attempt to reiterate how quality could be achieved in education here. To qualify the following comments, it is also recognized that experiments and efforts are currently underway in an organized manner to inject improved learning at schools and what follows should be seen as something complementing that effort.

While ‘quality’ is welcome in any field and because there is always room to improve quality in everything, Quality Education will be welcome. To have such a thing, however, will require more than rhetoric; it will not deliver by itself just because it is a felt-need or because it is demanded. ‘Quality’ will have to be defined first and then ways and means devised to meet that definition. Not enough has been done in any earnest thus far. If the policy-makers in Sikkim believe that the quality of education in schools here is inadequate, then, the first thing they will have to do is identify the gap that spans between schools in Sikkim and schools that deliver quality education here or elsewhere. Since China seems to be devising ways to deliver results on issues that India continues to only aspire for and pay lip-service to, perhaps even in this case, Sikkim should take a leaf out from how its northern neighbour achieved this end. China, with a human resource base rivaled only by India, realised that knowledge was the strongest weapon in the new millennium. Many other countries, including India, have realised this but only China appears to have addressed the issue with any intelligence and long-term commitment. One might add here that the Chinese experiment was with regard to higher education in universities. That said, the model could be adapted for school-level education as well. Recognising that the quality of its universities could use some ‘quality’ enhancement, the first thing that China did was carry out an honest and earnest ‘Academic Ranking of World Universities’ in the year 2003. The universities were graded according to the quality/ qualification of its faculty, the range of research undertaken by its students, the academic output of its staff [research papers, dissertations etc], number of awards tagged against the names of faculty and amount of future involvement of its students in path-breaking research. Then the Chinese studied the world leaders among the universities and tried to replicate their management and academic models at home. Higher education in China is already improving at a fast nip.

Sikkim needs to do something similar. It has to commission its own ranking of schools that deliver quality education and then send its officials from the HRD Department to these schools to learn how they deliver quality. While Sikkim learns what quality education is and how it can be delivered, it could also free the sector from all unproductive influence. Politics, for instance, should only influence the policy directions, not the actual human resource management and bureaucrats should be facilitators, not directors of the effort. Appointments and transfer of teachers should be freed from influence of any kind. A basic problem with government schools in Sikkim is their retention failure - their inadequacy to retain students [reflected in high drop-out rates] or even the teachers [manifested in high absenteeism, some schools without enough teachers and others with over-staffed faculty rolls]. This problem might get redressed if students had classes taught by qualified teachers to go to and if teachers had schools with at least the basic infrastructure to impart education in. If this is achieved, education would have become uniformly accessible in Sikkim and then can begin the process of improving the quality.

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

Climate change is really about prosperity, peace, public health and posterity – not saving the environment

EZRA MARKOWITZ & ADAM CORNER
theconversation.com

The story of climate change is one that people have struggled to tell convincingly for more than two decades. But it’s not for lack of trying.

The problem is emphatically not a lack of facts and figures. The world’s best scientific minds have produced blockbuster report after blockbuster report, setting out in ever more terrifying detail just how much of an impact we humans have had on the Earth since the dawn of the industrial revolution. Many people believe anthropogenic climate change – rapid and far-reaching shifts in the climate caused by human activity – is now the story that will define the 21st century, whether anyone’s good at telling it or not.

Nor is it merely a problem of delivery. The past decade has witnessed an explosion of climate change communication efforts spanning nearly every conceivable medium, channel and messenger. Documentaries, popular books and articles, interactive websites, immersive virtual reality, community events — all are being used in increasingly creative ways to communicate the story of climate change. Many of these efforts are beautifully designed and executed, visually and narratively engaging and careful to avoid common traps and shortcomings that have tripped up previous efforts.

As communications specialists who have each spent more than a decade observing and studying how people, media and organizations talk and think about climate change, we’ve come to understand that the climate change communication problem runs much deeper: It’s baked into the nature of the issue itself.

Climate change is abstract, uncertain, unfamiliar, impersonal, diffuse and seemingly distant, even as the frequency of climate-related events continues to increase in many parts of the world. This is not to say that the well-documented and well-funded efforts to sow misinformation, doubt and denial aren’t also real challenges facing climate change communicators and advocates; of course they are.

But even without explicit efforts to confuse and divide the public, climate change would still be a uniquely challenging issue to talk about in ways that motivate public engagement rather than inspire despair and fatalism.

The sad irony, of course, is that the story of climate change is in fact a deeply human one – we caused it, we will suffer from it and we alone can take action to avoid its worst consequences and prepare for the rest.

But shifting climate change from a scientific reality to a social, economic and political reality has proven extremely difficult. This is still primarily an “environmental” issue in many people’s minds, and

that is a real problem for building a broad-based social movement around climate change.

SOLVE ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS BY TACKLING THE FIRST

Over the past few years, one suggested solution around this communications roadblock has been to tell the story of what are called climate change co-benefits.

The idea is simple and compelling: If the public won’t or can’t get behind climate action for climate’s sake, maybe they will if all the many non-environmental benefits of reducing carbon emissions are brought to the foreground. Hence, climate change as a threat to public health, to national security, to social mobility.

Traditional co-benefits framing tells the story like this: If humanity does something about climate change – if we reduce carbon emissions through massive investments in renewable energy and retrofitting of inefficient buildings, if we improve resilience through investing in green infrastructure,



nature-based solutions and all the rest – we will not only solve the climate change problem, we’ll also reduce economic inequality, improve public health, reduce threats to national sovereignty and geo-political stability, and generally make people’s lives better.

These and many other co-benefits of aggressive and proactive action on climate change are real, and they will very much improve the lives of billions of people living on this planet today and in the future. But is this the best way to talk about the issue in service of building a powerful social movement?

The problem with the standard co-benefits narrative isn’t that it distracts too much from the core climate change challenge (it doesn’t), nor that it is somehow manipulative (it’s not) or simply not necessary (it is).

We suggest the problem is that it still leaves too much of the focus on climate change as an environmental or scientific issue while relegating all the other things people often care more about – addressing rampant inequality, increasing access to affordable health care, improving people’s material and emotional lives – to the background.

Leading with “if you really cared about your pet issue, then climate change should be your priority” is neither welcoming and inclusive nor likely to succeed in building a broad base of support for aggressive action on climate. Condescension rarely wins converts.

RETHINK WHICH BENEFIT DRIVES THE STORY

But that doesn’t mean advocates should necessarily give up on co-benefits. Maybe they just need to flip the script on its head – to lead with and keep the focus on the nonclimate benefits of aggressive decarbonization and adaptation efforts. Maybe “addressing climate change” should be treated as the co-benefit rather than the leading motivation for action that could materially help billions of people, today and in the future.

Ultimately, the most effective long-term approach to getting diverse audiences to engage deeply with climate change may require that advocates stop treating it as a standalone problem that could benefit from being linked to other topics

many people care more about. Instead, advocates may need to fundamentally rethink and alter the way they talk about and position climate change as an issue in the first place.

If climate change is now becoming a meta-narrative against which all other stories play out, perhaps no one needs to argue that decarbonization of the global economy will produce some health benefits or improve people’s well-being. Perhaps the best strategy is to simply say that climate change is a health risk, a risk to peace and prosperity, a risk to humanity’s survival – that the climate change story is our story as a species.

This is not about mobilizing the muscle of co-benefits to make the climate change narrative more robust or appealing. It’s about merging the co-benefits and climate change itself so thoroughly that they become one and the same.

[Ezra Markowitz is Associate Professor of Environmental Decision-Making, University of Massachusetts Amherst; Adam Corner is Research Director at Climate Outreach & Honorary Research Fellow in Psychology, Cardiff University]

Hong Kong is one of the most unequal cities in the world. So why aren’t the protesters angry at the rich and powerful?

TOBY CARROLL
theconversation.com

There have been many explanations for the turmoil in Hong Kong, which is now heading toward its 16th weekend. However, the powerful links between the economic and political elites in the city and the grossly inadequate system of governance they preside over are too often ignored.

In explaining the source of Hong Kong’s unrest, many leaders have predictably blamed the teaching of liberal studies in schools. The notion that students should gain a critical understanding of politics and society – not to mention actively participate in these – is simply too much for those who believe they must make the big decisions.

