



SummitTIMES



SFA

*mourns demise
of former
footballer*

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 MAY:**

A condolence meeting was held at Football House in Gangtok today to mourn the demise of former footballer Ganesh Kumar Subba who died in a Siliguri nursing home on 23 May after prolonged illness, a press release from SFA informs. He was 72 years old.

Late Ganesh Kumar Subba had represented Sikkimese clubs like Kumar Sporting Club and Water Babies Club in various tournaments during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

During his tenure as bureaucrat he held the post of Development Commissioner cum Additional Chief Secretary to Sikkim Government till 2006 and retired as Chief Election Commissioner in 2011.

SFA members present in the condolence meeting observed two-minute silence as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

The funeral service will be held at Tadong Church on 25 May, it is informed.



BOOM IN TOURISM...AND TRAFFIC SNARLS

Traffic jams and dearth of local taxis have made commuting around Gangtok a nightmare. Heavy tourist inflow has led to fewer taxis being available to ferry locals while also increasing the volume of traffic on the roads. Local passengers can be seen waiting at taxi stops, struggling to get into the few taxis that stop.

**Indigo, IAF
planes avert
mid-air collision
over Chennai**

MUMBAI, MAY 24 (PTI): A mid-air disaster was averted last week when an IndiGo plane which was on a collision course with an Indian Air Force (IAF) in Chennai airspace steered away to safety following an auto-generated warning, a source said.

The two aircraft were just “300 ft” away from each other at the time of the incident on May 21 which set off a Resolution advisory (RA) for the IndiGo pilot to steer the aircraft to a safer distance, the sources said.

RA is an auto-generated warning in the cockpit for the pilot to manoeuvre the aircraft and avoid collision.

IndiGo confirmed the incident, which is now being investigated by aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

However, there was no re-

sponse from the IAF.

“IndiGo aircraft VT-ITW operating on the Visakhapatnam-Bengaluru route and an Indian Air Force jet were on a collision course as the two aircraft were at a distance of just 300 ft from each other. The planes were at an altitude of 24,000 ft in Chennai airspace. IndiGo Airbus A320 flight was on the climb,” the source said.

The mishap was averted at around 9.49 pm on May 21, the source added.

“An IndiGo flight 6E- 647

turn to pg02

**EPIC 17000 Mountain
Biking Race to go
bigger this year**



MANGAN, 24 MAY (IPR): The North District Administration in collaboration with Mountain Goats Adventure Company and Hub Outdoors is organizing EPIC 17000 Mountain Biking Race, the highest Mountain Biking race in the world. The associate partners for the race are Lachen Dzumsa, Lachung Dzumsa, MNP, TAAS, Indian Army and ITBPF. The theme for this year’s race is ‘Beti Bachao Beti Padhao’ and ‘Secure Himalayas’.

Last year the race could make a mark in the Red Bull events. This year the aim is to take the race globally and make a mark in the mountain biking calendar of the world. Adventure tourism has been widely promoted by the Chief Minister Pawan Chamling for empowering the youth and entrepreneurship development. The EPIC 17K event strives to achieve the vision of the State Government for sustainable development of tourism in the Sikkim.

Today a preparatory meeting was conducted by the District Collector, Karma R Bonpo and was attended by Senior SP, North, KD Shangderpa, ADC North, SDM Mangan, Representatives of Mountain Goats Adventure Company and Hub Outdoors.

The EPIC 17K Mountain Terrain Biking Race is a unique race being held in North Sikkim, where riders will get to experience riding at an elevation of upto 17800 ft. It is a race that will test not only the endurance of the riders but also the ride presents the most panoramic views of Sikkim. The EPIC 17K is organized as a four-stage race and covers a distance of almost 330 kilometers.

The first day of the ride starts from Mangan and the riders will ride upto Lachung town. The next day the ride will be from Lachung and go right upto Yumesamdong and back to Lachung. On the third day, the riders will ride from Lachung to Thangu on the Lachen axis. The final day of the race will be from Thangu to Gurudongmar Lake which will be the final destination of the race. The stages of the race are staggered in such a manner where the obstacles presented to the riders will increase as the stage progresses.

Speaking during the meeting, the District Collector, North, stated that the EPIC 17K Mountain Terrain Biking Race was started in 2017 and the current race is the second edition of the race. While the first race was limited to

turn to pg02

India seeks Australia’s help to combat Nipah virus

NEW DELHI, MAY 24 (PTI): In the wake of Nipah virus cases in Kerala, the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has written to the Queensland government in Australia asking it to provide an antibody developed there to test if it can “neutralise” the virus in humans.

The antibody has not been tested on humans so far.

“We have asked them to give their monoclonal antibody for conducting a test in India to find out if it can neutralise the Nipah virus in humans.

“In Australia, it has only been tried in vitro (happening outside the body in artificial conditions, often in a test tube) and has been found to be effective. But it has not been tested on humans,” said ICMR Director General, Dr Balram Bhargava, while clarifying that it will not lead to creation of vaccine.

ICMR is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research.

“We are preparing a dossier on what will be methodology and what would be the regulatory process so that we can fast track the process,” he said.



According to Dr Bhargava, Australia is ready to share as it will help generate data on the efficacy of the antibody.

“It is not yet sure how much it will be effective,” he said, adding the infection caused by Nipah virus has a high mortality rate (50-70 pc).

According to National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme, the drug ribavirin has been shown to be effective against the viruses in vitro, but human investigations to date have been inconclusive and the clinical usefulness of the drug remains uncertain.

The death toll due to outbreak of Nipah virus rose to 12 in the southern state of Kerala,

with one more person succumbing to the deadly virus in Kozhikode this morning, said a Health ministry official.

