



'IKIGAI' AUTHORS COME OUT WITH SEQUE
pg 08

COVID-19 COULD NUDGE MINDS AND SOCIETIES TOWARDS AUTHORITARIANISM
pg 04

RAKUL PREET SINGH MAKES IT INSTAGRAM OFFICIAL WITH JACKKY BHAGNANI ON HER BIRTHDAY
pg 08



Summit TIMES

Vol 06 | Issue 260 | Gangtok | Monday 11 October 2021

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | Rs. 5

Chamber of commerce for Bangladesh, NE India mooted

SUSHMITA GOSWAMI GUWAHATI, OCT 10 (PTI): In a bid to enhance trade between the north-east region of India and Bangladesh, business associations from both sides are working on setting up a chamber of commerce.

While chambers of commerce for increasing business relations between the two countries are already in existence, the need for a trade body comprising representatives from the northeastern states and the neighbouring country is being pitched, a source said.

Shah Mohammad Tanvir Monsur, the Assistant High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Guwahati, has been advocating enhanced trade relations between NE India and his country. "My office has always been lending all help and cooperation for improving trade relations between the two countries. We have been supportive of endeavours to bring the two neighbours closer," he told PTI.

"The North East region of India is quite far from the national capital, and when talks between India and Bangladesh are held on trade issues, problems related to the region are often not addressed, the source said.

The trade between the NE region and Bangladesh is still confined to traditional items such as limestone, coal and stone chips, he said, adding that there is an urgent need to expand the commodity basket.

"North-East India and Bangladesh have a natural advantage to increase trade ties as the NE region shares international boundary with the neighbouring country. But this advantage hasn't been exploited to its potential. That is why the proposal for forming a chamber of commerce especially for this region comes to the fore," the source said.

A preliminary discussion among traders from both sides has already been held, and since such a chamber of commerce would be a private body, there would not be much difficulty in forming it, he said. A directory of contact details of major exporters and importers of NE India and Bangladesh was published by a private body last year, and the initiative was applauded by the trading community, the source said.

Need for revisiting current models of development to accelerate growth as well as to ensure more productive relations between the two countries was also highlighted at a seminar on India-Bangladesh relations, with a focus on North East India, by the Indian Army here in September.

Light up with Bhawani Gurung's Batti!

SAGAR CHETTRI GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

Bhawani Shankar Gurung, a local entrepreneur, has announced plans to go for aggressive marketing of his LED bulb, 'Batti', in the State. Batti has thus far been available only to a limited audience in Rabongla and Gyalshing, and after having received positive feedback there, is expanding across the State.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Gurung informed that he has been tweaking the product for the past year and is now confident that the product was ready for a larger market. It helps that he also expanded his production capacity.

Mr Gurung shared that he plans to open outlets at different parts of the state to reach

a wider clientele and has appealed to the people to support a local businesses and support the 'Vocal for Local' concept in the true sense.

Mr Gurung hails from Rabongla in South District and conceived the idea to launch a locally-manufactured LED bulb during last year's lockdown. He refined his business plan and production line during the lockdown and shortly after transport restrictions were relaxed, he sourced the required material from Maharashtra.

In October last, he produced his first batch of one thousand units of Batti and circulated it among friends and family for feedback. It was back to the drawing board after that and he refined the product some more. He then

applied for and received ISO certification and released the product in Rabongla and Gyalshing.

Batti was officially launched by Chief Minister PS Tamang during a function in November last year.

Both the markets have taken well to Batti and now he is placing it at markets across the State.

"There is strong competition in the market so I have decided to open small outlets in different parts of the State by myself. This product is completely made in Sikkim so the people should support a local business," Mr Gurung expressed.

Batti currently has LED bulbs from 3 to 20 watts and an inverter bulb of 2200 MAH battery. The product comes with a warranty of two years.



Film and photo-book celebrate Khangchedzonga Landscape

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

Directorate of Khangchendzonga National Park/ Biosphere Reserve [KNP/ KBR] released a documentary film and photo-book on KNP on the final day of Wildlife Week Celebration on 08 October.

KNP is India's first UNESCO World Heritage Site in 'Mixed' criteria.

The video and photo-book were released by Forest Minister Karma Loday Bhutia at a special function also attended by Additional Chief Secretary/ PCCF, ML Srivastava, APCCF Pradeep Kumar, and senior officials of the department.

The documentary is 22 minutes long and the photo-book comprises 64 pages, both highlighting the salient natural and cultural significance



of the Khangchendzonga landscape. KNP is recognized as one of the world's widest altitudinal range, home to several rare and endangered species and harbors a fascinating assemblage of cultural elements of the ethnic groups.

The documentary

and the photo-book have been created under Dip & Draw Productions with Deependra Mohora as production manager, Dilip Rai is the editor and Basant Sharma handling content and direction responsibilities.

In his address, the Minister congratulated

the KNP/KBR Division for coming up with the two projects to make people aware about the natural and cultural heritage and treasures of KNP.

He the Department to come up with more such initiatives to disseminate information and generate awareness among a

wider audience.

Likewise, Additional CS/ PCCF assured to promote the documentary film on national and international arenas to highlight Sikkim's natural and cultural treasures. He also shared that more such initiatives will be undertaken.

Dussehra greetings from Chamling

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

Sikkim Democratic Front president, former Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, has expressed hope that Dussehra brings Sikkim and its people renewed hope and strength to move on.

In his weekly Facebook post, Mr Chamling conveys Dussehra greetings and recognizes that Sikkim is emerging from

a difficult two years of losses and trauma and shares his hope that the tide was changing.

"In Sikkim we have had Covid and several other reasons to suffer. We have come through two years of unprecedented pain, hardship and loss. I am hopeful that this Dussehra festival will help us to forget, to some extent, our pain - at least momentarily," he writes.

NHPC officially revives work on Stage-VI



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

Civil works of the Rs 1,251 crore Lot-II package awarded to Patel Engineering Limited to resuscitate Teesta Stage-VI hydel project officially began today.

The inaugural concreting in column foundation for the Transformer Cavern was poured in the presence of Executive Director, RO-Siliguri, NHPC Limited, who is also CEO of LTHPL.

The representatives of the executing agencies and project officials were also present during the occasion. PEL is in the process

of mobilization and the Contract is to be signed after furnishing of Performance Bank Guarantee, an NHPC press release informs.

Patel Engineering Ltd is also engaged in the Sevoke-Rangpo Railway Tunnel Project.

The Project was originally being developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle, Lanco Teesta Hydro Power Ltd (LTHPL), promoted by the Lanco Group, and after that ran into financial trouble, ended up with NHPC via the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) route.

Sikkim's record of days without Covid deaths grows, number of new cases shrinks

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

Sikkim's tally of confirmed cases of COVID-19 reached 31,667 on Sunday with 13 new cases reported in the State in the past 24 hours. These new cases were picked up from the screening of 292 samples giving Sikkim a daily test positivity rate of 4.4%. There were also no new Covid deaths in the State and Sikkim is now into its ninth day without any lives lost to the virus. What is more, there were no new hospitalizations in the past 24 hours and most of the Covid-positive people are well on their way to recovery under home or facility isolation.

As per the Daily Report of COVID-19 in Sikkim released by the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme of Health Department, while nine people tested positive in RT-PCR testing of 174 samples, four more

cases were detected in rapid antigen testing of 115 samples.

Of the 13 new cases, 06 were registered in East District, 05 in West District and 02 in South District.

In the meantime, the number of recovered Covid cases in Sikkim further improved to 30,694 with 23 people making full recoveries and getting discharge from home and facility isolation. Sikkim's current recovery rate stands at 97.9%.

Active cases of Covid-19 have also slightly dipped 268, of whom five patients are currently admitted in ICU facilities at STNM Hospital and Central Referral Hospital.

On the vaccination front, a total of 4,346 doses of Covishield were administered in the State on Saturday. Of these, 4,129 people completed their vaccination schedule with their second dose while 217 people received their first shot.

Active COVID-19 cases in country lowest in 208 days

NEW DELHI, OCT 10 (PTI): India logged 18,166 new coronavirus infections taking the country's total tally of COVID-19 cases to 3,39,53,475, while the active cases declined to 2,30,971, the lowest in 208 days, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Sunday.

The death toll climbed to 4,50,589 with 214 fresh fatalities, according to the data updated at 8 am.

The daily rise in new coronavirus infections has been below 30,000 for 16 straight days.

The active cases comprise 0.68 per cent of the total infections, the lowest since March 2020, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 97.99 per

cent, the highest since March 2020, the ministry said.

A decrease of 5,672 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

As many as 12,83,212 tests were conducted on Saturday taking the total cumulative tests conducted so far for detection of COVID-19 in the country to 58,25,95,693.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 1.42 per cent. It has been less than three per cent for last 41 days. The weekly positivity rate was recorded at 1.57 per cent. It has been below three per cent for the last 107 days, according to the ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated **turn to pg02**

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

Riverside property measuring 7,500 sq ft (approx) available for sale at Adampool near Ranipool, East Sikkim. Ideal plot to be developed for warehousing or any large establishment.

Interested parties may contact **7982379893** for further details.

Legal awareness and aid and health camp by DLSA at Jorethang

NAMCHI, 10 Oct [IPR]: The Taluk Legal Services Committee, Jorethang Sub Division, South Sikkim, as part of the Pan India Awareness and Outreach Campaign from 02 to 14 October on the occasion of "NALSA-Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav", TLISA-Jorethang, in co-ordination with the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, organized a Legal Awareness Programme including Legal Aid Clinic and Health Camp at CHC, Jorethang, and Jorethang Haat Bazar today.

The purpose of the programme conducted today was to generate information and awareness regarding the important provisions of Legal Service Authorities Act, 1987 and various Government welfare schemes/programmes and for providing Legal Assistance to the marginalized people.

The programme in CHC, Jorethang South Sikkim was held in the presence of the Ex-Officio Chairperson, Taluk Legal Services Committee, Jorethang Sub-Division, South Sikkim, Resource Persons, Ld. Panel Advocates, Mr. Vivek C. Rai and Ms. Prasuna Sharma, MO (i/c) Dr. Kanu Priya

Rai, Dr. Sajna Poudyal, MO (Resource Person), and attendees SI Samir Subba, ASI



B. B. Lohar from the Police Department, IRBN Ms. Sumitra Tamang, Para Legal Volunteer, staff members of DLSA, Namchi, South Sikkim and Staff members of the Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Jorethang Sub-Division, South Sikkim and Local people of Jorethang, South Sikkim. The programme was successful in spreading awareness to common

citizens about various Le-

gal Aid programmes, services, schemes and information about the Legal rights under the Mental Health Care Act, 2017

and NALSA (Legal Services to the Mentally Ill and Mentally Disabled Persons) Scheme 2015 and that Mental Illness is curable. Thereafter, stalls including Legal Aid Clinic and Health Camp were set

up at Jorethang Haat Bazar, South Sikkim on 10.10.2021 at

12 PM onwards.

The programme was held in the presence of the Ex-Officio Chairperson, Taluk Legal Services Committee, Jorethang Sub-Division, South Sikkim,

Resource Persons, Ld. Panel Advocates, Mr. Vivek C. Rai and Ms. Prasuna Sharma, MO (i/c) Dr. Kanu Priya Rai, Ms. Sumitra Tamang, Para Legal

Volunteer, staff members of DLSA, Namchi, South Sikkim and Staff members of the

Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Jorethang Sub-Division, South Sikkim and Local people of Jorethang, South Sikkim.

The Legal Aid Clinic was manned by Para Legal Volunteer, Ms. Sumitra Tamang who distributed pamphlets to the people relating to topics on general

Legal Awareness and information regarding emergence contact numbers for women in distress and mechanism of Alternate Dispute Redressal Resolution. The Health Camp was manned by MO (I/C) Dr. Kanu Priya Rai and Ms. Hari Maya Tamang (FWA) who informed the public of the importance of regular medical check-ups, checked their blood pressures, prescribed medicines and gave them appropriate medical advice.

There were around 43 people who visited the Legal Aid Clinic and 32 people who visited the Health Camp. They interacted with the representatives

of the Departments present, to address their problems and to procure appropriate advice and guidance and thus benefited from today's program

Press Release, Source: Taluk Legal Services Committee, Jorethang Sub-Division, South Sikkim.