On the other side, the ire of many protesters is overwhelmingly directed toward China and the Hong Kong government, particularly Chief Executive Carrie Lam. Lam’s actions – first disappearing and then reappearing with equal measures of bureaucratic steeliness and obstinacy – have only made matters worse, as have the actions of a police force once revered by many as “Asia’s finest” and the posturing of Chinese forces.

Indeed, the sum total of these efforts has been a hardening localist identity that has become more apparent among the protesters as the unrest has continued.

Moreover, mutual animosity has grown to such an extent that backing down by either side would seem unlikely. Indeed, for the last few weeks it has been much easier to imagine escalation than the opposite.

DECLINE WITHOUT HOPE

However, the most likely explanation for the unrest lies not in the education curriculum or Beijing’s influence over the city, but rather the nature of Hong Kong government and society itself.

Despite the way the Hong Kong

government markets itself to the world – emphasising the rule of law and promoting the city’s high-quality business environment – the city has actually been in decay for decades.

Firstly, Hong Kong has been subject to the “hollowing out” processes that have plagued many former industrial economies – a situation in which industry leaves and nothing replaces it.

Importantly, this has been coupled with an inability of those at the top end of town to recognise the vast inequalities this has contributed towards. According to government statistics, Hong Kong’s wealth gap hit a historic high in 2017, with the wealthiest households earning 44 times the poorest.

For many here, life is experienced in the form of stalling or declining social mobility, sky-high housing prices (the most expensive in the world), dire air quality, crumbling infrastructure (the subway system and airport being the only exceptions), highly uneven education and health services (despite the trumpeted statistics), and lack of decent public spaces.

Long delays to move into public housing are the norm. “Nano apartments” smaller than a parking bay are the only housing option for many, with many flats in the city housing multiple generations of families.

Young Hong Kongers who have been raised on the city’s golden age stories of tycoons like Li Ka Shing (known here affectionately as “Superman”) also face depressing futures in low-paying service jobs.

Moreover, higher education hasn’t helped young people secure higher-paying jobs. One recent survey found that average graduate salaries are significantly lower than they were in 1987.

While market fundamentalists like Milton Friedman famously heralded the entrepreneurialism of

Hong Kong. In reality, it’s laissez-faire for the top end of town, and colonial-era bureaucracy for the rest. Young people contemplating opening a business face oligopolies, rapacious landlords eager to gain from the first signs of success and, in some sectors, rigid government regulations.

Making matters worse, anything vaguely progressive in a redistributive sense is often dismissed by anti-government protesters as too narrowly focused on economic factors at the expense of democratic reforms.

Much like the United States, which has become a positive reference point for many protesters, a pull-yourself-up-by-the-bootstraps individualism prevails in Hong Kong.

Frustratingly, rather than taking aim at the tycoons and conglomerates that dominate the economy, or the property developers and landlords who control the housing market, the main target of the protesters has been the government.

And the protesters don’t condemn the government for protecting the elite’s economic interests to the exclusion of many Hong Kongers, but rather for implementing the will of Beijing.

WHY PROTESTERS AREN’T FOCUSING ON ECONOMIC ELITES

Indeed, even after some of the richest people in the territory voiced support for the government in recent weeks, very few in the protesting camp have turned their anger towards the city’s economic elites.

This fact speaks to the power of the founding myths of modern Hong Kong and how the city’s rich made good. There’s a certain reverence for the city’s tycoons that persists here, along with a lack of class consciousness and an ingrained ideological hostility towards anything vaguely left-leaning politically.

Moreover, while universal suffrage is a key part of the demands

made by protesters, this overwhelmingly relates to the selection of the chief executive, not the structure of the government itself.

For instance, under an anachronistic colonial arrangement known as the “functional constituencies”, a host of economic sectors (such as the financial services, real estate and tourism) gain political representation in the Legislative Council at the expense of citizens.

Crucially, too, little effort has been made to explain why universal suffrage would be so important in Hong Kong beyond thwarting China’s influence. This has limited the formation of lasting coalitions within the protest movement that could rally around the idea of using increased political power to resolve pressing social issues.

Combined with some protesters flying American, British and colonial flags and waving pictures of US President Donald Trump on top of a tank, the movement often appears to be erring closer towards being just another form of reactionary populism.

REBUILDING HOPE AND THE CITY

The fact that young people are grappling with forging a more positive future is to be admired. However, for Hong Kong to have any reasonable future, the city requires nothing short of large-scale economic and political transformation.

Universal suffrage is one part of this, but in isolation it is insufficient. The question for Hong Kong is whether the protesters and other members of society recognise what needs to be done in a holistic sense and can pull together to make it possible.

In a city characterised by vast inequalities in economic and political power, this challenge is nothing short of revolutionary in the genuine sense of the word.

[the writer is Associate Professor, City University of Hong Kong]

Narada tapes scandal: CBI takes Mirza to Roy's house for face-to-face questioning

KOLKATA, SEP 29 (PTI): The CBI on Sunday interrogated senior BJP leader Mukul Roy at his residence, together with arrested IPS officer SMH Mirza, in connection with the Narada tapes scandal.

Mirza, who was apprehended earlier this week in the case, was taken to the BJP leader's south Kolkata residence by the agency officials, sources said.

The entire "face-to-face interrogation" has been videographed by the sleuths of the agency, they said.

On Saturday, Roy was interrogated for nearly three hours by the CBI at its Nizam Palace office.

Talking to the press, he had said it was his duty to cooperate with

the investigative agency.

In the tapes that had surfaced ahead of 2016 West Bengal assembly polls, persons resembling senior Trinamool Congress leaders and Mirza are seen accepting money from the representatives of a fictitious company in return for favours.

Roy, who was then a TMP MP, was purportedly shown talking to Mathew Samuel, the Narada News boss who had posed as a businessman to carry out the sting operation.

Mirza was seen accepting Rs 5 lakh in cash from a businessman in one of the footages. The former Burdwan SP had apparently claimed in the video that he was receiving the cash on Roy's instructions.

Northeast festival to be held in Varanasi in November

NEW DELHI, SEPT 29 (PTI): A four-day 'Destination Northeast' festival will be held in Varanasi in November to familiarise the people with the rich, unexplored potential and opportunities available in the region, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Sunday.

The festival in Varanasi will be a sequel to the 'Destination North-East' series begun about three years ago, as part of which, such festivals have already been held in places like Chandigarh and Delhi.

The four-day festival

on the Northeast will be held at Varanasi from November 23, Singh, Union Minister for Development of the North Eastern Region (DoNER), said here.

The concept behind holding such events is to familiarise the people in other parts of India with the rich, unexplored potential, avenues and opportunities that the Northeast has to offer for the rest of the world, he said.

Ancient temple town Varanasi is the Lok Sabha constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

RBI may go for another rate cut on Oct 4: Experts

MUMBAI, SEP 29 (PTI): The RBI may cut the key policy rate again on Friday, the fifth in row, to complement the government's measures like reducing corporate tax and promoting credit offtake to spur economic activity during the festive season amid range-bound inflation.

The RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will announce the fourth bi-monthly monetary policy for 2019-20 on Friday, October 4, after its three-day meeting.

The central bank has already slashed the repo rate (short-term borrowing rate) four times aggregating to 1.10 percentage points since January. At its previous meeting in August, the MPC had reduced the benchmark lending rate by an unusual 35 basis points to 5.40 per cent.

The upcoming MPC meeting comes in the backdrop of the RBI's mandate to banks to link their loan products to an external benchmark, like repo rate, for faster transmission of reduction in policy rates to borrowers from October 1. Ahead of the meeting, the Das-headed Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) sub-committee took stock of the prevailing macroeconomic situation.

Earlier, the RBI Governor had said the government has little fiscal space, giving hopes that the RBI may provide

more monetary stimulus to prop up the economy.

The government's fiscal space has been squeezed on account of cut in rates of corporate tax as well as lowering of GST on various goods. Revenue collection too has been below the Budget estimates. Experts opined that another rate cut is on the cards as the government's hands are tied and the onus of taking initiatives now rests with the central bank.

Anshuman Magazine, Chairman and CEO, India, South East Asia, Middle East and Africa, CBRE, said the government has taken a series of measures in the last few weeks to drive structural changes in the Indian economy. However, most of these are enabling provisions to ease supply side pressures while the key challenge of reigniting demand remains.

"Thus, we are hoping that the central bank to cut the key signalling rate of repo by 25 bps to 5.15 per cent next week to complement the government's fiscal stimulus," he said.