Meanwhile, there are reports of dead bats being found on the premises of a government school in Himachal Pradesh, samples of which have been sent for testing to NIV, Pune, to ascertain the reason behind their deaths.

According to the health ministry officials, of the 12 deaths in Kerala so far due to the virus, nine people died in Kozhikode district and three in Mallappuram. Besides, about 160 samples have been sent for testing at the virology institute.

While 18 people with specific symptoms are admitted

at hospitals in Kozhikode, 22 patients with suspected Nipah cases, all from Malappuram district, are admitted at Kozhikode Medical College for observation.

“They are all contacts of the confirmed cases and their lab results are awaited. Also, 95 families are under surveillance,” a health ministry official said.

Nipah virus (NiV) infection is a newly emerging zoonosis that causes severe disease in both animals and humans. The natural host of the virus are fruit bats of the Pteropodidae Family, Pteropus genus.

Currently, there is no vaccine or drug for the treatment of the NiV infection. The treatment for human cases is supportive and management treatment along with intensive supportive care.

The virus spreads through close contact with people’s secretions and excretions. Eating food which may have the droplets of saliva and urine of infected bats can lead to the transmission of the virus.

Earlier, cases of Nipah virus were reported from Siliguri in 2001 and Nadia in 2007 in West Bengal and around 47 deaths were reported.





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Sikkim-BJP meets with Sikkim Distilleries workers

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

A Bharatiya Janata Party team led by the state youth president, Laten Sherpa, visited Sikkim Distilleries at Chanatar in Rangpo, East Sikkim on Thursday.

The team interacted with the regular and temporary employees at the unit and enquired after their issues and grievances, a Sikkim-BJP press release informs, detailing that the interaction discussed EPF, salaries and other issues.

The release adds that the BJP team noticed differences between the management and employees and has demanded that the Labour Department immediately enquire about these issues to deliver justice to employees.

Two-day counselling workshop wraps up in Singtam

YOGEN THATAL SINGTAM, 24 MAY:

Karnataka College Group of Institution and Indo Global Group of College, Chandigarh concluded their two-day counselling workshop at Singtam today.

The workshop was conducted for students belonging to Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Communities [Central list] of Sikkim interested in pursuing college education in courses funded by the centre and state government, the organisers informed.

The workshop mainly aimed at informing students about various scholarship based courses offered by the institutes [above mentioned], which according to them will be funded by the Central and State Government.

Both the colleges are empanelled under the Human Resource Development Department and Social Welfare Department of the State.

The two-day workshop was attended mostly by girls with majority interested in pursuing Industrial Training courses, the organizers said.

Prospectus and necessary information were provided by the institute representatives to the students.

Indigo, IAF planes avert mid-air...

contd from pg01

(Vizag-Bengaluru) was involved in a resolution advisory at flight level 240, on May 21," IndiGo said in a statement.

"Pilot followed the laid standard operating procedures," the statement said, adding this matter was immediately brought to the notice of the regulator as per the prescribed protocol.

The incident is being investigated by the DGCA, it said.

Minister Ghatani inaugurates 3 PMAY-G houses at Zoom

Zoom, 24 MAY [IPR]: Health Minister cum MLA [Salghari Zoom constituency], Arjun Kumar Ghatani inaugurated three houses constructed under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana [PMAY-G] at Zoom Gram Panchayat Unit today.

The Minister was accompanied by Panchayat President, Agam Singh Rai, Vice-President, Rupa Rai, Junior Engineer [Chumbong Block Administrative Centre], Neeka Tamang and Panchayat Development Assistant, Kiran Gautam Chettri.

Mr Ghatani briefly interacted with the panchayats and villagers during which he encouraged them



to focus on producing organic vegetables.

Additionally, he also urged the gathered

panchayats to identify patients of Tuberculosis in their locality in order to complete-

ly eliminate TB in the State by 2022 as envisioned by Chief Minister Pawan Chamling.

Sant Nirankari Mandal devotees conduct blood donation drive

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 MAY: Devotees of Sant Nirankari Mandal, Gangtok conducted a blood donation camp at Nirankari Colony Satsang Bhawan near Kyi-De-Khang School today. More than 117 volunteers participated in the drive, a press release informs.



Rhenock Jr High School observes Anti-Terrorism Day



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

Rhenock Junior High School in West Sikkim observed Anti Terrorism Day on 21 May at its school premises with the aim to make students aware about the dangers of terrorism and the cult of violence

by highlighting the suffering of common people and showing how it is inimical to national interest, a press release informs.

School Headmaster, SD Bhutia, in his address, urged the students to rid negative thoughts from their minds and live in harmony and

peace within the society.

Teachers and the students presented patriotic songs which was followed by an oath taking ceremony administered by Mr Bhutia at the end of the programme, the release informs.

EPIC 17000 Mountain Biking Race to go bigger...

contd from pg01

just the local riders of the state, the current version will see participants from neighboring states of India and countries such as Bhutan and Nepal.

The District Collector also stated that the program has potential to be a game changer for development of tourism in the district and move the entire industry towards high value tourism in the state. The race will act as a platform to showcase the abundant bio diversity, unique geology and scenic beauty of the district. It will also attract

the youth of the state into the industry thereby promoting entrepreneurship among them.

The District Collector also enlisted the support of stakeholders such as Dzumsas, Indian Army, ITBPE, Mangan Nagar Panchayat, TAAS to make the program a success. He stated that the Indian Army will be providing medical support and other logistical support to the race. The youth of Lachen and Lachung will provide logistics and other support to the event. The rescue team, in case of any emergency, will be

led by Kazi Sherpa, an eminent Everestor from Sikkim. Ambulances and two medical units would follow the riders both from the front and back and ensure safety of the riders.

