

Short story

High and Lifted Up

By : Mike Krath

It was a windy day. The mailman barely made it to the front door. When the door opened, Mrs. Pennington said, "hello", but, before she had a real chance to say "thank you", the mail blew out of the mailman's hands, into the house and the front door slammed in his face. Mrs. Pennington ran to pick up the mail.



"Oh my," she said. Tommy was watching the shutters open and then shut, open and then shut. "Mom," he said, "may I go outside?" "Be careful," she said. "It's so windy today." Tommy crawled down from the window-seat and ran to the door. He opened it with a bang. The wind blew fiercely and snatched the newly recovered mail from Mrs. Pennington's hands and blew it even further into the house.

"Oh my," she said again. Tommy ran outside and the door slammed shut. Outside, yellow, gold, and red leaves were leaping from swaying trees, landing on the roof, jumping off the roof, and then chasing one another down the street in tiny whirlwinds of merriment.

Tommy watched in fascination. "If I was a leaf, I would fly clear across the world," Tommy thought and then ran out into the yard among the swirl of colors. Mrs. Pennington came to the front porch.

"Tommy, I have your jacket. Please put it on." However, there was no Tommy in the front yard.

"Tommy?" Tommy was a leaf. He was blowing down the street with the rest of his play-mates. A maple leaf came close-by, touched him and moved ahead. Tommy met him shortly, brushed against him, and moved further ahead. They swirled around and around, hit cars and poles, flew up into the air and then down again.

"This is fun," Tommy thought. The maple leaf blew in front of him. It was bright red with well-defined veins. The sun-light shone through it giving it a brilliance never before seen by a little boy's eyes.

"Where do you think we are going?" Tommy asked the leaf. "Does it matter?" the leaf replied. "Have fun. Life is short." "I beg to differ," an older leaf said suddenly coming beside them. "The journey may be short, but the end is the beginning." Tommy pondered this the best a leaf could ponder.

"Where do we end up?" "If the wind blows you in that direction," the old leaf said, "you will end up in the city dump." "I don't want that," Tommy said. "If you are blown in that direction, you will fly high into the air and see things that no leaf has seen before."

"Follow me to the city dump," the maple leaf said. "Most of my friends are there."

The wind blew Tommy and the maple leaf along. Tommy thought of his choices. He wanted to continue to play.

"Okay," Tommy said, "I will go with you to the dump." The winds shifted and Tommy and the leaf were blown in the direction of the city dump.

The old leaf didn't follow. He was blown further down the block and suddenly lifted up high into the air.

"Hey," he called out, "the sights up here. They are spectacular. Come and see."

Tommy and the maple leaf ignored him.

"I see something. I see the dump." The old leaf cried out. "I see smoke. Come up here. I see fire."

"I see nothing," the maple leaf said.

Tommy saw the fence that surrounded the city dump. He was happy to be with his friend. They would have fun in the dump.

Suddenly, a car pulled up. It was Tommy's mom. Mrs. Pennington wasn't about to let her little boy run into the city dump.

"Not so fast," she said getting out of the car. "You are not allowed to play in there. Don't you see the smoke?"

Tommy watched the maple leaf blow against the wall and struggle to get over. He ran over to get it but was unable to reach it.

Mrs. Pennington walked over and took the leaf. She put it in her pocket.

"There," she said, "it will be safe until we get home."

Tommy smiled, ran to the car and got in. He rolled down the back window and looked up into the sky. He wondered where the old leaf had gone. Perhaps one day he would see what the old leaf had seen - perhaps.

'Interviews for lower posts won't be necessary from 2016'

ANI
New Delhi, Oct. 25: Speaking about employment in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday announced that interviews for lower posts in the Central Government won't be necessary from 2016.

"I have not heard of any psychologist, who can judge a person by interviewing him in few minutes. I want to proudly announce that there wouldn't be any interviews for non-gazette entry of group B, C and D. This

will be implemented from January 1, 2016" said Prime Minister Modi. "The process that is underway now, there won't be any intervention now, but from next year there won't be any interview during recruitments in these groups," he added. Prime Minister Modi had in his Independence Day speech earlier this year said that the reason for corruption was the need for 'approach' felt by the people while applying for jobs and called upon the state

governments to avoid the practice of interviews for junior-level posts.

"We should end this...Interview can be held for jobs where personality or appearance is important," he said.

The Prime Minister had also asked all the departments to end the practice of interviews at the earliest and promote merit by recruiting only through transparent, online processes. During his earlier 'Mann Ki Baat' programme, Prime Minister Modi

had stressed that his government was working very fast to end the requirement of interview for certain government jobs.

"In my Independence Day address, I had questioned the requirement of interview for lower category jobs. Because whenever a call for interview comes, parents of poor people run from pillar to post, looking for 'sifarish' (recommendation) and 'jack' (help) ... And perhaps this is the reason for corruption at lower levels," he said.

J&K: Two civilians injured in Pakistan shelling

PTI
Jammu, Oct. 25: A woman was among two civilians injured in Samba sector as Pakistani Rangers continued mortar shelling villages on the Indian side on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday as well. Identifying the injured as Kailash Devi and Pritam Chand of village Mawa, sources said that the number of people injured in Pakistani shelling since Friday evening has risen to five. This is

apart from the death of a labourer in shelling at Mangu Chak. Significantly, the latest string of ceasefire violations have come despite the holding of a Director General level meeting between Pakistani Rangers and the BSF early last month, where both sides agreed to maintain peace along the borders.

With the situation escalating, the shelling appears to have spread to more areas. Pointing out that this has been the third ceasefire

violation since Friday evening, sources said that 14 BSF posts were affected in unprovoked shelling, which restarted from across the border at 9.05 pm on Sunday, sources said, adding that the BSF retaliated.