Suyash Choudhary, Head (Fixed Income), IDFC AMC was of the opinion that the global and local context is weak enough to argue yet for some (though not substantial) incremental role for monetary easing. "...we were expecting before and would expect the repo rate to bottom out in the 5 to 5.25 per cent area," Choudhary said.

FIELDWORK REFLECTIONS

Materials as memories of Historical Past: the Grees of the Lepchas

RONGNYOO LEPCHA

Material culture is an integral part of society. They allow us to reconstruct and understand past events, civilizations and culture. The Lepchas are the indigenous population of Sikkim, Kalimpong and Darjeeling. Anthropologist Elman Service (1975) distinguishes two stages of tribal societies: one, the simple societies organized by limited instances of social rank and prestige, and the other, more stratified societies led by chieftains or tribal kings (chiefdoms).

Historically, tribal societies represent an intermediate stage between the band society of the Palaeolithic stage and civilization with centralized, super-regional governments based in cities. Stratified tribal societies led by tribal kings thus flourished from the Neolithic stage into the Iron Age. We can well see that tribal kings existed in the ancient times (Service 1975). Lepchas claim to have constructed a good number of grees (forts) all over the Eastern Himalayan region. One of the more famous Lepchas forts is the Damsang Gree. At the ruins of Damsang fort, built by the last king of the Lepchas, Pano Gaeboo Achyok, one can find separate rooms for the king, queen, their bath rooms and rooms for the guards. It is not a palace or a fort in the modern sense of the term, and one needs to investigate it from the angle of a small community like the Lepchas who ruled in these remote, hilly areas of Eastern Himalayas in the ancient days.

The fort was constructed completely with locally available materials like stone and mud and there is no evidence of any imported materials or skill. It is a fine evidence of typical architecture which Lepchas use and it simply supports the claim of the Lepchas that they are the builders of the fort.

Forts in the eastern region were constructed to protect against Bhutanese attacks from the east; in the west to counter attacks from Nepal; and in the north to protect the land from Tibetan intrusions.

Material culture has the "capacity to reach back over the millennia to reconstruct and explain cultures and life ways of unimaginably ancient societies as they change over many centuries..." (Fagan 2003: 40). These forts stand as evidence of the historical past of the Lepcha community.

Pano Gaeboo Achyok is known as the last king of the Lepchas. He is the

most celebrated king among all others as the Lepchas honour and remember him as a king who died for his people and his land. He not only sacrificed his life for his people but set an example. There is an on-going debate as to Pano Gaeboo Achyok being a king or a chief. He could be an ordinary Lepcha but when there were numerous attacks on his land as Kalimpong falls on the border area of Bhutan. It is remembered how the armies would come and plunder the Lepcha people. Bhutanese attacks would lead to plunder, pillage of cattle, food grains, property and molestation of women and children. They would take away the cattle, the food and everything they had. The men had to run and hide in the forests as they would be killed, that is how those times are remembered. The Lepchas were few in number and they needed someone to protect them someone who would save them and this was when Gaeboo Achyok came along. He, along with his army, fought the enemy with their best forte that is guerrilla warfare. The Lepcha soldiers would fight with bow and arrows. They would poison the water where the enemy was likely to drink water. The common people also fought alongside. They would cook wild yams, these yams would have to be handled with care as it had both edible and poisonous parts. When the enemy came to take away their food they would give the enemies only the parts that were poisonous thus killing them.

Gaeboo Achyok raised an army with him which fought to protect their land. He gave the Lepcha people hope and strength to fight against powerful enemies. During his rule in Kalimpong, Pano Gaeboo Achyok built many forts as outposts to keep an eye on his enemies. One of the most popular one is Damsang Gree, which is situated above Pedong in Kalimpong. Damsang was named after Pano Gaeboo Achyok's father Damsang Pano. Besides Damsang Gree, Lepchas claim that they have constructed a good number of forts all over the Eastern Himalayan region where they were the rulers in ancient days. Within and around Mayel Lyang, several forts were constructed to protect the land from foreign attacks which in those days were very frequent and common. The innumerable rugged Lepcha forts of Damsang, Daling, Fyung, Savong Dang, Mungzing, Laiti, Song-saw, Tusachyok and many smaller ones that are still proudly standing in Darjeeling district are the most typical



examples of the art of Lepcha architecture|| (Tamsang1983: 71).

After the death of Pano Gaeboo Achyok, Damsang was annexed by Bhutan until 1865 when the British defeated the Bhutanese at Daling Fort Damsang, and annexed it into British India (Tamsang, 2008 : P-IV). It is a fine evidence of typical architecture which Lepchas use and it simply supports the claim of the Lepchas that they are the builders of the fort. Strategically, the fort was constructed at the top of a hill from where one could keep a close watch on the intruders from all sides. History witnessed frequent attacks on the Lepcha land by the Bhutanese from the east, by the Tibetans from the north, by the Nepalese from the west and by the British from the south. The location and the height of the fort favoured the Lepchas to fight with their traditional weapons like bows and arrows and stones from a height.

Damsang Gree is now a holy place for the Lepchas same as a temple for a Hindu or a monastery for a Buddhist and interfering with these may result in hurting the community as a whole. We have Setlyang Gree in Dapling (Kalimpong) but by what is left it shows that there was an attempt to build a fort but due to some reasons they left it incomplete. Even though there is a lot of history in Dapling above the main village of Dapling there is a place which is known as Uunthik Lyang it is believed that this was the place where Pano Gaeboo Achyok used to keep his horses when travelling. Seeing the setting of the forts, we can conclude that Dapling was a central point a place where Pano Gaeboo Achyok would rest while travelling from one fort to Uunthik Lyang. Below the main village at Dapling, there is the small village of Katara, a sub part of Dapling where there sits a Ramsuu Bong (Jack Fruit tree) which is believed by the locals to be planted by Aashekmit while travelling. The village derives its name from this very tree. It is a huge

ancient tree with branches spread wide across the sky. The locals also believe Dapling holds the grave of one of the horsemen of Pano Gaeboo Achyok named Targay who is said to have died here from high fever while travelling.

Another fort is in Lungsyol which is known by the name Chyakung Gree. The location of the gree is the same as in the case of the others we can see the similar patterns as all the grees of Pano Gaeboo Achyok are built on a high hill with a flat top. Chyakung Gree is believed to be the birthplace of Pano Gaeboo Achyok. There is a belief that it was not a fort but a monastery; others also say it's a house. A close look at the Gree shows it being closer to a house and if we bring in the story of PanoGaeboo Achyok this was the place where Aashekmit gave birth to Pano Gaeboo Achyok, a place where a child is reared would not be like a watch tower so we can say it's more of a house of Pano Gaeboo Achyok where he was born and brought up and as he grew older he took control of the land.

Another gree is the Yang Gree built on top of the highest hill in Yang Makum village in Kalimpong the ruins of which are similar to that of Damsang fort and Dalim fort but they are now just stones and dust with the wilderness around they are lost to the human eyes and known to only those few who still know about it.

The Bhutanese invasions and constant raids troubled the Lepcha people to an extent that it was time to rise again to fight for freedom, their existence and the one to rise was Pano Gaeboo Achyok thus making him one of the most famous Panus of the Lepchas. Dalim fort at Gorubathan holds great importance and the sentiments of the Lepcha people as it is that the Pano was murdered. The Lepchas are trying their best to preserve these historical evidences of their Pano and also safeguarding their heritage and identity.

[the writer is a research scholar, Department of Anthropology, Sikkim University]

ATDC joins hand with Instagram to promote Assam tourism

GUWAHATI, SEP 29 (PTI):

The Assam Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC) has joined hands with social media platform Instagram and launched the hashtag #AwesomeAssam to promote the state across the globe. An exhibition has also been organised showing select photographs of Assam in Instagram along with a workshop for tourism stakeholders for making best use of the platform's power of visual storytelling.

"Tourism in Assam is poised to enter a new phase with ATDC's collaboration with Instagram to promote tourism for the state with a formal unveiling of the hashtag #AwesomeAssam by Instagram on Saturday," the ATDC said on Sunday.