The total prize money of the race is Rs 2,50,000 and is being jointly sponsored by the District Administration and Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Hishey Lachungpa. The Minister Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management, TW Lepcha and MP Rajya Sabha, Mr Lachungpa are the chief patrons of the event. Both the patrons have actively

supported the event and have stated that the race will provide a much needed platform to showcase the beauty of Sikkim to the entire world. A special prize for women riders will also be presented with the message "Empowering Women".

Mountain Goats Adventure Company and Hub Outdoors are the joint organizers of the race. Mountain Goats is an adventure company promoted by local entrepreneur Panjo Saring of Mangan. The company has wide experience in adventure tourism in

Farmers Training Prog held in Suldung Kamling



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

Mevedir organized day-long Gram Panchayat Unit level farmer's training programme for the farmers of Suldung Kamling GPU in West Sikkim today, a press release informs.

Horticulture Development Officer, AB Rai and Mevedir master trainer, Chandra Lal Manger were the resource persons of the training

programme.

Mr Rai urged the farmers to update their organic knowledge and skills and adopt environment friendly practices. The farmers were informed about the preparation, usage and benefits of Fermented Plant Extract (FPE), a liquid formulation used to control pests and diseases in plants.

Mevedir master train-

er, Chandra Lal Manger demonstrated the preparation of FPE from locally available plants like Per-ay-Unyu (Pteridophytes), Titaypati (Artimisea vulgaris), Dhokray (Datura species) and Bagenal leaves (Azadirachta species).

More than 20 farmers participated in the training programme. The next round of farmers training will be held in Dorong next week, it is informed.

SDF condemns SKM's misrepresentation of CM's statements

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

Sikkim Democratic Front has strongly criticized and condemned what it sees as misrepresentation of the Chief Minister's positive statements by the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha.

The ruling party has asserted that SKM believes baseless criticisms, misinterpretation and misinformation to be politics.

A press release of SDF Spokesperson, Bhim Dahal, highlights that in his speeches during his ongoing Jan Sampark Abhiyan, the CM has appealed to the people to stay away from and remain alert against negative, crass and

misleading political organisations and to come into the mainstream of SDF to join the State-building process.

The release adds that irresponsible and misleading organisations like SKM have always kept busy circulating deceptive issues but always stay silent on the real issues facing the people. Such political organisations have always obstructed development by spreading rumours, the release contends.

The release reiterates that the CM has proved his leadership with his strong, consistent and model leadership and that he has invited people to work for the State which was being twisted out of context by the SKM.

World Biodiversity Day observed by the students of Sakyong Chisopani JHS



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

Sakyong Chisopani Junior High School celebrated World Biodiversity Day with a special programme at the school on 23 May, a press release from the school informs.

The programme featured skits based on environment conservation and songs by the students.

Green Teacher, Shital Pradhan, briefed students about the significance of the day and also recited a poem on biodiversity.

Headmaster, Satish Chandra Pradhan, spoke about the activities initiated by the school over the years to spread the message of environmental conservation and bio-

diversity. He applauded the students for participating in the event.

He further instructed the students to bring one sapling each from their homes and plant it around the school premises on 05 June [World Environment Day].

The headmaster mentioned that the students will also be awarded additional points in their final examinations based on their participation on World Environment Day, he informed.

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Gangtok on Friday, 26 May

Temp: 26°C / 15°C

Forecast: Mostly cloudy, a couple of showers.

Sunrise: 04:43 AM

Sunset: 6:22 PM

Chewang Choden Bhutia promoted to Secretary rank; Yashoda Bhandari is new Director Census Operations

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

Chewang Choden Bhutia, Special Secretary, Ecclesiastical Affairs Department, has been promoted to the rank of Secretary on officiating capacity, and in an office order issued today, posted to Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department.

Meanwhile, Yashoda Bhandari, Secretary, Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department, has been selected for appointment as Director, Census Operation, Sikkim, under the Central Staffing Scheme on deputation and has been relieved by the State Government to take charge of her new responsibilities.

Ambika Pradhan, Secretary, Mines Minerals and Geology Department, will now hold additional charge as Secretary, Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department.

Arunachal NGO honoured for conserving wildlife resources

ITANAGAR, MAY 24 (PTI): An NGO from West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh has bagged the first prize from the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA) for its efforts in conserving rare wildlife resources in the area.

The NBA, established by the Centre in 2003, honoured the Singchung Bugun Village Community Reserve (SBVCR) with a citation, a memento and a cash prize of Rs one lakh during a function in Hyderabad, an official release said yesterday.

The SBVCR has been partnering with the state forest department since 2016 in protecting and conserving the 17 sq km area of Singchung Bugun Village Community Reserve, adjacent to the Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in the district, the release said.

Rich in both flora and fauna, with 545 species of birds and various species of plants and animals, the sanctuary is spread over about 217 sq km.

The sanctuary is also known for the existence of Bugun Liocichla, a bird species presently found only in the park, it said.

Sanjay Agarwal conferred Ram Patro Memorial Award

REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

Freelance journalist based out of Rangpo, East Sikkim, Sanjay Agarwal was conferred the Ram Patro Memorial Award for Excellence in Journalism in a function held at Gangtok today.

Sub-Editor, Himali Bela, Arjun Piyush was awarded the 'Best Working Journalist in Sikkim Express and Himali Bela for 2017-18'. The award was received on behalf of Mr Piyush by his daughter.

Technical head, Sikkim Express, OP Chhetri was also felicitated for his hard work and dedication.

Sanjay Agarwal in his speech thanked the Ram Patro Memorial Award Committee for conferring him with the award.

"The recognition has motivated me to work more and



contribute towards the betterment of the State," he said.

