

SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Sikkim's ex-servicemen condemn police action in Darjeeling as "disgusting"

ESAS registers solidarity with neighbouring hills; will send delegation to Darj to stand with people there

**NITESH R PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:**

Ex-servicemen of Sikkim have condemned the police action in neighbouring Darjeeling and expressed solidarity with the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland.

President, Ex-Servicemen Association of Sikkim [ESAS], Colonel DN Bhutia, addressing a press conference here at the Rajya Sainik Board today, ad-

ressed the prevailing situation in Darjeeling and the issue of the demand for Gorkhaland.

He informed that on 22 June, the central committee of the ESAS convened a meeting and adopted a resolution declaring the police action on ex-servicemen and public of Darjeeling as "highly condemnable and disgusting".

"It gave an impression that these Police forces were deliberately doing this to humiliate our decorated soldiers who have sacrificed their entire lives in the defense of the country," he said.

He further informed that

the committee has expressed solidarity and extended the full support of the ex-servicemen fraternity and their families of Sikkim to the people of Darjeeling in their struggle against the imposition of Bengali language and their "rightful and just" demand for the separation of Darjeeling from Bengal.

Col Bhutia further informed that it was decided at the meeting that ESAS would extend full moral support and solidarity with the people of Darjeeling and have even resolved that a group of ex-servicemen and widows of soldiers from Sikkim will travel to Darjeeling at

a later to be physically present there and stand with the people there in their struggle.

Col Bhutia stressed that the people of Darjeeling were doing no wrong in seeking a separate state, and referred to Darjeeling's history as being leased by the Kingdom of Sikkim to the East India Company.

However, the British, when they left India did not decide anything for Darjeeling which continues to be part of State with which has no historical or cultural affinity, he said.

He also pointed out that the statehood demand has also received the support of serving

soldiers.

On the recent internet ban in the region, he said that it was hard to get news due to this communication jam, adding that since most telecom companies are headquartered in West Bengal, there was now a felt need for an independently functioning communication network for the entire region including Sikkim.

The turmoil and uncertainty in the neighbouring hills, he said, can be solved through discussions and reiterate that the constitutionally-valid demand cannot be ignored forever.

Pilgrimage cut short, Kailash-Mansarovar Yatris to return home today

Inclement weather and damaged roads in TAR beat back pilgrimage before it even began

**KESANG DOMA BHUTIA
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:**

The overland Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra for the first two batches of the season has ended with the 91 pilgrims not being able to get across Nathula. After keeping the groups waiting and hoping, confirmation reportedly arrived today that at least these two groups will not be able to travel onwards into Tibetan Autonomous Region of China on their pilgrimage.

They will now be returning home on Sunday, having enjoyed good hospitality in Sikkim, but refused their Yatra due to inclement weather on the other side of the border.

From information received from the STDC, both the batches are returning to New Delhi tomorrow. The STDC has arranged two AC buses from SNT to ferry the pilgrims till Bagdogra.

China has refused entry to the first and second batches of 47 and 44 Indian pilgrims respectively on their scheduled travel to Kailash Mansarovar through the Nathula. Although no official word has arrived yet on why this has happened, it is reliably learnt that extensive damage to roads across Nathula in TAR due to rains and landslides convinced the Chi-

nese authorities to stop travel for now.

The southwestern parts of China, including extensive stretches of Tibet which receive rains, have had a bad run with landslides this season. (turn to pg7 for report on one such devastating catastrophe)

The first batch of 47 pilgrims, who were stopped at the border from proceeding further, returned to Gangtok on yesterday and are boarded at Hotel Tibet here. Today, the pilgrims headed towards Namchi at around 10:15 a.m for sight-seeing arranged by STDC which provided an AC bus from SNT for their convenience. They were due to return late evening and return home on Sunday.

The second batch comprising of 44 pilgrims were taken sight-seeing to Nathula this morning by STDC, the closest they will be getting to TAR for now.

Meanwhile, media reports have quoted External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Gopal Baglayas as confirming that "some difficulties were being experienced in the movement of pilgrims through Nathu La and that India is taking up the matter with China".

This obviously did not go as planned.

The development has cast a shadow of uncertainty on the annual yatra as Chinese officials maintained that it would take some time to repair the

turn to pg05

Chopper packs in extra sorties, but stares at a never-ending waiting list

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:**

With the indefinite bandh in Darjeeling and its impact on passenger services, and now the trouble in Siliguri vis a vis Sikkim vehicles, the 5-seater helicopter service of the State has been running frenetic sorties, packing in up to six flights to Bagdogra and back per day and still staring at a practically unserviceable waiting list.

The Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation provides the Sikkim Helicopter Service from Gangtok to Bagdogra and back. The five-seater helicopter takes off on its first flight from Gangtok at 9 a.m. and presses on, weather permitting, till it is safe – the last flight departing from Gangtok at 4 p.m.

According to information received from the management team of the Travel Division engaged in providing this service, enquiries and bookings for the helicopter service have been pouring in because of the disruptions in road travel. Despite a waiting list which runs to 30-40, tourists are still eager to sign up and wait.

For instance, a couple, Sandeep and Sneha Gou-ru, who are holidaying here from Hyderabad, was among the several tourists who find themselves stranded in Gangtok.

They inform that their actual itinerary involved 3 days in Darjeeling and 4 days in Sikkim, but due to the ongoing situation there, they have spent the entire week in Sikkim itself. They have a flight to Hyderabad this coming Tuesday and are already panicking about getting out. They now plan to spend the entire night at the SNT Depot in the hope that they will get the bus ticket to Siliguri for Sunday.

The uncertainty in neighbouring West Bengal has now seriously begun hurting Sikkim.

Car, bus services to Sikkim disrupted by protesters in Siliguri

SILIGURI/ GANGTOK, JUN 24 (PTI): Bus and car services between Siliguri, considered the gateway to the north east, and Gangtok were affected today as drivers of West Bengal registered vehicles stopped plying to Sikkim, inconveniencing a large number of tourists.

Several Sikkim registered cars were also damaged by anti-Gorkhaland protesters and the services of Sikkim Nationalised Transport (SNT) from Siliguri was stopped.

SNT additional general manager (operations) HL Lamichaney said its buses were not plying today out of fear.

"Local drivers have threatened us that they will torch our vehicles if we carry on with our services. We will resume our service if West Bengal government provides



SNT buses headed to Siliguri from Gangtok on Saturday dropped off passengers near Salugara in light to potential trouble in travel ahead. Police bandobast was at hand to ensure that the situation did not get out of hand.

security to our buses," Lamichaney said.

Sikkim-bound tourists were stranded at the SNT bus stand in Siliguri.

Hundreds of tourists were seen standing in long queues at the SNT



bus depot in Gangtok waiting to purchase tickets to Siliguri.

An indefinite bandh is being observed in Darjeeling hills by Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) spearheading an agita-

tion demanding separate Gorkhaland state.

And even as this situation had minimal effect road travel from Sikkim, which passes through Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts, over the

last couple of days, there has been trouble for Sikkim in Siliguri.

Problem was created after Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Chamling extended support for a se-

turn to pg03

Sikkimese rapper pens anthem for the People's Movement for Gorkhaland



...and the people are connecting to it big time

**PALZOR MACHUNGPA
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:**

Gangtok-born music producer and rapper, Ugen Nagyal Bhutia, has done it again. His 2015 hit 'Call Me Indian' turned heads with many of the music sites calling him the next gen rapper sensation. A string of hits under his hat, like the radio favorite 'Badam Ko Lagi', the loyalty song 'Bhotey Kukur' and now one of the largest streaming songs by a Sikkimese rapper, 'Jai Jai Khukuri'.

Awash in music, Gorkha and Bhutia pride, he attempted to boost the morale of the community through the will of his conflicted rhymes. The rapper did not set out to create an anthem for protestors with his hopeful exploration of Gorkha pride, but it ended up being adopted by many who would write "Jai Jai Khukuri" while posting pictures of the movement as their caption.

"It's a chant of hope and feeling," he told SummitTimes.

"I was in class 10 when I first heard about the Gorkhaland movement. I was not aware of the situation or what it meant to the people at the time so I was not that vocal about it. Seven years later, the movement began again and it garnered attention from everybody. This time I knew what it meant for the people of Darjeeling to have their own home," Ugen shares.

In the video of the song, footage from past protests is interspersed with photos from Gorkhas' 100-year movement. Since its official release on 19 June on Facebook and YouTube, the song has garnered more than 3.50 lakh online streams (excluding YouTube plays) with people calling it the 'anthem' of the movement.

"I wanted to be careful about what I wanted to express through the song. I did not want it to create a stir among the listeners therefore; I researched the topic and did

some digging. I talked to people and wrote the song in about two days. I wanted to contribute something to the movement and I did with my music," the rapper shares.

"The song carries the unbearable anguish of thousands. The song reflects the indifference, disregard and negligence of all who remain quiet about this issue," Roshni Tamang from Darjeeling said when asked about the song.

On being asked about his timing to release the song, Ugen says, "This is what's happening in the country. Whenever I make music, it reflects where I'm at mentally. And this is where we're at".

When asked about the response that the song has gotten since it got released, the Gangtokian says, "It's crazy. This is one of my favorite songs that I have written and composed. To see that people are relating to the song makes me much more than just a musician. It makes them see me as one of them who is feeling the same thing."

Dzongu Development Committee lashes out against Save Dzongu Committee allegations

WANGCHUK BHUTIA
MANGAN, 24 JUN:

The Dzongu Development Committee today condemned allegations leveled against it by members of Save Dzongu Committee. The DDC was formed recently to deal with the hydel project issue and to interact better with the media, dialogue with the concerned authorities, mobilizing awareness programs and legal channeling.

Regarding the issue of the gram sabha for Forest Rights Act (FRA) for Lum-Gor-Sangtok Gram Panchayat Unit held on 13 May, Mikmar Lepcha of Tareng said that the people were not informed about the date being postponed.

"We were not informed about the postponement since there was no official intimation which resulted in the holding of the gram sabha on the prescribed date as the people demanded that the reso-



lution be passed on the same date," he stressed.

Tareng Ward Panchayat, Passang Doma Lepcha, who had attended the FRA gram sabha on 13 May, further stated that the gram sabha was successfully conducted as per the norms with support from most of the people. She added that even she was not aware of the postponement.

"I was told to conduct

the ward sabha and draft the demands of the public, so we conducted the ward sabha on 09 May and listed out the demands," she informed.

She further alleged that she was pressured by other panchayat members from the GPU regarding the matter.

Responding to allegation that most of the people have opposed the Teesta Stage-IV hydel

project from the left bank, Tashi Tongden Lepcha, one of the landowners, said that they have video evidence of all the FRAs held in every GPU recording how the public have endorsed their solidarity for the implementation of Teesta Stage IV.

The Development Committee further said that those blaming the administration should in

fact be charged with defamation case.

Ugen Lepcha, landowner of Hee-Gyathang GPU, countered the protestors questioning why they accepted grants from NHPC in terms of CSR activities like the recently-awarded ambulance and are also engaged as contractors with NHPC.

Another landowner from Hee-Gyathang GPU, Tashi Ongdup Lepcha, further claimed that the FRA Gram Sabha for Hee-Gyathang GPU was not held as per prescribed norms and that the people were forced to sign the Memorandum. Only a selected few people were allowed to address the Gram Sabha, he alleged.

He further claimed that only unutilized land by the riverbed or along the cliffs which were not fit for agriculture or any other purpose were being acquired for the said project, hence people should not have any

complaints.

Dzongu Development Committee has been formed for the overall development of Dzongu and is a representative group of all people, speakers further claimed, adding that it did not even have an executive committee since it was planned to be run by the people by consensus.

The DDC today further stated that they will be submitting a representation to the Chief Minister regarding the injustice inflicted on a woman panchayat member and seek an immediate apology from the rival group.