Assam is one of the most vibrant states in the country and is known for the mighty Brahmaputra, Kaziranga National Park, different monuments and picturesque tea es-



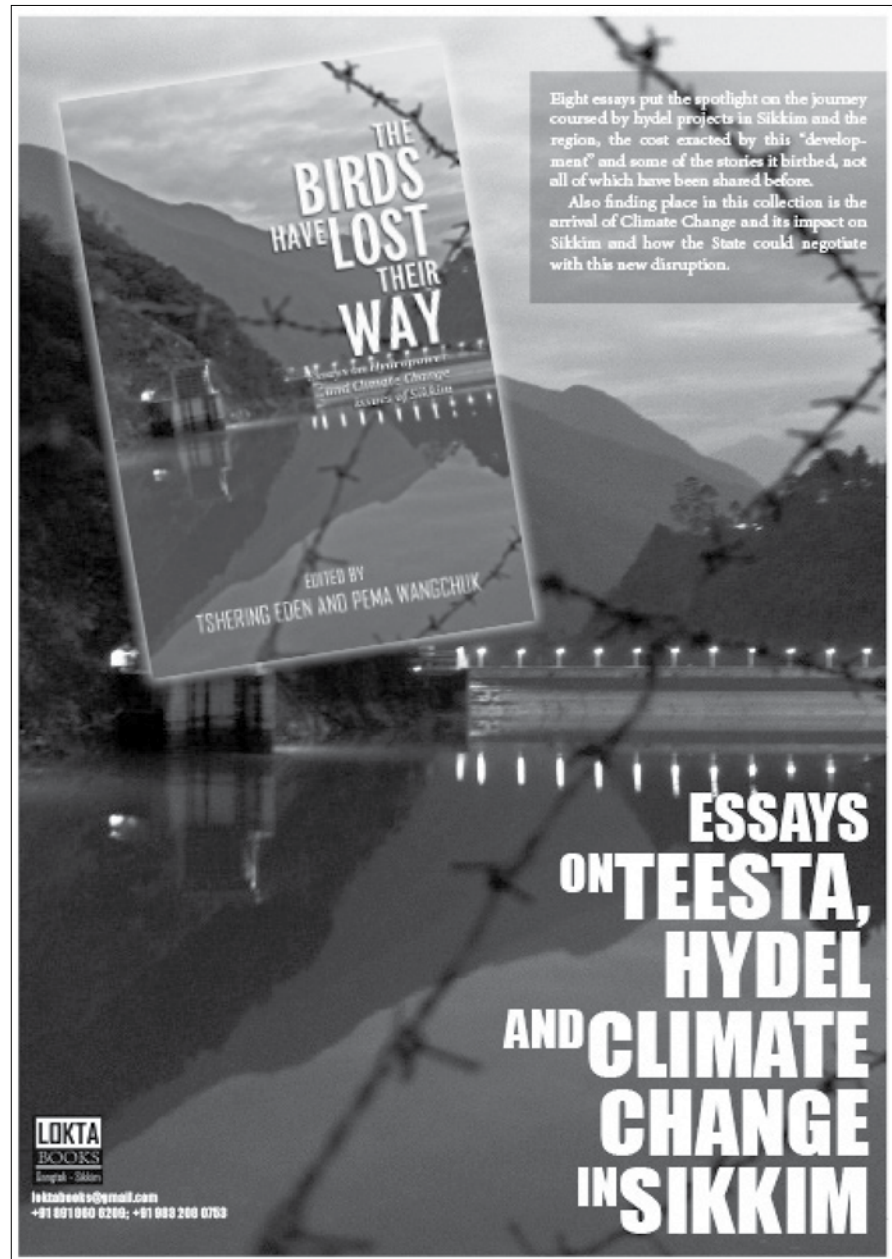
tates. "Assam is one of the most beautiful states of India and the government is investing significantly to attract tourists to the state. Assam Tourism has in the past few years launched a massive publicity and promotion campaign," ATDC chairman Jayanta Malla Baruah said. Assam Tourism has stepped into digital and social media platforms to showcase the state as the most exotic tourist destination in the country, he said.

"We especially want to have an active conversation with today's youth and we want to do it in a visual-first manner. This led us to Instagram as

the community is thriving with people who are young, adventurous, experimental and expressive," Baruah said.

Commenting on this collaboration, Instagram Public Policy and Community Outreach Manager Tara Bedi said that the social media platform is an integral part of tourism in today's digital age.

"When people travel, they post their adventures on Instagram and those stories inspire others. We are glad to partner with ATDC and help promote Assam as an incredible Indian travel destination for Indian and international travelers," she added.



Ditching Ole Gunnar Solskjær will not stop the rot at Manchester United

JONATHAN WILSON
theGuardian

All in all, it's been an excellent week for Manchester United. There was progress in the Carabao Cup and the announcement of record revenues of £627.1m. What more could anybody want?

Excellent, that is, as long as you don't worry about details such as the limp 2-0 defeat at West Ham last Sunday. Or that the weekend kicked off with United eighth in the Premier League table. Or that a club with a proud cavalier tradition have scored just 18 goals in their last 20 games. Or that the one outfielder of undoubted outstanding quality spent the summer trying to leave. Or that Old Trafford, essentially undeveloped in more than two decades, has an entirely appropriate air of shabbiness. Or that this is, relative to the rest of the league, the worst Manchester United squad in at least 30 years. Or that the share price has fallen 36% since its peak at the end of August last year.

It is that last detail that might prompt the most concern in the United boardroom. Revenues may be at record levels but last week United announced a fourth-quarter loss of £22.2m. Failure to qualify for the Champions League this season will make that hard to recover, particularly if United do not finish in the top four again this season.

On-pitch underperformance is finally beginning to hit the bottom line. The problem now is the rot runs so deep it is in danger of toxifying everything. It's easy to say that Alexis Sánchez was past it when he arrived at United, but Fred wasn't. Éric Bailly wasn't. Henrikh Mkhitaryan wasn't. United have become a club that drag players down.

Then there are those who once bristled with



promise and then stagnated: Adnan Januzaj, Luke Shaw, Phil Jones, Anthony Martial and Jesse Lingard. The danger of that pattern continuing seems all the more acute now United have switched to signing youth.

Daniel James has had a very good start to his United career. He has scored three goals, all of them of supreme quality. He is undoubtedly a player of great potential. But he is 21, came into the Swansea side only last season and had never played a Premier League game before August. He is somebody to be bedded in slowly, to be given time to develop. He should not be United's main creative threat and it's unfair to saddle him with that burden. It's true in part that James has been thrust front and centre by injuries but that itself only raises further questions. How have United ended up with a squad so imbalanced that a couple of absentees can have such a profound impact? And just why have United already suffered so many noncontact injuries this season? Bad luck can happen, of course, but you don't have to be Twitter's Dutch fitness maven Raymond Verheijen to wonder whether Ole Gunnar Solskjær's

summer of sweat may have been counterproductive.

The squad Solskjær inherited from José Mourinho ran less on average than any other in the Premier League. That's not necessarily to say it was unfit, more that Mourinho's aversion to pressing meant running was far less important to his side than it is for many others.

Solskjær then tried to implement a running game and for almost three glorious months it worked, bringing 14 wins in 17 games. Then fatigue set in, injuries mounted and United won just two of their last 12 games of last season. The 3-1 victory at Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League now represents a cliff edge.

That's the generous explanation, and it was one the club were keen to push through summer tours, in which all anybody seemed to talk about was how hard they were working. There is probably some truth to that theory but, as with everything else at United these days, it raises more questions than it answers.

First, the issue of why the injuries have recurred. Perhaps United overdid it in the summer or, as was suggested

last week, day-to-day training is in some way flawed. It may simply be misfortune but the point is wider than the injuries: there can be no confidence now in United's structures. There was much sneering when Manchester City, on dismissing Roberto Mancini in 2013, spoke of the need for a "holistic" approach, but United now is what happens when there is nothing holistic about a club beyond the general atmosphere of decline. What does it say about planning at the club if they replace one manager with another whose style is so different that players get injured trying to keep up?

In that sense, Solskjær can be portrayed as a patsy. It increasingly appears that his early success lay less in his being Solskjær than in his being not-Mourinho, while his appointment was characteristic of a leadership that blows with the wind, pursuing short-term popularity without any grand plan. But it may be that a squad this piecemeal, patched together from the remnants of four very different managers' inclinations under a board that has demonstrated little in the way of football expertise, makes the act of management almost impossible.