He also announced to donate his eyes after his death

and urged everyone to contribute in the eye donation

9th day of riverfront cleanliness drive at Ban Jhakri Falls

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 MAY:

On the ninth day of its 20-day riverfront cleanup drive focused along Rani Khola here, the Forest Department carried out a cleanup drive around Ban Jhakri Falls today, a press release informs.

The drive today was participated in by Ranka Senior Secondary School's eco-club and National Service Scheme.

The event was coordinated by Divisional Forest Officer (River Valley Project) and his team with support from ENVIS, Sikkim.

An awareness rally to sensitize local tourism stakeholders, shopkeepers and hoteliers was also conducted.



The Forest Department, in collaboration with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of

India, as a part of World Environment Day 2018 had kicked off the riverfront cleaning drive along Rani Khola and its adjoining

streams on 15 May. The cleanliness drive is scheduled to continue till World Environment Day, 05 June.

Nipah scare: Odisha health dept issues alert to hospitals



BHUBANESWAR, MAY 24 (PTI): The Odisha

government has issued an alert to five medical colleges and 30 district headquarters hospitals in the wake of Nipah virus outbreak in Kerala.

The rare virus, mainly transmitted through fruit bats, reportedly claimed 11 lives in the southern state.

In a letter to the medical authorities, the director of Health Services, Braja Kishore Brahma, underscored the need to take preventive measures against the deadly virus as treatment op-

tions were limited. Although no such case was reported from any part of the state so far, the health department has asked the hospitals to prepare themselves for contingencies.

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar, has already set up an isolated ward to admit patients afflicted with the virus, its dean, Bikas Bhatia, said.

The health department also advised people to avoid consuming fruits that are half-eaten by bats or birds. It said that

a detailed advisory, with preventive measures and common signs, would be issued soon.

Nipah Virus is a newly emerging zoonosis that causes a severe disease in both animals and humans. The symptoms that start appearing five to 14 days after infection include dizziness, headache, fever, nausea, drowsiness and confusion.

The World Health Organization has named Nipah as one of the eight priority diseases that could cause a global epidemic, alongside the likes of Ebola and Zika.

No county action for injured Virat, fitness test on June 15

NEW DELHI, MAY 24 (PTI): India cricket captain Virat Kohli's much-hyped participation in English County Championship was ruled out on Thursday due to a neck injury, throwing his meticulously planned build-up for the tour of UK into disarray.

Kohli will require a three-week rehabilitation to recover from the injury, the BCCI said.

The 29-year-old will undergo a fitness test on June 15, which will confirm his availability for the initial phase of the UK limited-overs tour starting with the two T20 Internationals against Ireland in last week of June.

India will begin the series against England with T20Is in early July.

"Team India Captain Mr Virat Kohli suffered a neck injury while fielding during Match 51 of the VIVO IPL between Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad on 17th May 2018 at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru," BCCI acting secretary Amitabh Choudhary said in a press release.

"Kohli, who was scheduled to play for Surrey CCC in the month of June, has been ruled out from participating. This decision was taken following assessments by the BCCI Medical team, subsequent scans, and a specialist visit," the release further stated.

The Indian captain will now undergo a period of rehabilitation under the supervision of the BCCI Medical team. He will begin training and subsequently undergo a fitness test at the NCA in Bengaluru from June 15.

"The BCCI Medical Team is confident that Kohli will regain full



fitness ahead of India's upcoming tours to Ireland and England," Choudhary stated.

The batting mainstay had decided to miss the one-off Test against Afghanistan, starting June 14 in Bengaluru, to appear in county matches.

Kohli had visited a hospital in Mumbai for a check-up yesterday and it was reported that he is suffering from a slip disc injury and will not be playing for Surrey ahead of the UK tour.

However, a top BCCI official, who is privy to Kohli's county engagements, clarified that it was a case of "neck sprain" and not a "slip disc injury" as reported.

But there was no denying Kohli's tremendous workload during the past one year.

In this phase, he appeared in nine Tests and 29 of the 32 ODIs

that the national team played. He also played 9 out of India's 18 T20 Internationals.

In all, he played 47 international matches with only Rohit Sharma and Hardik Pandya (48 each) playing a match more than him.

Add to it, the 14 IPL matches and his tally goes up to 61 in all.

However, the one question that begs to be answered is why did Kohli not rest himself from a few matches during the IPL?

The BCCI has already put a program in place where the centrally-contracted cricketers' workload and injury management is monitored through the National Cricket Academy.

The franchise physios and trainers are supposed to give weekly updates to the national team trainers and the ones present at the NCA.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

ONLINE REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS FOR ADMISSION TO UG COURSE IN SIKKIM GOVERNMENT COLLEGES

Registration of students for admission to UG courses in the following Eleven Government colleges of Sikkim for the academic year 2018-19 will be online. Students seeking admission in Government colleges are required to apply through website: www.sgccregistration.com / www.rusasikkim.com or Mobile Application. (RUSA SIKKIM ADMISSION) after announcement of CBSE class XII result 2018.

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7	Sikkim Government B.Ed College, Soreng
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11	Government Vocational College, Dentam

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SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Tourist Season Usury *Something so expected should have been resolved by now*

East District Traffic Police challaned 70 taxis on Wednesday after a surprise check along a popular tourist route revealed that they had over-charged their fares. A thumbs up for them! Such action has been seen in the past as well. Every time there is a jump in passenger numbers, like during tourist season, or a shortage of taxis, like during elections or trouble beyond Rangpo, the appointed ticket counters down shutters and touts peddle ticket in “black”. Clearly, surprise checks and on-the-spot challans are not doing much to contain the unethical profiteering that preys on guests short on time and ill-informed about their rights or what the authorities are doing to protect them from being fleeced. Given that the tourist season has been growing more robust every cycle, the scale of over-charging is also increasing and it has become necessary that more agencies and more options are explored to contain the situation.