The landowner from Lum, Nima Tshering Lepcha, further conveyed that the group strongly condemns allegations leveled against the district administration as well and reiterated that they, like everyone else, have the right to express their opinion when it comes hydel projects.

SDF condemns harassment of Sikkim vehicles and slogans against CM in Silg

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Sikkim Democratic Front has strongly condemned the incidents of harassment, threatening and disruption targeted at Sikkim vehicles and slogans raised against Chief Minister Pawan Chamling in Siliguri on Friday.

An SDF press release issued by its spokesperson, Bhim Dahal, explains that the SDF Government had passed a resolution in 2011 in support of the demand for the formation of a separate State of Gorkhaland. In that sense, there is nothing new, only a reiteration of the State Government's position on the statehood demand.

"Gorkhaland is a Constitutional demand and the party had also passed the resolution in support of Gorkhaland on the occasion of its historic Kranti Diwas celebration on 22 June," the release further details.

The release mentions

that it was known to everyone that on behalf of Sikkim Government, the Chief Minister Pawan Chamling wrote to the Union Home Minister on 20 June to request fulfillment of the demand for Gorkhaland. It is added that SDF party and the government have always stood in favor of the constitutional demand of Gorkhaland.

The release also mentions that Sikkim has been facing problems in the movement of its vehicles in Darjeeling hills for a long time now.

On the same, the release, while commenting on news reports of harassment, threatening and disruption to Sikkim drivers and passengers by some elements at Sikkim Nationalised Transport office and other some places in Siliguri on Friday, strongly criticized and condemned such mischief and unsolicited incidents in Siliguri and rues that such incidents could give out the wrong message and create a fear-psychosis situation.

Tourist dies of altitude sickness at Yumthang

GANGTOK, JUN 24 (PTI): A 40-year-old tourist from Bihar, who was on a visit to Yumthang Valley in Sikkim, has died due to altitude sickness here, police records inform.

Ramesh Kumar complained of breathing problem following his visit to Yumthang Valley before getting unconscious, they said.

He was rushed to a nearby hospital but was declared dead on arrival. The body was then forwarded to Mangan North District Hospital for medical autopsy, police said.

A case of unnatural death has been registered at Lachung police station and investigation is underway.

SADA booking at Rangpo

GANGTOK, 24 JUN: A 30 year old resident of Rhenock, East Sikkim was arrested and booked under Sikkim Anti Drugs Act, 2006 by Rangpo police on 23 June.

The accused was reportedly caught with 861 spasmoproxyvon capsules and 100 N-10 tablets. The recovered items were seized, sealed and sent for chemical analysis while the accused person was formally arrested and brought in police custody.

BJP-Sikkim condemns harassment of Sikkim vehicles in Silg

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Bharatiya Janta Party's Sikkim unit has condemned the harassment of Sikkim vehicles in Siliguri on Friday.

A BJP state-unit press release issued by its president, DB Chauhan, states that the action of the TMC party workers could now affect the cordial relations between Sikkim and West Bengal.

The release states that the WB Chief Minister should keep her party workers away from such anti-social and hooligan activities.

Sherpa assoc approaches Minister for Tribal Affairs with complaint

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

A Denzong Sherpa Association delegation called on Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, Jual Oram, today and placed demands seeking protection of land rights under Revenue Order No. 1 and separate census of Sherpa community in the state, a press release from the DSA president, Lha Tshering Sherpa informs.

"The association highlighted the injustice and suppression meted out to Sherpa community for centuries despite being recognized as a sub-caste of Bhutia from the very first census of 1891 conducted in



Sikkim. Considering such historical and documented facts, the Scheduled Tribes Order 1978 and the Representation of People's (Amendment) Act 1980, the Union of India placed

the Sherpa community within the constellation of Bhutia-Lepcha," says the release.

The association has further accused the state government of taking advantage of the Sherpa community saying, "Successive governments in Sikkim have done great injustice by allowing transfer of land to general communities for last 40 years".

Seeking explanation from the State Government of Sikkim, the Union Minister has assured immediate intervention to provide justice to the minority tribal Sherpa community in Sikkim, informs the release.

Legship School in solidarity with Darjeeling

GYPALSHING, 24 JUN: Darjeeling has been receiving immense support from all over Sikkim. From the capital to Namchi, people have been taking out rallies in support of the cause. Adding to the flow of support, teachers of Legship Senior Secondary School in West Sikkim stood in solidarity with Darjeeling and its people today. [from PRITAM LAMA]



Health Minister checks on NERLP progress in constituency

GANGTOK, 24 JUN (IPR): Health Minister Arjun Kumar Ghatani interacted with the officials of North East Rural Livelihood Project (NERLP) at Panchayat Bhawan, Gelling today.

He emphasized on the role of NERLP to increase economic and livelihood opportunities among the rural population. He encouraged Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to initiate income generating activities so that women, unemployed youth and the most disadvantaged group can improve their livelihood.

The minister also visited the newly upgraded Sawaligaon Secondary School and interacted with the staff and students.

He inspected the proposed site of herbal garden which is under progress.

The minister was accompanied by Zilla Panchayat, DK Rai, Panchayats, Deputy Director (Human Resource Development Department, West) along with members from the School Managing Committee.

The minister then inaugurated a house constructed under Chief Minister's Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM) at ward no. 2 of Gelling Samsing Gram Panchayat Unit.

Golay concerned over KMY deadlock at Nathula

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha president, PS Tamang (Golay), has expressed his concern over reports that the first batch of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra pilgrims have been refused entry through Nathula.

He believes that this was a very sensitive issue and that the State government should know about the reason in advance on why China was not allowing pilgrims' access.

The party has demanded that the State Government take note of the issue and take proper care of Yatris who are already in the State.

An SKM press release issued by its general secretary, Birendra Tamling, adds that if such an incident happens again in the future, then it would affect tourism in the State.

The party has also blamed SDF for creating the problem, claiming that the party supporters hoisted SDF flags in a foreign land despite strict instructions from the Chinese government during the first KMY in 2015.

The release suggests that the Chinese government could have taken this incident (of an SDF flag waved by a Yatri from Sikkim in 2015) seriously and that this might have led to the present deadlock.

BJP meet at Karongthang

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

A meeting of the Bharatiya Janta Party Sikkim Pradesh was held today at Karongthang under Rangrang-Yangang constituency under the chairmanship of its mahamantri, LR Gurung. The meeting constituted a booth-level committee for Karongthang, informs a BJP state-unit press release.

The release informs

that BJP-Sikkim's farmer's front president, YT Lepcha, highlighted the various schemes and programmes of the NDA government for farmers.

It is informed that the party delegation also inspected Korangthang Primary School after the meeting and found it in a deplorable condition. The party has lashed out on the weak educational policies of the State government.

ADMISSION OPEN

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REGD. NO. IV/VOL. 12/SL NO. 336

Contact 9933546862

Zumba Class
Time : Morning 6:30 am
3:15 pm Evening / 4:30 pm Evening
5:30 pm Evening and also for the Housewife timing 9:00am

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MIM

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Gangtok on Sunday, 25 June
Temp: 26°C / 18°C
Forecast: Mostly cloudy with a couple of showers and a thunderstorm
Sunrise: 04:42 AM
Sunset: 06:34 PM

DU announces first cut-off list

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): Delhi University has announced its first cut-off list for the academic year 2017-18 for merit-based undergraduate courses, with many registering a drop in cut-offs across colleges. The highest was 99.66 per cent for BSc (Hons) Electronics in SGTB Khalsa College.

In humanities stream, Khalsa again set the highest cut-off at 99 per cent for BA (Hons) Political Science, according to the list available on DU website.

While Miranda House's cut-off for BA (Hons) Economics is 97.25 per cent, B Com (Hons) cut-off in both Ramjas College and Hansraj College is 97.5 per cent.

Last year, the highest cut-off was announced by Ramjas College at 99.25 per cent for BCom (Hons), 98.75 for BCom and 98.5 for Economics (Hons).

Eligible candidates are advised to complete their admission formalities in the colleges concerned within the stipulated time as notified on the website, a release issued by the varsity said.

Admission to 54,000 undergraduate seats of various DU colleges received over 2.5 lakh applications. The second cut-off list is expected to be issued on July 1.

Car, bus services to Sikkim disrupted by protesters in Siliguri

Contd from pg01

arate Gorkhaland state on 22 June writing to the Union Minister for Home Affairs in support of the Gorkhaland demand.

First this triggered some protest in Siliguri with groups question why the State Government of Sikkim was interfering in West Bengal's internal matters, and now this has been taken up by WB-registered taxi vehicles.

Drivers of tourist vehicles in Siliguri allege that GJM activists were not allowing them to ply cars along NH-10, the lone highway connecting Gangtok and Siliguri, but bandh supporters were not objecting to Sikkim registered cars.

"GJM is not stopping cars from Sikkim. Their chief minister has supported Gorkhaland. And our livelihood is at stake," a Siliguri driver said.

They stopped a Sikkim-bound bus in the morning and later small cars from going to the neighbouring hill state.

Two cars were damaged by a mob at Champasari as the drivers were not ready to get down, it is informed.

No one was injured in the incident and police intervened and removed the two cars from the road.

[with additional reporting by our reporters]

Landslide damages home at Naitam

REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

A landslide which occurred on 22 June at 13th Mile in Naitam, East Sikkim has damaged the kitchen of a local residence.

"The landslide has unsettled the foundation of my home. The house can fall apart anytime," the affected family member says.

Meanwhile, fellow residents of the area have come together to help the affected person repair to foundation.

Apart from the house, the landslide has also blocked the road in Naitam.

Local commuters haven't been able to travel to Ranipool or Gangtok



along this axis. Due to heavy rain-fall, another landslide occurred at 14th Mile in Naitam, East Sikkim today causing the road to block there as well. It remains unattended.

Singtam drivers rally in support of Gorkhaland and to protest vandalisation of their vehicles



In protest against the vandalisation of one of their vehicles, Singtam drivers have resolved not to ply to Siliguri till 26 June.

YOGEN THATAL
SINGTAM, 24 JUN:

Members of Sikkim Motors Transport Workers Association (Singtam) carried out a peace rally in support of Gorkhaland at Golitar today.

The rally comes a day after Sikkim vehicles were targeted by protestors in Siliguri on Friday.

One of the vandalized vehicles was of Singtam, in response to which the association decided to conduct the peace rally.

An emergency meeting was called shortly after the incident in which the Association president, Tinku Adhikari, announced that no vehicle from Singtam will be plying to Siliguri until 26 Jun.



"If any vehicle is found to be traveling to Siliguri, the association shall be not be held accountable for any casualties or loss," said the president.

Speaking with SummitTimes the association president shared his disappointment regarding the vandalizing of Sikkim vehicles.

"Why are we held accountable for the statements made

by the Chief Minister? We have no part in anything. We strongly condemn the actions of the people who vandalized our vehicles. There were scared passengers in it," Mr Adhikari said.

The rally was attended and joined by all the executive body, committee member, line in-charge of various stand and taxi driver of Singtam.

National indigenous food initiative needed: MP minister

UMIAM (MEGHALAYA), JUN 24 (PTI):

The Centre should launch a national indigenous food initiative to identify and study traditional and regional foods having better nutritional benefits, Madhya Pradesh Welfare and Child Development Minister Archana Chintis said today.

"A national indigenous food initiative should be launched by the Central government to identify and study the traditional and regional foods with their nutritional benefits to enable dissemination and incorporating them into regional diets," Chintis said.

She said this after reading the 'Umiame declaration' adopted at the national seminar on nutrition sensitive agricul-

ture here.

The declaration sought adoption of traditional wisdom and their implementation in contemporary agricultural policies and practices, Chnitis said.

"We need to adopt a holistic approach towards providing food and nutrition to every Indian and this can be achieved by following the philosophy of integral humanism," the Minister said.

'Integral humanism' is a precept of the BJP presented by Deendayal Upadhyay in 1965.