Minister inspects fire damage in Mangan

MANGAN, 10 OCT: Roads & Bridges Minister, Samdup Lepcha, who also happens to be concerned area MLA, accompanied by SP North, APS to the CM, Chairpersons, Councilors and officers from the line departments visited the site of the fire in which a shop in Mangan was razed.

In his interactions

with the affected landlord and proprietor of the affected shop, the Minister assured assistance. He also instructed officials to properly inspect the damage and process immediate grant of ex-gratia. The Minister also provided assistance from his part and assured support to the victims from the government's side.

'They also said no Oxygen crisis': Delhi Minister slams Centre on coal

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT [NDTV]: Hours after the Centre's assurance that it has "sufficient" stocks to meet power sector demand, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia has accused it of turning a blind eye to the crisis at hand. Mr. Sisodia, drawing a parallel between the coal crisis and the oxygen shortage during the COVID-19 second wave peak in April-May this year, said, "When we had an oxygen crisis, they kept saying there was no such crisis."

"The coal situation is similar. We have a crisis today," he added.

Earlier in the day, Union Power Minister RK Singh said "a panic has been unnecessarily created about coal short-

age", adding the situation will be handled in the next few days. Mr. Singh also said that "sufficient power is available".

Mr. Sisodia termed the Union Minister's statement "irresponsible", at a time when "Chief Ministers across the country have been warning the Centre" about the impending blackouts due to coal stock situation.

Several states, including Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi and Tamil Nadu, have been raising concerns over blackouts. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, in a letter, urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to intervene so that coal and gas can be diverted to generating plants which supply electricity to the national capital.

Asked to drive slow near wedding, man runs over 5, kills 2: Haryana cops

CHANDIGARH, 10 OCT [NDTV]: Two people, including a woman, were killed after a man drove his car into five people at a wedding reception in Haryana's Karnal district on Sunday, the police said, after the accused was asked to drive responsibly because there was a function in the neighbourhood.

The incident took place in Karnal's Nilokheri area. While the woman died on the spot, another victim later succumbed to her injuries in the hospital.

Relatives of the woman who died said that the accused used to drive very fast in the neighbourhood and had been told to drive responsibly on that day as there were guests and children attending the event. Angered by this, the man ran over five people present there.

"We asked him today to drive carefully, but his father who was present there said he will drive as he wants. So he drove his car in reverse and ran over the victims," said Vijay Kumar, nephew of the victim woman.

Rinu, a resident of the neighbourhood, who identified the accused as Ajay of the same colony, also levelled allegations of rash-driving against him, adding that the incident happened when the victims were standing outside their house in the morning.

The police said a murder case has been registered against the main accused and his father.

"Two people died in the incident. The Superintendent of Police has formed five teams to apprehend the accused," said a police official.

Cycling and walking for mental health awareness

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), East Sikkim, organized a Cyclothon from Bujhary Zero Point to the District Court Complex at Sichey today.

This was followed by a Walkathon on mental health awareness at MG Marg in observance of the World Mental Health Day-2021 and also as part of the ongoing Pan India Awareness and Outreach campaign of NALSA and Sikkim SLISA, a press release informs.

The Cyclothon was flagged off by special guest Dr. Yudok Bhutia and was held in collaboration with the Bar Association of Sikkim (High Court and Subordinate Courts) and is part of the various activities of DLSA, East, in observance of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav".

The participants of Cyclothon included the

BAS President, Jorgay Namka, and law students from Sikkim Government Law College, Burtuk. This followed a series of activities of the DLSA (E), such as door-to-door campaign on legal rights, online webinars, legal awareness camps etc.

Law Student Dipendra Chettri (4th year) won the cyclothon while the runners up were Advocate Abhinav Kant Jha and Dipesh Sharma.

The prizes were distributed by Chairman, DLSA, Prajwal Khatiwada, and Secretary, DLSA, Zamyang Choden Bhutia.

Earlier, a table tennis tournament was also organized by DLSA (E) on 06 October as part of the above campaign at ADR Hall, Sichey Court. The winner in the table tennis tournament was Special Public Prosecutor (Vigilance), William Tamang, and the runners up was Advocate Tsewang Namgyal.

20 BPL families receive SGAY allotment orders at Amba GPU

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT: Twenty BPL families from Amba GPU of Rhenock constituency in East Sikkim received allotment orders for construction of houses under the Sikkim Garib Awas Yojana.

The Rhenock MLA handed over the allotment orders to the families. Each house is projected to cost Rs 17.51 lakh, informs an SKM press release issued the party's secretary [press & publicity], Ranjana Pradhan.

The release informs that the scheme follows from the Chief Minister's directive to provide

pucca houses to underprivileged families. A total of 3,050 houses were allotted in 2020, of which 80% have already been completed and work is underway on the remaining 20%, the release adds.

The release informs that after forming the government, the CM adopted Amba GPU under Rhenock constituency and announced pucca houses for 20 BPL families of the area under Sikkim Garib Awas Yojana. Where these homes were originally projected to be constructed for Rs 10 lakh each, the budget was later hiked to Rs 17.51 lakh.

Awareness prog addresses legal and mental health issues in Namchi

NAMCHI, 10 OCT [IPR]:

The District Legal Services Authority & Taluk Legal Services Committee, South, jointly conducted an awareness programme on the occasion of "Mental Health Day" today at the District Hospital, Namchi. An awareness programme at Haat Bazar Namchi was also organized with stalls of various Government Departments, including one for a Legal Aid Clinic.

Chairperson, District Legal Services Authority, ex-officio Chairperson, Taluk Legal Services Committee, South at Namchi, Panel Advocate Anjan Sharma, Health Department Chief Medical Officer Dr. DC Sharma, District Nodal Officer-cum-District Surveillance Dr. Ugen Sherpa, Senior Psychiatrist Dr. Bishnu Sharma, along with the staff of District Legal Services Authority and Taluk Legal Services Committee, South at Namchi, participated in the said programme.

Resource person Jiwani Kumar Kharka, Chairperson, DLSA (South), informed the public about legal rights under the Mental Health Care Act, 2017, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, Sikkim Anti Drugs Act (SADA) Act, 2016 and NALSA (Legal Services to the Victims of Drug Abuse and the Eradication of Drug Menace) 2015 and NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services to Children and their Protection) Scheme, 2015.

Further, the public were also told that if they have any further queries or problems they are free to contact the District Legal Services Authority or the Taluk Legal Services Committee, South District and they were also informed about the help line (Toll Free) number



18003453362 of DLSA/TLSC.

Thereafter, resource person Jwala D. Thapa, Ex-Officio Chairperson, Taluk Legal Services Committee, South Sikkim at Namchi, informed the public in brief about the NALSA (Legal Services to the Mentally Ill and Mentally Disabled Person) Scheme, 2015.

The gathering was also informed about the intervention scheme under National Legal Services Authority. She also spoke of how the DLSA and the District Hospital work together in providing medical facilities and mental health services to inmates in the Jail and Juvenile Observation Homes and in villages through Health Camps.

They were also apprised about the Free Legal Aid Services provided by the SSLSA, DLSA and TLSC.

Thereafter, Panel Advocate Anjan Sharma explained the amendment to the Mental Health Act, Lok Adalat, Mediation and free legal services u/s 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. He also spoke in brief about the misuse of the social media which impact the mental health.

Thereafter, Dr. Ugen Sherpa, District Nodal Officer-cum-District Surveillance, spoke about the Ayushman Bharat Scheme which is a National Health Policy Scheme started by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India which has also made Mental Health

a major focus. Under this programme, health workers including doctors, nurses and counsellors have been trained in mental health issues. They have also been given a smart phone with a dedicated SIM to facilitate the aid of mental health patients at the level of community health sub-centres.

He also informed that as of now, 100% targets for appointment of trained personnel has been achieved in Sikkim and the focus has been solely on infrastructure development to fully implement the spirit of the Scheme by 2025.

Thereafter, Dr. Bishnu Sharma, Senior Psychiatrist, spoke about this year's theme i.e. "Mental Health in an unequal world" which was inspired by the COVID-19 Pandemic and its effect on not only the physical health of the general populace but also the mental health. He pointed out that the uncertainties and the economic crises brought about by the Pandemic resulted in an increase in mental health cases, especially depression, anxiety and feelings of resignation from life. He also spoke of the effects on mental health of school going children due to the shut downs of schools and the mental pressure on parents, especially mothers and the general effect on family life. He also spoke of how the Indian Psychiatric Association is looking into the post COVID period which could be a period of a mental health pandemic.

Active COVID-19 cases...

from the disease surged to 3,32,71,915, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.33 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 94.70 crore.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19.

India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 and three crore on June 23.

The 214 new fatalities include 101 from Kerala, and 44 from Maharashtra.

A total of 4,50,589 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,39,514 from Maharashtra, 37,875 from Karnataka, 35,768 from Tamil Nadu, 26,173 from Kerala, 25,088 from Delhi, 22,896 from Uttar Pradesh and 18,894 from West Bengal.

The ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

AFFIDAVIT: I Service No. 5850760P Rank HAV Dhan Bahadur Chhetri s/o Late Bom Bahadur Chhetri, a resident of Pakyong Dugalakha, P.O. & P.S. Pakyong, East District, Sikkim do hereby affirm that Smt. Puspa Devi Dawari is my wife but in some of her relevant documents and in my service records her name/ surname has been recorded as "Puspa Devi Chhetri" and that in her Aadhar Card and in her Voter ID Card her name/surname has been mentioned as "Puspa Devi Dawari". That before marriage my wife's surname was "Chhetri" and after marriage her surname changed to "Dawari Chhetri". That "Smt Puspa Devi Dawari" & "Smt Puspa Devi Chhetri" are one and same identical person vide affidavit no A 192982 before LD Oath Commissioner, Gangtok, Sikkim on 30.09.2021.

ANTHEYESTI KRIYA

The Antheyesti Kriya of Late Dhanapati Kharel, who left for his heavenly abode on 30th September, 2021, falls on 12 October, 2021. We invite all friends, family and well-wishers to join us in prayers [13th day rites] for the departed soul at our residence in Rawtey Rumtek. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us in our time of bereavement.



Dr M P Kharel, H P Kharel, Prakash Kharel (sons)
Kamala Devi Kharel, Tulashi Kharel, Indira Kharel, Sangita Kharel (daughters)
Bimala Kharel, Hima Kharel, Rajani Ratna Pandey (daughter in law)
Dr Hari Krishna Shiwakoti, D N Sharma, D R Thapa (son in law)
Vinod Kharel, Sunny Kharel (grandsons)
And entire Kharel Family.
Contact: 8918237123, 9434241044, 9434164765

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

email us: news@summittimes.com

Inter-BAC football for U-19's begins

NAMCHI, 10 OCT [IPR]: Inter-BAC Under-16 boys and girls football tournament, organized by the Department of Sports and Youth Affairs, began at Temi Senior Secondary School ground and Jorethang Playground simultaneously today.

Pool-one matches were played at Temi Senior Secondary School and Pool-two at Jorethang Playground.

At Jorethang playground, the first girls match was played between Poklok Nandugooan sporting club and Sikkim Sporting Club which the former won. The second match was played between Namthang Sporting Club and Sumbuk Sporting Club and won by Namthang Sporting Club 2-0.



Similarly, in the boys

category, the first match was played between Sumbuk Sporting Club and Namthang Sport-

ing Club which Sumbuk SC won 4-0. The second match was played between Sikkim Sporting

Club and Poklok Nandugooan Sporting Club which Nandugooan Sporting Club won.

Taiwan will not bow down to China, says president

TAIPEI, 10 OCT [AL-JAZEERA]: Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen says her government will not bow down to pressure from China and will continue to bolster the island's defences in order to protect its democratic way of life.

Tsai's strong riposte on Sunday comes a day after Chinese President Xi Jinping promised once again to realise "peaceful reunification" with the self-ruled territory.

Claimed by China as its own territory, Taiwan has come under growing military and political pressure to accept Beijing's rule.