In the present context, two aspects need to be revisited – crackdown and preparation.

Punitive action, like the surprise checks and challans, need to continue. In fact, the frequency and locations where these ambushes are laid should be expanded. Since experience shows these as having only limited efficacy, something more is required. The tourist season stretches longer nowadays, and the seasonal mismatch between demand and supply allows for some heavy profits to be made. This makes the occasional payment of fines a risk that the cabbies see as an affordable occupational risk. May be the punishment for over-charging should be made harsher. It is worth exploring whether cancelling the taxi permit for even three days, or even a week in extreme cases, works as a deterrent because this would hit where it hurts. Impounding taxis even for a day could also be considered. Penalising not just the drivers but also the vehicle owners and even taxi associations they are affiliated to could also help introduce some self-monitoring which could discourage this trend. These are admittedly harsh methods, may be not even practical for the long-term and will definitely invite some backlash, but if the authorities are serious about addressing the issue, they should give these a serious a thought.

Any crackdown should be complemented with preparation. This will have to be a collaborative effort involving at least the tourism and police officials, preferably also the tourism stakeholders. Ahead of a tourist season, they should sit down and brainstorm on how guests do not return from Sikkim with a bad aftertaste of their budgets upended by cheats and cons. If they had a frank exchange, they will definitely come up with a plan that works. The State could begin with working out the carrying capacity of taxis and estimating the demand-supply shortfall. This will need to also include the service required by the daily local passengers. If there is no shortfall, then the crackdown option needs to be reinforced, but if there are fewer vehicles than what the State requires, some out-of-the-box thinking will be required. In the interest of both, the local passengers and the tourists, the authorities could consider issuing short-term taxi permits to even private vehicles. There must be many private car owners who will be excited by this option and the many hotels and home-stays will also take up this offer. It will also be good idea to incentivise fair practices and these can be easily achieved by setting up a Facebook page or even a website where feedback is taken from tourists and drivers and their associations who/which receive the most glowing reviews are awarded or felicitated at the end of a tourist season. There must be many programmers in Sikkim who can work out the algorithms required to make this poll transparent and serviceable.

There will be few tourists who make a noise about over-charging because that is a risk travellers run everywhere. Popular tourist destinations have traditionally been notorious for fleecing guests, but that does not make it okay. If Sikkim is serious about addressing this problem, it will do something about it, and with an earnest effort, will also earn another USP for itself. Tourists reassured that they are not being cheated are relaxed tourists. Relaxed tourists are happy tourists and might even tip large and spend more. If nothing else, they will spread even better word of mouth promotion of Sikkim. The State then will win in every regard.

Corrigendum:

This is with regard to the news-report headlined, “SJA conducts workshop on animal protection & welfare laws”, published in SummitTimes issue dated Tuesday, 22 May 2018. The headline should have correctly read, “SJA conducts workshop on animal protection laws & animal welfare laws”.

Similarly, the photo-caption carried published on 13 May 2018 had inadvertently reported that the Chief Minister had made a surprise visit to STNM Hospital on 12 May. He had not, in fact visited STNM Hospital that day. The error is regretted.

-Editor

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How Conrad’s imperial horror story Heart of Darkness resonates with our globalised times

JOHN ATTRIDGE
theconversation.com

Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* - or “The Heart of Darkness”, as it was known to its first readers - was first published as a serial in 1899, in the popular monthly Blackwood’s Magazine. Few of that magazine’s subscribers could have foreseen the fame that Conrad’s story would eventually garner, or the fierce debates it would later provoke.

Already, in 1922, the American poet T.S. Eliot thought the book was Zeitgeist-y enough to provide the epigraph for his epoch-defining poem, *The Waste Land* - although another American poet, Ezra Pound, talked him out of using it.

The same thought occurred to Francis Ford Coppola more than 50 years later, when he used Conrad’s story as the framework for his phantasmagoric Vietnam War movie, *Apocalypse Now*. Echoes of *Heart of Darkness* can pop up almost anywhere: the chorus to a Gang of Four song, the title of a Simpsons episode, a scene in Peter Jackson’s 2005 *King Kong* remake.

Consider one final *Heart of Darkness* allusion, from Mohsin Hamid’s 2017 Man Booker-shortlisted novel, *Exit West*. In the novel’s opening pages, a man with “dark skin and dark, woolly hair” appears in a Sydney bedroom, transported there by one of the mysterious portals that have appeared around the globe, connecting stable, prosperous countries with places that people need to escape from.

The “door”, as these wormholes are called, is “a rectangle of complete darkness — the heart of darkness”. This is a more complicated kind of Conrad reference. Here, “heart of darkness” is a shorthand for European stereotypes of Africa, which Conrad’s novel did its part to reinforce.

Hamid’s line plays on racist anxieties about immigration: the idea that certain places and peoples are primitive, exotic, dangerous. For contemporary readers and writers, these questions have become an unavoidable part of Conrad’s legacy, too.

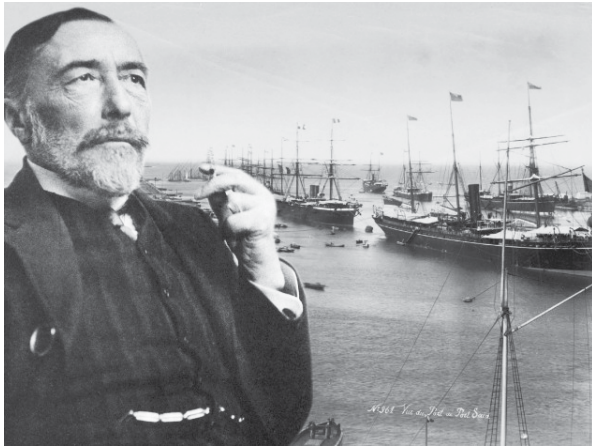
UP THE RIVER

Heart of Darkness is the story of an English seaman, Charles Marlow, who is hired by a Belgian company to captain a river steamer in the recently established Congo Free State. Almost as soon as he arrives in the Congo, Marlow begins to hear rumours about another company employee, Kurtz, who is stationed deep in the interior of the country, hundreds of miles up the Congo River.

