

SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Credit flow in agri lowest amongst all sectors in Sikkim

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:

During the third quarter of the current financial year i.e. upto 31 Dec 2017, only 17% of the estimated potential of credit flow was achieved in the agriculture sector in Sikkim. Overall credit flow stood at 42.2% of the estimated potential while under priority and non-priority sector, 86.5 % of the estimated credit flow was achieved.

This was informed by Regional Manager, State Bank of India, SK Chowbey during the release of 'State Focus Paper: 2018-19' prepared by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development [NABARD] on the occasion of 'State Credit Seminar' held today at Hotel Royal Plaza in Gangtok, as per a PIB release. Minister for Agriculture, Somnath Poudyal, released the 'State Focus Paper: 2018-19'

As the State Level Bankers' Committee [SLBC] convenor, Mr



Chowbey said that there is lot of scope under agriculture sector; however, a clear road map and target has to be set.

General Manager, Reserve Bank of India, Sikkim Regional Office, Gangtok, Olden Nongpluh, indicated that the Credit Deposit ratio [CD ratio] in the State is low and there is scope for increasing the credit flow to priority sectors and non-priority sectors in the state. He also stressed upon the need for setting up District Central Cooperative Banks [DCCBs] in

the State and reiterated the need for appointing more number of 'Banking Correspondents' by Banks in the State so as to ensure that the banking services reach areas where there are no bank branches.

Meanwhile, for the next financial year, the State Focus Paper has estimated a potential of Rs 545.31 crore for credit flow to priority sector activities in the State during the year 2018-19. A potential of Rs 3.81 crore has been estimated for financing 'Dairy

Activity' by Banks under 'Area Based Scheme' so as to give a boost to 'Term Loans' in agriculture. The document also estimated a potential of Rs 59.49 crore under investment in 'Critical Infrastructure' required in the State for improving the credit absorption capacity of farmers and rural populace.

Mr Chowbey has suggested financing of farm activities through Farmers Club and SHGs, and Financial Literacy Camps in remote villages for awareness as

means to tackle the low CD ratio.

GM RBI, Mr Nongpluh informed that State specific products and by-products unique to the State will be more sustainable in the long run. He suggested that all the stakeholders should come up with such type of products which could help in the loan portfolio of the banks.

Assistant General Manager, NABARD, Desh Raj Maurya, gave a detailed presentation on potentials estimated under various sectors.

General Manager-cum-Officer in Charge, NABARD, Sikkim Regional Office, Anjana Lama, in her key note address, presented various measures initiated by NABARD for improving credit flow to agriculture and rural sector in the state through its various promotional grant assistance programmes.

NABARD extended loan support of Rs 466.63 crore to the state government for construction of rural roads, bridges, rural markets, irrigation projects, drinking water supply projects, etc, she informed.

Earlier, Deputy General Manager, NABARD, P Jayakanan, welcomed the dignitaries and the guests and deliberated on the conduct of the State Credit Seminar - 2018. Representatives from State government departments, Banks, Kishi Vigyan Kendras and Non-Governmental Organizations were present on the occasion.



Party functionaries attacked by mob at Namchi Central Park, BJP claims

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:

Bharatiya Janta Party's Sikkim unit functionaries were attacked and manhandled by a mob at Namchi Central Park in South Sikkim today.

On the attack, the party has alleged that the State government and administration have failed to provide security to the people.

On the fourth day of its Vijay Rath Yatra, the State-unit team reached Namchi after covering Tokal Bermiok, Chuba, Namthang and Mainram-Bhanjyang today, informs a BJP press release.

The release adds that while distributing leaflets to invite people for the 38th foundation day celebration of BJP on 06 April at Singtam, a mob of around 25 per-

sons attacked and manhandled youth general secretary, Bikash Dahal, and a woman worker of BJP state-unit at Namchi Central Park.

It is informed that the mob also snatched away khadas and leaflets from them.

The release informs that the incident which took place at around 2:30 pm in the afternoon could be a conspiracy to run out opposition parties from the State.

It, however, adds that the party will continuously move ahead with its initiative in a peaceful manner. Although the police officers of Namchi Police Station have assured to investigate the matter, the party workers will not leave the police station until all culprits are nabbed, the release adds.

Melli youth launch river rafting in Rangit

NIRMAL MANGAR
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:

With an aim to promote adventure tourism as a career option, the unemployed youth of Melli in South Sikkim have started rafting services in Rangit river.

The group, Rangit Triveni Rafting and Rescue Team, has become the first to take up professional rafting in the Rangit.

"This is our effort to promote adventure tourism in the region. It will

not only boost the tourism sector here, but will also generate employment for enterprising youth," said one of the members, Dinesh Rai.

The service was launched on 18 March after the group received a license and clearance from the Forest Department.

"This is an unexplored region in terms of river rafting. The current flow is good and the activity can be included in the South District itinerary for visiting tourists," Mr Rai believes.

The rafting takes off from Rolu and concludes at Champa, covering a distance of 5.5 KM.

"For the longer distance, the rate has been fixed at Rs 4,500 and for the shorter ride of 3.5 KM, we will be charging Rs 3,500. One raft can accommodate around seven people at a time," the members inform.

An expert swimmer and a guide will be provided to assist the sailors in the raft.

"We are grateful to Travel Agents

Association of Sikkim for their guidance," the members add.

Ritesh Rai, a TAAS member, said that the organization will help in the promotion and branding of the initiative.

"We need support from the government in making rafting more vibrant in Rangit," the members said further.

The Rangit river rafting group includes Chetan Thapa, Phurba W Sherpa, Dinesh Rai, Deepak Gajmer,

Bring model scheme for construction workers in 6 months: SC

NEW DELHI, MAR 19 (PTI): The Supreme Court today directed the Centre to frame a model scheme before September 30 to address the issues of education, health, social security and pension for construction workers, saying they build not just infrastructure, but also the nation.

The top court said that more than Rs 37,400 crore have been collected for the benefit of construction workers, but ostensibly only about Rs. 9,500 crores have been utilized for their benefit.

It questioned as to why millions of construction workers across the country are being denied the benefit of remaining Rs 28,000 crore.

The top court further directed all the state governments and union territories to constitute an expert committee and bring out statutory rules within six months.

A bench of Justices M B Lokur and Deepak Gupta said the directions given by the court from time-to-time to implement the two laws -- The Building and Other Construc-

tion Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 (BOCW Act) and the Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Cess Act, 1996, (Cess Act) -- have been flouted with impunity.

"In preparing the model scheme, we expect the Ministry of Labour and Employment to include within it, inter alia, issues and concerns of education, health, social security, old age and disability pension and other benefits that are necessary for living a life of dignity as postulated by the Constitution of India," the bench said.

It added, "We also expect the model scheme to be framed and publicized within a specified time-frame to be decided by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, preferably within six months, but in any event on or before September 30, 2018".

The top court said that the every state government and Union Territory shall constitute an expert committee and frame statutory rules under provisions of the BOCW Act, if such

statutory Rules have not already been framed.

"Setting up an expert committee and framing statutory rules should be in a time-bound manner, with the exercise being completed preferably within six months and in any event by September 30, 2018," it said.

The court observed in the judgement penned down by Justice Lokur for the bench that "no state government and no UT seems willing to fully adhere to and abide by (or is perhaps even capable of fully adhering to and abiding by) two laws solemnly enacted by Parliament...".

It said that BOCW Act is a welfare legislation intended and enacted for the benefit of the unorganised sector of building and construction workers.

"It has a strong flavour of social justice and is a serious attempt by Parliament to ensure that building and construction workers are not exploited because of their poverty and their children do not suffer their fate in terms of education, healthy

living and whatever it takes to live a life of dignity. It is in this background and context that the BOCW Act was enacted by Parliament," the bench said.

Failing to get exact figure of funds collected so far through the Cess, the top court said that "it is quite shocking that even the CAG does not have all the figures and whatever figures are available, may not be reliable".

"If this constitutional body does not have the required and accurate information, there is undoubtedly a financial mess in this area and this chaos has been existing since 1996. The only victims of this extremely unfortunate state of affairs and official apathy are construction workers who suffer from multiple vulnerabilities," it said.

Referring to the situation of construction workers, the bench said that many of them are women and at least some of them have children to look after and "even they are victims of official apathy".

The bench noted that quantum of cess collected in one quarter from March 31, 2017 till June 30, 2017 is in the region of about Rs. 5000 crores.

"This is a huge amount and would work out to about Rs. 20,000 crores annual collection. The figures presented to us by the CAG or even the Standing Committee do not reflect such a huge collection. Obviously, there is something terribly rotten with the collection and accounting mechanism and it is quite clear that the exercise of registration, both of the establishments and of the construction workers is not being carried out satisfactorily," the bench said.

The top court passed several directions and hoped that they will be complied with by the Centre, all the states and Union Territories.

It posted the matter for hearing on May 1, only to ascertain whether timelines have been fixed by the concerned authorities for compliance of the directions.

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Unidentified body found near Temi

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:**

An unidentified body of a male was found by villagers on 17 Mar at Kumar Gaon, near Temi in South Sikkim.

A press release received from the office of Assistant Superintendent of Police [South] informs that the body was clad in black jacket, blue sweater, vest and grey pants. The body is presently under the custody of Temi PS, South District and is preserved at Singtam District Hospital.

If anyone has information about the identity, they are requested to contact South District Police.



Adolescence education held at Rorathang

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:**

A daylong sensitization programme on adolescence education for community mobilization was organised by Rorathang Social Welfare Association in collaboration with the State Council of Educational Research & Training [SCERT] and Rorathang Secondary School at Rorathang Bazaar in East Sikkim on 16 Mar, a press release informs.

The programme had the presence of Ranju Pradhan [SCERT], Dr Kuljan Lama [STNM] and Sonam Bhutia [DHO, Singtam District Hospital] as resource persons.

The main objective of the programme was to bring awareness and educate the community members on social issues.

The resource persons highlighted the important role of a community towards adolescent issues and advocated for community-wide support for restricting access of minors to tobacco, alcohol, drugs and other narcotic items.

The programme was chaired by Zilla Panchayat, Leela Sharma, in the presence of Panchayat President, Munna Bhushal, Panchayat members, stakeholders, teachers, guardians, students and representatives from Police and PHSC.