GMC celebrates Gangtok's inclusion in smart cities list

ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

The third list of smart cities selected under the Mission was announced yesterday by the Union Urban Development Minister, M Venkaiah Naidu. With Gangtok officially inducted in the Smart Cities initiative, congratulations and expressions of gratitude have been pouring from all over the capital.

The Gangtok Municipality Corporation is specially thrilled over the selection.

Speaking to SummitTimes, Gangtok Mayor, Shakti Singh Chaudhari, congratulated the people of the state for getting two selections in the mission.

He credited Chief

Minister Pawan Chamling and Urban Development Minister, NK Subba, for their efforts in making Gangtok one of the best destinations in the country.

He has urged the people to extend their full support in all aspects of the mission.

GMC Commissioner, Tsewang Gyachho, also congratulated Gangtokians on the selection and said that the selection was possible due to the efforts of all the departments and all the residents of the capital.

He said that inclusion of Gangtok in the list of Smart Cities will ultimately benefit the people of Gangtok and the State as a whole as they are the stakeholders.

Ek Kadam in support of Gorkhaland

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 JUNE:

Under the banner 'Ek Kadam', a newly-formed Non Governmental Organization of Pakyong, a peace candlelight rally was carried out at Pakyong Bazaar starting from Central Bank premises to the Community Hall today.

The rally was attended by the residents of Pakyong, including employees, businessmen, party workers, youth, students and senior citizens.

"We have organized this rally to voice our

support for the Gorkhas," shared Basant Gurung, a member of the NGO.

"We are here to protest the killings of innocent supporters who wanted their home. They wanted to protect their legacy. They were noble in their fight and we are here to support in whatever way we can," another participant, DR Gurung said.

President of Sikkim Pratibha Pratishtan, BB Subba along with the area general secretary of SDF, Nakul Chettri have also extended their support to the movement.

Role of media debated in talk show

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): The role of the media in the present socio-political scenario in the country was discussed threadbare at an event here today.

The event titled 'Changing Face of Media' was hosted under the Democratic Mirror talk show by the Centre for Public Initiative.

The audience including former Union minister Salman Khurshheed, Rajya Sabha MP K C Tyagi, and senior Supreme Court lawyer K T S Tuls, probed the media's role on a wide range of issues including ownership and political affiliations, growing jingoism and regulation of media organisations.

Khurshheed suggested for some sort of regulation of media that was outrightly rejected by journalist Satish Singh.

Another senior journalist Paranjoy Guha Thakurta batted for a "Communication Commission" with powers to deal with complaints of excess by the media.

Tulsi pointed to the danger of media trial resulting in "miscarriage of justice".

Thakurta said that small part of the media still produced honest journalism despite a large section getting "corrupt and commercialised" with media ownership in the hands of vested interests.

The Democratic Mirror is a unique talk show that will be held every month to focus on contemporary issues faced by the country, said Amrish Ranjan, president of Centre for Public Initiative.



SIKKIM HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD

AWWAS BHAWAN, CHURCH ROAD, GANGTOK

No: 759 (SHDB)/ 2017-18/165

Dated:22.6.2017

AUCTION NOTICE

Sealed Quotation are invited from interested parties for sale of stocked materials along with Kutcha Ekra Structure at SHDB's site at Setipul, East Sikkim belonging to Sikkim Housing & Development Board, on an "as is where is" basis.

The parties may inspect materials at site in presence of Board's official (Contact No: 9593612409) at any working day in between 10AM to 4PM before submission of the quotation. Quotation should reach the office of the undersigned on or before **12 noon of 05.07.2017** to be opened at **12:30PM** on the same day in presence of such bidder(s) who may be present. The highest bidder should deposit the full amount within 3(three) days from the date of opening/ approval of the quotation.

The Secretary, Sikkim Housing & Development Board reserve the right to declare the auction null and void without assigning any reason.

Sd/-
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER.

GRAND OFFER

RAMOLA CELLULAR

LALL MARKET ROAD GANGTOK

APPLE IPHONE	MRP	OFFER PRICE	EXTRA OFFER
IPHONE 5C 8GB	31500	15000	(free cover & temper glass)
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Remember the Emergency

The darkest phase of Indian democracy is also the most murkily remembered

25 June, 1975. For a long while, no one in the country remembered this date. And that is how things remained until the Right took office in Delhi, and chances are that they will ensure that more people remember this day and serve it the infamy it deserves. But this rediscovery is not without its ironies though, because the people now in power who will try and coach us about this day, display, every day, every sign of entitled righteousness and arrogance which had made the Emergency possible. The middle class continues to buy the fiction of order and pride today as it did from 1975 to 1977, and defends and justifies the extreme subjugation of the marginalized by the privileged and the powerful. So, even if the date might get discussed and “debated” on national TV, no one will really be any wiser. And this will be to the misfortune of the country.

For the record, on the midnight of 25 June, 1975, the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, clamped Emergency on the nation. An obvious lust for power led Indira Gandhi to impose the Emergency so that she could stay on in power even after the Courts had ruled that she had no business remaining in office. When the gavel of justice slammed against her, she cracked the whip and co-opted even more power for herself. Before the people's mood swept her into irrelevance, she gambled and roared. It worked, because the people cowered (at least for a while) and were distracted into believing that a strong leader was giving them what they wanted. This cycle repeats itself in our democracy at all levels and all corners with varying degrees of success. But this was not what the people have ever received. In 1975, fundamental rights were suspended, newspapers censored and journalists hauled to jail along with perhaps the entire Opposition. Midnight raids became common and Tihar was packed to the gills with dissenters. Emergency apologists suggest that for once the trains ran on time and officials actually worked. Fact remains that the two years of Emergency were times when India ran under a dictatorship and no matter how “efficient” the officers became at this time, it was a period which went against everything that democracy stands for and the worst hit were the underprivileged. The model did not go down well with the people and they voted not only Indira's INC out of power but also refused the original Mrs. G a berth in the Lok Sabha when they finally got a chance to vote in 1977. It is another matter that the same people voted her back into power in 1979. But that argument we keep for another day.

The Emergency is something that the generation in schools and colleges now does not even know about; at least not in the real sense. This blind-spotting of the tumultuous two years in the history of Indian Democracy is perhaps as unfair as the actual Emergency itself. Every generation of Indians should know what can happen if citizens of a democracy stop caring or allow themselves to get carried away by bombast and faux nationalism. One does not expect the horrors of the Emergency to be taught in schools, but even the mainstream media is failing in its job with mere tokenism on the topic. This is perhaps because the media houses, save perhaps Indian Express and The Statesman, keeled over to official pressure at the time. This is a skeleton that everyone wants kept locked. But that is wrong. Young Indians need to know what happened between 1975 and 1977. They have to understand the situation that led to the Emergency so that they can recognise the signs when a repeat is being attempted. No one really expects an Emergency to be imposed again, but there might not even be the need to in the present times when free thought and liberal ideas can instead be effectively drowned out by trolls and a jingoistic media. This makes the need for the young to understand the Emergency even more keenly so that they also need to know of the popular movement, about the silent majority, which finally overcame the draconian imposition. They need to know of the symptoms of a democracy in distress and about the tools that can repair it so that they can deploy the same when required.

The past, we should realise, is not something to pride over or to feel ashamed of, it is something to learn from. India, and for that matter even Sikkim, prefers to ignore the uncomfortable bits. India ignores the Partition Riots and the Emergency and Sikkim dodges on the Merger. This attitude should change. We need to look deeper into our pasts again, not for critiques and allegations, but, as mentioned earlier, to be better prepared.

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

Wonder Woman: Feminist Icon or Symbol of Oppression?

LINA ABIRAFEH
theconversation.com

It's been a busy – and controversial – year for Wonder Woman.

In October 2016, the United Nations made a curious appointment: Wonder Woman would be the global organisation's new Ambassador for Women's Empowerment, aligned with the launch of a new campaign to fuel Sustainable Development Goal number five, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030.

The announcement, which coincided with Wonder Woman's 75th birthday and a new Hollywood super-production about the comic book character, was met with a great deal of criticism.

While the fictional feminist icon has long been a representative of strong, liberated women, her Western appearance, sexualised image and unrealistic beauty don't resonate with millions of young women around the world. They're actually alienating.

Feminists skewered the decision. Was the UN implying that no flesh-and-blood woman was up to the task?

Over 44,000 people signed a petition resulting in “one less woman in politics”. Just as quickly as she'd got it, Wonder Woman lost her job.

WHAT'S A FEMINIST?

She's still winning at the box office though. The film, released on June 2, has already brought in US\$571 million worldwide.

Director Patty Jenkins's Wonder Woman is being hailed as a “masterpiece of subversive feminism”. It is the first time since 1984's Supergirl that a female superhero has anchored a film.

This woman-directed, woman-led film tells a story of justice, of a character who fights evil forces for the greater good. As Wonder Woman, Gal Godot overcomes the trite “damsel in distress” narrative and rescues her own damn self. But are we being overly generous with the feminist label here?

In a recent article, the Hollywood Reporter said that Warner Bros had created “what one might describe as a postfeminist Wonder Woman”, with Jenkins “temper[ing] the character's traditional strength with vulnerability”.

Even Gadot, the film's Israeli star, is quoted as saying, “Credit Patty for not turning [Wonder Woman] into a ballbuster” – not the most feminist of concepts.

Rather than represent real women, Wonder Woman satisfies the societal image of the ideal woman. Inhumanly strong, super sexy and bolstered by her exceptionalism, Wonder Woman is a “walking contradiction of the competing demands placed on women's shoulders today”.

How many actual women or girls around the world can live up to Wonder Woman as a role model? Would we even want them to?

Also lacking in laudatory reviews of Wonder Woman is the idea of intersectionality – the acknowledgement that women's multiple identities (not just sex but also gender identity, race, class, sexual orientation, religion and others) expose them to numerous forms of oppression.

Why haven't feminists noted that the film is, quite simply, too Western and too white?

MEANWHILE IN LEBANON

In Lebanon, where I currently live and work, Wonder Woman was banned nationwide, upsetting fans, shocking civil liberties groups and raising concerns about government censorship.

The decision is based on the Israel Boycott Law



of 1955, which prohibits economic relations with Israel, “an enemy state”, including with any “institutions or persons having residence in Israel”. Actress Gal Godot is clearly among them.

Lebanon and Israel have a long history of conflict (the most recent flare-up occurred in 2006), and Lebanon forbids its citizens from travelling to Israel. It also prohibits entry to anyone with an Israeli passport stamp and forbids the purchase of Israeli products.

More than a political disagreement, the Campaign to Boycott Supporters of Israel-Lebanon explains, this is “resistance against occupation”, which is to say that the ban isn't about Israelis or Judaism but rather about the government-supported Zionist project that has resulted in human rights violations against Palestine and the Palestinian people.

But enforcement of the law is uneven. Hewlett-Packard and Coca-Cola, supposedly banned, are actively operating here, and Lebanon has previously screened films featuring Israeli actors, including Star Wars (with Natalie Portman) and the Fast and Furious series (with Gal Gadot).

Nor is the Lebanese government consistent in supporting the Palestinian people. Palestinians here are routinely denied access to jobs, healthcare and citizenship. In Lebanon, popular sentiment on Palestine ranges from indifference and resentment to outright discrimination.

As the Lebanese researcher Halim Shebaya noted in a June 2 opinion piece, it would have been

a much more powerful statement if the Lebanese people had refused to see Wonder Woman because it symbolised oppression than for politicians to make that decision for them.

If this ban was an act of solidarity, it's unlikely that Palestinians here or elsewhere saw it that way. Letting the film run and then donating the proceeds to support Palestinians living in Lebanon – perhaps to Palestinian women's organisations – would have been read more clearly as solidarity.

REMEMBERING INTERSECTIONALITY

Lebanon's dubious ban and Wonder Woman's dubious feminism may seem poles apart but the two are, in fact, related – because of intersectionality, of course.

In both the Arab region and the United States, there is a growing debate about whether feminism and Zionism are compatible.