This includes repeated Chinese air force incursions into Taiwan's air defence identification zone. During the first week of October alone, Beijing sent some 149 military planes near the island, forcing Taiwan to scramble its fighter jets and sparking international concern.

Addressing a rally held to mark Taiwan's National Day in central Taipei, Tsai said she hoped for an easing of tensions across the Taiwan Strait.

She said her government will not "act rashly", but said "there should be absolutely no illusions that the Taiwanese people will bow to pressure".

Taiwan will "continue to bolster our national defence and demonstrate our determination to defend ourselves in order to ensure that nobody can force Taiwan to take the path China has laid out for us," she said in the speech outside the presidential office.

"This is because the path that China has laid out offers neither a free and democratic way of life for Taiwan, nor sovereignty for our 23 million people."

Known formally as the Republic of China (ROC), Taiwan is a democratically governed island that lies about 161 kilometres (100 miles) off the coast of mainland China.

The two sides have been ruled separately since the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, when the communists founded the People's Republic of China in Beijing and the defeated nationalists fled to Taiwan and established a government there.

Sikkim ENVIS dedicates week to AkAM

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

Sikkim ENVIS Hub at Forest and Environment Department today concluded a week-long [04-10 Oct] dedicated to events organized as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

The weeklong event was launched at Forest Secretariat on 02 October with a signature campaign on green pledges followed by a clean-up drive, a press release informs.

A special online session for capacity building of 100 Green Teachers and eco-club in-charges was organized on 05 October in collaboration with Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi.

The webinar provided green teachers with updated information on all aspects of plastics with a special focus on single-use plastics. It also facilitated an understanding on the scale of the problem of plastic



waste, especially single-use plastics, and helped teachers take these learnings to their classrooms. Teachers were provided with presentations and tool kits.

An online interactive online quiz amongst school eco-clubs was also held in which Namcheybong SS, Kaluk SSS and Pelling SSS secured first, second and third position respectively.

The Green teachers then conducted awareness drives for students and staff on the ill effects of single use plastics

and undertook various activities on its alternative measures. The school eco-clubs further extended the campaign at homes and neighborhood through propagation of Green Good Deeds focusing on waste management, water conservation, wildlife conservation and practice of 3 'R's - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

Eco-clubs across the state conducted clean up drives and pick up drives of plastic litters. Lectures, poster making, essay writing, drawings

and painting competitive events were organized by several school eco-clubs.

An online green pledge campaign was conducted weeklong in which over 50,000 responses from students and teachers from the state were recorded. Several schools also administered green pledges in physical presence of students and staff. The iconic week celebration culminated on Sunday with clean up drives by Eco-Club volunteers at school's neighborhood.

World Cup roundup: Denmark thrash Moldova to keep up perfect record

COPENHAGEN, 10 OCT [AFP]: Denmark maintained their 100% record in Group F, with a 4-0 win in Moldova. Andreas Skov Olsen opened the scoring before Simon Kjær added a penalty. Christian Norgaard and Joakim Mæhle were also on target. Austria won 2-0 in the Faroe Islands to keep up their slim hopes of overtaking Scotland, who beat Israel 3-2 in a Hampden Park thriller.

First-half goals from Andriy Yarmolenko and Roman Yarenychuk gave Ukraine a 2-1 win over Finland in Group D. The West Ham forward Yarmolenko put the visitors ahead less than five minutes after kick-off when he drove home from 20 yards past the Finnish goalkeeper. Norwich City's Teemu Pukki levelled for Finland in the 29th minute but Ukraine regained the lead minutes later with a goal from Yarenychuk.

Scotland players celebrate Scott McTominay's late winner.

France lead the group by four points from Ukraine, but Bosnia-Herzegovina - 2-0 victors in Kazakhstan - are two points worse off with a game in hand.

Poland thrashed San Marino 5-0 in their



Group I World Cup qualifier as Paulo Sousa's side remain one point behind second-placed Albania, who defeated Hungary 1-0 in Budapest thanks to Armando Broja's goal 10 minutes from time. England stay top of the group after strolling to a 5-0 win in Andorra.

Serbia boosted their hopes of reaching the finals after a moment of individual skill from striker Dusan Vlahovic gave them a barely deserved 1-0 win at Luxembourg in a turgid Group A qualifier. The Republic of Ireland won 3-0 in Azerbaijan in the group's other game.

Alexander Isak scored a world-class goal to add

to an Emil Forsberg penalty and a superb solo effort by Robin Quaison as Sweden cruised to a 3-0 win over Kosovo in Group B while Greece stay in the hunt thanks to a 2-0 win in Georgia.

Lithuania saw off Group C opponent Bulgaria 3-1 while Northern Ireland's hopes are all but over following their 2-0 defeat in Switzerland.

In African qualifying, Morocco and Senegal moved to within one victory of advancing to the last phase of African World Cup qualifying after wins on Saturday put them in commanding positions in their qualifying groups.

Morocco beat Guinea Bissau 3-0 in Casablanca to open up a five-point lead in Group I and will secure top place if they beat Guinea in Rabat on Tuesday. Sadio Mané was among the scorers as Senegal beat their closest challengers, Namibia, 4-1 in Group H and if they do the same in the reverse fixture on Tuesday will also be assured of winning the group.

But the expected battle for supremacy in Group G remained tight at the halfway stage after South Africa won away in Ethiopia to keep one point ahead of Ghana, who were home victors over Zimbabwe.

Uber Cup: Saina Nehwal retires with injury against Spain

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT: In the opening clash of the tie between Spain and India, India's lead women's singles player at the Uber Cup, Saina Nehwal was forced to retire from her opening match against Clara Azurmendi when she felt a sudden pain in her groin at the Ceres Arena in Aarhus on Sunday. Before retiring from the match, the Indian narrowly lost the opening game 20-22 to the world no 58 Azurmendi. With that, Saina was then unable to continue the second game.

"There was a certain catch in my groin. I was surprised at how it happened," Saina said as per

Olympics.com.

"I was trying to get back my rhythm and I couldn't get it and I had to give it up because it was hurting when I was taking long lunges," she added.

Asked what this means for the rest of the tournament, the 31-year-old replied, "I think let us see the next three, four days, how it is. There are two more matches, so I just want to see how it goes. I don't want to take any sudden decision at the moment because my body feels good but this groin issue has to go."

An Olympic bronze medalist, Saina Nehwal has been struggling on

the court to deliver results in the last two years and even missed the cut for Tokyo 2020.

Saina Nehwal last won a tournament in 2019, when she beat Spain's Olympic champion, Carolina Marin, in the final of the Indonesia Masters.

Since May 2019, Saina Nehwal has competed in 20 tournaments and fallen in the opening round 14 times and exited in the second round twice.

Saina Nehwal last competed at the Orleans Masters in March, making it to the semi-finals, her first since the 2019 Indonesian Masters.

Priti Patel's fury as Johnson blocks public sexual harassment law

MARK TOWNSEND

LONDON, 10 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: Boris Johnson has infuriated the home secretary by overruling attempts to make public sexual harassment a crime. This has prompted concern at the Home Office that the prime minister views the issue as mere "wolf whistling", rather than the aggressive targeting of women and girls going about their daily lives.

Sources say tensions have emerged between Johnson and Priti Patel, and other senior Home Office figures, after he blocked plans to make public sexual harassment a specific offence.

Patel's consultation on tackling violence against women and girls, drew feedback from 180,000 contributors - the majority sent after the murder of Sarah Everard in March - with many respondents complaining of being hassled on a daily basis.

Johnson announced last week that he did not support any new law on tackling violence against women, claiming there is "abundant" existing legislation. This caused disquiet throughout the Home Office.

Sources believe the prime minister has completely misjudged the public mood following the murders of Everard and, more recently, Sabina Nessa, both attacked while walking in the capital.

A senior Home Office source, who requested anonymity, said: "Trying to bring it down to wolf whistling is massively problematic. But we're going to make this happen. People are prepared to put their political capital behind this, and the home secretary is among those very much behind it."

Another source said the prime minister seemed not to understand the issue: "Make no mistake, Boris Johnson is the person blocking and holding this back. He seems to be stuck in the past on this issue."

A survey earlier this year revealed that more than half of women said they had suffered sexual harassment on public transport in London. The most common offence, experienced by more than a third of respondents, was being deliberately pressed up against by a stranger. The research, by YouGov, suggested that tens of thousands of incidents on buses and the Tube go unreported.

The issue of crimes against women has come under fierce scrutiny since Everard's kidnap, rape and murder by serving Metropolitan police officer Wayne Couzens.

Despite Johnson's words, Home Office officials are understood to be conducting a legal review into making pub-

lic sexual harassment - which covers all behaviour that could make women uncomfortable in all public spaces - a crime in its own right. Patel's strategy to tackle violence against women and girls, published in July, states: "We are looking carefully at where there may be gaps in existing law and how a specific offence for public sexual harassment could address those."

Indecent exposure was made a sexual crime almost 20 years ago, although as the case of Couzens underlined, such incidents, even when reported to the police, are often not taken seriously.

Georgina Laming, campaigns manager at children's rights charity Plan International UK, said: "This year, tens of thousands of women and girls have told the Home Office about their experiences of harassment and violence. Girls as young as 10 are being harassed, followed and touched, and millions of them are forced to change the way they live their lives because of it."

"Public sexual harassment is relentless, and it needs to stop. The Home Office recognised that there are real gaps in legislation, which means girls aren't protected from these behaviours by existing laws."

Other influential supporters of making public harassment an offence include Victoria Atkins, the former safeguarding minister, who last month became justice minister, and Caroline Nokes, chair of the women and equalities committee.

Justifying his reasoning last week, Johnson said changing the law would mean more work for the police.

However, Sophie Linden, deputy mayor for crime and policing in London, told the Observer that making such behaviour an offence was important to making the streets safer for women and girls. "We've been lobbying very hard on a number of fronts," she said, "including making sexual harassment a criminal offence in and of itself, which will make a difference to women and girls walking around."

Women's groups are also keen to underline harassment as an intersectional issue, also related to racism. Laming at Plan International said: "Our data shows that an overwhelming majority of girls of colour have experienced public sexual harassment, with one in six saying the harassment they face was also linked to their race. Public sexual harassment is serious, and when girls are approached in public spaces they are subject to threatening, violent and sexually explicit behaviour."

For the first time ever
the story of Kalimpong and the
Gorkhaland Revolution
of the 1980s

Chuden Kabimo's
Song of the Soil

translated from the Nepali by
Ajit Baral

co-published by
Rachna Books, India & FinePrint, Nepal

ISBN : 978-81-89602-15-4 Rs.399/-
rachnabooks.com
mail@rachnabooks.com

Good Rules Need Better Implementation

Regulations are required, but try building confidence first

It has now been four years since the government announced speed-limits for Sikkim roads. You don't remember, do you? You are not alone in the lapse of memory because even truck-drivers tear through Gangtok roads and the highways without any apparent knowledge of the same.

That said, the move was welcome most would say while adding that good rules need better implementation to be of any consequence. Knowing Sikkim though, this regulation too was only superficially thought out, and even when and if implemented is done so only for nuisance value for some time and then forgotten. To begin with, how were speed-limits to be checked everywhere, and how was the breaking of speed limits to be penalized? What were the traffic cops on the prowl to check more diligently against, unauthorized/ irresponsible parking, dangerous driving or over-speeding? Does the speed regulation apply to all vehicles? Couldn't be, because parking rules don't appear to be universally applicable and VIPs treated to empty slots kept empty in anticipation of their arrival even in areas like MG Marg where private citizens often whistled away.

One wonders why the speed limit was formalized. Again, most people would think that it was to make the roads safer. But, if it is only the private citizens who need to observe the speed limits while the VIPs and their officers can ignore it, then one would be forced to surmise that private vehicles are being intentionally slowed down so that those who consider themselves "very important" can travel even faster. If that is not the case, then ensure that the speed regulation is extended to every vehicle on the roads. And this brings one back to the need for improved implementation to ensure that well intentioned moves deliver on their promise.