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SKM accuses Gangtok MLA of favouritism and interference in developmental works

**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's Gangtok constituency level committee has alleged that Gangtok MLA, Pintso Chopel Lepcha, has been interfering in every work of different departments in the constituency. The party has accused the MLA of favouritism in providing works to youth in the area.

Addressing a press conference here today, SKM CLC president for Gangtok constituency, Sanjeev Gurung, alleged that the interference of MLA in various departments has been hindering the development of the constituency.

On the same, he asserted that every department should be allowed to work and function free from influence for the development of the area.



"This is not a question of SKM or SDF party but development works in the area should be provided to the youth of Gangtok. Various developmental works of the area have been provided to a few select youth and inexperienced contractors from other districts," he alleged.

He also alleged of favouritism in the bidding process of new in-

frastructure at Star Hall complex in PPP mode.

"Gangtok MLA should raise issues and problems of the constituency and its people in the Assembly. Gangtok has been facing problems of bad roads and shortage of drinking water supply among other issues. Despite huge funding by different financial institutions to address water scarcity in the capital, the

area is still facing acute shortage of drinking water," said Mr Gurung.

On the same, the party has demanded transparency in the execution of works in the area.

Mr Gurung alleged that houses meant for poor families in residential complexes made by the government in Gangtok have been allotted to workers of ruling party from other districts. He added that such action has deprived genuine beneficiaries of a proper house for living.

SKM secretary [press & publicity], Abhishek Sharma, alleged lapses in the recently launched Start Up scheme of the State government as well. He protested rules which required an applicant to also include a recommendation from the area MLA.

"Area MLA should

know the candidate properly and should check the project report before recommending," he said.

He further claimed that they have a blank form of the Start Up scheme which has the recommendation of the Gangtok MLA along with his signature and stamp.

Providing a copy of the same to media persons, he questioned, "How could the Area MLA give a recommendation on a blank form without knowing the candidate or the project. This way anyone can take advantage of such blank forms."

The press conference was also addressed by general secretary, Sushil Pradhan, Scheduled Caste wing secretary, Perna Darnal, and surveillance wing secretary, Amar Rai.

SSB sponsors skill development programme in horticulture



GANGTOK, 19 MAR [PIB]:

Five-day skill development training programme on "Processing & Value Addition of Horticultural Crops", sponsored by 36th Battalion Sashastra Seema Bal, Gyalshing, under its Civic Action Programme in North East region, commenced today at College of Agricultural Engineering & Post Harvest Technology [Central Agricultural University], Ranipool.

A press release informs that the training is being conducted for 15 farmers of remote border villages of West Sikkim.

Dean, CAEPHT, Professor PP Dabral, presided over the inaugural function in the presence of Commandant Medical, 36 Bn SSB, Dr CK Das, as chief guest and Publicity Officer, SSB HQ, Gangtok, GD Saklani, as guest of honour.

Addressing the opening function, Dr Dabral spoke about the importance of technology in agriculture. He assured that professors and instructors will give hands-on training to the farmers on processing and value addition of horticultural crops.

Assistant Professor,

Dr RP Mishra, and Head, Department of Processing and Food Engineering, Dr Sujata Jena, explained the details of training to be given to the farmers at farmers produce processing-cum-skill development centre of CAEPHT.

Commandant of 36th Bn SSB, Dr Das, urged trainees to make use of this opportunity and make agricultural work economically viable while SSB Publicity Officer, Mr Saklani, informed that 15 young farmers were selected by 36th Battalion from the interior border villages with the aim to develop their skills in agricultural trades.

He further said that SSB is not only providing security to the border but also helping border residents in development of their areas and economic conditions.

It may be mentioned here, CAEPHT will train the farmers on processing and value addition of horticultural crops. Nine Professors and instructors will give them hands-on training and also help them in establishing the business, if required. The training will conclude on 23 Mar.



Training on organic management of pests & diseases for Sikkim Mandarin

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:**

Agriculture Technology Management Agency, West Sikkim organised a training programme on "Organic Management of Pest & Diseases in Sikkim Mandarin" at Aarigoan in Yangthang, West Sikkim on 17 Mar.

The programme was attended by 30 farmers, a press release informs.

Block Technology Manager, Safal Pandey, and Assistant Technology Manager, Pavitra Subba, conducted the pro-

gramme and highlighted the importance of organic vegetable cultivation and Kisan Call Centre.

Subject Matter Specialist [Plant Protection], KVK West Sikkim, Rohini Silwal, was the resource person for the programme.

She highlighted on the major pest & diseases infesting tomato and their organic management.

Thereafter, she demonstrated the preparation of bio-pesticide using water, cow urine and neem oil which can be used against red ants.

HRDD conducts basic Yoga training for untrained teachers

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAR:**

Directorate of Primary Education, Human Resource Development Department, organized a massive Yoga training programme for untrained Yoga teachers of all districts of Sikkim from 07 Mar. The training was conducted in order to equip government schools of Sikkim with trained teachers to teach basics of Yoga to children, a press release informs.

It may be mentioned here, Yoga has been introduced in the curriculum in all government schools from the academic session 2016. To

ensure that all schools have trainers from the beginning of this academic session, the training was organized phase-wise for all districts.

The first phase of the training for East district participants concluded on 09 Mar at the conference hall of Teachers' Guest House in Syari. Sixty-six teachers were trained in the basics of yoga.

The second phase of the training began from 09 Mar at Singhik Secondary School for North district wherein 31 teachers participated from various schools of the district. The third phase of training for

West district concluded on 14 Mar with the participation of 90 teachers.

Likewise, for South district, the three-day basic Yoga training was scheduled from 15 Mar which saw a total of 79 participants from various schools of South district.

However, despite efforts to organize training in all the districts, the training was centralized in Gangtok for South and West districts owing to the non-availability of suitable venues because of the ongoing CBSE examinations.

Ten master trainers were engaged in imparting training to 266 trainees.

The trainers were selected from among the Yoga trainers working in different schools of Sikkim.

The inaugural session of the district-wise training at the conference hall of Teacher's Guest House in Syari was attended by officials from Primary Directorate, SSA, RMSA and SSTRB. For North district, the inauguration was done by Deputy Director and the valedictory function was attended by Joint Director, North.

Additional Chief Secretary, HRDD, GP Upadhyaya, addressed the trainees of West district on 13 Mar and urged the participants to make the

best use of the training period and in turn teach the children what they have learnt.

Director, Primary Education, Bhim Thatal, who was also the chief guest on the inaugural sessions of East and South districts congratulated the participants of all three districts and advised the teachers to share the correct poses of doing various Asanas, Pranayamas, etc. of Yoga with their students.

The entire training programme was coordinated and supervised by State Yoga Coordinator, Laxuman Adhikari, the release adds.

EVM strong room opens at Namchi

NAMCHI, 19 MAR [IPR]: An Electronic Voting Machine [EVM] strong room established at the premises of District Administration Centre [DAC] in Namchi was opened today as per the direction of Election Commission of India [ECI] for verification of EVM machines.

Present during the process were District Collector [South], Raj Yadav, Superintendent of Police [South], Siva Prasad Yellarsi, Under Secretary, Election, Tripti H Subba, Sub Divisional Magistrate [Headquarter], Sunil Mothey, officials from Election department and representatives from various political parties.

The team inspected and verified the EVMs which have been kept in the strong room. It was also informed that authorized representatives will be allowed to remain present at the time of opening and closure of the EVM strong room.

Additionally, similar process will continue on 20 Mar for the authentication of the EVM machines following which a report will be sent to CEO Sikkim and ECI as per the prescribed directions.



Gangtok on Tuesday, 20 Mar

Temp: 24°C / 09°C
Forecast: Mostly sunny and beautiful day; a shower in spots in the evening followed by occasional rain and drizzle late.
Sunrise: 05:40 AM
Sunset: 5:47 PM

Awareness on glacial lake outburst flood held at Pheedang

WANGCHUK BHUTIA MANGAN, 19 MAR:

An awareness programme on Glacial Lake Outburst Flood was organized by Sikkim State Disaster Management Department [SSDMA], District Disaster Management Authority [DDMA, North], Land & Revenue Department, under SDC-UNDP project on "Strengthening State strategies on climate action mitigation of South Lhonak Lake" at Pheedang in Lower Dzongu, North Sikkim, today.

Resource persons from the SSDMA imparted information on the status of the South Lhonak Lake. It was also informed that the awareness was held to spread awareness and not to spread panic.

District Project Officer [Headquarter], SSDMA, Jigme Bhutia, presented the issue of glacial lake outburst flood at South Lhonak Lake.

Sub Divisional Magistrate, Dzongu, Tshering Dorjee Bhutia, and SDM Mangan, PW Lepcha, also addressed the awareness session and stressed that disaster equipments will be provided for emergency along with training to the Disaster Management Committee.

The representative of Central Water Commission underlined about satellite monitoring of the lake while the NHPC representative shared their experiences on reducing the risk.

PET for Police Constable recruitment held in Mangan

MANGAN, 19 MAR [IPR]: The physical endurance test for recruitment of 330 posts [270 male, 60 female] of Police Constables was conducted today at Mangan Public ground. In the technical wing, the recruitment test was conducted for 12 posts. A total of 856 candidates applied from North Sikkim.

Five events namely long jump, 100m race, high jump, short put and 1500m race was conducted. Biometric identification of the qualifying candidates was also taken to identify these candidates during the written exams.

Present during the event was Additional DGP, AK Singh, DIG Special Branch, DB Giri, Superintendent of Police [North], KL Tenzing, and SP Lines, Rabden Bhutia, and other personnel from the Police Department.

Workshop held on Spring-shed Management

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 MAR:

Two-day workshop on "Spring-shed Management: integrating aquifers, watersheds and water security in mountains" was jointly organised by Rural Management & Development Department and Advanced Center for Water Resources Development & Management [ACWADAM], Pune on 16-17 Mar at Janta Bhawan in Gangtok, a press release informs.