One camp claims that they are, a position that the Sarah Lawrence College student Andrea Cantor laid out for the Huffington Post earlier this year.

“Israel is more than a government” she wrote. “It is a country that allows trans people into the army,” and has “progressive stances on women's and LGBTQIA's rights”.

The other side questions that notion. Linda Sarsour, a prominent Palestinian-American activist, has been an outspoken proponent of the view that you can't be a Zionist feminist.

As an Arab woman raised in America, I don't so much question the choice of Gal Gadot to play Wonder Woman – because, in point of fact, Hollywood rarely denies actors roles because of their beliefs and moviegoers hardly care – but her elevation as a global feminist icon. Is it appropriate that an outspoken Zionist – a woman who supports the idea of a national identity rooted in another's national erasure – should become the emblem of powerful Western womanhood?

In the end, despite its efforts, Wonder Woman merely exposes the dominant narrative of white women's feminism and the global indifference to Palestine's plight. Its failures to challenge the status quo are too important to ignore, because a feminism rooted in oppression is no feminism at all.

[the writer is Director, Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, Lebanese American University]

What is ‘cognitive reserve’? How we can protect our brains from memory loss and dementia

MICHAEL RIDDING
theconversation.com

As we get older we have a greater risk of developing impairments in areas of cognitive function – such as memory, reasoning and verbal ability. We also have a greater risk of dementia, which is what we call cognitive decline that interferes with daily life. The trajectory of this cognitive decline can vary considerably from one person to the next.

Despite these varying trajectories, one thing is for sure: even cognitively normal people experience pathological changes in their brain, including degeneration and atrophy, as they age. By the time a person reaches the age of 70 to 80, these changes closely resemble those seen in the brains of people with Alzheimer's Disease.

Even so, many people are able to function normally in the presence of significant brain damage and pathology. So why do some experience symptoms of Alzheimer's and dementia, while others remain sharp of mind?

It comes down to something called cognitive reserve. This is a concept used to explain a person's capacity to maintain normal cognitive function in the presence of brain pathology. To

put it simply, some people have better cognitive reserve than others.

Evidence shows the extent of someone's cognitive decline doesn't occur in line with the amount of biological damage in their brain as it ages. Rather, certain life experiences determine someone's cognitive reserve and, therefore, their ability to avoid dementia or memory loss.

HOW DO WE KNOW?

Being educated, having higher levels of social interaction or working in cognitively demanding occupations (managerial or professional roles, for instance) increases resilience to cognitive decline and dementia. Many studies have shown this. These studies followed people over a number of years and looked for signs of them developing cognitive decline or dementia in that period.

Cognitive reserve is traditionally measured and quantified based on self reports of life experience such as education level, occupational complexity and social engagement. While these measures provide an indication of reserve, they're only of limited use if we want to identify those at risk of cognitive decline. Genetic influences obviously play a part in our brain development and will influence resilience.

BRAIN PLASTICITY

The fundamental brain mechanisms that underpin cognitive reserve are still unclear. The brain consists of complex, richly interconnected networks that are responsible for our cognitive ability. These networks have the capacity to change and adapt to task demands or brain damage. And this capacity is essential not only for normal brain function, but also for maintaining cognitive performance in later life.

This adaptation is governed by brain plasticity. This is the brain's ability to continuously modulate its structure and function throughout life in response to different experiences. So, plasticity and flexibility in brain networks likely contribute in a major way to cognitive reserve and these processes are influenced by both genetic profiles and life experiences.

A major focus of our research is examining how brain connectivity and plasticity relate to reserve and cognitive function. We hope this will help identify a measure of reserve that reliably identifies individuals at risk of cognitive decline.

STRENGTHENING YOUR BRAIN

While there is little we can do about our genetic profile, adapting our lifestyles to include certain types of be-

haviours offers a significant opportunity to improve our cognitive reserve.

Activities that engage your brain, such as learning a new language and completing crosswords, as well as having high levels of social interaction, increase reserve and can reduce your risk of developing dementia.

Regular physical activity also improves cognitive function and reduces the risk of dementia. Unfortunately, little evidence is available to suggest what type of physical activity, as well as intensity and amount, is required to best increase reserve and protect against cognitive impairment.

There is also mounting evidence that being sedentary for long periods of the day is bad for health. This might even undo any benefits gained from periods of physical activity. So, it is important to understand how the composition of physical activity across the day impacts brain health and reserve, and this is an aim of our work.

Our ongoing studies should contribute to the development of evidence-based guidelines that provide clear advice on physical activity patterns for optimising brain health and resilience.

[the writer is Professor, University of Adelaide]

Haokip students' organisation president shot dead in Imphal

Imphal, Jun 24 (PTI): President of Haokip Students' Organisation (HSO), Lethkhol Haokip (37) was shot dead by unidentified miscreants in Imphal West district, police said today.

The student leader was shot near the gate of his residence by the armed miscreants last night. He was rushed to the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) Hospital where doctors declared him brought dead, the police said.

Haokip originally hailed from Khoken village in Kangpokpi district.

Police registered a case at Lamphel police station and are investigating the matter, the sources added.

In another incident, a self styled 'lieutenant' of the banned outfit United National Liberation Front (UNLF) was apprehended by police commandos on Thursday night.

In a press statement issued by the police, the apprehended cadre has been identified as Narungbam Prameshwar Singh.

The 42-year-old was apprehended from Yaiskul Police Lane in Imphal during frisking, following a tip off.

Flood situation worsens in Assam

GUWAHATI, JUN 24 (PTI): Flood situation in Assam worsened today hitting over 87,500 people in Lakhimpur, Karimganj and Sonitpur districts.

According to a report by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) 131 villages are under water at present, while 148 hectares of crop land have been damaged.

Till yesterday a little over 82,000 people were affected across Assam due to the calamity.

Around 500 people are taking shelter at relief camps in Karimganj district, officials said.

Meanwhile, ASDMA said local people have recovered the body of a woman, who was washed away on by Ranganadi flood waters on May 31.

The woman was identified as Pallabi Saikia (32) from Nowboicha.

Afghans suffer deadliest Ramadan since 2001

KABUL, JUN 24 (AFP): Afghanistan has suffered its deadliest Ramadan since the US-led invasion in 2001 with over 200 killed and hundreds wounded, according to an AFP count based on official figures.

The streets of Kabul were quiet on Saturday ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr festival, which marks the end of Islam's holiest month, amid fears of further attacks.

Militants believe they will go to paradise if they die during Ramadan or on Eid, a day when millions of Muslims break their fasts and visit mosques for prayers and celebrations.

"It was the deadliest month for pious Afghans who were all fasting," political analyst, General Abdul Wahid Taqat told AFP.

"They killed them everywhere they could, inside the mosques, on the streets... as they believe the more they kill, the more rewards they will earn," he said.

Processions taken out in Darjeeling, shutdown continues

DARJEELING, JUN 24 (PTI): People wearing the traditional Gorkha attire marched through the streets of Darjeeling today in support of Gorkhaland as the indefinite shutdown in the hills entered its 10th day.

Internet services remained suspended and local cable channels remained blocked in certain parts of the hills.

Meanwhile, the family members of a Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) activist, who was allegedly killed in police firing on June 17, lodged a complaint against the police.

The police had earlier denied the allegation of opening fire at the GJM activists.

The GJM has decided to burn copies of the Gorkha Territorial Administration (GTA) Accord, signed in 2011 between the

Union home ministry, the West Bengal government and the outfit, on June 26 and 27.

The elected members of the GTA, belonging to the GJM, which is leading the stir, resigned en masse yesterday.

GJM chief Bimal Gurung, who had surfaced in public yesterday, addressed the media at the party's stronghold at Patlebas and threatened to "fight till the end" for their one-point agenda of a separate Gorkhaland.

Meanwhile, Bengal BJP chief Dilip Ghosh denied that the saffron party had ever talked about Gorkhaland.

"We had never talked about Gorkhaland. Didi (West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee) had signed the GTA accord. We are not in favour of creation of states on the basis of any lin-

guistic group or community. We had said this earlier too.

"If states are to be created on the basis of a linguistic group or community, we would have to support all such demands such as those of the Kamtapuris, Rajbanshis etc. We were never in support of this," he told reporters in Alipurduar.

The GJM is an ally of the BJP in the NDA.

Gurung had said that talks were on with the Centre and that he was hopeful of "positive results".

Students stranded at several boarding schools were evacuated yesterday after the GJM offered them a 12-hour "window" till 6 pm to leave the hills safely.

A case of murder, arson, assault on police personnel and conspiracy to incite violence

was filed against Gurung and his wife Asha on June 17.

The Calcutta High Court has directed that notice be served on Gurung by all means possible in view of a PIL, challenging the indefinite bandh called by the GJM in Darjeeling.

The West Bengal government yesterday offered a dialogue to the GJM leadership in a bid to defuse the crisis with Home Secretary Malay De saying that the doors were "open for talks to restore normalcy in the hills".

The government also sent a letter to Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh protesting Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling's support to the GJM's Gorkhaland demand terming it as "unconstitutional".

West Bengal govt receives UN Public Service Award for promoting girls' education

THE HAGUE, JUN 24 (PTI): The UN has awarded a scheme by the West Bengal government aimed at promoting girls' education with its highest Public Service Award.

'Kanyashree Prakalpa' scheme was chosen among 552 projects from 62 countries which were nominated for the award, the Indian embassy in The Hague said in a statement.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee received a trophy and the certificate for the First Prize at the UN Public Service Forum here.

Kanyashree Prakalpa is a targeted conditional cash transfer scheme aimed at promoting edu-



cation among girls.

Over four million girls are already enrolled in the scheme.

Around USD 500 million has been transferred directly to the benefi-

ciaries' bank account through the scheme, which is being implemented through 16,000 institutes and schools.

The scheme won the prestigious public ser-

vice award for its ability to reach the poorest and the most vulnerable sections of the society through inclusive services and participation, the statement said.

On receiving the award on behalf of the state, Banerjee said that it was a historic achievement and a proud moment for the people of West Bengal and India.

She reiterated the commitment of her government towards achieving the 2030 agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through similar innovative public service programmes catering to the needs of the most vulnerable sections of the society.

Earlier, Banerjee also participated in a ministerial conversation on 'Accelerating Innovation in Public Service' as part of the UN Public Service Forum, the statement added.

We never talked about Gorkhaland: WB BJP president

KOLKATA, JUN 24 (PTI): West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh today said the party had never talked about Gorkhaland nor was it in favour of formation of states on the basis of any linguistic group or community.

"We had never talked about Gorkhaland. Didi (Mamata Banerjee) had signed Gorkhaland Territorial Administration accord. We are not in favour of creation of states on the basis of any linguistic group or community. We had said this earlier too," Ghosh told reporters in Alipurduar.

"If states are to be created on the basis of linguistic group or community, we have to support everybody like Kamtapuris, Rajbanshis. They also demanded separate states. We don't support this.

"If states were created on that basis, others cannot live there. Assam has more Gorkha population than Bengal. What will happen there?" he asked.

The state BJP chief, however, said the Centre will look into whether any new state will be created or not.

Asked that local BJP leaders had attended the meeting called by the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha, which is spearheading the movement for Gorkhaland, he said "Only one leader had gone there due to political pressure in the hills".

The GJM is an ally of the BJP.

On cases filed against GJM chief Bimal Gurung by the police, Ghosh said "Most of these cases are false. Such cases were also filed against me. I had challenged them to arrest me."

Ghosh held Chief minister Mamata Banerjee responsible for the current unrest in the hills.

"She had signed the GTA agreement. If she believed that GTA can usher in development then why was separate fund given to the district magistrate? Why were 11 development boards formed in the hills?" he asked and alleged that it was done to weaken Gurung and the GJM.

It would be easier for the Trinamool Congress to expand its organisation in the hills if Gurung is arrested, he added.