Some years ago, the Motor Vehicle Rules were marked for an amendment to deliver a stronger commitment to making vehicular traffic safer in Sikkim. The proposed amendment required a driver to produce a driving license issued from hill regions or procure such a special permit from Sikkim before being allowed to ferry passengers as a taxi driver in the State. The idea was sound. At one level it ensured that those hired as taxi drivers in Sikkim were tried hands on hill roads and not landing jobs despite suspect driving skills only because they have managed to buy a driving license elsewhere. The requirement to get these permits renewed and the powers given to the licensing authorities here to verify the antecedents of the applicants ensured that drivers took their jobs more seriously and the authorities have a paper trail to follow in case someone absconds after a mishap (a common response). One wonders where this rule sits nowadays because it sure does not appear to be in practical practice. Agreed, this one was complicated and presented many genuine complications, but in the many years that have passed, these could have been ironed out to guarantee that drivers of passenger vehicles in Sikkim had tested driving skills. That is a substantial assurance to receive for passengers nowadays.

The point being reiterated is that 'good rules' need good implementation to deliver 'good results.' After all, there is no dearth of either good rules or good intentions in the country, but it is in the delivery that everything goes wrong. The more stringent stipulations to keep the roads safe are welcome, but almost immediately raise the fear of more complicated red tape, more powerful officials, more dugdi. In fact, it would not be a bad idea to first win back the trust of the people before issuing any more rules. There is too much disconnect nowadays between the janta and their janardhans, too much distrust. Let's work at repair this faith first.

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

COVID-19 could nudge minds and societies towards authoritarianism

LEOR ZMIGROD
theconversation.com

It is a little-known fact that humans have not one but two immune systems. The first, the biophysical immune system – the one we've all heard much about – responds to infections as they enter the body, detecting and eliminating intruders such as the coronavirus.

The second is the behavioural immune system, which adapts our behaviour to preemptively avoid potentially infectious people, places and things. The behavioural immune system is the first line of defence against infectious disease. It prompts people to socially conform with known traditions and to avoid foreign, dissimilar and potentially infectious groups.

In a recently published study, my colleagues and I at the University of Cambridge examined the impact of the behavioural immune system on our attitudes towards obedience and authority. We found that high rates of infectious diseases – and the disease-avoidance they promote – may fundamentally shape political opinions and social institutions.

INFECTION DRIVES AUTHORITARIANISM

We collected data from over 250,000 people across 47 countries and looked at the relationship between the (pre-COVID) infection risk where they lived and their authoritarian attitudes – the degree to which they endorsed conformity and obedience to authority.

We were curious as to whether high risk of infection would activate the behavioural immune system in ways that promoted authoritarian beliefs. We made sure to measure authoritarianism in a politically neutral way, to avoid our results reflecting people's religious beliefs or commitments to certain political parties.

We found a clear relationship between people's authoritarian attitudes and their region's levels of infectious diseases: areas with a higher prevalence of infectious diseases had more authoritarian citizens. Additionally, areas with high infection rates tended to vote conservatively and were governed by more authoritarian laws – laws that are imposed on some members of society but not all.

Examples of authoritarian laws include legal restrictions surrounding LGBT civil liberties or extreme criminal punishment. Infection rates were specifically related to these "vertical" hierarchical laws, and not to "horizontal" laws that affect all citizens equally – suggesting rates of infectious disease uniquely affect people's preferences for hierarchical power structures.

Strikingly, the pattern of results was consistent when comparing the 47 countries as well as US states and US metropolitan regions and cities. These effects persisted even after accounting for

regional demographic variables such as educational attainment, wealth and inequalities, suggesting direct and significant relationships between infectious diseases and authoritarian beliefs and behaviours.

We further discovered that the relationship between infection rates and authoritarianism was specific to infections that can be acquired from other humans, such as measles or cholera. The effect was absent for infectious diseases that can

and an aversion to threat.

Indeed, COVID-19 has brought about a global wave of authoritarian policies that have justified the tightening of national borders and limitations of everyday rights. In our study, we found that even historical infection rates from decades earlier predict what citizens believe, who they vote for and how they are governed today. Pandemics may have long-lasting and profound ramifications for politics.

However, while our instincts to avoid infection



only be acquired from nonhuman species, such as rabies or Lyme disease.

These results support the idea that there is a social and behavioural mechanism connecting infection risk and authoritarianism. A high prevalence of human-to-human infections appears to lead to conformist and obedient social arrangements that potentially reduce the risk of people being infected by those who do not conform or resemble the majority. Social diseases like COVID-19 may therefore sculpt social ideologies and institutions.

HOW TO OVERCOME COVID'S INFLUENCE

In the COVID-19 era, we have all been living with overactivated behavioural immune systems. We have changed how we socialise and relate to other people; who we allow to enter our countries; and how we calculate the balance between personal freedom and collective safety.

What does this mean for our political futures? Will the fear of COVID-19 push us towards living in more authoritarian societies? How do we restore a psychological balance – and a preference for political anti-authoritarianism – without endangering ourselves and others?

The first inevitable step is to decrease real infection risks. Without a reduction in real health risks through effective vaccination programmes and health policies, our all-too-human bodies will naturally tend towards defensiveness, conformity

are inbuilt – the behavioural immune system has been documented in species as varied as mice, frogs and chimpanzees – humans are endowed with magnificent mental capacities to overcome biases and flexibly adapt to change. If it is our highly evolved imagination that facilitates the behavioural immune system, then it is also our rich and compassionate imagination that can pull us out of its toxic side-effects.

Safe contact with those who we are instructed to avoid – even imaginary, intellectual or virtual contact, through film or literature or news or friends – is a powerful antidote to the xenophobia that can emerge when we fear infection. These forms of nonphysical touch can remind us of all we have in common and all we can lose if we shun contact and care.

Perhaps the way forward lies in adopting anti-authoritarian stances that champion openness, inclusion and scientific reasoning rather than mythical, ideological or conspiratorial thinking. Overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic and the contagious divisions within our politics may thus be intertwined tasks. The health of society – the collective "body politic" – requires the health and resilience of our bodies and minds. Immunity is fundamentally political.

[the writer is Research Fellow in the Psychology of Ideologies, University of Cambridge]

Supply chains can easily break – here's how they can be made more resilient to prevent shortages

TOM STACEY & YING XIE
theconversation.com

Supply chains are essential to everyday life, bringing materials to factories, food to your plate, and fuel to your car.

The links in those chains – the manufacturers, logistics companies, warehouses and retailers – combine to form dynamic systems driven by customer demand. But a small, unpredictable change in demand can have major ramifications, as seen with the recent queues and rising tempers at petrol stations in the UK. This is because modern supply chains are not designed to cope with large levels of uncertainty around time, supply or demand. Instead, businesses have focused on developing operations which reduce costs

But a cheaper supply chain often means a weaker supply chain. And problems arise when lean systems lack resilience and flexibility.

This was perfectly illustrated by the disruption to the fuel supply chain in the UK which started in the distribution of supplies to petrol stations. Then the temporary closure of some forecourts triggered widespread stockpiling and panic buying. This, in turn, created a surge in demand for fuel, exacerbating the original disruption.

There have been warnings that a similar situation could arise with supplies in the coming months – for everything from food and toys to Christmas trees. And it will take more than a few thousand extra lorry driv-

ers to truly strengthen these supply chains.

That said, more lorry drivers would be a good place to start. The UK currently needs at least 90,000 people driving HGVs, a shortage which leads to longer waiting times at ports, more congestion, and more frequently empty shelves.

But the government's plan for 5,000 three-month visas for European drivers is not going to make a huge difference (and might not even attract any, given that Europe itself needs another 400,000). Current applications to the scheme are said to total 27.

Longer lasting visas would probably be more attractive to some foreign drivers, and allow them to get familiar with the road networks in the UK, and make appropriate personal arrangements. The next step to addressing the long standing shortage would be to look at improving working conditions, reviewing pay levels and even tax incentives.

A LONG ROAD

Beyond driving vehicles, there are about 2.5 million people working in haulage and logistics in the UK, covering road, rail, air and water. And while that sounds like a lot, it has been estimated that around 840,000 additional workers are needed in the sector to manage growing demand.

The logistic sector has a reputation for being low paid and harsh with long hours and poor working environments. Improving that reputation would attract more young people, as would more apprenticeships

and better training.

In the long term, major infrastructure changes are needed, with improvements to ports, road, rail and inland waterways. One freight train removes 43 to 76 lorries from the roads, and one freight barge can remove about 24.

But using these alternatives is restricted by a lack of network and capacity. The new high speed railway linking up London, the Midlands, the North and Scotland (HS2) will free up additional capacity on the existing railway network, to allow more freight trains to be run.

Higher efficiency and effectiveness in operation is also necessary, through consolidating consignments into fewer shipments to reduce cost, to reduce the number of lorries in road, to reduce damage risk, and to improve quality control.

The whole sector needs to improve its use of digital technology to automate processes and improve efficiency and productivity while reducing reliance on labour. This would make the whole industry more resilient and dynamic, and not as exposed to the effects of staff shortages.

Reliance on fragile global supply chains can be somewhat re-balanced by investing in localised production and diversification of supply. This could involve firing up an old coal power plant (albeit this is at odds with climate goals) to meet the electricity needs in the UK temporarily, or investing in domestic production of controlled environment vegetable crops (currently 69% of fresh vegeta-

bles are imported from Spain and the Netherlands). This would reduce the UK's dependence on "risky" overseas sources of energy, food and pharmaceuticals, and transporting less food would mean fewer emissions and longer shelf life.

Away from the industrial side of things, that key element of the supply chain – the customers – need to be mindful of the way they consume goods. They need to shop responsibly and sensibly, so that the links they depend on are not put under too much strain.

If consumers get a sense that there are shortages, then panic buying ensues as it did with toilet rolls and petrol, and this causes repercussions down the supply chain. Politicians and industry leaders are often at pains to get across the message that there is enough to go round – and usually there is.

Only by taking a broader approach to improving the supply chain and logistics industry will we be able to ensure that it is fit for purpose – and that global, or even national events do not cause shortages in shops or at fuel pumps. This means an approach supported by the industry and governments working together, but also by consumers, who will need to manage their own actions and expectations.

[Tom Stacey is Senior Lecturer in Operations and Supply Chain Management, Anglia Ruskin University; Ying Xie is Professor in Supply Chain Management, Anglia Ruskin University]

Ladakh records one new COVID-19 case, 6 patients cured

LEH, OCT 10 (PTI): One fresh COVID-19 case was detected in Ladakh, taking the virus tally to 20,848 while the active cases in the Union territory dropped to 55 after six patients recovered, officials said on Sunday.

Ladakh has registered 208 COVID-related deaths -- 150 in Leh and 58 in Kargil -- since the outbreak of the pandemic last year.

The officials said 2,520 people were tested for COVID-19 in the twin districts on Saturday and one person was found positive in Leh.

Six coronavirus patients were cured and discharged from a hospital in Leh that took the number of recoveries in Ladakh to 20,586, they said. The officials said no death was reported due to coronavirus in Ladakh on Saturday.

Wild elephant tramples woman to death in Assam

GUWAHATI, OCT 10 (PTI): A woman was trampled to death by a wild elephant in Assam's Golaghat district, a Forest and Environment Department release said here.

According to reports, the incident took place when the woman identified as Jyoti Tanti was on her way to take bath in river Dhansiri at 6 am on Saturday when the wild elephant attacked her at Bahbariline under Bokial beat of Golaghat Forest Range killing her on the spot, the release said.

Her body was recovered by police and forest personnel who sent it to SKK Civil Hospital, Golaghat for post mortem.

Assistant Conservator of Forest, in charge of Golaghat Range has been asked to collect documents of the deceased to start the process for sanction of ex-gratia, it added.

visit us at:
www.summit-times.com

Bengal's tourism industry eyes revival this Durga Puja

AMITAVA ROY

KOLKATA, OCT 10 (PTI): In a leg-up to the COVID-battered tourism industry in West Bengal, bookings for the Durga Puja festive season have surged beyond expectations, tour operators said.

According to industry sources, bookings for trips during Durga Puja are in full swing amid fears of a possible third wave of the pandemic.

"Many people are mixing travel with family get-togethers at exotic locations, having missed out on meeting each other for a long time owing to the restrictions," Anil Punjabi, the eastern region chairman of the Travel Agents Federation of India, said.