Delegates from 22 organisations from across India like Government of Nagaland, Department of Forest and Jal Sansthan [Govt of Uttarakhand], International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development [Nepal], United Nations Development Programme, National Bank For Agriculture And Rural Development [UNDP, NABARD, Tripura], People Science Institute [Dehradun], Chirag [Uttarakhand], Himmothan [Uttarakhand], Himalayan Seva Sangh [Rishikesh], Key Stone Foundation [Tamil Nadu], Arghyam Trust [Bangalore], Gram Vikas [Orissa], Save the Hills

and Prasari [West Bengal], Tata Trust, India Water Portal, PAST [Manipur], TMI India, WWF and Eco-Tourism & Conservation Society of Sikkim [ECOSS, Sikkim] were present for the workshop.

The first day of the workshop was a field visit to Dhara Vikas site at Perbing in South Sikkim wherein the State resource persons, Dr Subash Dhakal and Pem Norbu Sherpa, explained to the

participants how the science of hydro-geology was applied while executing the Dhara Vikas project.

The second day included a classroom session at Janta Bhawan which was chaired by Additional Secretary, RM&DD, Sarika Pradhan.

In her inaugural speech, Ms Pradhan highlighted the different initiatives for water security taken under RM&DD such as preparation of hab-

itation level Village Water Security Plan, Mapping of springs, Hydrogeological Modelling and intensive research in collaboration with CDAC Pune. She also mentioned that the Dhara Vikas initiative of the State has been appreciated by Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India.

Dr Himansu Kulkarni and Jayesh Desai from ACWADAM, Dr Debashish Sen from PSI

[Dehradun], a representative from Chirag [Uttarakhand] and Dr S Dhakal and Pem Norbu from RM&DD gave their presentations.

The presentations and discussions included the problem of spring depletion, approaches to understanding spring systems and partnerships through which the concept of spring-shed management is being implemented.

The second-day session was also attended by all Additional District Collectors [Development], Deputy Secretaries, Block Development Officers, Assistant Engineers and officials from RM&DD, the release adds.

The programme concluded with a panel discussion on governance of spring water which was actively participated by representatives of different organizations.



Adarsh Gaon youth install eight CCTV cams

SINGTAM, 19 MAR: Adarsh Youth Club of Singtam has installed eight CCTV cameras at Adarsh Gaon here from funds collected from a successful tam-bola session organized by it during Makar Sakranti earlier this year. The cameras came at the cost of around Rs 1 lakh, it is informed.

The monitor for all the cameras has

been installed at the Police Outpost in Adarsh Gaon itself.

The installation was inaugurated by Cultural Affairs Minister, GM Gurung.

Further, the Adarsh Youth Club also donated 30 chairs along with sound system to Kalyan Samaj of Adarsh Gaon. [from SHITAL PRADHAN]



ASSCWA to organize Dr BR Ambedkar football tourney

REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 19 MAR:

All Sikkim Scheduled Caste Welfare Association will be organizing the 1st Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar Open Football Tournament from 01-09 Apr here at Paljor Stadium in Gangtok.

The organising committee is headed by Health Minister, AK Ghatani.

Sixteen football teams from across the State and from Jaigaon, Kalimpong and Nepal will be participating in the event. Since this will be an open knock-out tournament, the organizing commit-

tee has invited interested football clubs to join the tourney.

From Sikkim, Himalayan FC, Aakraman FC, USFC, Sports Hostel and Sikkim Police are expected to participate in the tournament. The final match will be played on 14 Apr since the date coincides with the birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar.

Addressing a press meet today here at the conference hall of Paljor Stadium, chairperson of the organizing committee cum former Minister, AS Baraily, said, "The motive behind organiz-

ing the tournament is to provide platform to the players of Sikkim. We have been celebrating the birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar in a grand manner every year. This year the association decided to organize the tournament with focus on sports and fitness. We hope to receive positive responses as this is the first time that the tourney is being organised."

He appealed to all other associations, departments and the general public of Sikkim to come forward and support the players.

Three-day State level Yoga and Naturopathy seminar begins

GANGTOK, 19 MAR

[IPR]: In a bid to promote healthy lifestyles among the people of the State by making them embrace the ancient art and science of fitness - Yoga and Naturopathy, the 3rd State Level Seminar 2018 began today in the capital.

The seminar is being organized by the Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy [CCRYN], New Delhi in collaboration with the Sikkim State AYUSH Society, Department of Health Care, Human Services & Family Welfare, Government of Sikkim.

The three-day programme was declared open by Speaker, Sikkim Legislative Assembly, KN Rai, who attended the function as chief guest.

The inaugural session had the presence of participants from National Training Centre [NTC], STNM, Nursing students from Vinayaka Mission, Sikkim



Manipal Institute of Medical Science [SMIMS] and Sikkim University.

The seminar will be facilitated by resource persons Dr Vadiraja HS [Research Officer, CCRYN, New Delhi], Dr Sanjeet S [Consultant, Yoga and Naturopathy, CCRYN], Dr Sagun M [Director, Green Word Nature Care & Care Hospital, Siliguri] and Dr Neelam Sarju [Consultant, Yoga and Naturopathy].

While addressing the gathering, Speaker Mr Rai extended happiness on being part of the seminar. "Yoga and Naturopathy is associated with nature and is highly beneficial for holistic health especially in today's age. In ancient times, there were no facilities of medicines and antibiotics therefore these natural processes were the reason for the healthy human environment," said Mr Rai.

He also shared his personal experiences of practicing yoga and urged every individual to do the same and not to depend merely on allopathic medicines.

He also congratulated AYUSH and CCRYN for or-

ganizing such seminars and urged the department to also organize seminars and awareness programmes on life style and food habits in the future.

Resource person, Dr Vadiraja HS in his address said that the aim of the seminar is to update the knowledge of the participants and to help understand the mechanism of Yoga & Naturopathy practices. He also informed about CCRYN and its activities.

Earlier, the welcome address was delivered by Additional Director Health Services cum State Programme Officer, AYUSH, Dr Keshree Rai.

The programme also had the presence of Dr AD Subba [Advisor, Health Department] and Dr Bimal Rai [Mission Director, National AYUSH Mission/ National Health Mission Sikkim] along with senior officials of Health Department and CCRYN.

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For a Better Public Transport System

At least 1,14,293 households would welcome a reliable Public Transport option

Waiting in the sun for a share-cab is not the most relaxing way to begin a work-day, especially now that the weather is finally warming up and a tourist season setting in. Not only are the jams enormous and tiring, even taxis have become scarce as they chase after the more remunerative sightseeing fares. This development, when taken up along with the growing hesitation among banks to jump at every vehicle loan application, leads to a situation where one can safely assume that the number of new cars on Sikkim roads will not be growing at the same clip as they did in the decade between 2001-2011. A host of factors came together in that decade to inject an explosion of vehicles in Sikkim, and while this might be all fine if one were looking at vehicle ownership as a sign of prosperity, the traffic jams here led to a mistaken notion that there were enough private vehicles in Sikkim to justify the absence of a decent public transport system here.

Let's hold that thought and begin with vehicle ownership statistics in Sikkim as revealed in the data for households released by the Census of India for 2011. Sikkim had around 1.04 lakh households in 2001 which grew to 1,28,131 households in 2011. While the population grew at its slowest rate in recent times at 12.6% between 2001- 2011 [against 33.6% growth in the previous decade, 1991-2001], four wheel vehicle ownership grew nearly four-times. Where 2.3% of the families in Sikkim owned a car/jeep in 2001, the 2011 headcount revealed that this has now grown to 8.3%. It is now seven years since that census was undertaken, so chances are that the number of families owning a car of their own has grown some more or possibly the same families are now owning more vehicles. Comparing Sikkim's [per capita vehicle spread against the national average for such ownership throws up some interesting statistics as well. While back in 2001, car ownership in Sikkim at 2.3% was slightly lower than the national average of 2.5%, in 2011, it was nearly double the national average of 4.7%. For those who would prefer real numbers, here it is - while 2,618 of the 1.04 lakh households in Sikkim owned a car in 2001, in 2011, this number had grown to 10,635 families out of the around 1.28 lakh households here. The increase, as mentioned, has been mind-boggling and the endless line of vehicles on the highways and town roads here also projects the mistaken notion that there are already too many vehicles on the roads.

And some might even use this density to argue against adding the burden of a wider public transport system here. But that would be a wrong inference, because while many more families in Sikkim now own cars, the number of Sikkim households without any mode of conveyance is also staggering at 89.2% of the households here. Interestingly, at the national level, while much fewer families on average own a car, only 44.1% of the households own no mode of transportation. Again, for those who would prefer actual numbers – the Census of 2011 found that 1,14,293 households in Sikkim do not own any form of conveyance, neither a car, nor a scooter nor even a bicycle. This number was 1,00,548 in 2001. The point being made here is that nearly 90% of the households are in need of a cheap and reliable mode of transportation.

The road network in Sikkim is already expansive and there are jeeps available to and from every corner of the State. People have recourse to only an occasional SNT bus in most places and private jeep services are expectedly more expensive than what a state operated bus would charge for the same journey. What is also sorely missed in Sikkim is a public transport option for shorter distances. Even the City Runner which has a well advised route connecting Gangtok to the suburbs and nearby towns has too few buses on the road compared the number of commuters who would use it if they were more frequent and better scheduled (at least to the level that the jams on Gangtok's only road will allow). The same applies to the districts.

Fact remains that close to 90% of the population remains denied the option of using a state supported public transport, which, even if it were slower, would also be more reliable [against the tourist season vagaries of private operators], safer and cheaper. The policy makers should perhaps factor the interests of this sector in their future projections.

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

Mail us at: letters@summittimes.com

My Lai: 50 years after, American soldiers' shocking crimes must be remembered

ROBERT HODIERNE
theconversation.com

Sa Thi Quy was 43 years old on the morning of March 16, 1968, when Americans came to her hamlet near the coast of the South China Sea in what was then South Vietnam.

"The first time the Americans came, the children followed them. They gave the children sweets to eat. Then they smiled and left. We don't know their language – they smiled and said OK and so we learned the word OK."

"The second time they came, we poured them water to drink. They didn't say anything."

"The third time they killed everyone."

The name of her hamlet was My Lai.

DIM MEMORIES OF A HORRIFIC CRIME

If Americans remember that name at all, they most likely remember that something dark and awful happened there. They are probably fuzzy on the details. Maybe they remember some grainy color photographs of Vietnamese bodies piled in a ditch. Or a lieutenant named Calley.