The second half of the novel - or novella, as it’s often labelled - relates Marlow’s journey upriver and his meeting with Kurtz. His health destroyed by years in the jungle, Kurtz dies on the journey back down to the coast, though not before Marlow has had a chance to glimpse “the barren darkness of his heart”. The coda to Marlow’s Congo story takes place in Europe: questioned by Kurtz’s “intended” about his last moments, Marlow decides to tell a comforting lie, rather than reveal the truth about his descent into madness.

Although Conrad never met anyone quite like Kurtz in the Congo, the structure of Marlow’s story is based closely on his experiences as mate and, temporarily, captain of the *Roi des Belges*, a Congo river steamer, in 1890. By this time, Conrad, born Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski in the Russian-ruled part of Poland in 1857, had been a seaman for about 15 years, rising to the rank of master in the British merchant service. (The remains of the only sailing ship he ever commanded, the *Otago*, have ended up in Hobart, a rusted, half-submerged shell on the banks of the Derwent.)

Sick with fever and disenchanted with his colleagues and superiors, he broke his contract after only six months, and returned to London in early 1891. Three years and two ships later, Conrad retired from the



sea and embarked on a career as a writer, publishing

the novel that he had been working on since before he visited the Congo, *Almayer’s Folly*, in 1895. A second novel, *An Outcast of the Islands*, followed, along with several stories. Conrad’s second career was humming along when he finally set about transforming his Congo experience into fiction in 1898.

DARKNESS AT HOME AND ABROAD *Heart of Darkness* opens on a ship, but not one of the commercial vessels that feature in Conrad’s sea stories. Rather, it’s a private yacht, the *Nellie*, moored at Gravesend, about 20 miles east of the City of London. The five male friends gathered on board were once sailors, but everyone except Marlow has since changed careers, as Conrad himself had done.

Like sail, which was rapidly being displaced by steam-power, Marlow is introduced to us as an anachronism, still devoted to the profession his companions have left behind. When, amidst the gathering “gloom”, he begins to reminisce about his stint as a “fresh-water sailor”, his companions know they are in for one of his “inconclusive experiences”.

Setting the opening of *Heart of Darkness* on the Thames also allowed Conrad to foreshadow one of the novel’s central conceits: the lack of any absolute, essential difference between so-called civilized societies and so-called primitive ones. “This, too”, Marlow says, “has been one of the dark places of the earth”, imagining the impressions of an ancient Roman soldier, arriving in what was then a remote, desolate corner of the empire.

During the second half of the 19th century, spurious theories of racial superiority were used to legitimate empire-building, justifying European rule over native populations in places where they had no other obvious right to be. Marlow, however, is too cynical to accept this convenient fiction. The “conquest of the earth”, he says, was not the manifest destiny of European peoples; rather, it simply meant “the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves.”

The idea that Africans and Europeans have more in common than the latter might care to admit recurs later, when Marlow describes observing tribal ceremonies on the banks of the river. Confronted with local villagers “stamping” and “swaying”, their “eyes rolling”, he is shaken by a feeling of “remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar”.

Whereas most contemporary readers will be cheered by Marlow’s scepticism about the project of empire, this image of Congo’s indigenous inhabitants is more problematic. “Going up that river”, Marlow says, “was like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world”, and he accordingly sees the dancing figures as remnants of “prehistoric man”.

Heart of Darkness suggests that Europeans are not essentially more highly-evolved or enlightened than the people whose territories they invade. To this extent, it punctures one of the myths of imperialist race theory. But, as the critic Patrick Brantlinger has argued, it also portrays Congolese villagers as primitiveness personified, inhabitants of a land that time forgot.

Kurtz is shown as the ultimate proof of this “kinship” between enlightened Europeans and the “savages” they are supposed to be civilising. Kurtz had once written an idealistic “report” for an organisation called the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs. When Marlow finds this manuscript among Kurtz’s papers, however, it bears a hastily-scrawled addendum: “Exterminate all the brutes!” The Kurtz that Marlow finally encounters at the end of the novel has been consumed by the same “forgotten and brutal instincts” he once intended to suppress.

ADVENTURE ON ACID

The European “gone native” on the fringes of empire was a stock trope, which Conrad himself had already explored elsewhere in his writing, but *Heart of Darkness* takes this cliché of imperial adventure fiction and sends it on an acid trip. The manic, emaciated Kurtz that Marlow finds at the Inner Station is straight out of the pages of late-Victorian neo-Gothic, more Bram Stoker or Sheridan Le Fanu than Henry Rider Haggard. The “wilderness” has possessed Kurtz, “loved him, embraced him, got into his veins” — it is no wonder that Marlow feels “creepy all over” just thinking about it.

Kurtz’s famous last words are “The horror! The horror!” “Horror” is also the feeling that Kurtz and his monstrous jungle compound, with its decorative display of human heads, are supposed to evoke in the reader. Along with its various other generic affiliations — imperial romance, psychological novel, impressionist tour de force — *Heart of Darkness* is a horror story.