"This time, the response and bookings are much more than our expectations. We are getting a very good response. If you compare it with pre-COVID times, for example, 2019, the revival is around 60 per cent. We hope it will grow further in days to come," he told PTI.

Raj Basu, convenor of the Association for Conservation of Tourism, said keeping in mind COVID safety norms, many travellers this time are more interested in quieter destinations.

"People are preferring to stay at one place for at least three to four days instead of hopping in and out of several tourist attractions," he said.

Basu said that the tourist response to four districts of north Bengal - Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri is "extraordinary"



for the festival season.

"Most village tourism destinations like Sittong, Tagdah, Tinchuley, Pedong are totally booked for the Durga Puja, and bookings have also started for Diwali and Christmas holidays," he said.

Basu said that if the trend continues, the tourism industry would be assured of a turnaround from the lull it faced since March 2020, when the nationwide lockdown was announced.

As the village destinations are getting priority among the travellers for health safety reasons, there is now a crisis of homestays and resorts in

these places, he said.

With Northeastern states such as Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim also opening up, tourists from far-off states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Karnataka are showing interest in travelling to these places, Basu said.

"This will benefit the north Bengal destinations also as tourists are interested in the Darjeeling and Kalimpong hills and the lush green forests and tea gardens of Terai and Dooars," he said.

Basu said that health safety awareness campaigns conducted in the villages earlier had worked immensely with

owners of even the remotest homestays asking prospective tourists whether they have received double vaccination.

Punjabi said that during the festive season earlier, the ratio used to be 65 per cent international destinations and 35 per cent domestic, but at present, the domestic sector is attracting around 85 to 90 per cent of travellers.

"The drop in international travel is owing to limited destinations having opened up and apprehension that they may get stuck over there," he said.

The unexpected response to domestic tourism could

also be attributed to many tourists opting for driving to destinations in cars or two-wheelers instead of availing public transport, he said.

Punjabi said that with a large percentage of people vaccinated and the travel industry sticking to safety protocol, tourist movement has started increasing rapidly.

He said that families are using this opportunity to use tourism as a means of a get-together also. "Like someone is in Mumbai, and another is in Kolkata, they are travelling to Dehradun or some other destination," he said.

This is mostly happen-

ing in Kashmir and Ladakh region, where such family get-togethers are being done along with enjoying in the exotic locales, he said.

Shaukat, a travel agent from Srinagar who recently attended a travel trade fair here, said that though the numbers are yet to reach the pre-COVID era, things are fast getting back to normal with tourists flocking back to the destinations in Kashmir.

Rakesh Dubey, another tour operator, based in Jammu, said that the Ladakh and Nubra valley destinations are a big draw and people are really excited to visit these places.

Punjabi said that everyone will benefit further after the international destinations open up and the economy gets better.

"I hope that if there is no more surge of COVID cases, things will get even better by the day. Once the international travel opens up fully, the industry will be back in business," he said.

According to businessman Soumik Chakraborty, after 2019, this will be the first time his family will be travelling to Darjeeling for a week-long trip.

"Travelling to various destinations during Puja has been an old practice in our family, but we could not do so last year due to the COVID situation. But this year, our entire family is fully vaccinated, and we will be travelling in our car," he said.

New generation Bajaj Pulsar launch date confirmed

NEW DELHI, 10 OCT [NDTV]: Bajaj Auto is all set to introduce the next generation Pulsar in the country, and the bike maker has confirmed that the model will arrive on October 28, 2021.

The Bajaj Pulsar traces its origins to 2001 when the first models rolled out of the factory and the bike has gone on to hold a cult status in the Indian motorcycling scene as a sports commuter. The new generation model is expected to be the new flagship motorcycle coming to life and is likely to be the

Bajaj Pulsar 250 that has been spotted testing on several occasions.

Bajaj Auto is likely to bring the semi-faired and naked versions of the Bajaj Pulsar 250 range together. The semi-faired version is all the more important as the model is expected to replace the ageing yet volumes-friendly Pulsar 220F that has been in the brand's stable for well over a decade now.

You can expect a completely new motorcycle right from the chassis, engine, suspension and ore. It will also be priced

competitively that has always been Bajaj's forte, keeping the Pulsar brand accessible to the masses. The Bajaj Pulsar 250 range will have ample competition when it arrives right from the Suzuki Gixxer 250 twins to the Yamaha FZ25.

Speculations also suggest of a Bajaj Avenger 250 also arriving in the future as a replacement to the Avenger 220. The Avenger continues to be a dependable seller for the manufacturer, and the new motor would promise more power, improved torque, as well

as better refinement and efficiency over the current model. The model is expected to get an evolutionary upgrade without straying too far from the existing version. That being said, we are yet to see a test mule of the same.

The upgrades on the Bajaj Pulsar 250 range could make their way to other Pulsar motorcycles at different displacements in the future. It will be interesting to see how big of a change the new flagship really will be. Keep watching this space for all the action on October 28, 2021.

3 new COVID-19 cases push Andamans tally to 7,632

PORT BLAIR, OCT 10 (PTI): Three new COVID-19 cases were recorded in Andaman and Nicobar Islands pushing the tally in the union territory to 7,632, a health department official said on Sunday.

Of the three new cases, one was detected during testing at the Veer Savarkar Airport here and the other two during contact tracing, he said.

Two more persons

recuperated from COVID-19, taking the total number of recoveries to 7,492.

The archipelago now has 11 active COVID-19 cases and all the patients are in the South Andaman district. The other two districts - North and Middle Andaman and Nicobar - are now COVID-19 free.

The coronavirus death toll remained at 129 as no fresh fatality has been reported in the

last 24 hours, he said.

The administration has so far tested 5,67,652 samples for COVID-19 and the cumulative test positivity rate is 1.34 per cent.

A total of 4,56,241 beneficiaries have been inoculated so far of which 2,91,269 have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine while 1,64,972 people have received both doses of the vaccine, he added.

England name strong squad for Ashes tour to Australia after quarantine fears

LONDON, 10 OCT [AFP]: England were able to name their strongest available squad for the Ashes tour to Australia on Sunday as their stars committed to the trip after coronavirus quarantine fears. The Ashes tour had been the subject of tense negotiations after England's players and their families expressed concerns over tough Covid quarantine restrictions in Australia. England Test captain Joe Root and vice-captain Jos Buttler both hinted they might not travel if their fears were not eased. But following a breakthrough in talks with Cricket Australia, the England and Wales Cricket Board on Friday said they had given "conditional approval" for the tour to go ahead.

Both Root and Buttler were named in the 17-man squad for the tour and there were no Covid opt-outs, with Essex batsman Dan Lawrence the most eye-catching selection.

"A tour of Australia is the pinnacle as an England Test cricketer. I'm delighted that all of our available players have committed to the tour," England head coach Chris Silverwood said.

"This is why we play and coach to be involved in iconic series like this. More than half of our squad haven't featured in an Ashes tour before, which means we will be fresh and looking to embrace the cricket and the excitement of touring one of the best places in the world."

Veterans James Anderson and Stuart Broad head up the seam bowling for what may well be their Ashes swansongs, with support from fellow pacemen Chris Woakes, Mark Wood and Ollie Robinson.

Broad will embark on his fourth Ashes tour after making "excellent progress" from a torn right calf sustained during the Test series against India.

Moeen Ali's retirement from Test action left the way clear for Jack Leach and Dom Bess to take up two spinners slots.

Haseeb Hameed travels despite missing out on a central contract this week.

Buttler, Woakes, Wood, Jonny Bairstow and Dawid Malan will all head to Australia straight from a month with England at the Twenty20 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates.

As expected, England are without fast bowlers Jofra Archer and Olly Stone due to elbow and back injuries respectively.

Ben Stokes, currently recovering from finger surgery, was left out as the star all-rounder continues an indefinite break for mental health reasons.

Surrey all-rounder Sam Curran was not considered for selection after a second scan has confirmed that he has a stress fracture in his lower back.

Australia are the current holders of the Ashes after retaining the urn following a 2-2

draw in England in 2019.

They won the last series "Down Under" 4-0 in 2017/18.

Beaten in six of their last nine Tests, England's squad features 10 players who will be touring Australia in an Ashes series for the first time.

"I believe we have selected a well-balanced squad with options in all areas and a blend of youth and experience. There is real competition for places and a genuine desire to work hard and compete, aiming to create some history," Silverwood said.

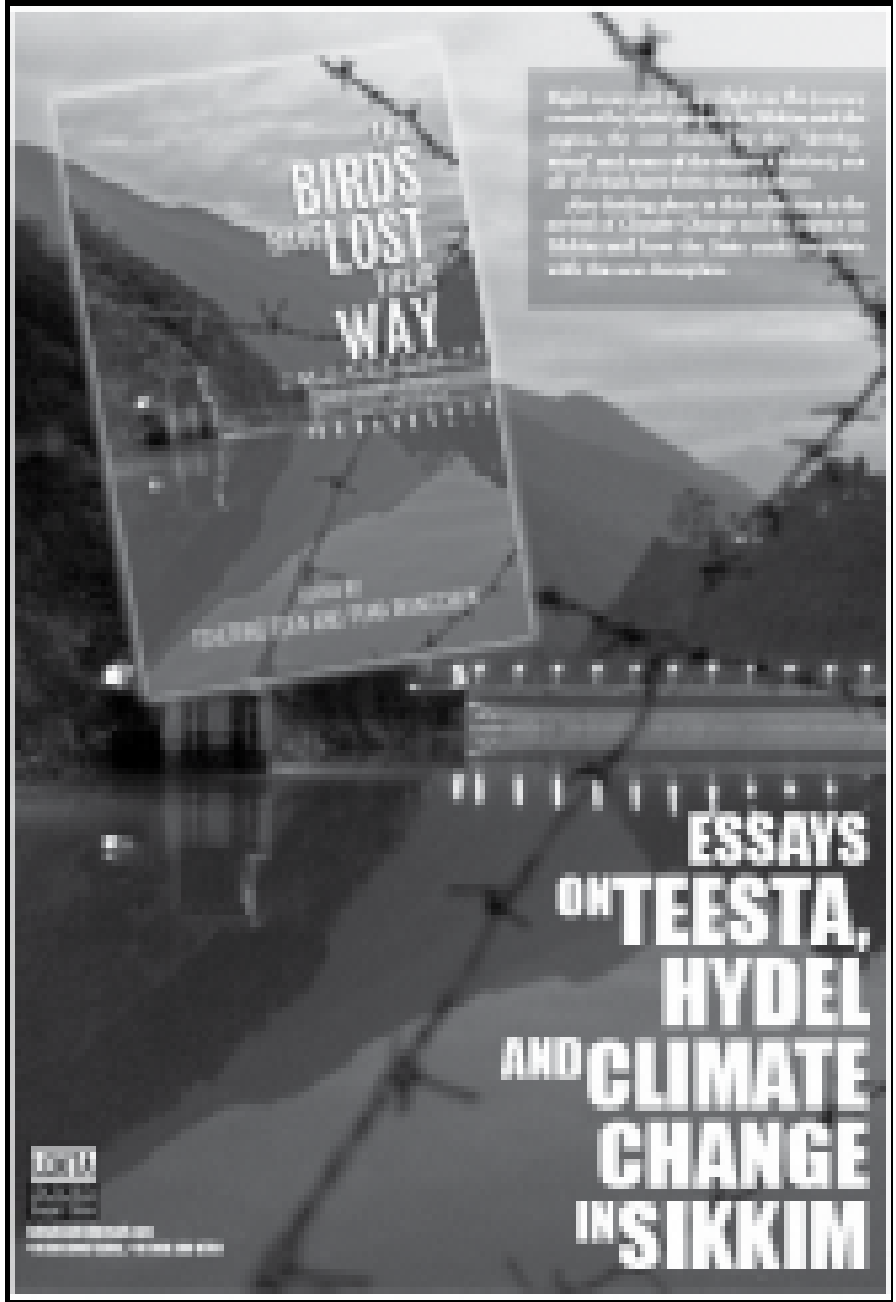
"We are under no illusions about how difficult the task is going to be. Australia have been strong at home in the past, and there is an expectation on them to win this series.

"However, from our point of view, there is genuine excitement and belief that we can do something special."