But on this 50th anniversary of what happened in that Vietnamese hamlet, it is worth recalling the grotesque details, in the hope that doing so will help prevent a future My Lai.

It is still an unsettled question about what, exactly, the troops of the Americal Division were ordered to do and who, exactly, issued the orders. What is settled is that for four hours that morning, American young men went on a rampage of killing and rape.

When they finally broke for lunch, the Americans had butchered 504 Vietnamese old men, women, children and babies. No military-aged men were killed. Only one weapon belonging to the Vietnamese was found.

Sometimes, the soldiers shot Vietnamese one at a time. Sometimes they herded them into ditches and machine-gunned them down in groups.

Sometimes it seemed as if the Americans were making a sport out of it.

One soldier threw a wounded elderly man down a well then dropped a grenade in after him. A soldier bayoneted an old man to death.

Another soldier was armed with an M-79 grenade launcher. Other soldiers testified at Army hearings that the man was frustrated that he hadn't been able to use his weapon, so he herded some women and children together, backed off and fired several explosive rounds into them. Other soldiers with pistols killed those who were only wounded.

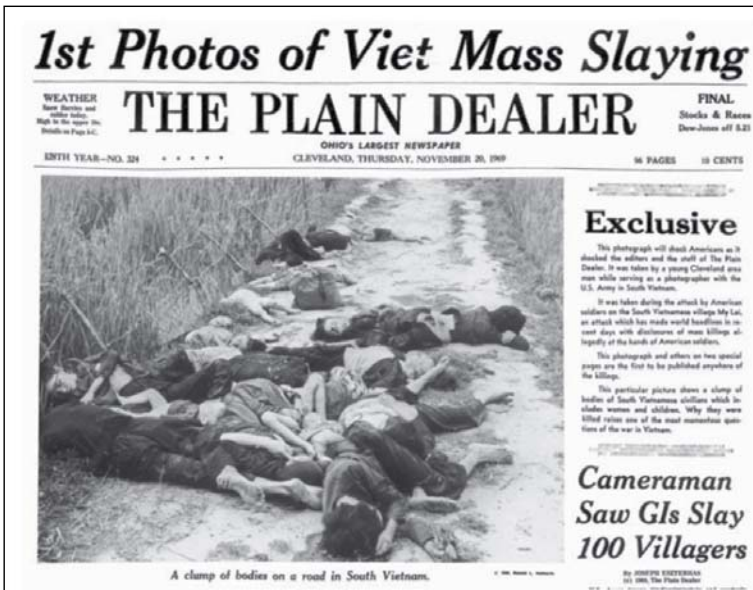
In a better-disciplined outfit, the officers in the field would have stopped such violence.

But in this outfit, officers took part in the killing.

'BLEW HER BRAINS OUT'

According to testimony from his men, one company commander, Capt. Ernest Medina, shot and killed a wounded and helpless woman. Lt. William Calley grabbed one woman by the hair and blew her brains out with his .45-caliber pistol. Then he shot to death an infant she'd been carrying. In total, Calley is thought to have killed or ordered killed more than 100 civilians.

It is worth noting that the massacre may never



have come to light if it weren't for a soldier who was an aspiring journalist. Ronald Ridenhour served in the Americal Division in Vietnam at the time of the massacre but was not present at My Lai. Ridenhour got wind of it, interviewed men who had been there and wrote his findings in a letter to 30 members of Congress and the Pentagon.

As the story started to break – mostly due to the efforts of young investigative reporter Seymour Hersh – another soldier who had been in My Lai published the color photos that are the best documentation of the horror at My Lai.

I covered Vietnam for two years as a photojournalist and was in Vietnam when the My Lai story broke. I remember that I was stunned. I'd seen villages burned and Vietnamese pushed around, but nothing even approaching My Lai.

In the wake of all that bad publicity, the Army appointed a highly decorated and well regarded three-star general, Lt. Gen. William R. Peers, to investigate the cover-up. Over four months, he and his staff took sworn testimony from about 400 witnesses. The transcript runs to 20,000 pages.

Ten years ago a sharp producer in London, Celina Dunlop, found out that the testimony had been tape-recorded. I worked on a two-part BBC radio documentary about My Lai, using those tapes. It was the first time I'd heard the voices of the men who took part, describing what they had done and seen.

Their voices haunt me. I used voices to write a play about the massacre – called simply enough, "My Lai" – and in doing so, read all 20,000 pages of their testimony. No writer could do better than their simple, direct description of the horror they let loose on that village.

HEROES AMID THE CARNAGE

There were really only three Americans who behaved heroically that day. Warrant Officer Hugh Thompson was flying a small scout helicopter with two crewmen, Glenn Andreotti and Lawrence Colburn. They witnessed the massacre from above. When they saw American troops advancing toward a group of old men, women and children, Thompson landed his helicopter between the soldiers and the civilians and ordered his crewmen to shoot the Americans if they opened fire on the civilians. He called other choppers to evacuate the civilians. For that, Thompson was shunned by fellow officers for years afterward.

What isn't usually written about at My Lai are

the rapes.

While the exact number may never be known, the Americans raped at least several dozen women and girls, some as young as 12. And then murdered and mutilated many of them.

One soldier, Dennis Bunning of Raymond, California, testified that a sergeant "took one girl there, and drug her into a compartment, like in a hootch there, you know, and hootches don't have doors or nothing, and you could see, and he raped one girl inside there. And then there was three other guys and one girl all at one time. ... A guy would just grab one of the girls there and in one or two incidents they shot the girls when they got done."

Pham Thi Tuan, who lived in My Lai, told a documentary filmmaker, "Over there a naked woman who had been raped and a virgin girl with her vagina slit open. We don't know why they behaved like that."

'FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP'

And that, finally, is the question that is most vexing.

How could American boys behave like that? How could they behave like Nazi and Japanese soldiers in World War II?

One excuse frequently offered is that the unit had been hard hit and was in some sort of shock. In fact, the unit had only been in Vietnam for three months and had never been in a firefight. Before My Lai, only five men from the unit had been killed, all by mines or snipers, at a time when Americans were losing 15-20 men per day.

Another excuse is that the men were subpar, draftees, the bottom of a rapidly emptying barrel. But that's not true either, according to an Army investigation. By every measure – intelligence, education, physical fitness – they were typical of the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who never engaged in such behavior.

In the end, Peers, who headed the investigation, concluded that the massacre was a failure of leadership, from the commanding general on down. He concluded that 28 officers and enlisted men had committed war crimes – murder and rape – or conspired to cover up the crimes.

But in the end, only 14 officers were charged. And only Calley was convicted. President Richard Nixon, bowing to public pressure from those who believed Calley was a scapegoat, commuted his life sentence. He spent three and half years confined, most of that time under house arrest.

Nixon wouldn't even allow Peers to call it a massacre. The massacre became, instead, "a tragedy of major proportions."

The darkest side of American exceptionalism is the belief that somehow we are more moral than others and that our troops would never slaughter innocents civilians. Americans need to understand that in every war in the history of humankind, soldiers commit hideous acts. Even our troops. It is inevitable.

Americans need to be prepared to share the moral responsibility for those crimes when we send our young men and women off to fight wars on our behalf.

[the writer is Chair and Professor of Journalism, University of Richmond]

Why every day should be World Water Day

CAROLYN JOHNS
theconversation.com

Most people think of World Water Day as just another international event on the calendar — when water becomes newsworthy for one day in March, on the 22nd.

Yet we would be hard-pressed to go without water for just a few hours, let alone one whole day. Depriving ourselves of water even for a short period of time would demonstrate to Canadians just how much we take our water for granted.

In the week ahead, there are many global, national and local events organized to discuss and take action related to water. The 8th World Water Forum, held this week in Brazil (the country with the most fresh water in the world) is the world's largest conference on water, attracting more than 40,000 representatives from governments, NGOs and companies.

At the forum, the United Nations will launch the new International Decade for Action on Water (2018-2028) and release its annual World Water Report. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) will also release its new

Water Governance Indicators based on 12 Water Governance Principles.

These indicators will allow jurisdictions like Canada to gauge how well they are adapting their policies and governance systems to new realities and challenges.

MEETING OUR WATER CHALLENGES

The emphasis at these forums is on the need for innovation and investment in the water sector, water science, water technology and water infrastructure — the hard services required to meet our water challenges and cope with crises like drought, flooding and pollution.

These are important investments that will yield a significant return on investment in coming decades. However, what the OECD and UN have been increasingly emphasizing is the need for dialogue and action on water governance — to focus on changing water behaviours and decisions.

Indeed, even countries with an abundance of freshwater like Brazil and Canada will face significant water challenges in the coming decades. As drought, flooding and pollution across the globe and in communities across

Canada has shown, water governance challenges are increasing in contexts of both abundance and scarcity.

In Canada, we have some very serious water challenges in Indigenous communities, new and enduring water pollution in many of our lakes, rivers and aquifers and aging infrastructure at a time when populations are urbanizing.

Evidence of water crises in Canada and water infrastructure needs have touched many Canadian communities, and surveys in the past 10 years indicate that Canadians consistently rank water as our most valuable natural resource. Yet our policies, decisions and conduct do not reflect the significance of water to our society and economy.

THE NEED FOR WATER 'THINKERS'

In addition to improving our water policies and adapting our water governance institutions, Canada needs to place more emphasis on its future water thinkers, leaders and practitioners.

Investments in hard services and water infrastructure are very important. However, to be creative and innovative with these investments

we need new approaches. New approaches come from investing in people focused on the social, economic and political challenges we increasingly face in governing our waters.

One such approach is encouraging governments, the private sector, NGOs and educational institutions to invest in Canada's future water leaders – and the Geoffrey Bruce Fellowships in Canadian Freshwater Policy is a great example.

The fellowships were established in 2017, by Erika Bruce, to honour her late husband's efforts to champion local and global efforts to protect Canada's freshwater resources. They provide funding to encourage Canada's best young minds to help improve water governance — at the local, national and international levels.

Katherine Minich and Edgardo Tovilla are the inaugural recipients of the fellowships at Ryerson University.

Minich, who is an Inuk PhD student in policy studies, is focusing her doctoral research on how traditional knowledge can be the foundation of new water governance approaches in Canada's northern and Indigenous

turn to 06

Swaraj meets Nepal's commerce minister, ways to boost trade discussed

NEW DELHI, MAR 19 (PTI): External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj today met Nepal's Industry, Commerce and Supplies Minister Matrika Yadav and discussed ways to take forward trade, commerce and developmental partnership.