Conrad’s Kurtz also channels turn-of-the-century anxieties about mass media and mass politics. One of Kurtz’s defining qualities in the novel is “eloquence”: Marlow refers to him repeatedly as “A voice!”, and his report on *Savage Customs* is written in a rhetorical, highfalutin style, short on practical details but long on sonorous abstractions. Marlow never discovers Kurtz’s real “profession”, but he gets the impression that he was somehow connected with the press — either a “journalist who could paint” or a “painter who wrote for the papers”.

This seems to be confirmed when a Belgian journalist turns up in Antwerp after Kurtz’s death, referring to him as his “dear colleague” and sniffing around for anything he can use as copy. Marlow fobs him off with the bombastic report, which the journalist accepts happily enough. For Conrad, implicitly, Kurtz’s mendacious el-

quence is just the kind of thing that unscrupulous popular newspapers like to print.

If Kurtz’s “colleague” is to be believed, moreover, his peculiar gifts might also have found an outlet in populist politics: “He would have been a splendid leader of an extreme party.” Had he returned to Europe, that is, the same faculty that enabled Kurtz to impose his mad will on the tribespeople of the upper Congo might have found a wider audience.

Politically, Conrad tended to be on the right, and this image of Kurtz as an extremist demagogue expresses a habitual pessimism about mass democracy — in 1899, still a relatively recent phenomenon. Nonetheless, in the light of the totalitarian regimes that emerged in Italy, Germany and Russia after 1918, Kurtz’s combination of irresistible charisma with megalomaniacal brutality seems prescient.

These concerns about political populism also resonate with recent democratic processes in the US and the UK, among other places. Only Conrad’s emphasis on “eloquence” now seems quaint: as the 2016 US Presidential Election demonstrated, an absence of rhetorical flair is no handicap in the arena of contemporary populist debate.

RACE AND EMPIRE

Heart of Darkness contains a bitter critique of imperialism in the Congo, which Conrad condemns as “rapacious and pitiless folly”. The backlash against the systematic abuse and exploitation of Congo’s indigenous inhabitants did not really get underway until the first decade of the 20th century, so that the anti-imperialist theme was ahead of its time, if only by a few years. Nor does Conrad have any patience with complacent European beliefs about racial superiority.

Nonetheless, the novel also contains representations of Africans that would rightly be described as racist if they were written today. In particular, Conrad shows little interest in the experience of Marlow’s “cannibal” shipmates, who come across as exotic caricatures. It is images like these that led the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe to denounce Conrad as a “bloody racist”, in an influential 1977 essay.

One response to this criticism is to argue, as Paul B. Armstrong does, that the lack of more rounded Congolese characters is the point. By sticking to Marlow’s limited perspective, *Heart of Darkness* gives an authentic portrayal of how people see other cultures. But this doesn’t necessarily make the images themselves any less offensive.

If Achebe did not succeed in having *Heart of Darkness* struck from the canon, he did ensure that academics writing about the novel could no longer ignore the question of race. For Urmila Seshagiri, *Heart of Darkness* shows that race is not the stable, scientific category that many Victorians thought it was. This kind of argument shifts the debate in a different direction, away from the author’s putative “racism”, and onto the novel’s complex portrayal of race itself.

Perhaps because he was himself an alien in Britain, whose first career had taken him to the farthest corners of the globe, Conrad’s novels and stories often seem more in tune with our globalized world than those of some of his contemporaries. An émigré at 16, Conrad experienced to a high degree the kind of dislocation that has become an increasingly typical modern condition. It is entirely appropriate, in more ways than one, for Hamid to allude to Conrad in a novel about global mobility.

The paradox of *Heart of Darkness* is that it seems at once so improbable and so necessary. It is impossible not to be astonished, when you think of it, that a Polish ex-sailor, writing in his third language, was ever in a position to author such a story, on such a subject. And yet, in another way, Conrad’s life seems more determined than most, in more direct contact with the great forces of history. It is from this point of view that *Heart of Darkness* seems necessary, even inevitable, the product of dark historical energies, which continue to shape our contemporary world.

[the writer is Senior Lecturer in English, UNSW]

PM in Jharkhand, West Bengal tomorrow

NEW DELHI, MAY 24 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the convocation of Visva Bharati University at Shantiniketan tomorrow in the presence of his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina.

He will also inaugurate the Bangladesh Bhavan a symbol of cultural ties between India and Bangladesh at Shantiniketan. Hasina will also be present at the event, an official statement said here.

Later in the day, Modi will travel to Jharkhand where he will lay the foundation stone of various projects of central and state governments at an event in Sindri.

These include revival of Sindri Fertilizer Project of Hindustan Urvarak and Rasayan Ltd, Ranchi City Gas Distribution Project by GAIL, AIIMS, Deoghar, Development of Deoghar airport and Patratu super thermal power project of 3x800 MW capacity, the statement said.

He will also witness the exchange of MoUs for 'jan aushadhi kendras' and later address the gathering.

In Ranchi, the prime minister will interact with the district collectors of 'aspirational' districts of Jharkhand.

Launched by the PM in January, the transformation of aspirational districts' programme aims to quickly and effectively transform these districts to raise the living standards of their people.

Head of Catholic Bishops' Conference meets Rajnath

NEW DELHI, MAY 24 (PTI): Catholic Bishops' Conference of India president Cardinal Oswald Gracias today met Home Minister Rajnath Singh and discussed with him various issues concerning the Christians in the country.

A home ministry official described the 20-minute meeting as a "courtesy call" by Gracias, who has recently took over as the president of the CBCI, the apex decision-making body of the Indian Catholic Church.

However, sources said, the Cardinal apprised the home minister about a number of issues which have been matter of concerns for the community.