Ed Woodward, United's executive vice-chairman, has insisted patience will be shown towards Solskjær. That makes sense in as much as the manager doesn't seem the biggest problem at the club. Paul Scholes has suggested that it will take "four or five" transfer windows to make United competitive again, but why would a leadership that has presided over such decay for the past six years suddenly be able to put it right in two?

At the investors' conference call this past week, shareholders raised only two questions with the CEO: about how the loan system works and about expansion in China, where the club's app is now producing country-specific content. As an indication of the lack of football expertise and where the club's priorities lie, it was exemplary. But this cannot endure.

Prolonged exile from the Champions League will surely dull the lustre even of Manchester United. All those noodle partners and official lubricants presumably didn't sign up to be associated with scraps for Europa League qualification.

For Woodward and United, far more serious questions are coming.

Thomas Partey makes noise but Atlético Madrid fail to break down Real Madrid

SID LOWE
theGuardian

In the end there was no way through, in part because no one was particularly desperate to find it. Another derby ended in another draw, allowing Real Madrid to remain top and Atlético to remain a solitary point behind them.

"We didn't have clear chances and nor did they: neither of us risked very much," Jan Oblak said at the final whistle, pretty much saying it all. Between them, these sides spent almost €600m in the summer but they produced a game of few clear-cut opportunities that came to a goalless conclusion.

The last time these teams had met, it had finished 7-2 to Atlético in New Jersey. "What happened, happened," Zidane had said then. Everyone knew it would be different this time and so it turned out. This was tighter, tenser, and meant more; a fact highlighted by the inclusion of Fede Valverde in Real's midfield in place of James Rodríguez. Afterwards Zidane suggested that defensive solidity was his priority. This was a battle for control which no one really won – at least not when it came to the ball – but no one lost either.

If there was a broad first-half pattern it ran:

Atlético, Real, Atlético. Joao Felix shot wide when Diego Costa sent him clear. Harmless shots from Karim Benzema, Nacho and Toni Kroos drew three corners in little over a minute. Kroos then took the ball beautifully on the bounce before bending a shot from 20 yards that Jan Oblak dived to push away. There was little, though, from the two biggest signings: João Félix and Eden Hazard.

Thomas Partey was the game's outstanding midfielder. Displaying a range of passing that was not always reciprocated by those around him, he sent a superb ball across the six-yard box which Costa couldn't reach. Kieran Trippier was another of the night's most impressive performers, sought early and often by his team-mates.

Thomas teed up João Félix to shoot wide from the edge of the area and then his superb pass found Trippier in the area. Options didn't open up for the Englishman with the speed he hoped and Thibaut Courtois stopped his low ball reaching Koke.

Diego Simeone made his first change at the break, Ángel Correa replacing Vitolo and immediately dashing in to head over from Costa's

chipped pass. Correa brought electricity but not much clarity and it was Real who had the clearest chance of the night when Hazard found Nacho overlapping. Nacho's cutback ran towards Gareth Bale, thundering into the area and the perfect shooting position. He opened his body and hit the ball high into the south end, the roar from the fans there speaking of relief. At the other end, Trippier's cross – his ninth – only just evaded Costa.

Both sides made changes, albeit without running excessive risks. Lemar, Modrić, Llorente and James were introduced but it had little affect on the direction of the game, something both teams seemed to accept and embrace as time ticked away. "We weren't going to go mad, throwing everything forward," Courtois said. Saúl headed Koke's corner just past the post. Thomas, Correa and Trippier combined to reach the byline but Koke couldn't turn the shot goalwards at the near post. And that was just about that, Zidane not unjustly saying: "We didn't allow a single chance."

The closest anyone came was Benzema, whose header from Nacho's cross found Oblak diving full length to make a sharp save.

Sajan wins gold and place in Indian team for U-23 Worlds

SHIRDI, SEP 29 (PTI): Sajan Bhanwal, the only Indian to win two junior World Championship medals, expectedly earned a place in the country's Greco Roman team for the Under-23 World Championship by emerging champion in that age-group Nationals, which concluded here on

Sunday. Sajan won gold in the 77kg Under-23 Nationals for Haryana, which finished third in the team championship.

With four gold, two silver and three bronze medals, Services Sports Control Board (SSCB) took the team championship. Arjun (55kg), Rajeet

(63kg), Rahul (72kg) and Deepak (130kg) won gold for Services.

The only category in which SSCB did not win a medal was 97kg, in which Haryana's Ravi took gold with a win over Rajasthan's Pushpendra.

Delhi finished second (170 points) ahead of Haryana (136).

Indian junior boys win bronze in TT tourney

MUMBAI, SEP 29 (PTI): Indian junior boys Raegan Albuquerque and Yashansh Malik paired with Netherlands' Lode Hulshof to win the bronze medal at the Serbia Junior and Cadet Table-Tennis Open.

The team put up a big fight before going down 2-3 in the semi-finals to

the Czech Republic trio of Radek Skala, Tomas Martinko and Ondrej Kveton.

Starting the proceedings, Raegan lost 2-3 to Radek but Lode got them back into the tie, beating Martinko 3-2.

Yashansh then increased the lead in his team's favour and beat Ondrej 3-1. With just a

win away from entering the final, Raegan and Lode went down by identical 0-3 margins to Tomas and Radek to end their campaign.

Earlier, in the quarterfinals, the combination of India and Netherlands got the better of Spain and Slovakia 3-1.

Hima, Gopichand flag off PSPB marathon

NEW DELHI, SEP 29 (PTI): Sprinter Hima Das and badminton's chief national coach Pullela Gopichand on Sunday flagged off the PSPB International Half Marathon 'Petro Run' here.

The fourth edition of the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board event was flagged off in the presence of PSPB chairman MM Kutty, president Sanjiv Singh and Indian Oil sportspersons Padmini Rout, M Poovamma, Swapna Burman, Ameya Malik, Jauna Murmur, Suresh Kumar, Laxman Rawat, S K Uthappa and Kajal Kumari.

Hima said, "I am happy to be part of Fit India movement by flagging off the Petro Run Delhi. I request everyone to actively participate in this movement started by our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and make



it a big success. "As it will not only help us to stay healthy individually but also make our country fitter, healthier and free from diseases. So everyone please participate in the Fit India movement by at least spending one hour on your fitness and contribute for making better India."

The event carried a prize money of Rs 42 lakh, with 119 prizes

under various categories for both men and women.

"It is an electrifying environment here. I am overwhelmed to witness this level of participation at the Petro Run. It is a privilege to be associated with PSPB and Indian Oil. Kudos to the organisers and best wishes to runners," said Gopichand while flagging off the 10kms run.

Hyderabad FC unveils team jersey for ISL season 6

HYDERABAD, SEP 29 (PTI): Hyderabad FC, Hero India Super League's newest entrant, on Sunday unveiled its black and yellow coloured jersey for the 2019-20 season.

The event was graced by prominent Tollywood actor Venkatesh Daggubati along with co-owners of Hyderabad FC, Varun Tripuneni and Vijay Madduri, head coach Phil Brown and the players.

The jersey sports a contemporary look and is inspired by the traditional Nizami Sherwani and the city's architecture. Along with the new jersey, the club also introduced the Hyderabad FC team, which will be representing the city in the ISL.

Speaking on the occasion, Tripuraneni said, "We are very excited to unveil our new jersey that represents the rich culture of the city. The team is all geared up to hit the field and face challenges like true sportsmen.

European roundup: Suárez helps end Barcelona's barren away run, Bayern top

GETAFE, 29 SEPT: Barcelona ended a string of bad results away from home with a 2-0 win at Getafe on Saturday in La Liga. Goals from Luis Suárez and Junior Firpo either side of half-time gave the Spanish champions their first away win of the season, although they finished with 10 men after Clément Lenglet's dismissal.

It was Barcelona's first win in their last nine competitive games away from the Camp Nou and it eased the pressure on coach Ernesto Valverde. Real Madrid stay top on 15 points after their 0-0 capital derby draw with Atlético, who are third on 14 points. Grana-da beat Leganés 1-0 and are second, also on 14 points. Barcelona are fourth on 13 points.

Cristiano Ronaldo helped Juventus to continue their unbeaten start to the Serie A season with a comfortable 2-0 home victory over struggling Spal. Miralem Pjanic's strike put the hosts in front on the stroke of half-time before Ronaldo, who missed Tuesday's win over Brescia with a minor injury, headed his third goal of the campaign with 12 minutes remaining.