"Neighbourhood first! EAM @SushmaSwaraj met with Nepal's Minister of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Matrika Yadav. Leaders discussed ways to take our trade, commerce and developmental partnership forward," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said.

According to the MEA, India accounts for over two-third of Nepal's merchandise trade, about one-third of trade in services, 46 per cent of foreign direct investments, almost 100 per cent of petroleum supplies and a significant share of inward remittance on account of pensioners and workers.

Last week, Swaraj made a phone call to congratulate her newly-appointed counterpart Pradeep Gyawali and extended him an invitation to visit India.

Assam-Mizoram border dispute not to feature in Delhi meeting: Lal Thanhawla

AIZAWL, MAR 19 (PTI): Mizoram Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla today informed the Assembly that the talks to be held in New Delhi tomorrow between chief secretaries of Assam and Mizoram would not touch the border dispute between the two states.

Lal Thanhawla said that



state chief secretary Arvind Ray would talk about the re-

Mizo students and reporters on March eight and ten.

The meeting, to be chaired by union home secretary and attended by home ministry officials and chief secretaries of the two states, has been convened by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

The border dispute erupt-

ed in the wake of protests by Mizo students, which turned violent recently as Mizo Zirlai Pawl tried to construct a rest house on NH 154 near the border on February 27 on land owned by the first state chief minister Ch Chhunga at Zophai area near Mizoram-Assam border area.

Fire reduces 18 houses to ashes in Arunachal's Roing

ITANAGAR, MAR 19 (PTI): A fire broke out at Lower Dibang Valley district of Arunachal Pradesh yesterday evening, reducing 18 houses to ashes, police today said. However, there were no casualties in the incident.

The incident occurred at Model Village in Roing, the district headquarters. The houses were under District Urban Development Agency (DUDA).

The wind-aided fire spread quickly to the closely built houses and reduced all 18 of them to ashes before the fire fighters brought the flame under control after hours of efforts.

The fire is suspected to have started from an unattended fireplace, the police said.

Roing Fire Station in-charge Kasem Tayeng informed that strong winds made it difficult for the fire fighters to contain the blaze.

BSF seizes Bangladeshi Taka

MALDA (WB), MAR 19 (PTI): The Border Security Force has seized Bangladeshi currency from near the Indo-Bangla border in West Bengal's Malda district, a BSF release said today.

BSF troops made the seizure on Sunday when they chased a miscreant near Mohadipur border outpost. The miscreant

fled and on searching the area they found a packet containing 10,970,00 Bangladeshi taka, it said.

Malda is used as a corridor to push in counterfeit Indian currency notes from across the border.

The seized currency was handed over to the customs department at Mohadipur, the release added.

KCR meets Mamata, says this is beginning of federal front

KOLKATA, MAR 19 (PTI): Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao met his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee here today and discussed the formation of a federal front to take on the BJP and the Congress in the 2019 general election.

Talking to reporters after the meeting at the State Secretariat,

Rao, the chief of Telangana Rashtra Samithi, said that the country needed an alternative agenda and an alternative political force.

"The country needs something good...What will happen if the BJP goes and the Congress comes? Will it do any wonders? We are in talks with like-minded parties," he said, emerging from his meeting with

Banerjee who heads the Trinamool Congress.

He said this was the beginning of the federal front which would be a people's front.

Rao had recently said a non-Congress and non-BJP front should be formed in the country, as he called for a "qualitative change" in politics.

Only 6% of women have critical illness cover in cities: Survey

MUMBAI, MAR 19 (PTI): Women in the metros are more cautious about health than their counterparts in

the non-metros but only 6 per cent of a survey have critical illness cover against 22 per cent who have a health insurance.

This is despite the fact that as much as 88 per cent of the 1,000 respondents in the survey believe that critical illness is increasing because of lack of exercise.

Also, only 33 per cent of the respondents pay attention to their own health even though over two-thirds of the respondents feel physical activity is important, says an ICICI Lombard survey among 1000 women in the 22-45-year age bracket in eight cities, both metros and non-metros conducted online.

When it comes to health check-ups, though 79 per cent do it, the frequency is only once in two years, while 29 per cent feel such check-ups are not needed. According to the study, 68 per cent of women in the

metros feel that any physical activity/ exercise is important to stay healthy.

However, only 33 per cent of them pay attention to their health, with women in metros having a major share.

Significantly, the survey finds that most women believe that regular health check-ups are not very important and as much as 79 per cent of them do medical checkups only once in two years.

Busy lifestyle is a key excuse for the metro women to not take care of their health, while, women in non-metros are under a pre-conceived notion that they are fit.

The survey enumerates one important fact about the rise in critical illnesses. Sedentary lifestyle, heavy work pressure, late working hours and poor eating habits are few among the many reasons for this.

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Bangla SC stays Khaleda Zia's release on bail for 20 days

ANISUR RAHMAN

DHAKA, MAR 19 (PTI): Bangladesh Supreme Court today stayed the release of former prime minister Khaleda Zia on bail in a corruption case in which she was sentenced to five years in jail, prompting her party to announce a nation-wide demonstrations tomorrow demanding her unconditional release.

Zia, 72, was sentenced on February 8 in connection with the embezzlement of 21 million taka (about USD 250,000) in foreign donations meant for the Zia Orphanage Trust, named after her late husband Ziaur Rahman, a military ruler-turned-politician.

"The full bench of the appellate division (of the Supreme Court) stayed until May 8 her (Zia's) bail, which means she will not be freed



until that day," a spokesperson from the Attorney General's office said.

The five member apex court bench, headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, also fixed May 8 the date for hearing the arguments supporting and opposing

Zia's four-month interim bail by the High Court.

The Chief Justice said after examining records of the case, all the four judges of the bench unanimously reached the decision.

Justice Hossain also asked the government and the Anti-Corruption

Commission (ACC), alongside Zia's counsels to submit concise statements in two weeks explaining their points for opposing and seeking her bail.

Zia's counsels, however, in an abortive plea sought to advance the date for hearing on her bail, saying the apex court will go on vacation from April 13 and remain close until May 6, lingering the 73-year-old ex-premiers imprisonment.

To which, Justice Hossain said that the court will hear on May 8 and conclude the hearing.

Zia's son Tarique Rahman and four others were sentenced to 10 years in jail in the same case.

On March 12, the High Court here granted the chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) a four-month interim bail.

According to legal experts, even if Zia would have got the bail, she was unlikely to be released from jail as she was shown "arrested" in another criminal case under a separate arrest warrant by a court in central Comilla district.

The lower court's verdict shook the country's political scenario ahead of the general elections in December this year.

The BNP, a main opposition outside parliament, alleged it as a "politically motivated" to debar Zia from contesting elections, an allegation denied by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government.

Following apex court's order, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said at a media briefing that the government has driven the last nail in its coffin by denying the bail to Zia.

He announced that the party would launch countrywide demonstrations demanding her unconditional release tomorrow.

But political analysts earlier feared the BNP was now facing a political wilderness after Zia's conviction, which is likely to disqualify her for elections unless she could obtain an acquittal.

The BNP boycotted the general election in 2014 over polls time government system amid violent protests and spearheaded a protracted street campaign enforcing a nationwide blockade coinciding with its first anniversary that saw some 500 people dead in arson attacks.

Zia, however, appears to be seeking to contest the next general elections scheduled for December this year.



ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM GANGTOK

Memo No: 855/ED/ R&B

Date: 15.03.18

CORRIGENDUM OF NIT

This is for general information to all concern that the NIT published vide Memo No: 787/ED/R&B dated: 27.02.2018 and R.O. No. 603/IPR/PUB/Classi/17-18 dated: 28.02.2018, the cost of work put to tender and Earnest Money @@2.5% was wrongly depicted. The correct figures are as follows:

SL. NO	NAME OF WORK	COST OF WORK PUT TO TENDER (IN RS.)	EARNEST MONEY @2.50% (IN RS.)	COST OF TENDER DOCUMENTS (IN RS.)	COMPLETION TIME
1	Construction of Approach road to Bethesda Church at Sang in East Sikkim	62,31,963.00	1,55,799.00	15,000.00	24 months.

All other conditions of contract i/c TIME SCHEDULE as published earlier remains the same.

Sd/- DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (EAST - II) ROADS & BRIDGES DEPTT., GANGTOK.

R.O. No. 633/ipr/pub/classi./17-18 dt. 17.3.18

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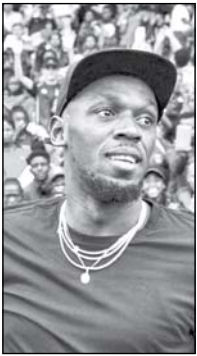
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He left a struggler, returns a star

THINGS HAVE GONE SOUTH IN NORTH SIKKIM

Pokémon Go: Best Game of 2016

Organic Sikkim begins with four product launches



Usain Bolt to attend Commonwealth Games- as a spectator

SYDNEY, MAR 19 (AFP): Sprint legend Usain Bolt will attend next month's Commonwealth Games on Australia's Gold Coast to watch the 100-metres final, former Jamaican world champion Yohan Blake has revealed.

Bolt, 31, who retired from athletics after August's World Championships in London, has been busy preparing for a tilt at football and has also worked with Australia's cricketers to boost their running between the wickets.

Blake, one of the track stars at the April 4-15 Games, arrived in Australia on Sunday and told reporters the eight-time Olympic champion and world record holder in the 100m and 200m was "coming to watch the 100m final".

"(He) was at the track in Jamaica before I left. He said, 'When I come to Australia, if you don't win there is going to be problems,'" Blake told Brisbane's Courier Mail late Sunday.

"I don't have a Commonwealth medal. It's very important for me to have one in my trophy case. Usain Bolt has left his legacy for us to carry on and that's what we want to do," said Blake of his fellow Jamaican.

Blake, 28, the second-fastest man of all time, missed the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games due to injury.

Why every day should be World...

turn to 06
communities.

Tovilla, a PhD student in Ryerson's environmental and applied science and management program, is examining how water and wastewater policies and management in Ontario can be integrated using a "One Water" approach at the municipal level.