Along with the main Test squad, England will also name a separate Lions party in due course.

That group will be on stand-by in the event of injury and will serve as warm-up opposition before the five-match Test series starts in Brisbane on December 8.

The ECB said the tour is still subject to "several critical conditions" being met by Cricket Australia before the team travels in November.



Mbappé can transform Deschamps' France into the great entertainers

PAUL DOYLE

PARIS, 10 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: Before his country's thrilling win over Belgium on Thursday, Hugo Lloris said he could sense something special in the air around the France camp. That smelt like ordure by half-time in the Nations League semi-final, when Belgium were 2-0 up and Les Bleus, if not quite stinking out Turin, looked off-colour.

But by the time Theo Hernández arrowed in a fabulous last-minute goal in a 3-2 victory, it was fair to wonder whether we had witnessed not just an extraordinary turnaround, but a more substantial transformation of France. Are the world champions at last going to fulfil their potential?

That is a peculiar question to ask three years after France won the World Cup, and nine years into Didier Deschamps' reign. It reflects the fact Deschamps has generally been a successful yet disappointing manager. He was brought in to restore order and win honours and he achieved that, but there has long been a suspicion that under someone else France could have won more – and won better.

To Deschamps' credit he used his man-management skills and a basic gameplan to make France functional after he took over but, despite their extravagant attacking talent, they have seldom been flamboyant on his watch, mostly sparing rather than daring. After a previous meeting with Belgium – the 1-0 win in the 2018 World Cup semi-final – their opponents were not the only ones to grumble about the lack of French boldness.

Deschamps tends towards conservatism but it was interesting that even he claimed a long time after that match – in an interview with Eurosport earlier this year – that his team had retreated much deeper than he would have wished, “but the players were happy with that and felt strong ... What do you do?”

Knowing when to let players follow their instincts is part of what makes Deschamps a good man-manager, and can usually be enough when a team have solid defenders and exceptional counterattackers, but sometimes a manager could or should prod even gifted players to be more forward-thinking, to stimulate them to create, through his organisation, selections or words. That is especially true when he has several players who lean easily towards complacency.

The erosion of France's defensive solidity since 2018 forced Deschamps to develop a way of playing more in opposing territory and triggering his players' ingenuity. Recalling Karim Benzema was part of that but at Euro 2020 his team were a muddle, their uncertainty about themselves giving encouragement to opponents, as they surrendered a 3-1 lead against Switzerland in the last 16 and lost on penalties. Various players were at fault but the overriding conclusion was that Deschamps' limitations had been exposed.

So he went into the Nations League denouement under more pressure than he has known for nearly a decade. If his team perform against Spain on Sunday evening like they did when fighting back against Belgium on Thursday, Deschamps can justifiably claim to be the manager to lead Les Bleus into a glorious new phase.

France's chief failing in the first half on Thursday was a lack of intensity when trying to win back the ball, which helped Belgium to exploit a defence that remains wobbly even with three central defenders. Deschamps' teams have rarely been aggressive pressers, especially when N'Golo Kanté is absent, but in the second half they seized control, and suddenly Roberto Martínez's team could not cope. Paul Pogba led like few others can, and like one wishes he always would, imposing his unique combination of finesse, power and inventiveness. Most excitingly of all, the France front three of Kylian Mbappé, Karim Benzema and Antoine Greizmann, from whom so much was expected at the Euros, began combining with enchanting, deadly style.

Mbappé was particularly brilliant, even in the first half when many of his teammates sputtered. He needed a performance like this as much as his country did, because during the Euros he had been the most disappointing of the front three. He was even identified by some critics as the main reason the trio malfunctioned. The same formation worked well against Finland in September when Anthony Martial replaced Mbappé and he meshed neatly with the others while also, – despite not being renowned for his defensive diligence – contributing more than Mbappé when France were out of possession.

Mbappé gave a characteristically intelligent interview to L'Équipe this week in which he spoke clearly about his career, the reasons why he requested a transfer to Real Madrid from PSG in the summer and why he would not sulk about PSG's refusal to sell him. But that did not quell accusations that the 22-year-old had grown too big for his boots and had stopped developing his play. His performance against Belgium was the perfect response.

Belgium's defenders had no answer to his speed, skill and sharpness and he took obvious pleasure not just in tormenting them but in colluding with Benzema and Griezmann. On Sunday Deschamps' team will have to press even harder and smarter against Spain, who keep the ball better than Belgium.

Tears of relief show how far Fury was pushed by Wilder in fight for the ages

DONALD MCRAE

LONDON, 10 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: After one of the great fights in heavyweight history was all over, Tyson Fury lent over the ropes and said a silent prayer. The world champion had just knocked out Deontay Wilder in the 11th round of a tumultuous contest and his arms pressed down on the ropes as he bowed his 6ft 9in frame in relief and gratitude. Fury's gloves were off but his hands were still covered in their sweat-sodden wraps. He laced his fingers together in a familiar old ritual for the victorious Gypsy King.

As he prayed, Fury also cried. His brother Shane, a big shaggy bear of a man, covered the champion's bald head with his hand. It was a gentle and comforting gesture which confirmed how clearly he understood that his big brother had come through some dark and testing moments before Fury again dominated Wilder. The American had shown immense bravery and, at least until the final round, he kept trying to unleash one last shattering punch to rescue himself from defeat. The fact that he had come close to stopping Fury in the fourth round, when the champion went down heavily twice, drove on Wilder until all his valiant resistance was eventually beaten out of him.

Tim Allcock, Fury's close friend who runs their camp with Shane, completed the picture in the winning corner. He stood to the right of Fury, his hand on the champion's arm, as the prayer continued amid the falling tears. Fury finally turned back to the ring. He found his wife, Paris, and



kissed her wearily before he was engulfed again by the madness of heavyweight boxing and the demands for his post-fight reaction in a ring seething with people.

It was a very different scene in the opposite corner. Blood coated Wilder's lower lip, smearing it crimson, while a small swelling rose beneath his right eye. On his stool, Wilder looked up at the masked doctor while more blood seeped from his left ear. The doctor pressed a pad against Wilder's lip and talked softly to him. At least the beaten boxer looked alert as he listened. His fiancée, Telli Swift, stood helplessly at ringside, blinking back her own tears and nodding again and again. Each nod seemed a search for consolation that, at least, the brutal fight was over. Wilder then stood up. A sad look of fresh disappointment stole across his face and he

closed his left eye as if he felt an unsettling pressure in his head.

All these private little moments were moving and sombre reminders of how much boxing takes from even its greatest champions. This was a riveting contest, elevated by courage and resolve, but it was also a damaging fight which will have torn hidden chunks from both men. Wilder was sent to hospital, as a precaution, for he had been knocked down three times and, more worryingly, had absorbed one hard punch after another to the head. But the 35-year-old from Alabama refused to surrender and, even when he was exhausted and depleted, he kept looking to land one last thunderous right hand.

The conclusion of their epic trilogy confirmed that Fury is, unequivocally, the superior fighter. He looked badly

shaken when he went down twice in the same round, for the first time in his career, but Fury has remarkable powers of recovery. Even more significantly, the 33-year-old has a natural aptitude for boxing. Rather than freezing or becoming bemused, Fury seems to think even more precisely and intelligently when he is in acute danger. He was helped by his trainer Sugarhill Steward who, at the end of the seventh round, dished out some industrial advice: “Just jab the mother-fucker, dammit!”

Fury duly went back behind the jab, a weapon which Wilder had used effectively to the body at the outset before he was too befuddled to rely on it once he had been sent to the canvas in the third round. The American, who has always been a wild and ragged technician, resorted to near total dependence on his right hand to

get him out of trouble. It is capable of landing with terrifying force but even Wilder's mighty power was rendered helpless by Fury's far more skilful versatility and sheer ringcraft.

Wilder will need a long time to get over the pain and damage he endured in this glittering stretch of the Nevada desert. Fury also deserves rest and respite because, even though he was such a decisive winner, this was a fight which will warn him that boxing gets everyone in the end. He will defend his title again, probably in spring or early summer next year against the winner of the bout at the end of this month between Dillian Whyte and Otto Wallin. The winner of that fight, to be held in London, will become Fury's mandatory challenger.

Whyte is expected to beat Wallin and seal an all-British world title fight. But he is unlikely to then end the reign of Fury whose last great challenge is to become the undisputed world heavyweight champion. The IBF, WBA and WBO belts are now held by Oleksandr Usyk, who outclassed Anthony Joshua two weeks ago. They are locked into a rematch with the winner knowing that all roads lead to the Gypsy King.

Usyk is favoured to beat Joshua again but, after watching this fight for the ages in Las Vegas, a man as intelligent as the Ukrainian will know that Fury operates on a higher plane. Late on Saturday night, as he cried and prayed while hunched over the ropes, Fury still showed how much he had been forced to give in the ring to find victory yet again.

Phil Foden and Jadon Sancho rise above squabble to shine for England

BARNEY RONAY

LONDON, 10 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: Start the bus. Download the boarding passes. Count the pointless yellow cards (two of them, for the record). Mission just about accomplished. England's footballers may take some happy memories from this 5-0 defeat of Andorra.

The Pyrenees are beautifully rugged. They make a fine brandy. The players deserve credit for keeping their cool and getting the job done. But it seems fair to say this is not a game that will live on fondly in the highlights reel, a night of snark, squabbles and the odd heavy tackle on a rough-looking rubber pitch.

In many ways this was a thankless, credit-free mission. Whatever England managed to do here, whatever impact an individual might make would always be dismissed as village kick-about stuff, flat-track punching down.

But these games have always been played. And someone always has to make the difference. International football is like this: a series of staccato moments where you either seize the day or you don't.

Here it was two of England's younger more outrageously talented players who made the difference: Phil Foden,



who has looked in prime form; and Jadon Sancho, who, to put it politely, hasn't.

Foden produced something of a curio, a performance of lovely, subtle, incisive passing from a deeper position. The early exchanges were tight and a little tetchy. For a while you wondered where the incision would come from.

At which point Foden started doing something different, lurking in a withdrawn inside-right position, keeping himself away from the red-shirted double bolt. And suddenly he was fading a succession of lofted, whispered passes from right to left – hard flat Hoddle-type stuff, picking out the runs of the white shirts.

With 17 minutes gone he conjured up the telling pass from that same space, caressed in a lovely curling arc over

the defence and midfield. Sancho took the ball on his chest, then showed fine awareness to flick it back to Ben Chilwell. He smashed it into the net for his first England goal. But it was Foden's goal, too, his creation, his act of string-pulling.

For Sancho this was a first assist since May. What's eating Jadon? Probably not much. It is easy to forget he is still only 20. At Dortmund he was given a detailed brief, told exactly where to run, what combinations to make. He thrived, as young players will, in a genuine coaching environment.

At Manchester United Sancho has looked like what he is, a new player being asked to invent his own patterns as he goes along, with a manager who has no significant record of coaching and improving young attacking players.

In his early days at Manchester City, Pep Guardiola was so obsessed with detail he ended up painting a spot on the training pitch and ordering Raheem Sterling to stand there during certain phases. It seems unlikely Ole Gunnar Solskjær has had the chalk out just yet.

As for Foden it will be tempting to see some kind of tactical shift here, signs of a Southgate 2.0 creative blueprint. But it isn't really that. Foden's fluency against Andorra was a hunch, a necessary step in the most unusual of games.

Against Liverpool last Sunday Foden played as a dribbler, attacking James Milner. Here he showed off his glorious passing range. But it felt like something else too, a glimpse of some other world where footballers of this level are allowed to improvise, to look for

spaces to play rather than being tied to the relentless collisions of systems-football. This was a throwback Foden, Foden of the square screen exploring his maverick qualities.

Phil Foden with Jack Grealish at the end of England's 5-0 victory

A few minutes before half-time he did it again from that same space to make England's second goal. As the red shirts hung back Foden was able to stop, measure the wind speed and play an aristocratic in-out through pass to find Bukayo Saka's fine run on the right. The finish was fierce, the ball spanked straight through Josep Gómes.

We also got that glimpse of Sancho. Early on he had an open door here. Jesús Rubio, Andorra's right-back, is 27. He plays amateur football in the Andorran top tier.