Gorkhas of Arunachal rally for Gorkhaland

ITANAGAR, JUN 24 (PTI): Gorkhas in Arunachal Pradesh brought out a rally here this evening in support of the ongoing movement in Darjeeling hills for the creation of a separate Gorkhaland state.

Gorkha men, women and children took part in the rally amidst heavy rains carrying pro-Gorkhaland placards and shouting slogans against the West Bengal government.

The rally, which started off from IG Park, culminated at the Itanagar Monastery where the protesters lit candles in memory of three persons who were allegedly killed in clashes with police in Darjeeling on June 17.

"We, the people of Arunachal Pradesh are not supporting the Gorkhaland movement because we want a land in Darjeeling or Kalim-

pong. We are doing it for our identity," said All Arunachal Pradesh Gorkha Youth Welfare (AAPGYWA) president Shyam Ghatani.

AAPGYWA chairman Chanbir Sonar said that it was high time that Prime Minister Narendra Modi fulfil his promise made to the Gorkha community.

BJP's manifesto before the 2014 Lok Sabha election had said that the party will "sympathetically examine" the demand for Gorkhaland.

The rally was also supported by various unions and organisations including All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union and All Nyishi Students Union.

Arunachal Pradesh has been a home to the Gorkha community for many decades. The Gorkha population in the state is said to be more than 1 lakh.

Kovind to kickstart nation-wide tour tomorrow from UP

LUCKNOW, JUN 24 (PTI): The NDA's presidential nominee Ram Nath Kovind will visit Uttar Pradesh tomorrow to seek support from members of both the Houses of the state where preparation is on for smooth conduct of voting, slated for July 17.

Kovind's visit to Uttar Pradesh, which has the highest value of each vote in the presidential election, is part of his nation-wide tour during which he will talk to members of the electoral college that votes for the new president.

The electoral college in-

cludes elected members of the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha, states, union territories and the NCT region of Delhi.

"All necessary steps are being taken to make foolproof arrangement before the presidential election," a senior official of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly said.

An Election Commission team also took stock of the preparations and held meeting with Vidhan Sabha officials here last evening, the official said.

It would be the first time, a special pen and ink would be brought to Lucknow from

Delhi to be used by voters to mark their preference of candidates.

For presidential elections, votes are marked in a preferential order which is then counted to declare the winner.

Kovind's programmes in the state tomorrow is yet to be finalised, sources said, adding he would be meeting MPs, MLAs of the BJP, its allies as also leaders of other political parties.

He is likely to go to Uttarakhand from here, they said.

Since the NDA's presidential pick hails from Kanpur Dehat district of the state, Chief Minis-

ter Yogi Adityanath has said it is an honour that the son of Uttar Pradesh would be occupying the presidential office.

Kovind had been active in the Uttar Pradesh unit of BJP and was even appointed the general secretary when Laxmikant Bajpai was the party's state chief. But, he chose to switch to the party's central unit.

After the Narendra Modi government came to power, he was appointed the Bihar Governor, from where he resigned after being named the NDA's presidential nominee.

Thousands evacuated as 27 UK high-rise towers fail safety test

ADITI KHANNA LONDON, JUN 24 (PTI):

Thousands of residents were today evacuated from four housing towers as the UK government in the wake of the deadly Grenfell Tower blaze found 27 high-rise residential blocks across Britain unsafe.

Residents of 650 flats in four tower blocks on an estate in the Swiss Cottage area of north London were evacuated last night by the local Camden Council, following tests ordered in the wake of the Grenfell Tower blaze on June 14, which claimed at least 79 lives and displaced hundreds others.

The estates evacuated were found to have cladding similar to Grenfell Tower, which Scotland Yard confirmed as a factor for the fire spreading rapidly through the 24-storey building after a fridge-freezer burst in one of the flats.

Local councils and housing authorities have been given until Monday to submit cladding samples for these tests to ensure the material used on the exterior of their residential blocks are not made up of similar flammable material as in the massive Grenfell Tower blaze in

west London last week.

The Metropolitan Police, which had launched a criminal investigation into the Grenfell Tower tragedy, has said that detectives are keeping open the option of bringing manslaughter charges relating to the Grenfell fire.

Camden Council's Labour party leader Georgia Gould said the council had acted "as swiftly as we possibly can" to ensure people's safety after the fire service said they could not guarantee the residents' safety in those blocks.

"I know it's difficult, but Grenfell changes everything and I just don't believe we can take any risk with our residents' safety and I have to put them first," she said.

"I offered to pay for fire stations to be stationed outside all of those blocks so we could have a couple of days to get the work done but the message was there was absolutely nothing I could do to make those blocks safe that night," she added.

Refurbishment on the Chalcots Estate evacuated overnight was also overseen by Rydon, the company involved in the refit of Grenfell Tower, according to its website.

A statement released by Downing Street on behalf of Prime Minister Theresa May said: "My thoughts are with residents being evacuated in Camden while their homes are made safe tonight. We will work with and support the emergency services and relevant authorities to safeguard the public".

Many residents have reacted with anger at being moved out of their homes and 83 have so far refused to leave their homes on the Chalcots Estate.

The council has said that if people still choose to not leave their homes then it would "become a matter for the fire services".

Once the flats are evacuated, the external thermal cladding from five tower blocks on the Chalcots Estate will be removed.

There were also concerns raised about the insulation of gas pipes going into flats, and fire doors. The council has secured 270 hotel rooms to house the residents.

Emergency accommodation has also been set up at Swiss Cottage Leisure Centre and at the Camden Centre in King's Cross nearby.

Pilgrimage cut short, Kailash-Mansarovar Yatris to return home today

Contd from pg01

roads and the Indians would not be able to make the pilgrimage any time soon.

"The pilgrims and the liaison officer were told that because of incessant rainfall the roads in the Chinese side had been washed away in major landslides. So they cannot proceed any further," a source informs.

The Chinese officials said they were concerned about the safety of the Indian pilgrims which is why they were stopped from proceeding further.

The Chinese officials also informed the yatris that as and when the weather improves and the roads in TAR are restored they would be allowed through, sources inform.

The first batch of 47 yatris had arrived in Sikkim on 15 June. The Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation is the nodal authority for conducting the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Nathula.

This year, a total of 350 yatris had registered for the Yatra via the Nathula route and were to travel in seven batches.

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DU girl thwarts kidnapping bid

by two men

NEW DELHI, JUN 23 (PTI):

Two men allegedly tried to kidnap a DU student in Vijay Vihar but their attempts were thwarted by the woman who threatened them with a knife, the police said, adding the accused have been arrested.

The woman, who is pursuing her graduation from Delhi University's School Of Open Learning, was returning home on June 21 around 8 PM when the two men, who are in their 20s and work as drivers for a cab aggregator firm, allegedly made some comments on the woman, police said.

When the woman, who is also a civil defence volunteer, protested, the two men got angry and slapped her, they said.

The accused then tried to pull her into their car but she somehow picked up a knife and threatened them, police said.

After which the accused fled but she noted down their car's registration number and informed the police.

The duo was later arrested.

India humble Pakistan 6-1 in World League Semifinals

LONDON, JUN 24 (PTI): India continued to torment Pakistan in the Hero Hockey World League Semifinals, hammering the arch-rivals 6-1 in a 5th-8th place classification match, here on Saturday.

Ramandeep Singh (8th, 28th) and Akashdeep Singh (12th and 27th) struck a brace each while Harmanpreet (36th) sounded the board in the third quarter in India's comprehensive victory in the match.

Pakistan pulled one back through Ajaz Ahmad (41st) in the third quarter while Mandeep Singh (59th) completed the tally for India in the dying moments of the match.

The win is India's second in a row over Pakistan in the tournament after a 7-1 result in their first match. The Indians will take on Canada in the 5th-6th place match tomorrow.

The first quarter belonged to India with play mostly restricted to the Pakistan half. Ramandeep put India ahead in the eighth minute when his reverse flick beat the Pakistan custodian.

Akashdeep had a chance to double the lead four minutes later but it went abegging. He received a pass from Ramandeep, ran into the circle alone and had only the goalkeeper to beat but could not control the ball and ended up missing the goal.

Talwinder though did not make the mistake in giving India their second goal as he deflected a rasping cross from Pardeep Mor from the right.

India took the game away from the arch-rivals in the second quarter with three strikes that handed India a 4-0 cushion at half time.

Pakistan had hardly come to terms with the onslaught when Akashdeep (27th) struck from the left flank as he lobbed the ball past the goalkeeper and the ball hit the bar before crossing the line.

Leaving the Pakistani team in complete disarray, Ramandeep struck for a second time. SV Sunil sent a pass into the 'D' and a fully stretched Ramandeep just had to connect to send the ball into the goal.

C-Div Sikkim League begins with 32 teams

SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Sikkim Football Association C-Division Sikkim-League kicked off here at Paljor Stadium today. 32 teams from different parts of the State are participating in the league this time.

In the inaugural match, Sadarain Football Club outplayed United Dzomsa Football Club 4-2.

Sagar Subba scored a brace, finding the UDFC net in the 10th and 58th minutes, while one goal each was contributed by Silash Tamang [31st minute] and Suman Dewan [70th minute] in the Sadarain FC victory.

Meanwhile, Kinjaub Lachungpa [14th] and Simon Kalikotey [54th min] scored one goal each for United Dzomsa FC.



In the second match of the day, Chujachen Sporting Academy swept past Football Club Pakyong 2-0. Amir Rai [46th] and Ruben Gurung [70th] contributed one goal each for Chujachen SA.

On 25 June, Buzz Football Club will take on Renzong Football Club in the first match which will be followed by Yeti Football Club taking on Devendra FC.

The inaugural function had the Sports &

Youth Affairs Secretary, SD Dhakal, as chief guest, accompanied by SFA president, Menla Ethenpa, and other executive members.

The C-Division league follows the league-cum-knock out format. The 32

teams have been divided into eight groups and only the group toppers will move forward to the knock-out round.

The top-two clubs of the league will be promoted to the second division.

Srikanth beats Shi Yuqi, reaches 3rd successive Super Series final

SYDNEY, JUN 24 (PTI): Kidambi Srikanth continued his dream run and grabbed a third successive Super Series final spot at the Australian Open with a straight-game victory over China's Shi Yuqi here today.

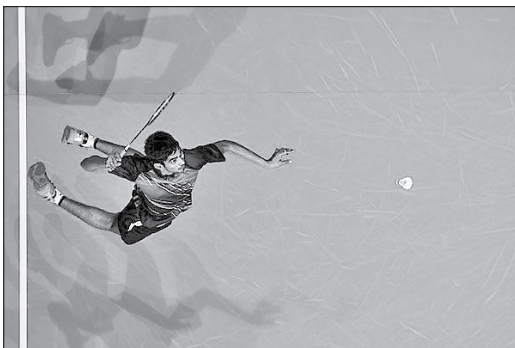
Srikanth, who had reached the summit clash in Singapore and Indonesia, joined Indonesia's Sony Dwi Kuncoro, Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei, the Chinese duo of Chen Long and Lin Dan to become only the fifth player in the world to contest three successive Super Series finals.

A former World No.3, Srikanth, who had reached the semifinals in the last edition, produced yet another near-perfect performance to outclass All England finalist Shi 21-10 21-14 in a 37-minute match to notch up his second win over the Chinese. Srikanth had beaten him at the quarters of the Singapore Open in April.

"It's a dream performance," said Srikanth, who had suffered a stress fracture in his right ankle after the Olympics.

"I played a World Super Series final (Singapore Open) after two years, and then to play the next two finals is a dream for sure."

"I was in control of the whole match, I didn't give him any easy



points at the start. It's just that I had to stay there, he's someone who wants to keep the shuttle in play and goes for the odd shot, so I wanted to stay there and not give him easy points. I was in control at the net."

Srikanth will play either reigning Olympic champion and two-time World champion and All England champion Chen Long or Korea's Lee Hyun Il in the finals.