The Spal goalkeeper Etrit Berisha made a string of impressive saves to keep the score down as the visitors fell to their fifth de-

feat in six matches to stay level on three points with Sampdoria at the foot of the table.

Internazionale stay top with a 100% record after winning 3-1 at Sampdoria. The match was Alexis Sánchez's first start for Inter and the Chilean scored his club's second before being sent off early in the second half. Stefano Sensi's deflected strike put Inter in front after 20 minutes before the on-loan Manchester United forward finished from close range to double the lead two minutes later. A minute into the second half Sánchez was shown a second yellow card for simulation and Jakub Jankto pulled back a goal for Sampdoria with 35 minutes still to play.

But Roberto Gagliardini pounced to seal the three points for Inter, who have won their first six league games of a season for the first time since 1966-67, and for only the second time in their history.

"Fortunately, the way it finished, I can look at the glass half full," the Inter coach Antonio Conte said. "I'd prefer a more relaxed match on an emotional level, as we absolutely dominated the first half and were in complete control."

Juventus and Inter meet at San Siro next Sunday in a match that is

expected to have a big impact on the title race. The Juve coach Maurizio Sarri said he was taking things one step at a time with a Champions League match against Bayer Leverkusen to come on Tuesday first. "I haven't actually watched any Inter games this season as we've focused mainly on the teams we are facing next," he said. "Tonight we'll watch a couple of Bayer Leverkusen matches and then go to dinner. I hear that Inter are playing very well; I had no doubt they would considering the quality of the coach and their players. I always said this would be a far more balanced season."

Bayern Munich were made to sweat for a 3-2 win at Paderborn that sent them top of the Bundesliga after RB Leipzig went down 3-1 at home to Schalke for their first loss of the season. Bayern squandered several chances, hit the woodwork and conceded two goals in the second half in an uneven performance.

The Bavarians went in front through Serge Gnabry in the 15th minute after a sensational start that saw them hit the post and create chance after chance. Their top scorer Robert Lewandowski managed to somehow miss a completely open goal from 10 metres, firing wide.

Trump blurs lines between personal lawyer, attorney general

WASHINGTON, SEP 29 (AP): As Washington plunges into impeachment, Attorney General William Barr finds himself engulfed in the political firestorm, facing questions about his role in President Donald Trump's outreach to Ukraine and the administration's attempts to keep a whistleblower complaint from Congress.

Trump repeatedly told Ukraine's president in a telephone call that Barr and Trump personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani could help investigate Trump's Democratic rival Joe Biden, according to a rough transcript of that summertime conversation.

Justice Department officials insist Barr was unaware of Trump's comments at the time of the July 25 call.

When Barr did learn of that call a few weeks later, he was "surprised and angry" to discover he had been lumped in with Giuliani, a person familiar with Barr's thinking told The Associated Press.

This person was not authorized to speak about the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Giuliani, a former New York City mayor, often appears in rambling television interviews as a vocal defender of the president. Giuliani represents Trump's personal interests and holds no position in the U.S. government, raising questions about why he would be conducting outreach to Ukrainian officials.

Barr is the nation's top law enforcement officer and leads a Cabinet department that traditionally has a modicum of independence from the White House.

Yet to Trump, there often appears to be little difference between the two lawyers.

"I will have Mr. Giuliani give you a call and I am also going to have Attorney General Barr call and we will get to the bottom of it," Trump told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, according to the memo of the call that was released by the White House this past week.

Since becoming attorney general in February, Barr has been one of Trump's staunchest defenders. He framed special counsel Robert Mueller's report in favorable terms for the president in a news conference this year, even though Mueller said he did not exonerate Trump.

Kathleen Clark, a legal ethics professor at Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, said Trump is treating the country's attorney general as if he's just another personal lawyer.

"I think it represents a larger problem with President Trump," she said. "To him, it appears Giuliani and Barr both have the same job." Trump has frequently lauded Barr and his efforts to embrace the president's political agenda. That's in stark contrast to Trump's relationship with his first attorney general, Jeff Sessions, whom the president repeatedly harangued in public.

Police fire teargas and pepper spray as Hong Kong protests continue

HONG KONG, 29 SEPT: Hong Kong police have used teargas and pepper spray on thousands of protesters as demonstrations enter the 17th week in the city's most serious political crisis in decades.

The protest, which was not sanctioned by police, was scheduled to start at 3pm local time (0800 BST) in the Causeway Bay shopping district, but dozens of riot police began guarding the area hours before. They stopped and searched a number of young people dressed in black.

The crowds chanted "Black cop! Black cop!" as they saw riot police. At about 2.20pm, before the march was due to start, police fired several rounds of teargas at crowds congregating in front of the Sogo department store. Police had earlier subdued several protesters.

Protesters targeted by the teargas ran in panic, but many remained in the area and began marching along the scheduled route towards the central business district.

Police later fired teargas at protesters outside



an upmarket shopping centre in Admiralty, not far from the government headquarters.

Helicopters hovered above the protest areas as demonstrators opened their umbrellas, saying they feared an unknown liquid was being sprayed at them.

A number of middle-aged people said they were there to protect young people despite the increasingly violent pro-

tests in recent weeks.

"These kids feel hopeless and they're willing to give their lives even, they need us to protect them," said Vanita Chan, 55, who was helping rinse the eyes of those affected by the teargas and pepper spray. She said she had bought supplies such as saline, goggles and raincoats with her own money to hand out to protesters.

"If we don't speak up

now there won't be another opportunity, the Hong Kong and Chinese governments are cracking down on us already," said Mrs Lau, 56. "We don't want our next generation to lose our freedoms. We don't accept one country, one system." This was a reference to China's agreement to give Hong Kong semi-autonomy - "one country, two systems" - after taking control of the city back

from the UK in 1997.

Many shops in the area have closed. Protesters spray-painted a closed Starbucks cafe in Wan Chai with messages calling on people to boycott it. The company that runs the cafe chain on Hong Kong is seen by protesters as being pro-Beijing.

Young, black-clad protesters were digging up paving stones at a crossroad in Wan Chai while

others smashed up glass panels at a metro exit of Wan Chai station, which has been closed. The outer walls of the exit were also spray-painted with anti-police messages and "Free HK", "Reclaim HK, revolution of our era". Protesters are angry that in past weeks the metro company has allowed police to go into the station to beat protesters and close it during protests but has provided carriage

to transport riot police officers.

Hong Kong has been gripped by a wave of protests since June, sparked by a controversial extradition bill, but the movement has become increasingly violent as animosity has grown between protesters and police.

On Saturday night, while a rally marking the fifth anniversary of the pro-democracy "umbrella revolution" was staged, riot police fired pepper spray, teargas and used a water cannon on thousands of protesters who surrounded the government headquarters. Protesters burned a communist flag and hurled bricks and petrol bombs at the government building. They had occupied the main thoroughfare that was occupied by peaceful protesters for 79 days five years ago.

Hong Kong is bracing for consecutive days of protests and clashes, culminating with anti-government demonstrations on Tuesday to coincide with China's National Day, a politically significant anniversary marking 70 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Saudi Arabia to invest USD 100 billion in India

NEW DELHI, SEP 29 (PTI): Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, is looking at investing USD 100 billion in India in areas of petrochemicals, infrastructure and mining among others, considering the country's growth potential.

Saudi Ambassador Dr Saud bin Mohammed Al Sati has said India is an attractive investment destination for Saudi Arabia and it is eyeing long-term partnerships with New Delhi in key sectors such as oil, gas and mining.

"Saudi Arabia is looking at making investments in India potentially worth USD 100 billion in the areas of energy, refining, petrochemicals, infrastructure, agriculture, minerals and mining," Al Sati told PTI in an interview.

He said Saudi Arabia's biggest oil giant Aramco's proposed partnership with Reliance Industries Ltd reflected the strategic nature of the growing energy ties between the two countries.

The envoy said investing in India's value chain from oil supply, marketing, refining to petrochemicals and lubricants is a key part of Aramco's global downstream strategy.

"In this backdrop, Saudi Aramco's proposed investments in India's energy sector such as the USD 44 billion West Coast refinery and petrochemical project in Maharashtra and long term partnership with Reliance represent strategic milestones in our bilateral relationship," he said.