"Both sides used 51 mm, 81 mm and 82 mm mortars at many places," sources said, adding that the exchange of fire continued throughout night that kept villagers awake. Apprehending infiltration attempts amidst

shelling from Pakistani side, the BSF has intensified patrolling along the border.

The provocation to Rangers, sources said, appear to be the ongoing repair of barbed wire fence damaged on the Indian side during recent rains and floods along the border. Though the barbed wire fence is erected deep inside the Indian territory, Rangers were opposed to its repair as it would obstruct infiltration by terrorists.

ISIS claims responsibility for bomb attack in B' desh

ANI
Dhaka, Oct. 25: The Islamic States of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) claimed responsibility for the recent attacks on Huseini Dalan, the headquarters of Shiite Muslim group in Dhaka.

The US-based SITE Intelligence Group, a for-profit Maryland-based company which tracks online activity of extremist groups stated that ISIS has claimed the responsibility for the attack which killed a 14-year-old boy and left 87 people injured, The Daily Star reported.

The attack happened when members of the Shia community gathered at the building around 30 minutes before the traditional Tajia procession was to be brought out from there to mark the holy Ashura. This is first attack on the Shia community in Bangladesh during such kind of procession.

ISIS had earlier taken responsibility of killing of two foreign nationals in the country. However, both the government and the administration have denied the presence of the extremist group in the Bangladesh.

Army recovers two explosive

PTI
Jammu, Oct 25: Army has recovered two explosive devices weighing 10 and 6 kgs in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Based on the information of a Territorial Army Battalion, a search operation was launched yesterday

against a suspected hideout in general area of Lor Devta in Poonch district, a defence spokesperson said.

During the operation, a natural cave was found near a big boulder in which two huge gunny bag packets with wires jutting out were found, he said.

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India open to talks with

"Also, NSCN (K)'s not signing NCA has created a legal framework for us to get Yangon to hit its bases in Myanmar. The modalities on whether this crackdown will be a joint one by Indian and Myanmar forces or involve just the Myanmar Army, only time will tell," the official added.

Sources believe the group's chief S S Khaplang could be subjected to pressure from the armed forces. India is weighing Myanmar's proposal of joint operations carefully as it remains skeptical of Myanmar honouring the May 2014 bilateral agreement to target Indian insurgent groups. This is because Khaplang has signed a memorandum of understanding — in effect, a ceasefire — with the Tatmadaw. Parliamentary elections in Myanmar are scheduled for November and the Tatmadaw would like to buy time till then by undertaking a charade of coordinated operations with India while forewarning the NSCN (K) about the planned operations, sources said.

India also realises that the Tatmadaw has a capacity constraint and its borders with India are a lower priority compared to the anti-Myanmar insurgents on its northern borders with China. Following the adverse publicity and Myanmar's reaction to

the Indian Army operation inside their territory, Indian officials remain wary of launching another unilateral cross-border operation, in case the Tatmadaw fails to act against the NSCN (K).

Another concern was the United National Liberation Front of West South East Asia (UNLFWSEA), a platform of NSCN(K) and other insurgent groups, formed by Khaplang in April this year with active help from Ulfia chief Paresah Barua.

UNLFWSEA is not the first effort by Khaplang to insurgent groups on a united platform. He had founded the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front (IBRF) in May 1990, comprising NSCN(K), Ulfia, Kuki National Front (KNF) and Chin National Front.

Another unification effort was made in January 2011, when Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front was renamed United North East Revolutionary Alliance (UNERA). This initiative too failed. Apart from NSCN (K), the prominent groups in Myanmar are Ulfia (Paresah Baruah faction), NDFB (Songbjit), UNLF, PLA, KYKL and KLO.

Their camps are located from Upper MNHS in Sagaing region on Arunachal-Myanmar border till Rakhine state.

State News

Flag in ceremony of NIT tour



IGAR(S)
Imphal, Oct. 24: The flagging in ceremony for the National Integration Tour was held at Thoubal on October 23, marking the culmination of 15 days National Integration Tour to Delhi and Agra which was organised by 2 Assam Rifles of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) from 04 to 18 October 2015.

The National Integration Tour came back to Thoubal after visiting the historical places of the country in Delhi and Agra. A total of 24 students of Thoubal district of Manipur belonging to different Schools were part of the tour. The tour gave an opportunity to the students to learn about the cultural and regional diversity of India. The students were able to assimilate experiences from different places and communities of the country which will serve them throughout their life. It will serve them in becoming a truly

National citizen being able to identify with history and people from various parts of the country. The students also received rare honour to meet Shri Kiren Rijiju, MOS at New Delhi and Lieutenant General Rajan Ravindran, GOC Delhi Area during the tour. The team visited Red Fort, Akshardham Temple, India Gate, Lotus Temple, ISKCON Temple, Fatehpur Sikri, Agra Fort and Taj Mahal at Delhi and Agra respectively. The tour was deeply appreciated by both parents and children who thanked the Assam Rifles for organising such an enriching and memorable tour for the Children of Manipur. Assam Rifles hopes to have broadened the horizons for the Children of Manipur, initiating a new perspective and drive for the Future of Manipur. With the culmination of this tour, Assam Rifles achieved its aim of educating the young budding students of Manipur and channelizing them towards a promising future.

Sunday Quiz

1. Name the two kings of Manipur who were conferred KCSI and CBE by the British.
2. Which sport is believed to be originated from Manipur?
3. When was DM College founded?
4. What is the botanical name of *Stroy lily*?
5. What does the acronym 'ILPS' stands for?

1. Sir Chandrakriti Maharaj and Sir Churachand Maharaj
2. Polo
3. 6 August 1946
4. Lithium Mackerhinae Sealy
5. Inner Line Permit System

Compiled by - Dr. S Langpoklakpam.

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