The Bruce Fellowship program hopes to encourage and fund Canada's future leaders to focus on freshwater policy and governance.

World Water Day reminds us that Canada's next generation of water leaders must be able to understand complex governance challenges and make value-based decisions based on a new water ethic — a water ethic that Indigenous peoples and other jurisdictions have much to teach us.

[the writer is Associate Professor, Ryerson University]

MADRID, MAR 19 (AFP): Lionel Messi delivered another masterful performance as Barcelona sailed past Athletic Bilbao 2-0 to take an 11-point lead over nearest rivals Atletico Madrid in La Liga.

After putting Chelsea to the sword in the Champions League midweek, Messi scored for the sixth game in a row against Athletic at the Camp Nou to propel Barca closer to the domestic title.

"Every day he discovers something new, something different, he's very aware of what he has to do, what the team needs from him at each moment," Barca coach Ernesto Valverde said of Messi, the Spanish league's leading scorer this season with 25 goals.

"Many times it seems that the coach has to teach the players, but what the coach really does is learn



alongside them as things go on. We hope to keep on learning together"

Not to be outdone by his greatest rival, Cristiano Ronaldo then hit four goals as Real Madrid downed Girona 6-3 to move into third place, albeit still 15 points off Barcelona.

A dominant start from Barca yielded the opening goal after just eight minutes as Mes-

si found Jordi Alba out on the left, his pull-back neatly side-footed into the far corner by Paco Alcacer, filling in for the suspended Luis Suarez.

The hosts looked a constant threat early on and Philippe Coutinho was denied a second when he rattled the woodwork, while Ousmane Dembele should have done much better with just Kepa Arrizaba-

laga to beat.

But the Athletic goalkeeper was powerless to keep out a crunching low drive from Messi on the half hour, the Argentine taking a touch to control a pass from Dembele before lashing home.

Coutinho, the club's record signing, struck the woodwork for a second time as he tried to lob Kepa after latching onto a clever lofted pass from Paulinho,

who then smacked a curling shot of his own against the upright.

Barca extended their unbeaten La Liga run to 36 matches dating back to last season, drawing to within two games of the record set Real Sociedad between 1979 and 1980.

"I would love to (break the record) but why carry on talking about it if we can lose, win or draw the next game," Valverde said. "We're not going to tempt fate. The next match in Seville will be a very difficult trip."

Real Madrid reclaimed third place from Valencia when Ronaldo took his La Liga goals tally this season to 22 with four in a 6-3 victory over Girona at the Bernabeu.

Ronaldo has now scored 21 goals in all competitions in 13 games since the turn of the year.

"I hope that he can

catch Messi in La Liga (he is three goals behind), it's important for him and for us," said Real coach Zinedine Zidane.

"When Cristiano plays well, the team plays well."

The Portuguese star opened the scoring with a deflection after 11 minutes, adding his second off the crossbar three minutes after the break when the two sides had been locked 1-1.

Ronaldo teed up Lucas Vazquez on the hour mark before completing his hat-trick four minutes later and adding a fourth in stoppage time.

Welsh star Gareth Bale was also on the scoresheet four minutes from time.

Second-placed Atletico effectively surrendered their hopes of overhauling Barca at the top, as two late goals from 20-year-old Turkey striker Enes Unal handed Vil-

larreal a 2-1 victory over Diego Simeone's side.

Antoine Griezmann converted a first-half penalty after he was impeded by Jaume Costa, before Koke hit the post.

But Unal headed in an 82nd-minute equaliser for the hosts and turned home a stoppage-time winner as Villarreal climbed up to fifth.

Sevilla crashed to a 2-1 league defeat by Leganes just days after pulling off the surprise elimination of Manchester United in the Champions League.

The loss means Sevilla are increasingly unlikely to qualify for the Champions League through La Liga this season.

Meanwhile, Real Sociedad sacked coach Eusebio Sacristan on Sunday with the team in 15th place with Imanol Alguacil installed until the end of the season.

India at CWG: Nervous energy helps, feels boxing coach Nieva

POONAM MEHRA

NEW DELHI, MAR 19 (PTI): Confidence becomes the buzzword before any major sporting event but Indian boxing's High- Performance Manager Santiago Nieva prefers a bit of nervous energy heading into next month's Commonwealth Games because "that's what gets the best out of everyone".

The 43-year-old Argentina-born Swede would be exactly one year into his job when the Games get underway in Gold Coast from April 4. Indian boxers had claimed four silver and a bronze at the last edition in 2014 and the country stands 12th in the all-time list with five gold, nine silver and 14 bronze medals in all.

In an interview to PTI before the team of eight men and four women boxers left for a pre-CWG training trip to Canberra, Nieva dwelled on India's



medal chances and the discontent triggered by a brand new selection policy.

"Yeah, it's going to be my CWG debut. I have been at the Pan-American Games (while competing and later managing Argentina), the Olympics and now the Commonwealth Games which will be followed by the Asian Games. I will

have covered everything this year," Nieva said.

Nieva was initially brought in as the coach for male boxers before being elevated to the position of High- Performance Director (both men and women) after the world championships last year.

"I prefer to be a tiny bit nervous before such events because that helps

in pulling the best out of not just yourself but also others. So, yeah, I would rather be a little nervous than too confident," he added.

In a departure from convention, boxers for six of the eight men's weight categories at CWG were picked without trials.

A points system, put in place last October, was used to judge their perfor-

mances starting with the national championships.

The methodology caused a fair bit of heartburn among the boxers and questions about the fairness of the process. Nieva defended the new system and insisted that it would remain in practice.

"The selection method we have followed will continue in the sense that the boxers will continue to be graded on the basis of their performances but wherever there is a need for a trial, we will conduct it. There is no definitive call on that," he said.

"But yes, anybody who wins a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games can consider himself a strong contender for the Asian Games. Of course, it is subject to the boxer being fit and in form, which will be evaluated in the tournaments after the CWG.

"Anybody who can challenge that boxer and

prove himself to be as good if not better, he will get a chance too," he explained.

The process followed for selection meant that the likes of world bronze-medallist Gaurav Bidhuri and three-time Asian medallist Shiva Thapa lost their slots to newcomers, who logged in more points through various tournaments.

"I can understand the disappointments. Obviously, when you are not selected, it feels bad. I know that because I have been a boxer. I know how much it can hurt but the challenge lies in picking yourself up and giving it your best shot the next time.

"You cannot be bogged down by one disappointment. That's not what a fighter does. One success or one failure does not define a fighter," he asserted.

India's first and only Olympic medallist in men's boxing, Vijender

Singh, was critical of the method followed but Nieva begged to differ.

"I am of the view that performances over a period of time ought to be rewarded and one trial should not form the basis of selection," he said.

India's best boxing performance in the CWG came in the 2010 New Delhi edition when the home team claimed three gold and four bronze medals. Asked how challenging he finds the CWG compared to the world championships last year, Nieva said the world event was "obviously bigger".

"I understand the spotlight is going to be a lot more on the Commonwealth Games than the world championships because of the high media presence and the fact that it is a multi-sport event. But world championships is obviously a bigger draw of boxers we are talking about," he said.

Whatever situation comes, Karthik's ready: Rohit

COLOMBO, MAR 19 (PTI): Dinesh Karthik is always ready to deliver whatever the situation may be and his experience and repertoire of strokes make him a suitable candidate to provide the final flourish for India at the death overs, skipper Rohit Sharma said.

Wicket-keeper batsman Karthik (29 of 8 balls), who has made sporadic international appearances, produced a last-ball six as India pulled off an incredible chase beating Bangladesh by four wickets in the Nidhas T20 Tri-series final, in Colombo on Sunday night.

"He was with us on the previous tour in South Africa and didn't get much game time. To do what he did today will give him a lot of confidence going forward," Rohit told reporters.

"Most important thing he has is belief in himself.

Whatever situation comes, he's ready - whether he bats up the order or down the order. That's the kind of guy we need in our team."

Rohit revealed Karthik was not happy that he was not batting higher in the order but the Indian skipper defended his decision of sending him at number 7 saying his experience and skills made him a suitable candidate to provide the late charge in the final overs.

"When I got out, I went and sat in the dug-out and Dinesh was quite upset that he didn't bat at No. 6," Rohit said.

"But I told him: 'I want you to bat and finish off the game for us, because whatever skill you have, it will be required in the last three or four overs'. That is the only reason he was not batting at No. 6 in the 13th over when I got out. He was upset with that, but he'll be quite happy now how he finished off the game."

Lavishing praise on Karthik, Rohit said: "I have to go back to the kinds of shots that he has in his books - it suits him to finish off games at the death where you have to use that



one fielder that is inside the circle - either fine leg, or mid-off or short third man.

"He can always play those ramp shots which he played in the end to Rubel Hossain. He knows that. I thought Mustafizur [Rahman] would bowl probably the 18th and the 20th overs, and we wanted an experienced guy to handle him.

"We knew he would come out with his off-cutters and Dinesh probably would have been a better choice at that point.

He has done it for his state team and also for Mumbai Indians."

Washington Sundar alongside Yuzvendra Chahal finished as the tournament's highest wicket-takers, with eight dismissals apiece and Rohit singled out the allrounder for special praise.

"I think throughout the series Sundar's bowling has been magical for us. What he has done with the new ball is quite incredible, I would say. Not anyone can just take the pressure of bowling within the Powerplay. Not to forget he also got wickets at the same time. He didn't allow any of the opposition to score runs really in the Powerplay," Rohit said.

"The skillset that he has - he's quite courageous to do what he wants to do in the middle. It's not just one or two games. He consistently bowled in the Powerplay, and always kept us in the games. We identified him as one of the promising talents who can play for the national team for many years. This tournament will give him a lot of confidence."

Rohit said the young team showed character and executed the plans perfectly.

"Great tournament for us. Everybody who played, they showed lots of character. These games are not easy and these guys have not played a lot for the national team. And this performance will give them a lot of confidence. Some of them went for runs, but they will learn from it," he said.

Sundar, who was adjudged the Man of the Series, said it was challenging to bowl in the powerplay.

"It means a lot, especially such an award at such a young age. It's a challenging role (bowling in Powerplay) but when playing for your country, it's just an honour," he said.