The envoy said the vision 2030 of Crown Prince Mohammed bin



Salman will also result in significant expansion of trade and business between India and Saudi Arabia in diverse sectors.

Under vision 2030, Saudi Arabia plans to diversify the Saudi economy while reducing its economic dependence on petroleum products.

Saudi Arabia is a key pillar of India's energy security, being a source of 17 per cent or more of crude oil and 32 per cent of LPG requirements of India.

The envoy said more than 40 opportunities for joint collaboration and investments across various sectors have been identified between India and Saudi Arabia in 2019, adding the current bilateral trade of USD 34 billion will undoubtedly continue to increase.

"There is huge untapped potential available in merchandise trade, particularly in non-oil trade and we are enhancing cooperation in economic, commercial, investment, cultural and technological fields," the envoy said.

Asked about Saudi Arabia's plan to issue

initial public offering of Aramco's stock, being seen as world's largest IPO, he said it will open up the company to the wider world. "Consistent with the vision 2030 goals, Saudi Aramco is pursuing new opportunities toward creating a world leading downstream sector in Saudi Arabia," he said.

On future energy ties with India, he said the bilateral energy ties have grown beyond the supply of crude oil, refined products and LPG to a more comprehensive partnership that focusses on investments and joint ventures in petrochemical complexes and cooperation in exploration.

"India's invitation to Saudi Arabia to invest in its strategic petroleum reserve reflects the trust and goodwill the two countries share," he said.

Talking about 'Vision 2030', Al Sati said Saudi Arabia is working towards transforming its economy and looking at a post-oil age of world-class technological research, start-up and entrepreneurial vigour.

"The entire devel-

opment strategy of the kingdom rests on three pillars - to build a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation," he said.

"The World Bank too has ranked the kingdom as the fourth largest reformer within G20. The number of foreign investment licenses granted in Saudi Arabia in the first quarter of 2018 increased by 130 per cent," he said.

The envoy also talked about Saudi Arabia's new residency permit scheme for qualified international expatriates.

"This move is expected to attract leading global innovators and investors to live and work in Saudi Arabia, and help drive the private sector growth needed to realise the goals set out in Saudi Vision 2030," he said.

Asked whether Saudi Arabia will increase oil supply to India to address the shortfall due to curb on import of oil from Iran, the envoy said his country is committed to India's energy security and will meet any shortfall that may arise due to disruptions from other sources.

Pak opens major border crossings for Afghans to take part in polls

SAJJAD HUSSAIN ISLAMABAD, SEP 28 (PTI): Pakistan opened all major border crossing terminals on Saturday for the Afghan citizens to allow them to cast their vote in the key presidential election.

Voting is under way in Afghanistan's presidential election, amid heavy security and threats from insurgents.

About 9.6 million Afghans are registered to vote in key presidential poll which marks the culmination of a bloody election campaign.

Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) said in a statement that the country received a request from the Afghan Ministry of Defence on very short notice for border facilitation and opening of border crossings.

"Therefore, it has been decided to open major border terminals

to facilitate movement of Afghan citizen across Pakistan Afghanistan border, so that they are able to exercise their right to vote during presidential election in Afghanistan," the FO said.

It also said that in spite of security issues along the border, Pakistan would continue to support the Afghans.

In view of the Afghan election and in support of domestic transition in Afghanistan, Pakistan has decided to enhance security along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Earlier two days ago, Pakistan had said it will close "all passage ways / Cargo terminals (except for emergency patients) on 27-28 September."

Pakistan had also decided to implement "strict security check of all pedestrians and trading vehicles from 26-29 September."

The steps were taken to stop any miscreants moving across the border to disrupt the process of elections, the FO said.

Security has been tightened across Afghanistan, with tens of thousands of troops and police deployed to guard polling stations and prevent attacks.

Early on Saturday, an explosion occurred near a polling station in the southern city of Kandahar, wounding at least 15 people.

The twice-delayed vote is taking place after Taliban-US peace talks collapsed earlier this month.

The two main candidates are the incumbent President Ashraf Ghani and chief executive, Abdullah Abdullah. They have shared power since 2014 in a unity government.

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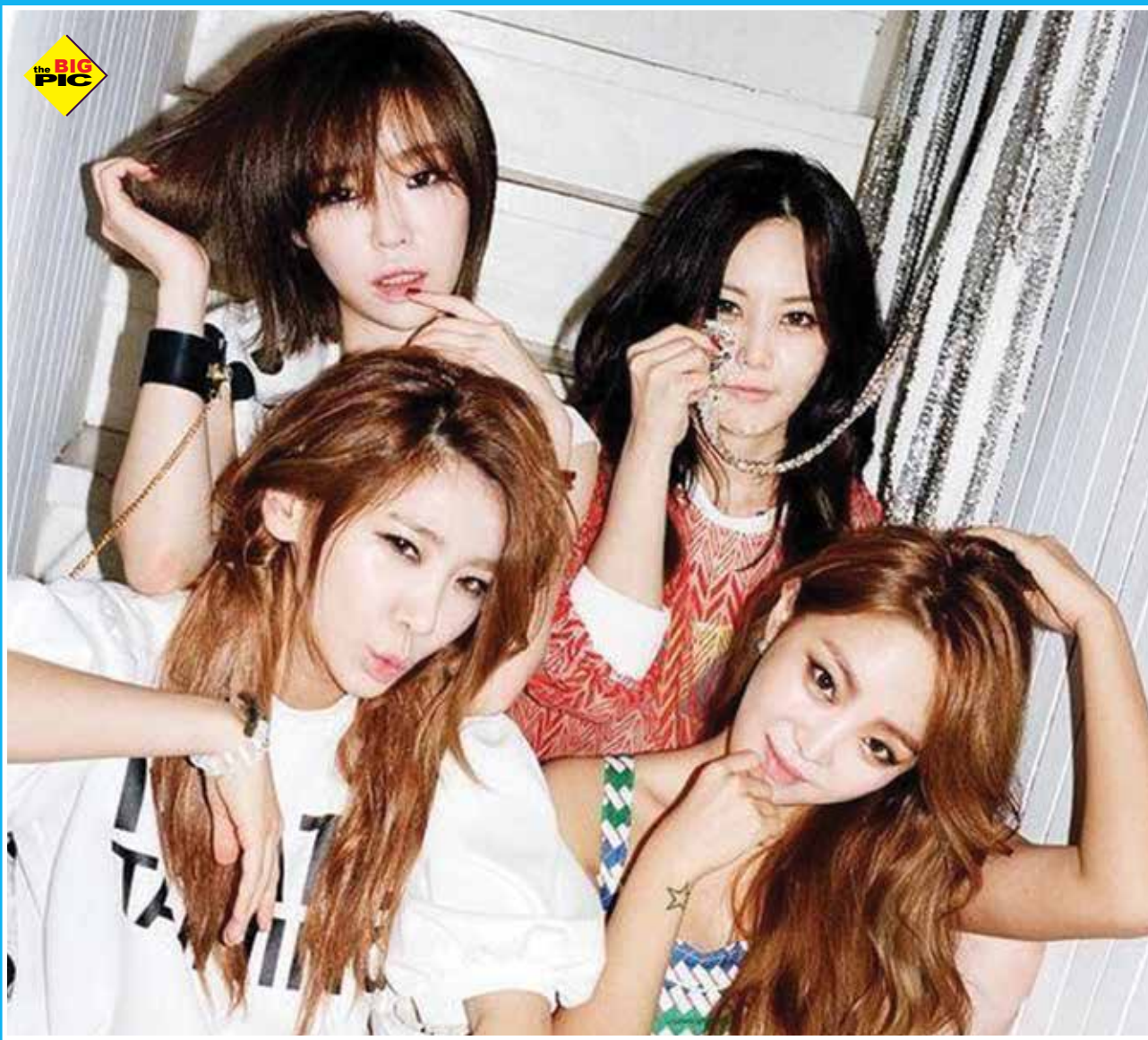
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BROWN EYED GIRLS ANNOUNCE SURPRISE COMEBACK: K-pop girl group Brown Eyed Girls have said the magic word yet again, but this time, it's not "Abracadabra". It's "comeback"! If you were a fan of K-pop in the 2000s, you will definitely remember iconic girl group, Brown Eyed Girls. On 25 September, Miryo, Ga-In, Narsha and JeA surprised fans by spontaneously starting a livestream on V Live. It has been over four years since fans have seen the Brown Eyed Girls back together in one screen, as the group took a hiatus in 2015.