"I have no thoughts about the final, no thoughts about winning or losing. (If it is Chen Long) I've played him four or five times. Most times it was close. I played him twice this year, I lost 21-19 or so," he said.

Srikanth and Shi engaged in

long rallies with both the shuttlers staying away from the net early on. The Indian relied on strong returns to lead 9-6 in the first game.

Srikanth showed better anticipation and immaculate stroke play to lead 11-7 at the break.

He continued to dominate the proceedings with Shi hitting long, finding the nets. At 16-9, Srikanth had a service error as the shuttle went to the net.

But that didn't affect his run as he continued to move ahead and reached the game point when the Chinese faltered with a net-stroke. The Indian seized the opportunity with a straight smash which left his opponent stranded.

Shi took a slender early lead in the second game but Srikanth caught up at 2-2 and edged ahead with an onrushing return at the net.

The duo engaged in some sensational rallies where both tried to surprise each other with odd shots. But it was Srikanth's brilliant net play which helped him to move to 7-6 with a backhand smash.

Shi's every play was met with determination from Srikanth and it seemed the Chinese had run out of ideas.

He did play some extraordinary strokes but the Indian was always a step ahead. He once again gained a three-point advantage at the interval with another attacking net play.

After the break, the Chinese tried to be more aggressive but Srikanth managed to reach 15-8. Shi grabbed three straight points but another rally ended with his shuttle going long as Srikanth moved to 16-11.

The Indian seemed in total control as he moved effortlessly to change positions from the forecourt to the back to eventually move to 19-13.

Another stiff smash at the net and Srikanth had seven match points. He left one at the baseline but another jump cross court smash took him to the finals.



Devendro, Ankush in finals of Mongolian boxing tourney



NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI):

Commonwealth Games silver-medallist L Devendro Singh (52kg) advanced to the final along with the young Ankush Dahiya (60kg) on another mixed day for Indian boxers at the Ulaanbaatar Cup in Mongolia today.

Devendro defeated Mongolia's Gandulam Mungun-Erdene in a unanimous verdict, while Ankush, a former Asian youth silver-medallist, got the better of Russia's Radna Tsbikov in a split decision.

However, three others - K Shyam Kumar (49kg), Mohammed Hussamuddin (56kg) and Priyanka Chaudhary (60kg) - lost their respective semifinal bouts to settle to bronze medals.

In tomorrow's final bouts, Devendro, putting up his best performance of the year so far, will be

up against Indonesia's Aldoms Suguro.

The 25-year-old former Asian silver-medallist has looked sharp in the tournament with improved fitness making quite a difference to his performance.

The 19-year-old Ankush, on the other hand, will fight it out with Korean Man Choe Chol. This is Ankush's second international tournament since making the transition from youth to elite level late last year.

Shyam Kumar, a gold-medallist from this year's King's Cup in Thailand, lost a split verdict to Filipino Rogen Ladon.

Hussamuddin was beaten by Mongolia's Bat-Ochir Tumurkhuyag in his semifinal bout.

In the women's draw, Priyanka lost to Korea's Hye Song Choe.

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Focus on Yuvraj as India hope for rain-free 2nd ODI

Port of Spain, Jun 24 (PTI):

Yuvraj Singh's patchy form and fear of inclement weather will be paramount when India take on the West Indies in the second One Day International, here on Sunday.

The first ODI was abandoned after 39.2 overs with India reaching 199 for 3 when persistent showers played spoilsport.

Shikhar Dhawan's 87 and comeback-man Ajinkya Rahane's 62 were the highlights of the Indian innings.

While weather is not in their control, what will keep Virat Kohli a touch worried is Yuvraj's form which doesn't exactly inspire confidence of the highest order.

After a half-century against Pakistan in the Champions Tro-



phy opener, Yuvraj's sequence of scores has been 7 (vs Sri Lanka), 23 not out (vs South Africa), 22 (vs Pakistan in CT final) and 4 (1st ODI vs WI).

There is no debate on the class and experience of Yuvraj but at 35-plus, he surely is a shadow of his old self.

His fielding has gone from bad to worse and skipper Kohli has not felt the need to summon him to bowl his left-arm spinners.

Former India captain and current India U-19 coach Rahul Dravid had recently said that team management should have a clear cut policy whether

they want Yuvraj going into the 2019 World Cup.

With just two years left and around 45-50 ODIs to be played, Kohli will have to take a call in the next few months about Yuvraj figuring in his scheme of things.

An explosive left-hander like Rishabh Pant, the most exciting batting prospect among the Gen-Next is waiting in the wings, eagerly for his chance. The veteran can't take his place for granted in the side.

Not to forget an injured Manish Pandey waiting to get fit and prove his mettle in the 50-over format.

With the first match being a wash-out, India are unlikely to change their playing XI for

the second ODI, which will be played at the same venue.

For Rahane, the half-century will be a confidence booster, knowing fully well that he will have to vacate the top spot once Rohit Sharma is back during the next limited overs assignment.

It was not the smoothest of innings by any standards but if one assesses the track which was slightly on the slower side, Rahane did well to add 132 with Dhawan, who has been in blazing form.

Come to think of it, even Dhawan's second coming has been largely due to KL Rahul's shoulder surgery and he has made full use of the opportunity since the start of the Champions Trophy.

After emerging as the top-scorer in England winning the 'Golden Bat', Dhawan has carried his form into the Caribbean islands, which augurs well both for him and his team.

India also need a full match, which will help the team management test left-arm Chinaman Kuldeep Yadav's abilities as a shorter format bowler. Kuldeep was handed a debut during the first match in place of Ravindra Jadeja, who didn't have a great Champions Trophy with the ball.

Jadeja still remains the country's premier left-arm spinner but the West Indies series is an ideal platform to test youngsters.

Match Starts: 6:30 pm IST.

Man arrested for cheating over 2,000 people in tourist scam

New Delhi, Jun 24 (PTI): Delhi Police have arrested a 40-year-old man for allegedly cheating more than 2,000 people from all over India of crores on the pretext of providing luxurious holiday tour packages in five-star hotels.

The accused, Raman Kapoor, is wanted in several cases of cheating in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. He was arrested on the intervening night of June 19 and 20 outside Kalinga Hotel, south Tukaganj in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Madhur Verma.

Kapoor had opened a firm in the name of 'Sun Star The Club' and 'Goodluck Hotels Pvt Ltd'. He used to send his employees to busy market-places and petrol pumps with cou-

pons of their company.

They would ask visitors to these places to fill up these forms. They would tell visitors that if their names come up in a lucky draw, they would be invited for free dinner with family in a five-star hotel in the city.

Later, they used to call the victims to a hotel with family for dinner and his employees used to lure them by showing features and facilities provided by the club.

After the customers would be convinced, they would be charged between Rs one to 1.5 lakh for different types of membership in the company by showing different grade hotels, said the officer. After paying the amount to the accused, the cus-

tomers, however, would not be able to avail the perks of the membership they had taken.

Police had received a complaint from Manoj Kumar, a resident of Patel Garden, Uttam Nagar that he had been cheated to the tune of Rs 1.12 lakh.

The company representatives cheated the complainant on the pretext of providing holiday packages for 12 nights per year in five-star hotels with air-tickets for 20 years after membership.

They claimed that Sunstar company has tie-ups with various five-star properties located at prime tourist locations in India and abroad like JW Marriott, Le Meridien, ITC Welcome, Leela Ambience Hotel and others,

said the DCP.

The accused also told him that he can discontinue membership in the tenth or twentieth year and he will get back the entire membership amount. They also offered a refund of Rs 2,000 for each holiday to those who did not avail the offers.

However, when Kumar tried to avail the holiday offers, he did not get any response from the company, said the officer.

A Crime Branch team conducted several raids in Delhi, Gujarat, Mumbai, UP and Madhya Pradesh in search of the accused persons since they had duped several people in these states with the same modus operandi, he added.

Kapoor is a hotel management graduate from IHM, Ahmedabad.

He worked with Club Mahindra Holidays for nine years but after a dispute with the company, he left.

In 2016, he launched his business of holiday tour packages in which around 2,000 members have joined till date.

He employed people who had earlier worked with various holiday companies and were well-experienced in the field.

Kapoor, along with his wife and other associates are also wanted in eight other cases of cheating registered in different police stations in Delhi, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, and Surat in Gujarat.

EC disqualifies MP minister for 3 years for fudging election expenditure

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): The Election Commission (EC) today disqualified senior Madhya Pradesh minister Narottam Mishra for filing wrong accounts of election expenditure.

An EC spokesperson confirmed that Mishra had been disqualified for three years from today.

His election from the Datia Assembly constituency also stands void.

Rajendra Bharti of the Congress had alleged that Mishra, a close aide of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, had not filed certain details in his election expenditure in the 2008 polls.

The EC had served notice to Mishra on January 15, 2013.

Mishra had moved the Madhya Pradesh High Court and the Supreme Court against the EC notice, but did not get any relief.

Finally, the EC came out with its verdict today.

Monsoon session of Parliament from July 17 to Aug 11

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): The monsoon session of Parliament will commence on July 17, the day voting for the presidential election will take place.

The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs (CCPA) has recommended holding the session from July 17 to August 11, according to sources in the committee.

The CCPA meeting, chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh, was held last evening after NDA presidential nominee Ram Nath Kovind filed his nomination papers.

The House may not function on the first day of the session on account of death of two sitting MPs -- Lok Sabha member Vinod Khanna and Rajya Sabha member Pallavi Reddy.

BJP leader in UP booked for tearing religious book, looting

Pratapgarh(UP), Jun 24 (PTI): A BJP leader has been booked for allegedly tearing up a religious book and looting after breaking into the house of a man who had opposed the felling of trees at a graveyard in Lalganj here.

In a complaint lodged last night, one Syed Ahmed said that Anand Bhushan Singh, a former MLC, and some of his accomplices had on June 21 chased him away after he objected to them cutting down trees in the graveyard, a police officer said.

Inspector Suresh Chand Tripathi, the in-charge of Lalganj police station, said Ahmed has also accused Singh and others of barging into his house with firearms, looting and tearing a religious book.

On the basis of the complaint, an FIR has been registered against the BJP leader, his associates Ram Harak, Dushyay Singh, Devnarain Yadav and 25 other unidentified people, Tripathi said, adding investigation into the case is on.

When contacted, Singh, who joined the BJP in 2011 after the expiry of his term as an independent MLC in 2010, termed the allegation as an attempt by his adversaries to defame him.

KJM VARMA BEIJING, JUN 24 (PTI):

Over 140 people were feared buried today after a massive landslide smashed into their homes in southwest China's Sichuan Province after which rescuers frantically scoured through the rubble for survivors.

The landslide from a high part of a mountain in Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture of Aba hit Xinmo Village in Maoxian County at about 6 AM, blocking a 2 km section of a river and burying 1,600 metres of road.

The landslide smashed into 46 homes, where about 141 people were feared to be buried. State television showed large groups of rescuers trying to scour through the mud and rocks to find survivors.

Chinese President Xi



A family of three was pulled out alive from the rubble, the Mao County government said on its official Weibo page.

The couple and their baby are being treated at the Mao County People's Hospital, the post said. It did not provide further details on their identities.

Jinping has ordered all-out efforts to save people buried in the landslide.

The provincial government has launched the highest level of disaster relief response and sent rescue teams to the site, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

More than 300 rescuers carrying excavation

and life-detection instruments were rushed to the site, said Tang Limin, spokesperson of Sichuan provincial government.

Pictures posted by the People's Daily newspaper showed bulldozers moving earth and large boulders as the rescue efforts continued.

Local police told state

broadcaster CCTV that the landslide had been triggered by recent heavy rains in the region and that the situation was made worse by a lack of vegetation in the area.

"There are several tonnes of rock," police captain Chen Tiebo told the broadcaster, adding that, "It's a seismic area here."

Roads in the county were closed to all traffic except emergency services. Landslides are a regular danger in mountainous regions of China, especially during heavy rains.