I've always wanted to read the batsmen's mind, and that's what I have been trying to do. I really wanted to be there when we win the game and I think Dinesh bhai played really well and it turned out to be a memorable series for me."

Though disappointed to end up on the losing side, Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan praised his team for playing well throughout the series and credited India for showing better nerves under pressure to pull off the narrow win in the final.

"You can't ask for more in a final like this. I thought we played superbly, anybody could have won the game, but India held their nerves well," he said.

"We wanted to bowl our best bowler in the 18th and 19th.

But even if Rubel had gone for 15 an over, we could have handled it. He didn't miss his length too much but credit to Dinesh Karthik to just come out and hit sixes from his first ball.

"We knew 166 would be tough to defend, we had a good feeling though, everyone did their best, gave their 100 per cent. It hurts to lose, but we played well. We can still take lots of positives from here and someday we can be on the winning side.

Putin wins fourth term with record vote

MOSCOW, MAR 19 [AFP]: Vladimir Putin was today set for another six years in power after his landslide victory in Russia's presidential election but so far only close allies have congratulated him as Moscow's relations with the West disintegrate.

Putin, who has ruled Russia for almost two decades, recorded his best election performance with 76.67 per cent of the vote but rejected the possibility of staying in power indefinitely.

The opposition said the results were rigged, reporting ballot stuffing and other cases of alleged fraud as the Kremlin pushed for a high turnout to give greater legitimacy to Putin's historic fourth term.

Putin, who has extended his power until at least 2024 and is already Russia's longest-serving leader since Stalin, ruled out remaining president for life.

"Listen to me. It seems to me that what you are saying is a bit funny," he told reporters Sunday night when asked if he saw himself running for president again in 2030. "What, am I going to sit here until I am 100 years old? No."

The Russian strongman ran against seven other candidates, but his most vocal critic Alexei Navalny was barred from the ballot for legal reasons and the final outcome was never in doubt.

"I see in this (result) the confi-



dence and hope of our people," Putin said in an address to a crowd of supporters on a square next to the Kremlin after exit polls put him on track for a resounding victory.

Turnout was at more than 67 per cent as authorities used both the carrot and the stick to boost engagement in the polls.

Selfie competitions, giveaways, food festivals and children's entertainers were laid on at polling stations in a bid to create a festive atmosphere around the election.

But employees of state and private companies reported coming under pressure to vote.

According to central election commission data with 99.8 per cent of ballots counted, Putin took 76.67 per cent of the vote, well ahead of his nearest competitor Communist Party candidate Pavel Grudinin, who was on 11.79 per cent.

Ultra-nationalist firebrand Vladimir Zhirinovskiy took around 5.66 percent, former reality TV

presenter Ksenia Sobchak was on 1.67 per cent, while veteran liberal politician Grigory Yavlinsky received just over 1 percent of the vote.

Navalny -- who called on his supporters to boycott the "fake" vote and sent more than 33,000 observers across the country to see how official turnout figures differed from those of monitors -- said there had been "unprecedented violations".

Navalny's opposition movement and the non-governmental election monitor Golos reported ballot stuffing, repeat voting and Putin supporters being bussed into polling stations en masse.

But the electoral commission dismissed most concerns, saying monitors sometimes misinterpret what they see.

Runner-up Grudinin said the elections had been "dishonest."

NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden, who has lived in Russia after leaking classified information

about the US government's surveillance programmes, tweeted a picture apparently showing ballot stuffing in a Russian school.

"The ballot stuffing seen today in Moscow and elsewhere in the Russian election is an effort to steal the influence of 140+ million people," he said. "Demand justice; demand laws and courts that matter."

The election was held as Russia faces increasing isolation on the world stage over a spy poisoning in Britain and a fresh round of US sanctions just as it gears up for the football World Cup in the summer.

Among the few leaders to congratulate Putin so far was Chinese President Xi Jinping, who has just been handed a second term himself and has gained a path to indefinite rule after presidential term limits were lifted last week.

"China is willing to work with Russia to keep promoting China-Russia relations to a higher level, provide driving force for respective national development in both countries, and promote regional and global peace and tranquility," Xi said.

In Latin America, the presidents of the leftist regimes in Venezuela and Bolivia both effusively congratulated Putin on his "overwhelming" victory.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro also commended "the glo-

rious Russian people for its display of civic duty" while Bolivia's Evo Morales said Putin's victory "guarantees geopolitical equilibrium and world peace before the onslaught of imperialism".

Since first being elected president in 2000, Putin has stamped his total authority on the world's biggest country, muzzling opposition, putting television under state control and reasserting Moscow's standing abroad.

The 65-year-old former KGB officer used an otherwise lacklustre presidential campaign to emphasise Russia's role as a major world power, boasting of its "invincible" new nuclear weapons in a pre-election speech.

Putin's previous Kremlin term was marked by a crackdown on the opposition after huge protests, the Ukraine conflict, military intervention in Syria and the introduction of Western sanctions that contributed to a fall in living standards.

In the runup to the vote, a new crisis broke out with the West as Britain implicated Putin in the poisoning of former double agent Sergei Skripal with a Soviet-designed nerve agent.

In response, London expelled 23 Russian diplomats, prompting a tit-for-tat move by Moscow. Also this week, Washington hit Russia with sanctions for trying to influence the 2016 US election.

Pak disappointed at India for not issuing visas to pilgrims

ISLAMABAD, MAR 19 [PTI]: Pakistan today expressed disappointment at India for not issuing visas to more than 500 Pakistani pilgrims for visiting the famed shrine of Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer.

The visit was to take place under the 1974 Pakistan-India Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines and is a regular annual feature, Foreign Office [FO] said in a statement.

"Pakistan notes with deep disappointment the non-issuance of visas by India for the visit of the 503 Pakistani Zaireen [pilgrims] to participate in the Urs of Hazrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti [RA] at Ajmer Sharif, India from 19-29 March 2018," the statement said.

Due to India's decision, the Pakistani pilgrims have been deprived of the opportunity to participate in the Urs, which is of special significance, it said.

Earlier, 192 Pakistani pilgrims could not partic-

ipate in the Urs of Hazrat Khawaja NizamuddinAulia in Delhi from 01-08 January due to the non-issuance of visas by India, it said.

The FO said that during 2017, despite Pakistan's offer to send a special train, Indian delays had resulted in Sikh yatrees [pilgrims] from India being unable to participate in the Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Arjan Dev and the death anniversary of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

In February, Pakistan had made all the arrangements for the visit of 173 Katas Raj pilgrims, who were "forced" to withdraw their applications from the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi due to non-issuance of necessary clearance by the Ministry of External Affairs of India, the statement said.



Five people have perished in a raging inferno that tore through a hotel and casino complex in Manila, authorities said Monday, after firefighters battled more than 24 hours to douse the flames. Rescuers said billowing smoke, sometimes so dense it obscured the 22-floor Waterfront Manila Pavilion, had hampered their efforts to contain the blaze which started Sunday morning. The dead were all casino employees, and another of the workers was still in critical condition. About 20 people were injured. Some 300 guests and staff were evacuated safely, hotel and fire officials told a press conference.

China unveils new Cabinet amid dip in growth, territorial disputes

BEIJING, MAR 19 (PTI): Chinese Premier Li Keqiang today unveiled his new Cabinet as part of the government's efforts to stabilise the world's second largest economy and appointed a missile expert as the defence minister amidst regional tensions with its neighbours over territorial disputes.

The new line-up approved by the rubber-stamp parliament, the National People's Congress, includes four Vice Premiers, Han Zheng, Sun Chunlan, Hu Chunhua and Liu He.



Their names were approved by nearly 3,000 deputies of the NPC after they were proposed by Premier Li Keqiang, who himself was re-appointed to the post under the new political setup headed by President Xi Jinping.

Xi was re-elected last week for a second five-year term, days after the NPC ratified constitutional amendment, removing term limits for President and Vice President. His close confidant and former anti-corruption chief Wang Qishan has been elected as the Vice President.

Vice Premier Liu He is expected to play a bigger

role in the management of the Chinese economy, the world's second largest after the US.

China which was witnessing nearly three decades of double-digit growth slowed down in 2016 with a slight improvement last year. Debt-fuelled investment in infrastructure and real estate has underpinned China's growth for years.China also claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of South Tibet. The India-China border dispute covered 3,488 km along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).



Ms Rebika Biswakarma, D/o. Govind Biswakarma, age about 13 years, R/o of Kumrek, East Sikkim is missing. Any information regarding her or anyone seen her please inform Ranipool Police Station or Contact: **03592-251712.**

MIZORAM STATE LOTTERIES LABHLAXMI ARIES

Draw No:7 DrawDate on:19/03/18
1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 4690
2nd Prize Rs.1,000/- 4334 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 5613
4th Prize Rs.300/- 5394 5th Prize Rs. 200/- 3396
6th Prize Rs.100/-
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2035 2062 2072 2086 2134 2158 2173 2191 2264 2287
2312 2318 2351 2365 2374 2397 2402 2468 2498 2534
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For result please visit: www.mizoramlotteries.com

ARUNACHAL PRADESH STATE LOTTERIES MUMBAILAXMI RAM

Draw No:7 DrawDate on:19/03/18
1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 4845 2nd Prize Rs.2,000/- 1922
3rd Prize Rs. 1,000/- 1625 4th Prize Rs. 500/- 5916
5th Prize Rs.200/-
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4330 4385 4407 4414 4474 4523 4804 4835 4877 4923
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6th Prize Rs.100/-
1085 1158 1167 1219 1252 1254 1278 1285 1295 1341
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DEAR LOVING MORNING		DEAR PRECIOUS		DEAR FLAMINGO EVENING	
Draw Time: 11:55 am onwards Draw No:16 DrawDate on:19/03/18 1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 94H 31129 (Including Super Prize Amt)		Draw Time: 04:00 pm onwards Draw No:16 DrawDate on:19/03/18 1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 88E 52454 (Including Super Prize Amt)		Draw Time: 08:00 pm onwards Draw No:34 DrawDate on:19/03/18 1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 77E 15916 (Including Super Prize Amt)	
Cons. Prize Rs.9494/- 31129 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Cons. Prize Rs.9494/- 52454 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Cons. Prize Rs.9494/- 15916 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)	
2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 23623 35185 36512 44481 44793 47193 58541 60490 84949 87800		2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 04185 05796 11358 19420 30650 32080 39700 47132 63979 89008		2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 22661 25554 37275 46100 53468 62754 81788 96361 98225 99853	
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A GRAND A DAY TO PLAY YOUNG KILLMONGER!