At one point Sancho performed a kind of low-key Irish dance over the ball, then poked it between Rubio's legs, haring off while he was still untangling his ankles.

It is fascinating to see this kind of mismatch, mortal human flesh and muscle up against genuine fast-twitch precision. And Sancho did look good here, providing a string of crosses and nudges inside. Shortly after half-time he set up England's third goal, for Tammy Abraham, then left the field before James Ward-Prowse and Jack Grealish added the fourth and fifth.

For Sancho it was a timely reminder in a thin time with United. He has such distinctive skills, is so creative in his angles and his manipulation of the ball. His talent isn't in doubt. The question is simply how to unlock it.

African agriculture without African farmers

ALEX PARK & SIERA VERCILLO
QATAR, 10 OCT [ALJAZEERA]: With the passing of the United Nations' highly contested Food Systems Summit last month, the task of "feeding the world" has taken on a newfound urgency.

But one point apparently lost on the summit's attendees is that the project of "agricultural modernisation" which many of them have supported for decades is only making food insecurity worse in recent years, especially in Africa.

Since the 2007-08 world food price crisis, Western governments and philanthropies, led by the United States and the Gates Foundation, have backed a multitude of programmes across the continent to raise farmers' productivity and connect them to commercial supply chains. Together, these efforts carry the banner of an "African Green Revolution" – an approach not unlike the primarily Asian and Latin American Green Revolution before it.

But at the heart of this massive philanthropic and governmental undertaking lies an essential contradiction: agricultural "modernisation", we are told, will benefit Africa's smallholder farmers by giving advantages to farmer-entrepreneurs with larger landholdings. The result is a "revolution" ostensibly meant to help the poor which actually makes rural life difficult for anyone but the most well-off, well-connected, commercially-oriented, and "efficient" business people.

In our research, we have both encountered the reality of the African Green Revolution in Ghana, a country that has experienced a surge in agricultural foreign aid in recent years.

As geography professors Hanson Nyantakyi-Frimpong and Rachel Bezner Kerr have mentioned in their 2015 paper, British colonialists developed production and market systems to extract cocoa – a crop not widely consumed in the country but which continues to attract significant investment and subsidies today. In the post-colonial period of the 1960s and 1970s, the government of Ghana, with support from Western government donors, introduced high-yielding varieties of rice and maize, as well as imported chemical fertilisers.

In a 2011 paper, University of Ghana professor and anthropologist Kojo Amanor also explains, that from 1986 to 2003, Sasakawa Global 2000, a development organisation founded by Japanese industrialist Ryoichi Sasakawa and Norman Borlaug, the initiator of the Asian Green Revolution, tried unsuccessfully to bring new



farm technology to rural Ghana and much of sub-Saharan Africa. Sasakawa Global 2000 took over the government's previous role, distributing low-interest credit packages to smallholders willing to buy hybrid seed, chemical fertiliser and other agrochemicals, and become part of global, commercial supply chains.

Sasakawa Global 2000 found many farmers willing to accept their assistance. But according to Amanor, many of the farmers who initially adopted the technology reverted to traditional practices and local seed varieties after the project concluded. Even after years of working in rural Ghana, the organisation saw only a 45 per cent recovery in crop investment.

These days, there are many reasons why smallholders do not cooperate with the "modernisation" programmes of the African Green Revolution. In their 2015 study, Nyantakyi-Frimpong and Bezner Kerr found that smallholder farmers often preferred to plant their own maize varieties, even when government and development organisations made more "advanced" hybrids available.

As the farmers understood well, their own hardier, local varieties of maize were more resistant to drought, required less labour, cost less, and required little or no chemical fertiliser. Moreover, unlike hybrids, whose wide leaves obstruct the sun for neighbouring plants, farmers could plant their own maize varieties alongside peanuts, cowpea, and bambara beans – all nutritious crops well adapted to the local ecology.

Development planners have long touted technologies like hybrid seeds as "solutions" to the many problems resulting from cli-

mate change, and it is true farmers sometimes turn to them in their struggle to adapt to unpredictable ecological conditions. In one study, one of us found that many smallholders in an area of northern Ghana reluctantly turned to those technologies in a desperate gambit to adapt to increasingly erratic rainfall, shortening growing seasons and drier, less fertile soils.

But beyond climate change, farmers have also adopted technology to deal with the problems induced by the African Green Revolution itself, such as increasing competition for land, as local businessmen (and they are overwhelmingly men) acquire farms to capitalise on the very programmes supposedly meant to help smallholders.

Despite the apparent need for more technology, smallholders find themselves trapped in a vicious cycle, sacrificing tomorrow's soil for today's planting. While even some of the poorest farmers in Ghana rely on chemical fertiliser to grow enough food to survive, a number of farmers said their soils were infertile without ever-larger doses of chemicals. Or as some put it, the land was "addicted to chemicals". This dependency increased their debt and their risk of land dispossession, particularly for women.

Far from levelling the playing field so that any farmer can succeed, the emphasis on expensive technology and commercial access has only made it harder for smallholder farmers to survive in their native lands, while opening the door to local businessmen who see in the African Green Revolution their own investment opportunity. As one farmer said, "[donors] are supposed to help, but what do we see? [...] you see big cars. This district executive wants 50 acres, the party head

wants 100 acres."

As another put it, development workers "treat farmers like they are so stupid".

Even at the smallest scale, farming is more than a livelihood. Studies show that a major share of the world's food is grown by smallholder farmers. Yet many critical agrarian thinkers like Henry Bernstein have argued that smallholder farming is becoming increasingly difficult, and even impossible in some places. Developmental aid that largely goes to the agri-food companies and well-capitalised businessmen, while smallholders lose the very farmland they need to survive, is undoubtedly one of the underlying causes of this phenomenon.

It is tempting to think of mass displacement as an unforeseen consequence of the African Green Revolution. But displacement and marginalisation were always bound to result from an effort that rarely envisions smallholders as anything more than a component in a supply chain managed by other, more powerful actors.

In Ghana, several organisations, including World Vision, the Gates-funded Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, and the World Bank have empowered relatively well-off business people to provide assistance to farmers that the state once provided. As part of one project we researched, USAID supported a group of relatively well-off "nucleus farmers" to distribute seeds and facilitate the occasional service of a tractor for smallholders in exchange for a portion of their crop. The aid agency and its contractor said the multi-year project, which ended in 2020, directly involved tens of thousands of impoverished farmers in an effort to modernise one of

the country's agricultural processing chains.

But when one of us travelled to Ghana in 2016 and asked some of the nucleus farmers how they dealt with smallholders who, despite the assistance, could not grow enough soy to compensate them, these agro-entrepreneurs revealed a darker side to the programme. At their direction, struggling smallholder farmers borrowed money from local banks to buy snacks to sell by the roadside to pay off the debt. When a farmer repeatedly failed to grow sufficient amounts of the crop, one nucleus farmer said, he instructed the farmer to let someone else take over their plot for the rest of the season. While some returned the next season, many did not.

When asked about these outcomes, one executive for the development contractor managing the programme deferred to a standard refrain. Nucleus farmers were "independent businesses" and how they dealt with farmers was none of their concern. But the fact that smallholder farmers in Africa were leaving their farms was no reason for concern.

"That's an evolutionary process," this person said. "I don't think that's anything anyone is trying to counter."

Proponents of a Green Revolution in Africa often employ justifications like these when confronted with unflattering stories about rural life in Africa: smallholders are leaving the countryside, but that is their choice. And if it is not their choice, their departure is only part of a natural process outside anyone's control. In any case, when smallholders drop their hoes and head to the nearest city, they are only doing so to find a better liveli-

hood. But among like-minded people, enthusiasts will often make their position on rural depopulation quite clear. Speaking to an audience that included several African heads of state and numerous development contractors in Kigali, Rwanda, in 2018, Rockefeller Foundation President Rajiv Shah – one of the most prominent supporters of the African Green Revolution – had this to say: "A uniquely African agricultural revolution was meant to beat hunger by making food more available and accessible. But this revolution was also meant to create a diversified, modern economy, where food production no longer dominated how nations deployed the majority of their labour."

Like other development planners who cheer the collapse of smallholder agriculture in Africa, Shah – who previously headed USAID under the Obama administration and the Gates Foundation's agriculture programme – did not acknowledge some of the bleaker consequences of this population shift: growing slums and joblessness in Africa's cities (and the cities of other continents), rising food insecurity, and a growing reliance on monocultures and other environmentally destructive farming techniques in rural areas.

Instead, he went on to say that from 2003 to 2018, sub-Saharan Africa's population had increased from 700 million to over a billion people, while the proportion of people working in farming on the continent had fallen from 65 percent to 57 percent.

"Real progress," he said. "But the eight-point drop over 15 years in the share of labour employed in agriculture is simply too small to celebrate."

In other words, a mass displacement of smallholder farmers is not a natural process or a side-effect of the African Green Revolution. It is exactly the outcome development planners want and expect.

As the many grassroots organisations representing smallholder farmers in Africa and around the world understand, this story is fundamentally about who deserves to farm and reap the rewards from Africa's farmland. It is one reason why so many of them boycotted the Food Systems Summit in September. But to succeed, groups standing up for smallholders will have to continue on many other fronts.

We call on activists to continue to speak the truth about the Green Revolution in Africa, and to take a stand against the donors, philanthropists, diplomats and academics promoting it. Let us call out actors that claim to help smallholders, but actually strive to kick smallholders off their land.

Iraqi voters head to the polls in test for democratic system

BAGHDAD, 10 OCT [AL-JAZEERA]: Iraqis headed to the polls for an early election billed as a concession to anti-government protests but one expected to be boycotted by many voters who distrust official promises of reform.

Polls opened at 7:00am (04:00 GMT) on Sunday but few voters turned up early at one polling station at a school in the centre of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad.

"I have come to vote to change the country for the better, and to change the current leaders who are incompetent," said Jimand Khalil, 37, who was one of the first to cast her vote. "They made a lot of promises to us but didn't bring us anything."

Security was tight in the capital, with voters searched twice at the entrance to polling stations.

Airports have been closed until dawn on Monday across Iraq, where despite the government's declaration of victory over the ISIL (ISIS) group in late 2017, sleeper cells continue to mount attacks.

"Iraqis should have the



confidence to vote as they please, in an environment free of pressure, intimidation and threats," the UN mission in Iraq said ahead of the polls.

Polls remain open until 6:00pm, with preliminary results expected within 24 hours of closing. Dozens of election observers deployed by the European Union and the United Nations were set to monitor the vote.

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi cast his ballot early in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone. "This is an opportunity

for change," he said.

"Get out there and vote, change your reality, for Iraq and for your future," urged al-Kadhimi, whose political future hangs in the balance, with few observers willing to predict who will come out on top after the lengthy backroom haggling that usually follows Iraqi elections.

Analysts have predicted a record-low turnout for the polls, held a year early in a rare concession to the youth-led protest movement. Dozens of anti-government activists

have been killed, kidnapped or intimidated over the last two years, with accusations that pro-Iran armed groups, many of which are represented in parliament, have been behind the violence.

Reporting from Baghdad, Al Jazeera's Mahmoud Abdelwahed said the expectations of low turnout are widely based on disillusionment among people, especially the youth.

"Most of the disillusioned are those who rose up against corruption and mismanagement in 2019 in what is known

as the Tishreen [October] revolution," he said.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in October 2019 to express their anger at corruption, unemployment and crumbling public services, and hundreds lost their lives in protest-related violence.

The protests have largely fizzled out as anger has given way to disillusion.

"The people are boycotting the elections because they say it is not bringing any change; it is still producing the same old parties despite the fact that the same old parties have been reshuffling their candidates," Abdelwahed said.

"Nothing will change. This election will be won by the same factions that people protested against," 45-year-old Baghdad day labourer Mohammed Kassem, who did not intend to vote, told the AFP news agency.

At least 167 parties and more than 3,200 candidates are competing for Iraq's 329 seats in parliament, according to the country's election commission.





LOVE DON'T COST A THING! Happy couple Ben Affleck & Jennifer Lopez share a cute moment together at The Last Duel premiere in New York City.