Feel confident I'll bring back Miss Universe crown: Vartika Singh

MUMBAI, SEP 29 (PTI): Lucknow-based Vartika Singh, who was recently crowned Miss Diva Universe 2019, is geared up to represent the country at Miss Universe and says with her family's support and faith in God she is confident about winning the pageant.

The 26-year-old says she is nervous going in for Miss Universe but because she had participated in Miss India, she knows the drill.

"I have participated in Miss India before, so I know the drill. Yes, I am nervous but with support from family, friends and Miss India organisation, I feel confident. I have faith in God that I will bring back the Miss Universe crown," Vartika told PTI.

Vartika, who was crowned by Nehal Chudasama, the reigning Miss Diva Universe, said winning the pageant feels surreal.

"It feels great and I feel I am over the moon. It's beyond my imagination and God has been kind to give me an opportunity to stand for all girls who have dreamt to be in this competition."

Marvel mastermind Kevin Feige to develop new Star Wars film



Marvel Studios president Kevin Feige – generally acknowledged as the driving force behind the enormously successful series of blockbusters the studio has released – is to develop a new Star Wars film, it has been announced.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, the Walt Disney Company (which owns both Marvel Studios and Star Wars producers Lucasfilm) has asked Feige to work on Star Wars material with Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy. Disney co-chair Alan Horn said: "With the close of the Skywalker Saga, [Kennedy] is pursuing a new era in Star Wars storytelling, and knowing what a diehard fan Kevin [Feige] is, it made sense for these two extraordinary producers to work on a Star Wars film together."

No details have been revealed as to the nature of the project, or whether it will operate as part of the "main" chronological narrative or as a standalone "anthology" film. Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker, due for release in December, is the ninth and final part of the

"Skywalker Saga"; Lucasfilm have previously made agreements with Game of Thrones creators David Benioff and DB Weiss and The Last Jedi director Rian Johnson to make separate trilogies.

However, Lucasfilm have experienced considerable hiccups in maintaining the Star Wars franchise since the triumphant release of Star Wars: The Force Awakens in 2015. A series of directors have been replaced or sidelined: Tony Gilroy took over from Gareth Edwards on Rogue One, while Colin Trevorrow and director team Phil Lord and Chris Miller were replaced on The Rise of Skywalker and Solo: A Star Wars Story respectively. Disney CEO Bob Iger also admitted that Solo's disappointing box office results were partly due to "franchise fatigue", when the film was released only six months after The Last Jedi.

Since 2008, the 23 films that Feige has produced as part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe have grossed over \$22.5bn (£18.2bn) worldwide.

gining, Gemini, it is important to let the past go. You have been holding a grudge against a certain someone for a long time. They might not inhabit your conscious thoughts anymore, but deep down, they still have the power to affect you. Whether the person in question is an old friend, a lover or a parent, take this as a sign to free them and yourself.

Tip: Practice forgiveness.

CANCER: A lucky break could manifest in a number of ways. A new person in your life could be instrumental in bringing about this change. Even better, you could lock eyes with somebody special in the midst of your solo adventures. The Universe is in the mood to give, Cancer. For some, this is a time of turning an idea into viable business opportunities. Let expansion become your magic word.

Tip: Expect the unexpected.

LEO: Only you can decide who and what has power over you, Leo. And what doesn't is also in your control. Make your way out of the self-imposed prison today. Remember, it's not just about the other. Your own self-sabotaging patterns are playing out too. For instance, the

fear of being abandoned or rejected by the one you love.

Tip: Break out of the self-sabotaging patterns.

VIRGO: The fog has officially cleared. You now know where you stand as far as your relationships are concerned, and who you want to invest in as you move forward from here. Bask in that feeling of knowing that you have a close-knit circle which brings you joy and takes pride in watching you grow. Coupled Virgos thinking about bringing their own into the world, now is the perfect time to get started. Those who are blessed with children of their own, spend time with them today.

Tip: You are blessed with joy and clarity.

LIBRA: "Where is everybody going to and what's the rush anyway?," you wonder as you sip on your second cup of hibiscus tea. Your revelations this Saturday afternoon: taking long naps with your beloved is the equivalent of bliss. The thing about slowing down is that it also stimulates the right side of the brain. Traverse to the creative realms, Libra. You'll find that both poetry and prose flow easily today.

Tip: Get your Zen on!

BTS' J-Hope & Becky G Announce Surprise Collaboration, "Chicken Noodle Soup"

"Chicken Noodle Soup" has dropped, we repeat, "Chicken Noodle Soup" has dropped!

The old school, hip-hop track has gotten a modern makeover from BTS' J-Hope and American singer Becky G. As promised, the pair have reimagined the classic and given it a personal touch with respective lyrics in Korean and Spanish.

Big Hit Entertainment tweeted out a download link earlier for the collaboration track, which includes an MP3 link, the cover art, as well as the lyric sheet.

Becky G and J-Hope have also been tweeting at each other all day to drum up excitement for the track. Choice selects from their cute convo include J-Hope uploading a video of himself ladling — what else — chicken noodle soup, or "Caldo de Pollo" as J-Hope captioned it, and Becky G tweeting, "Chicken Noodle Soup" in Korean.

The secret's out: BTS' J-Hope and American singer Becky G are collaborating on a new single, to be released later today.

J-Hope announced the collaboration with Becky G on "Chicken Noodle Soup", a recreation of the popular



song by American musician, DJ Webstar and rapper Young B. In addition to the song, the pair will also be releasing a music video featuring themselves, and a dance crew of 50 from around the world.

According to The Korea Times, J-Hope wrote rap lyrics in Korean for the song,

while Becky G expressed her own lyrics in Spanish, giving the iconic hip-hop song an international feel.

"Chicken Noodle Soup" was reportedly the first song that J-Hope learned to dance to, and Becky G also fell for the song as a child — so this collaboration marks a full circle moment for both singers.

Star sons like me are spoilt brats: Parikshit Sahni

NEW DELHI, SEP 29 (PTI): It is difficult for star sons to replicate the success of their fathers as they are handed everything on a platter rather than go through the grind, says Parikshit Sahni, son of Bollywood legend Balraj Sahni. Parikshit Sahni, who was here in the capital recently to launch his new book "The Non-Conformist: Memories of my Father Balraj Sahni", said he himself belongs in that category of "spoilt brats".

"The simple reason that no star sons made it as big as their father in the industry is that they didn't go through that grind. Sunil Dutt, Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra... just look at their back-breaking journeys.

"Or read my father's autobiography and see what a hell of a grind he has gone through in his journey. That is what made them. They had seen both sides of the life," the actor said.

Star sons, on the other hand, had access to best of the schools and colleges, he said. "We were spoilt brats," Parikshit said during a conversation with actor Deepti Naval.

The 75-year-old actor said he did not have kind of passion for acting his father had. This is why he never blamed anyone for not giving him good roles.

On people doing comparisons between the two, Parikshit said his father was a "class apart" and those drawing parallels should know that while one is a "race-horse" the other is a "jack****".

"As they say in English, 'All comparisons are odious'. I have written in my book how much effort my father would put in his roles to make them look effortless, I never did that. I have never been a serious actor and have done the roles because they came to me," he added. The actor said he found success early in his career with hit movies like "Anokhi

Raat" and "Pavitra Paapi" but felt at home with the profession only when he started doing "character roles".

Parikshit Sahni said many of his famous character roles came to him because actors like "Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra and others recommended his name to directors" and successfully pursued them to give the role to him.

"Amitabh is responsible for getting me



good roles. He always canvassed for me and said 'Balraj ji ka beta hai isko le lo'. Same was the case with Dharmendra. The role that I did in 'Kala Patthar' was supposed to be done by Dharam ji. (But) he asked me to do it.

"Then in 'Desh Premee' again, there was some big shot who was supposed to do that role, I guess Shatrughan Sinha. But someone said 'Nahi Parikshit ko lo' (No no, take Parikshit). These were the character roles I enjoyed doing the most," he said.

Published by Penguin, the book, whose foreword has been written by megastar Amitabh Bachchan, gives an intimate glimpse into Balraj Sahni's life as a "man and an actor, as a husband and a friend, as a parent and a patriot".