In 2008, 87,000 people were killed when an earthquake struck Wenchuan county in Sichuan province. In Maoxian county, 37 tourists were killed when their coach was buried in a landslide caused by the earthquake.

Pak mourns attack victims; army launches crackdown

PESHAWAR, JUN 24 (PTI): Pakistan was in a state of shock after weeks of relative peace as terrorists struck at three cities, killing 62 people and wounding over 100, prompting the army to launch a countrywide crackdown on militants.

A suicide bomber yesterday blew up his explosives-laden car near Inspector General of Police Ehsan Mehboob's office in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan province, killing at least 13 people, including seven policemen, and wounding 21 others.

The blast was claimed by both the local affiliate of the Islamic State terror group and by Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), a splinter group of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan.

Hours later, twin blasts tore through a market crowded with the people shopping for Eid in the Shia-dominated Parachinar city in the Kurram tribal region yesterday, killing at least 45 people, mostly Shias, and injuring 75 others.

Banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Sunni militant group linked with the Taliban took responsibility for the attack.

The first blast occurred during rush hour in Turi Market, where a

bus terminal is also located. The second blast took place as rescuers and bystanders rushed to aid those who had been hurt in the first explosion.

At least 45 people have been killed and 80 others injured in Parachinar, an official from the local administration said.

Officials said the blasts on the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan targeted people shopping in the area and those heading out of the city ahead of Eid.

Separately in the evening, three militants riding on two motorbikes killed four policemen in a restaurant in Karachi.

Police said that a banned group was involved in killing of cops in Karachi but did not identify the attackers.

However, pamphlets found from the spot of attack in Karachi showed that previously little known outfit Ansar al-Sharia Pakistan has claimed responsibility for the attack. It also warned to launch an operation against security forces.

It appears to be in retaliation for Radd-ul-Fasad operation launched by security forces earlier this year to eliminate the facilitators of militants.



With former US governor Arnold Schwarzenegger at his side, French President Emmanuel Macron has repeated his catchphrase "Make the planet great again" - a swipe at President Trump's "Make America great again" slogan. In a video selfie posted by the actor-turned-Republican politician, the pair met at the Elysee Palace in Paris ahead of climate change discussions. While holding his phone, Mr Schwarzenegger says: "I'm here with President Macron. We're talking about environmental issues and the green future." Mr Macron then promises to "deliver together, to make the planet great again". For the duration of the video, the words "With President Macron, a great leader!" appear on the screen.

Modi embarks on foreign tour

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi today embarked on a three-nation tour of Portugal, the US and the Netherlands during which he will hold talks with the top leadership of those countries to boost bilateral ties.

The highlight of his four-day visit will be the US leg as Modi will be meeting President Donald Trump for the first time on June 26 in Washington. Ahead of his US visit, Modi said he looked forward to the opportunity of having an in-depth exchange of views.

"My USA visit is aimed at deepening ties between our nations. Strong India-USA ties benefit our nations & the world," he had tweeted. In a statement posted on Facebook, Modi said his two-day visit to Washington from June 25 was at the invitation of Trump.

UN chief's meetings with India, Pak PMs sign of his commitment to Kashmir issue: aide

YOSHITA SINGH UNITED NATIONS, JUN 24 (PTI):

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' several meetings with Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in the six months since he assumed charge is a sign of his involvement and commitment over the Kashmir issue, according to one of his spokespersons.

Guterres, in his first press conference here this week, had acknowledged that through his meetings with Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Nawaz Sharif, he is engaged in bringing about dialogue between the South Asian neighbours to resolve the Kashmir issue.

"I think what he was saying was that he has been engaged with these leaders. He's met them five times in total since he's become Secretary-General. I think that's a sign of his commitment to the issue, his interest and his involvement in the issue," the UN Chief's associate spokesperson Eri Kaneko told reporters at the daily press briefing here yesterday.

Kaneko was asked details regarding the discussions between Guterres, Modi and Sharif and whether any commitment was given

by the Indian and Pakistani leaders on resumption of dialogue over the Kashmir issue.

"What the leaders agreed on is for them to say, them to announce. It's not for us to say. But, the point that he (Guterres) was making and that we continue to make is that he is very engaged on the issue, and we'll let you know if there is anything," Kaneko said.

When asked again if the Secretary-General got any commitment from the two leaders on engaging in dialogue, Kaneko said, "any commitment from the leaders is a question for them. It's not something for us to announce."

Responding to a question whether he is engaged in bringing about dialogue between India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute, Guterres had said, "why do you think I met three times the Prime Minister of Pakistan and two times the Prime Minister of India."

"For someone accused of doing nothing, it is quite a number of meetings," he said, referring to criticism that he has been shying away and is reluctant to act to defuse tensions between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir issue.

Modi and Guterres had met in St Petersburg in June on the sidelines of the St Petersburg International Economic Forum.

During the meeting, Modi had stressed on multilateralism to address global challenges such as terrorism.

Sharif and the UN chief had met on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum at Davos in January and again this month in Astana on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit.

Guterres spokesman Stephane Dujarric, when asked at press briefings about the Secretary General's response to the situation in Kashmir, has repeatedly said that Guterres is following the situation in the region closely.

The UN Chief has not made any direct intervention to resolve the issue, reiterating his call for India and Pakistan to find a peaceful solution through engagement and dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue.

Pakistan continuously raises the Kashmir issue at the UN seeking the world body's intervention in the dispute with India. But New Delhi has always maintained that Kashmir is a bilateral issue with Islamabad.

Kutse Shegu

The Kutse shegu of late Palden Yeshey Lepcha who left for heavenly abode on 11th of May 2017 falls on **28th June 2017 [Wednesday]**. All the relatives well wishers & friends are requested to join us for offering prayers to the departed soul at our residence at **Pamrang Gaon, Upper Tathangchen, Chandmari, Ganton, East Sikkim**. We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude towards those who extended their support during the time of bereavement.

(Daughters) Mrs. Dikit Ongmu Lepcha, Mrs. Padma Lhanzey Lepcha, Mrs. Passang Choden Lepcha, Mrs. Sonam Choden Lepcha and Hissey Shalden Lepcha. Tenzing Wangyal Lepcha (grandson) contact No.8768772413/ 9609868265.



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4341 4550 4553 4577 4857 4867 5054 5167 5196 5220
5314 5395 5471 5559 5724 5760 5771 5792 5967 5986
6084 6188 6367 6521 6583 6764 6820 6945 6977 6997
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SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES DEAR HONOUR	SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES SINGAM TOUGH EVENING
Draw No:49 DrawDate on:24/06/17 1st Prize Rs.50 Lakhs/- 28187 (Including Super Prize Amt)	Draw No:20 DrawDate on:24/06/17 1st Prize Rs.10 Lakhs/- 98B 28368 (Including Super Prize Amt)
Cons. Prize Rs.8,000/- 28187 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS) 2nd Prize Rs.9500/- 03559 14006 15093 17110 24808 28873 34992 52168 71541 87888 3rd Prize Rs.9000/- 00411 05604 18533 27655 49489 55139 61844 89647 90978 99682 4th Prize Rs.1000/- 0039 1254 1547 2189 3650 4696 6984 7558 8333 8928 5th Prize Rs.600/- 1707 2550 2631 3071 3300 3822 4000 4972 5282 9179 6th Prize Rs.250/- 0120 0207 0383 0385 0511 0727 0733 0791 0834 0894 1128 1198 1212 1355 1489 1678 1798 1823 1861 1878 1966 2084 2229 2256 2304 2350 2375 2586 2678 2693 2894 2964 3057 3257 3298 3417 3613 3964 4068 4087 4100 4140 4357 4634 4635 4906 5036 5119 6530 5330 5526 5815 5905 5975 6003 6203 6211 6129 6353 6533 6675 6718 6727 6763 6847 7020 7092 7106 7181 7352 7550 7666 7687 7762 7872 8164 8210 8211 8371 8377 8423 8502 8626 8634 8787 8944 9123 9199 9233 9274 9336 9486 9494 9622 9672 9674 9703 9816 9930 9988	Cons. Prize Rs.9,100/- 28368 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS) 2nd Prize Rs.9,000/- 00657 03207 04579 39010 45065 46601 49120 50493 73773 90857 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 1344 2831 4462 4740 4913 5921 6118 6500 6532 9924 4th Prize Rs.300/- 1418 3564 4011 4431 7726 7893 7911 8004 8168 8625 5th Prize Rs.130/- 0020 0076 0085 0097 0114 0206 0217 0268 0409 0422 0609 0848 0906 1030 1169 1280 1322 1388 1461 1643 1715 1718 1730 1883 1941 1957 1961 1964 2025 2160 2165 2419 2670 2901 2951 2975 3092 3097 3111 3144 3338 3385 3402 3516 3606 3839 3904 4201 4242 4467 4499 4696 4847 4936 4991 5208 5231 5323 5354 5630 5912 5931 5983 6139 6262 6496 6587 6628 6743 6752 6762 6812 6825 6926 7015 7026 7027 7086 7174 7209 7376 7412 7708 7743 7907 7976 8054 8374 8585 8635 8705 8770 8799 9016 9071 9300 9384 9486 9563 9764
Issued by: The Director, Sikkim State Lotteries, Deorali-737102 Please visit: www.sikkimlotteries.com	Issued by: The Director, Sikkim State Lotteries, Deorali-737102 Please visit: www.sikkimlotteries.com
KINDLY CHECK THE RESULT WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE.	

ARUNACHAL PRADESH STATE LOTTERIES	
MAHA GANAPATHY	KUMBHA RASI
Draw No:95 DrawDate on:24/06/17	Draw No:95 DrawDate on:24/06/17
1st Prize Rs.10,000/- A 09616	1st Prize Rs.10,000/- A 00294
2nd Prize Rs.5,000/-	2nd Prize Rs.5,000/-
0067 1304 1385 2408 2552 2685 7464 8433 8681 9080	0063 0105 1573 1872 4070 4492 4816 4920 5629 7778
3rd Prize Rs.500/-	3rd Prize Rs.500/-
1360 2544 3417 4265 4630 4807 5560 7371 8306 8540	0015 0913 1961 2308 2644 4717 5630 6211 6491 7813
4th Prize Rs.250/-	4th Prize Rs.250/-
0939 1129 1386 3904 3965 5821 6466 7483 7829 8848	0047 0523 3456 4616 4760 5503 6427 6532 6782 9975
5th Prize Rs.100/-	5th Prize Rs.100/-
0024 0959 1375 2095 3687 5053 6551 6802 8187 8234	0584 1891 2176 3462 3585 3664 5906 6323 6707 7882
6th Prize Rs.50/-	6th Prize Rs.50/-
0003 0701 1105 2018 2837 4046 5009 6684 7592 8808	0231 1315 2240 3173 4316 5158 6109 6875 7816 8761
0006 0739 1131 2031 2906 4075 5011 6710 7862 8984	0276 1689 2350 3209 4343 5288 6171 6905 7849 8805
0033 0747 1186 2256 2943 4229 5148 6756 7999 9094	0377 1731 2352 3404 4345 5386 6252 6949 8008 9130
0071 0752 1208 2263 3110 4294 5309 6970 8008 9205	0448 1791 2358 3775 4414 5517 6276 6963 8062 9199
0226 0756 1406 2283 3164 4345 5530 6981 8136 9265	0554 1853 2456 3818 4552 5539 6285 7203 8068 9636
0367 0776 1593 2305 3402 4353 5713 7032 8169 9564	0557 1880 2609 3827 4611 5601 6443 7230 8272 9687
0384 0807 1823 2371 3574 4526 5745 7422 8290 9586	0630 1969 2676 3940 4650 5602 6600 7263 8335 9725
0536 0832 1885 2454 3826 4530 6088 7441 8387 9659	0857 2004 2858 3988 4709 5709 6668 7312 8523 9842
0616 0873 1898 2513 3963 4690 6213 7444 8644 9698	1011 2091 2908 4135 4733 5931 6738 7655 8631 9832
0695 0968 1961 2666 3997 4888 6482 7500 8672 9872	1012 2217 2957 4299 4818 6042 6844 7794 8700 9843
Issued by: The Commissioner, Arunachal Pradesh State Lotteries, Itanagar.	