Rakul Preet Singh makes it Instagram Official with Jackky Bhagnani on her birthday



Woohoo. Actress Rakul Preet Singh and actor-producer Jackky Bhagnani have made their relationship Instagram official on Sunday and we couldn't be more excited.

The actress, who turned 31 on Sunday, celebrated her birthday on Instagram by making her relationship with Jackky Bhagnani public. The couple shared a beautiful picture of themselves taking a stroll in a park holding hands on their respective Instagram profile.

Posting the picture, Jackky Bhagnani wished the actress with this loved up note: "Without you, days don't seem like days. Without you, eating the most delicious food is no fun. Sending Birthday wishes to the most beautiful soul who means the world to me!!! May your day be as sunny as your smile, and as beautiful as you are. Happy Birthday my (heart icon)." Awww. In her reply, Rakul Pre-

et Singh thanked Jackky Bhagnani with this mushy post: "Thank you my (heart icon)! You have been my biggest gift this year! Thank you for adding colour to my life, thank you for making me laugh non-stop, thank you for being you!! Here is to making more memories together."

Congratulations Rakul Preet Singh and Jackky Bhagnani. Check out the duo's posts here: Rakul Preet Singh has worked in several Hindi and Telugu films. Some of her popular Telugu movies include Nannaku Prematho, Kick 2, Jaya Janaki Nayaka and Manmadhudu 2.

She made her Bollywood debut with Divya Khosla Kumar's Yaariyan in 2014 and also starred in Neeraj Pandey's Aiyaari, co-starring Sidharth Malhotra and in De De Pyaar De, with Ajay Devgn and Tabu.

'Ikigai' authors come out with sequel

NEW DELHI, OCT 10 (PTI): Hector Garcia and Francesc Miralles have authored a sequel to their book on Ikigai which seeks to find and empower all aspects of this concept that means 'a reason to live' in Japanese.

Published by Tuttle Publishing, "The Ikigai Journey: A Practical Guide to Finding Happiness and Purpose the Japanese Way" is being distributed in the Indian subcontinent by Penguin Random House India. It will hit the market on October 12.

Japan is said to have one of the longest life spans in the world, and the greatest number of centenarians - many of whom cite their strong sense of Ikigai as the basis for their happiness and longevity.

Unlike many "self-care" practices, which require setting aside time in an increasingly busy world, the Ikigai method helps one find peace and fulfilment in a busy life.

The authors term their book as a "tool that can revolutionise your future by helping you understand your past so that you can live your present the way you want to".

In order to whittle that tool into shape, Garcia and Miralles set off on a new journey across Japan, the country that inspired their first collaboration, in search of essential lessons to make Ikigai the centre of the universe and a driving force for change that will enable readers to achieve their life mission.

The author duo came across the 'Shinkansen effect' while researching the "Japanese miracle", which took place between 1960 and 1980, when Japan left its post-war devastation behind to become the second largest economy in

the world.

The mission of Garcia and Miralles in the first part of their book was to bring the "Japanese miracle" to the personal life of each of their readers and achieve an exponential leap.

"Yet although the Shinkansen effect concept is a fascinating one, not everything in life is about doing things better

say. The book suggests 35 keys to living one's Ikigai. These include: if one aims to improve by 10 per cent, he or she needs to work to improve by 100 per cent; at least one 'impossibility' should be included in day-to-day agenda; 21 days should be devoted to implement a positive, new habit; and he or she should ask people they trust for feedback on what



and faster. In the journey we are about to undertake, we have developed techniques to make our past fuel our present, and in turn, for our present to light the way to a future in which we accomplish what we set out to do," they write.

In their first book "Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life", they explored the concept of Ikigai but left a key question to the reader: "How to find your Ikigai?"

"In our second book, we answer this question and guide the reader with 35 stories travelling around Japan and practical exercises to explore your life and help all of us to find our Ikigai," they

he or she is doing. It takes the readers beyond the discovery of their Ikigai with life-changing exercises outside of their comfort zone. "The Ikigai Journey" reinforces the concept of change in people's lives as inevitable, a constant transformation depending on the phase of life.

The book has three sections: Journey Through the Future: Tokyo (a symbol of modernity and innovation); Journey Through the Past: Kyoto (an ancient capital moored in tradition); and Journey Through the Present: Ise (an ancient shrine that is destroyed and rebuilt every 20 years).

Adele surprises fans with song clip from new "Divorce" album on Instagram Live

Hello, it's Adele, with a little prezzie for you this fine weekend.

On Saturday, Oct. 9, the 33-year-old singer made a surprise appearance on Instagram Live to answer some fans' questions, during which she played a new snippet of the first single, "Easy on Me," from her anticipated new album, which she said was based on "divorce, babe, divorce."

Resting her hand under her chin, Adele slowly moved her head, closed her eyes and gave a small smile to the camera as the ballad played.

Lyrics include, "There ain't no gold in this river / That I've been washing my hands in forever / I know there is hope in these waters / But I can't bring myself to swim / When I am drowning in this silence / Baby, let me in."

"That's it. That's all I'm going to play," Adele said, as she stopped the music. "Oh, my phone's already buzzing, I'm gonna get in trouble."

"Easy on Me" features Adele's signature powerful and haunting vocals and comes two years after she filed papers to end her marriage to Simon Konecki, father of their almost 9-year-old son Angelo.

In a November 2021 Vogue cover interview, Adele said she was not sure if her

new record is a divorce album, saying that it "was more me divorcing myself...just being like, Bitch, f--kin' hot mess, get your f--kin' shit together!"

The album became a way of explaining things to Angelo, Vogue reported. "He has so many simple questions for me that I can't answer, because I don't know the answer," Adele told the magazine. "Like, Why can't we still live together? That's just not what people do when they get divorced. But why not? I'm like, I don't f--king know. That's not what society does. And: Why don't you love my dad anymore? And I'd be like, I do love your dad. I'm just not in love."

The singer added, "I can't make that make sense to a nine-year-old."

A shorter, solely instrumental snippet of "Easy on Me" is heard on a clip of the single's music video that was released on Adele's official YouTube page earlier this week and the full single is set to drop on Oct. 15.

The release date of the singer's new album, the follow-up to her 2015 record 25, and its title have not been announced. It is rumored to be called 30, which is how old the singer was when she and Simon broke up after more than eight years together.

R Balki's New Film Is An "Ode" To Guru Dutt

Filmmaker R Balki, who is known for helming movies like Shamitabh, Padman and Paa, released the motion poster his new film titled Chup: Revenge Of The Artist on Sunday. Chup is a psychological thriller that stars Sunny Deol, Pooja Bhatt, Dulquer Salmaan and Shreya Dhanwanthary.

R Balki and his team unveiled the motion poster of the film on the legendary filmmaker Guru Dutt's death anniversary. The film is R Balki's "ode" to Guru Dutt, who died at the age of 39 on October 10, 1964.

The motion poster shows a portrait of Guru Dutt, followed by the names of the stars featuring in the film. "Chup is an ode to the sensitive artist, and Guru Dutt is right on top of that list. I have had the story for a long time and I am glad we finally wrote it and are almost done filming it," R Balki said in a statement, reported news agency PTI.

Sharing the motion poster on social media, Amitabh Bachchan, who has featured in R Balki's Paa, Shamitabh and Cheeni Kum, wrote: "#Chup... Motion Poster." Padman star Akshay Kumar also shared the motion poster on social media and called it "intriguing."

Aries:

The more you contemplate on the given situation from the place of the ego, the more reasons you will find to blame yourself and others. Word for the wise: bring a certain degree of detachment into the equation. Remember your role as the catalyst in this story. The truth that you are not the 'doer' simply the medium through which certain things are being set into motion. Let karma play out the way it is meant to as you remember that all the world is but a play, Aries!

Tip: You are merely the catalyst in this story.

Taurus:

The Universe speaks to us in mysterious ways, Taurus, and those of us who find a way to silence the mind are able to tune into this voice of wisdom within. So, what is this voice bringing you attention to today? What are you being asked to adopt and what are you being guided to let go of? Remember, if it was meant for you, it would have worked out in your favour a long time ago.

Tip: Follow the path of least resistance.

Gemini:

It's all or nothing, Gemini! It's all or nothing. You're feeling the love more than ever before, and are being reminded of why you started walking a certain path. It's now time to risk everything for it. To lean into that feeling of freefalling, knowing the Universe has always got your back. Things

may not work exactly in accordance with the plan, and that's okay. Something tells us the outcome is going to be better than you could have expected.

Tip: Get ready to risk everything for the chosen path.

Cancer:

Know how and where to draw a line. The weekend sees you revisiting your budget, making certain adjustments and allocating funds in a way that both your needs and wants are taken care of. Some of you may be thinking about savings and investments too. If you're not too well-versed with money matters, consider consulting an expert in the field.

Tip: It's all about savings and investments.

Leo:

People are always showing us who they are through both their actions and words. It all comes down to how actively you're willing to tune in. The signs are getting louder, Leo. The signs are getting louder. So, pay attention to what is being revealed to you in moments of silence. Something tells us that one of your closest accomplices could be the cause of the turmoil you are experiencing at the moment.

Tip: The truth will be revealed to you in moments of silence.

Virgo:

Manifestation is not a ritual, honey! It's a lifestyle. Manifestation is not a ritual but a lifestyle. The real question is:

what are the miracles that you want to call into your reality today? How do you feel inspired to co-create with the divine forces? It's time for you to take action in the right direction with the inner knowing that you are fully supported. Remembering the mantra 'As above, so below' will instil you with the faith that you need at this moment.

Tip: Co-create.

Libra:

Remember when doubting yourself was a lifestyle? Remember when you constantly needed external validation to know that you were offering something worthwhile? Look at where you are now, beautiful. Libra season is offering you the opportunity to marvel at all the ways in which you have evolved over the years. That glorious, crystal-studded crown you're wearing is proof of the long way you have come. So, as and when the demons of doubt rear their ugly heads today, walk them to the exit door, and let them know that they have been banished forever from your Universe.

Tip: Take a moment to marvel at all the ways in which you have grown.

Scorpio:

It's time to pause, sip on your tulsi tea, looking forward but also look backwards. What a long way you have come, beautiful! What a long way you have come! This chapter of your life requires you to integrate all the soul lessons

you have been taught so you can move forward with grace and poise. Yes, there are certain things that have been taken away from you on this path. Observing your circumstances from a higher perspective, however, will help you realise that there were no wrong turns.

Tip: It's time to integrate the learnings of the past.

Sagittarius:

The wheel of fortune is turning in your favour. The wheel of fortune is turning in your favour, Sagittarius. So, pay attention to the opportunities that are showing up. They're aligning you with your path and purpose. For some of you, this opening could come through a close friend or accomplice. Word for the wise: if you're feeling inspired to reconnect with somebody from your past and seek their assistance, do so without delay.

Tip: Pay attention to the opportunities that are showing up in your world.

Capricorn:

An affirmation you want to repeat now and for the rest of the weekend: "I am living in the quantum field of infinite possibilities." This is a time of magic and synchronicities, Capricorn. A time of witnessing miracles unfold in your reality. The only thing you need to do is stay open and "allow". Allow what has always been yours to find its way into your Universe. A sudden change in your finances is also indicated for some of you. If and when the opportu-

nity to level up shows up, say yes with utmost faith in the mysterious forces above.

Tip: If only you could see what's taking place behind the scenes for you.

Aquarius:

While we're all gifted with the power of free will, not all of us exercise it in the way that we are meant to. Could this be true in your case, Aquarius? Do you sometimes feel like things are simply not in your control? While the external circumstances cannot be fixed, your response to stimuli certainly can. So, reclaim the reins, honey, and repeat the affirmation, "I am the char-acter of my life."

Tip: Tap into the power of free will.

Pisces:

Dream a little dream, Pisces, and compose a love song for us as you astral travel through the subtle realms. Boarding the flight of fantasy is a big mood around here. Escapism is the sweet elixir that helps you deal with the trials and tribulations of the physical world. Those who have been working themselves to the bone are being encouraged to take the day off as well (some part of it at least!). Could there be a better way to heal and recuperate than to stay in bed with a warm cup of tea and your furry friend curled into a ball somewhere near your feet? Tip: Dream a little dream.