Black Panther child actor Seth Carr, 10, is in one of the biggest box office smashes of all time. And now it's revealed that the child actor was paid \$1,000 a day for his role as the young Killmonger in Marvel's Black Panther.

Seth, who is 10, is only on screen for a few minutes but, TMZ reported, he was guaranteed a minimum of \$7,654 for the part along with future residuals.

The child version of Michael B. Jordan's character is seen briefly at the beginning of the movie in a flashback sequence, and again for a longer speaking part later in the film. It's not known how many days of work he actually completed.

Despite his young age, he's already a veteran of the small screen

with recurring roles in Amazon's Bosch series and Nickelodeon's Knight Squad.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, Black Panther beat out Tomb Raider to remain at the top of the US box office.

The comic-book movie directed by Ryan Coogler became the first film since James Cameron's 2009 smash Avatar to top the weekend box office five straight weekends. Before Avatar, the last film to do it was 1999's The Sixth Sense by M Night Shyamalan.

The Disney release grossed \$27 million in ticket sales over the weekend, according to studio estimates, pushing its domestic haul to \$605.4 million. Worldwide, Black Panther has grossed more than \$1.1 billion.

Meghan Trainor fights off dark demons to get back on track

'I HIT ROCK BOTTOM': Meghan Trainor thought she was 'possessed' and was convinced she would die in her sleep after undergoing vocal surgery.

The 24-year-old singer went under the knife for vocal surgery in 2016 for a second time after previously having a hemorrhaged vocal chord repaired in 2015.

After previously revealing her medical issues left her battling depression, she's now told the Daily Star she feared she had 'gone crazy' because she was in such a 'dark place' and couldn't properly rest without fearing she wouldn't wake up again.

She said: 'After surgery I hit rock bottom. I felt like I was possessed and demons were attacking me. I literally felt I had gone crazy. I thought I was schizophrenic.'

The All About That Bass singer recalled that 'Mentally, I went to a really dark, dark



place. I couldn't really speak for four months due to surgery.'

As she described the situation: 'It was really unhealthy for me. All your thoughts become internalized. You feel alone in your head.'

Meghan confided: 'It is a terrible place to be. I couldn't sleep because I was terrified I wouldn't wake up in the morning. I never thought it would end. I thought my career and my life was over.'

The No Excuses singer has since recovered thanks to

a team of doctors, therapists and psychologists, but admitted it was a 'hard process.'

And Meghan - who is engaged to Spy Kids actor Daryl Sabara - has never felt better and hopes her story can give hope to others suffering from similar issues.

Meghan, meanwhile, is now head over heels in love with her fiancé Daryl. But there was a time when the singer once thought she would never find love. The singer recalled breaking down into tears over the lack of her love life before she was eventually set up with her current fiancé.

'I remember I was crying in an Uber on my way home,' she recently said on Lorraine. 'There was a scream and I thought "Where is he? I know he's here". There's this saying that you speak to the universe and you get what you wish for. A week later my friend set me up on a blind date.'

Sanjay Dutt and Madhuri Dixit to reunite after 21 years for KJo's Shiddat!

The Dhak Dhak girl of Bollywood, Madhuri Dixit, will replace late actress Sridevi in Karan Johar's production venture Shiddat. The news was officially confirmed by Sridevi's daughter Janhvi Kapoor, who posted the picture of the two divas and wrote, "Abhishek Varman's next film was very close to mom's heartDad, Khushi and I are thankful to Madhuriji for now being a part of this beautiful film...."



Interestingly, the cross-border period drama will mark the reunion of Sanjay Dutt and Madhuri Dixit after 21 long years. The duo was last seen in Mahaanta in 1997. Apart from this, Madhuri and Sanjay received praises from the audience

for their crackling chemistry in films like Saajan, Khalnayak, Thanedaar, Khatron Ke Khiladi, Ilaaka, Sahibaan, Kanoon Apna Apna and others. Shiddat is directed by Abhishek Varman, who previously helmed 2 States and also stars Varun Dhawan, Alia Bhatt, Sonakshi Sinha and Aditya Roy Kapur in key roles. The film will mark the fourth collaboration between Alia and Varun after Student

of the Year, Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania and Badrinath Ki Dulhania. Interestingly, all the films are bankrolled by filmmaker Karan Johar.

On the work front, Sanjay Dutt has interesting projects lined up in his kitty, the first one being Sahib Biwi Aur Gangster 3, which is expected to release in July this year. Post that, the 58-year-old

actor will also be seen in Torbaaz and Ashutosh Gowariker's Panipat which is scheduled to hit the screens on December 6, 2019.

On the other hand, Madhuri Dixit is currently busy in her debut Marathi film Bucket List. After wrapping it up, she will start the shooting for Total Dhamaal which also features Anil Kapoor and Ajay Devgn in key roles.

SNEAK PEEK: Varun Dhawan-Katrina Kaif's hot chemistry in Remo D'Souza's next!

After months of speculation, T-Series and Remo D'Souza finally confirmed that Varun Dhawan and Katrina Kaif will be coming together for the biggest dance film in India till date. While reports suggest that the film is ABCD 3, the makers did not mention in their announcement whether the film was the third part of the hit dance franchise or not.

Varun Dhawan and Katrina Kaif performed a dance together and they literally set the stage ablaze with their hot moves. And if that wasn't enough, Varun had gone down on his knees and Katrina had even given the actor a kiss



during one particular show. Their bond, their dance moves and everything else grabbed attention. In fact, their pictures and videos show off their scintillating chemistry.

Talking about the movie, Varun mentioned, "It's a huge achievement to work with Remo on what's going to be India's biggest dance film. I

performed once in New York with Katrina and it was electric. She's going to bring her 'A' game, so I need to get back in shape as well. Bhushan is not only a strong producer but also contributes creatively, especially in the music department."

Katrina also added, "I am excited to be joining Remo's vision. Varun's passion is wonderful; he works tirelessly to create magic on screen. And, Bhushan Kumar, with his understanding of market dynamics as a producer, will ensure this turns out to be the most talked-about film of 2019. I can't wait to start this journey."

The film is set to release on 08 Nov 2019.



QUALITY TIME! Pregnant Chrissy Teigen cradles cute daughter Luna as she flaunts her chic maternity style in form-fitting dress and reptile print coat on dinner date.

ARIES: The planetary energy has you feeling a bit sluggish today. You'll probably want to stay home, surrounded by your books, pets, and plants, yet you know you have appointments to keep and responsibilities to fulfill. Your sense of duty is especially strong. Make a deal with yourself to get the bare minimum done and then relax. Try a hot bath and listening to classical music.

TAURUS: A temporary separation from someone close to you could have you reflecting on the good times you've spent together, especially over the past few weeks. You're likely to talk with him or her on the phone. You're feeling a lot of warmth and affection toward everyone around you, but a little sad as well, particularly when you think of

those far away. Call them up, Taurus! They'll be glad to hear from you.

GEMINI: Dreams with mixed messages might trouble your sleep tonight. One minute you'll be having a wonderful dream, and the next could be black and gloomy. Write them down, Gemini. The message is probably more positive than it appears. Worries about money might plague you throughout the day, yet things probably aren't as bad as they seem. Make sure you learn the facts about your situation before allowing yourself to panic!

CANCER: The special person in your life could be working too hard, causing strain for him or her and frustration for you. Their extra hours at work could interfere with your desire

to enjoy quality time together. Your own worries could put a damper on your self-confidence, Cancer. You might be wondering if you're doing everything that needs to be done. It might help to make a list and cross off each task you complete.

LEO: Today you might try to continue or complete a creative project of some kind, but your imagination just isn't working the way it normally does. Also, overindulgence from last night could have you feeling a bit sluggish, which doesn't help the situation. Put your work aside before you give up on it completely, Leo. This is only a temporary situation. Your mind should be back to normal tomorrow.

VIRGO: Today you might feel especially protective toward all

those you love: children, family, friends, pets, and the special person in your life, Virgo. Upsetting news might have you wondering about the future, but don't let it get you down. All should be well, so allow yourself to relax and enjoy your loved ones. Distract yourself by going to an exciting movie. That will help release tension and put you in a better frame of mind.

LIBRA: Today you could make the acquaintance of actors, musicians, or other performers, some of whom might be quite well known. Social occasions could bring valuable contacts your way, which you could make good use of later. You might be having so much fun out among the beautiful people that you really don't want to go home!

Don't make it too late a night, however, Libra. You'll need all your energy tomorrow!

SCORPIO: Someone who lives far away, someone you haven't heard from for a long time, could give you a surprise phone call today. You'll be delighted and probably stay on the phone too long. You might need to run a few errands, but the weather could keep you indoors. Don't worry about it, Scorpio. You'll still have time to take care of other pressing matters. You should be feeling especially artistic right now. Be creative!

SAGITTARIUS: Money could be a source of worry today, Sagittarius. You might feel you've spent too much [who doesn't sometimes?] or perhaps some funds you were expecting have

been held up. This is a delay and not a permanent situation [although it might seem that way]. Too much worry could spoil your day, and you don't want that. If there's anything you can do to ease the situation, do it. Otherwise, hang in there.

CAPRICORN: Too much stress and strain over the past few days could cause you to clash with your partner. While not a disaster by any means, Capricorn, this can put a damper on your day. It might be best if you took a few minutes to get away by yourself and let all your negativity fade away when no one's around. You'll feel better by the time you face your family, friends, and partner again.

AQUARIUS: Overindulgence last night could have left you feeling

a little woozy today, Aquarius. You're may want to spend the day in bed, but the prospect of leaving tasks undone could cause you to push on anyway. That's a bad idea. Rest is just what you need. Don't force yourself to socialize, either. You need some time alone to recover and gather your resources so you can face the world with a clear head.

PISCES: Plans for getting together with a group of close friends may have to be called off because of sudden unexpected events. This could have you feeling somewhat down, Pisces, especially if a romantic partner is involved. Try not to worry about it too much. You will be able to reschedule, and you could use the time alone anyway to relax and center yourself.