First look of Govinda in Jagga Jasoos revealed

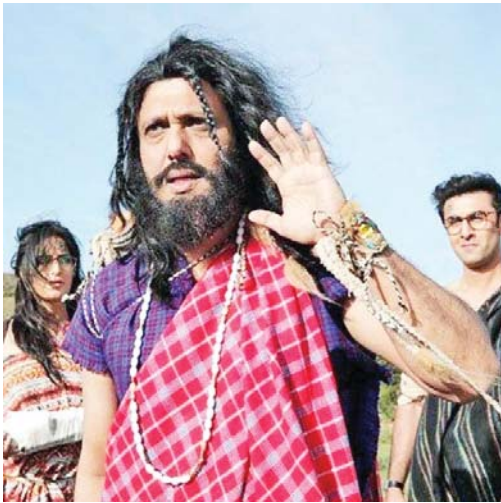
Ranbir Kapoor and Katrina Kaif starrer Jagga Jasoos will release on July 14. The movie has been directed by Anurag Basu and follows an amateur detective and his journey to find his missing his father.

The movie has been in the making for the past four years, which is quite a long time. So much that we almost forgot that Govinda was going to do a cameo appearance in the movie. The picture of the actor has surfaced on social media pages, and is being extensively shared by Bollywood enthusiasts. The actor appears to be playing hippie yogi like character in the film.

Govinda shot for his scenes in Jagga Jasoos in the 2015. He will have not more than 05 scenes in the film. A controversy also erupted back then and there were rumours that Amitabh Bachchan will replace Govinda in Jagga Jasoos.

Clarifying the matter, Govinda has said in an interview, "I've finished my work but I won't be a part of the promotions. I'm upset with the makers for not clarifying things on my behalf. I can understand them not wanting to get dragged into a silly controversy but not reacting was not a solution. Nobody is allowed to make money by defaming me. I may forgive but I'll never forget."

The third ditty from the movie, Jhumri Talaiyya, released yesterday. Unlike the previous two songs, this one is less upbeat, and more mellow. We get to see the chemistry that the two characters share, and get the first glimpse that these two will go to any lengths to protect each other.



'Sultan' wins best action movie at Shanghai Film Festival



MUMBAI, JUN 24 (PTI): Superstar Salman Khan's "Sultan" has won the best action movie award at the Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF).

Ahead of its China release, "Sultan" became the first ever Bollywood film to win the award in the Jackie Chan Action Movie week section, which focuses on a selection

of the best in action, special effects, and performances by action stars from China and the Asia Pacific.

Prakash Gupta, Consulate General of India, Shanghai, accepted the award on behalf of Yash Raj Films.

Directed by Ali Abbas Zafar, the movie also featured Anushka Sharma.

"We are very happy with all the love and respect we got at SIFF. Receiving an award under the action category from Jackie Chan is just super special. As a child he has

been one of the most inspiring action stars for me and many Indians.

"Sultan' is about desi, Indian wrestling and it's raw power. Amidst a selection of brilliant action films that present the most refined martial arts, the film's win is rewarding, and reflects that a good story based in action has universal appeal," Zafar said in a statement.

In 2016, the best action movie award had been given to "IP Man 3," a cult Chinese action franchise that is popular worldwide.

Goans, tourists celebrate festival Sao Joao



Panaji, Jun 24 (PTI): Goans thronged wells, ponds and other water bodies to celebrate festival Sao Joao today.

Finding its origin in the erstwhile Portuguese rule, the festival is dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, who baptised Lord Jesus in the river of Jordan.

Celebrations began across Goa since morning with youngsters wearing headgears made up of flowers and leaves, jumping into the wells and screaming 'Viva Sao Joao'.

The festival is celebrated annually on June 24 at the onset of monsoon by people cutting across religious lines, while tourists also join revelers with great zeal.

Traditionally, a group of youth travel all over a place to take a plunge inside wells, ponds, streams, and then claim a reward of seasonal jack fruit, pineapple from relatives and friends.

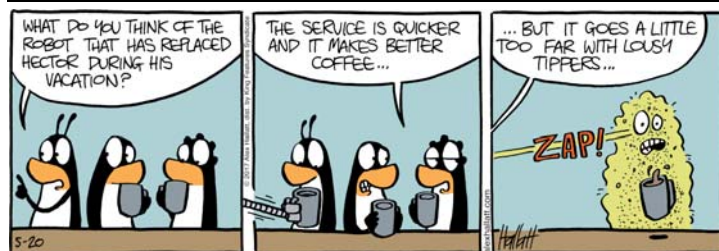
Dominick Gonsalves, a resident of St Cruz locality near Panaji, said things have changed over the time but the spirit for the festival remains intact.

"Now the wells are con-

taminated and unsafe but the enthusiasm remains the same," said Gonsalves.

Another Sao Joao enthusiast, Minguel Afonso, a sexagenarian, said, "Sao Joao brings back memories of my childhood, how we used to feast on the locally made sweets.

ARCTIC CIRCLE



BABY BLUES



ground your thoughts and emotions.

SCORPIO: This is one of those days in which you need to act or else you will be acted upon, Scorpio. Stubborn, aggressive forces are working counter to your aims. You will find yourself swept up in the thick of things if you aren't careful. Don't get too worried about what other people consider wrong. Have confidence in what you know is right.

SAGITTARIUS: The intense energy of the day is helping you streamline your projects and solidify your thoughts, Sagittarius. Work to manifest the ideas and dreams that constantly swirl in your head. Today is a great day to bring your mind into focus and get down to the



JAKE GYLLENHAAL STARS IN THE POWERFUL DEBUT TRAILER FOR BOSTON MARATHON BOMBING DRAMA STRONGER

Gyllenhaal stars in the true story of Boston man Jeff Bauman, who was waiting at the finish line of the 2013 Boston Marathon to cheer on his then-girlfriend, Erin Hurley (Maslany).

He lost both his legs in the attack, which killed three people and injured hundreds of others. In addition to being the subject of one of the most widely-circulated photos from the attack, Bauman was also able to help the police identify the suspect in the bombing.

He went on to recount his experiences and recovery in his 2015 memoir, co-written by Bret Witter. Peter Berg brought the Boston Marathon bombing to the screen with his harrowing 2016 drama Patriots Day, starring Mark Wahlberg, but Stronger takes a more per-

sonal look at the attack through Bauman and his recovery — both physically and emotionally. David Gor-

don Green (Our Brand is Crisis) directed from a script by John Pollono.

Stronger will hit theaters on Sept. 22.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Dr. RAJEN UPADHYAY
Assistant Professor in History,
Namchi Govt. College

25th June

WORLD HISTORY

1503: Christopher Columbus beached his sinking ships in St. Anne's Bay, Jamaica, and spent a year shipwrecked and marooned there before returning to Spain.

1630: The fork was introduced to American dining by Gov. Winthrop.

1807: Napoleon Bonaparte of France and Russian Czar Alexander I met near Tilsit, in northern Prussia, to discuss terms for ending war between their empires.

1861: Abdul Mejid, the 31st Ottoman sultan, died. He had dreamed of a tunnel under the Bosphorus Straits connecting Asia to Europe.

1946: Comrade Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam traveled to France for talks on Vietnamese independence.

1975: Mozambique became an independent state ending nearly five centuries of Portuguese rule and a long civil war began that

lasted to 1992.

INDIAN HISTORY

1658: Aurangzeb proclaimed himself emperor of the Mughals in India and engaged in a civil war against his brothers. He formally took his charge on July 31, 1658 after the war of succession.

1900: Lord Louis Mountbatten of Burma, the last British viceroy of India, was born at Frogmore House in the Home Park, Windsor, Berkshire.

1975: The emergency was imposed on June 25, 1975 when the president passed an ordinance about how the state was in danger. All the fundamental rights were suspended, politicians were arrested and a heavy censorship was imposed on the media.

LOCKHORNS

- HOEST & REINER



"SO... WHAT'S THE POINT SPREAD ON OUR AGES THIS YEAR?"

- HALLATT



BABY BLUES

- KIRKMAN & SCOTT



ARIES: You would do well to join the intensity of the day, Aries. You have the ability to unravel any riddle and find the underlying cause of any dispute. There's a great deal of potential for you to follow through on some major projects today. Work to press through with your ideas. Don't back down. Your sensitivity is your greatest asset. Feel free to express your emotions.

TAURUS: Today might end up being quite combative, Taurus. There may be people opposing you from all sides. There are apt to be some serious disruptions to your daily routine. Others may be quite stubborn, and you're apt to fall into a situation in which no one is willing to

back down. Whatever happens, you will be called upon to act. This will most certainly be an eventful day.

GEMINI: Your flexibility will be tested today, Gemini. You may end up twisting and flexing your body to fit the contours of the day. You will find that if you join forces with the powerful movers, you will get quite a bit done and be successful. Don't be intimidated by the intensity of other people's emotions. You will find strength in your calm, grounded self.

CANCER: You may have a hard time figuring out why everyone is so worked up today. Don't waste your time, Cancer. You're better off accepting that things simply are the way they are and allowing other

people to have their drama. Your job is to maintain balance. This may be easier said than done. You're working with some pretty intense issues, but nothing you can't handle.

LEO: If anyone is capable of dealing with the intense emotional energy of today, it's you, Leo. Other people may be angry and unable to stomach the sensitive issues that may arise. Take care, since there may be some major opposition coming at you that disrupts your plans. You will face a practical, grounding force that questions your methods of operation. Use these lessons to your advantage.

VIRGO: Stubborn forces may challenge your easygoing nature today.

You would do well to tap into this aggressive energy and use it to follow through on some projects that you've left hanging, Virgo. Other people may be yielding in their positions, but you can easily overcome this by tapping into your flexible, adaptable nature. Don't get upset and restless. Go with the flow.

LIBRA: Tune into the aggressive energy of today, Libra, and use it to push your intentions forward. Today's emotional intensity will bring you to your knees if you aren't careful. The secret is to harness the energy and use it to your advantage. Try not to get caught between the crossfire of conflict. Tap into the slow-moving, generous force that's helping you

ground your thoughts and emotions.

SCORPIO: This is one of those days in which you need to act or else you will be acted upon, Scorpio. Stubborn, aggressive forces are working counter to your aims. You will find yourself swept up in the thick of things if you aren't careful. Don't get too worried about what other people consider wrong. Have confidence in what you know is right.

SAGITTARIUS: The intense energy of the day is helping you streamline your projects and solidify your thoughts, Sagittarius. Work to manifest the ideas and dreams that constantly swirl in your head. Today is a great day to bring your mind into focus and get down to the

nitty-gritty. Clean up the scraps off your plate and make room for the next gourmet course to be served.

CAPRICORN: Suddenly your emotions are much more intense, Capricorn. You notice that people are on edge and they're likely to go to extremes in all situations. This is one day to do things with passion. If there is any sort of detective work you need to get done, now is the time to do it. Try not to start any arguments. Others aren't likely to back down. All-out wars are likely to ensue.

AQUARIUS: There's a strong force working to oppose you today, Aquarius. Another's unbending attitude may be holding you back from things you're trying to ac-

complish. Take the time to see the other side of the situation. You can gain a great deal of perspective and come to a healthy point of balance, thanks to the events of the day. Don't back down from your viewpoint just because everyone doesn't agree with you.

PISCES: There's an intensity about the day that may cause you to recoil from certain events and conversations, Pisces. Issues could get uncomfortable and perhaps a bit too involved. Other people may want to go to places that you don't want to go to. Don't get upset or frustrated. Either join in and roll with the punches or walk away and deal with the issues later.