The meeting came in the wake of Gracias' reported comments that there was "growing anxiety" among minority communities "because the government is not acting enough" to protect them. He had also said there have been "more attempts" to polarise society in the last four years. The Narendra Modi government assumed office four years ago.

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Tripura CM urges Centre to initiate CBI probe into scribes' murder

AGARTALA, MAY 24 (PTI): Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb has urged the Union government to order a CBI probe into the murders of two journalists in the state last year, sources in the chief minister's office said today.

Deb spoke to Minister of State (MoS) PMO, Jitendra Singh, over phone on Wednesday and urged him to initiate the inquiry following a meeting with members of the Agartala-based Forum for Protection of Journalists (FPJ) at the state secretariat yesterday, officials said.

On September 20,

2017, television journalist Santanu Bhowmik was hacked to death while covering a political event in Mandwi, about 25 km from here.

The then ruling CPI-M had accused the supporters of the tribal party Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura (IPFT) of being involved in the murder. The IPFT had denied responsibility and instead demanded a CBI inquiry into the murder.

In the second incident, senior crime reporter Sudip Dutta

Bhowmik was shot dead inside the headquarters of the 2nd battalion of Tripura State Rifles (TSR), a state paramilitary force, on November 21, 2017.

The then Left Front government had formed a special investigation team to probe the death but the scribe's family and the FPJ had demanded a CBI probe.

The BJP had promised before the February state assembly poll that they would hand over the case to the central investigating agency if voted to power.



VP visits Mizoram varsity, asks students to stay true to roots

AIZAWL, MAY 24 (PTI): Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu today exhorted the students of the Mizoram University to stay true to their roots and respect the customs and traditions of the country.

Delivering a lecture this morning after inaugurating the administrative building of the university, the vice president said students should be well-versed in their mother tongues before learning a foreign language.

He stressed the need to eradicate poverty and illiteracy to bridge the urban-rural divide in the country.

Naidu, during his maiden visit to the state as vice president, expressed hope that Mizoram University, which

bagged the 81st spot in the National Institutional Ranking Framework, would become an education hub for the north-east region in the years to come. "If APJ Abdul Kalam, who distributed newspapers at one point of time, could become the president of India and Narendra Modi, who sold tea at railway platforms, could become the Prime Minister, any hard working students can achieve high positions in life," he asserted.

The vice-president, who was here for the day, also laid foundation stones for boys and girls hostels at the university.

"If you work hard with dedication, you will excel in your studies," he told the students.

Arunachal NGO honoured for conserving wildlife resources

ITANAGAR, MAY 24 (PTI): An NGO from West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh has bagged the first prize from the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA) for its efforts in conserving rare wildlife resources in the area.

The NBA, established by the Centre in 2003, honoured the Singchung Bugun Village Community Reserve (SBVCR) with a citation, a memento and a cash prize of Rs one lakh during a function in Hyderabad, an official release said yesterday.

The SBVCR has been partnering with the state

forest department since 2016 in protecting and conserving the 17 sq km area of Singchung Bugun Village Community Reserve, adjacent to the Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in the district, the release said.

Rich in both flora and fauna, with 545 species of birds and various species of plants and animals, the sanctuary is spread over about 217 sq km.

The sanctuary is also known for the existence of Bugun Liocichla, a bird species presently found only in the park, it said.

The Arunachal Pradesh forest depart-

ment, under the initiative of Rupa DFO Millo Tassar, partnered with the SBVCR in a "unique conservation model" for conservation of the reserve, the release said.

The NGO organises ecotourism camps for visitors and researchers every year, and employs local community members, it said.

"I believe this prestigious award will encourage them to work harder in conserving the environment," Tassar said, adding, the award has not been given to any other NGO in the state till date.

Plan to install CCTV cameras in Itanagar: Minister

ITANAGAR, MAY 24 (PTI): Arunachal Pradesh Home Minister Kumar Waii today said there was a plan to install CCTV cameras in the city to ensure safety and security of the people.

The cameras will be monitored by a city surveillance centre, Waii told a function after inaugurating a police assistance booth in the Rama Krishna Mission Hospital here.

The minister appealed to the people to cooperate with the police to maintain the law and order in the state.

The parents and guardians of a section of the unemployed youth who resort to extortion should shoulder responsibility to discipline them instead of blaming the police, he said.

He lauded the hospital for selfless service to the poor people and said the police booth was provided as de-



sired by Chief Minister Pema Khandu to extend help on the spot. Another such booth would be set up in the Tomo Riba Memorial Institute of Medical and Health Science at Naharlagun, he said.

Rama Krishna Mission secretary Swami Vishaswnanda maharaj thanked the chief minister for providing the booth to tackle problems relating to emergency medico-legal and trauma cases.

DU to translate and publish world classics into Hindi

NEW DELHI, MAY 24 (PTI): In a first, the Delhi University will translate and publish world classics of foreign countries in Hindi language, the varsity announced today.

The first-of-its-kind initiative, according to the university, was taken to widen students' understanding of global thought.

"The initiative aims to strengthen bilateral, social and cultural ties further. This would make our citizens and students aware of these classics and would widen their understanding of global thought," Registrar Tarun Kumar Das said.

A committee has been constituted to look after the initiative, he added.

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Should we ask monkeys not to procreate: HC asks govt

NEW DELHI, MAY 24 (PTI): Should we ask monkeys not to procreate or bite people till the government comes out with a method to sterilise them, the Delhi High Court asked today.

It also pulled up the Centre for importing oral immune-contraception vaccines for testing on the simians without getting approvals for carrying out the sterilisation trials. A bench of Acting Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice C Hari Shankar noted that the vaccine imported from the United States was primarily used to sterilise horses and have not been used on monkeys anywhere in the world.

"Why did you import the vaccine if the permission for trials has not been received," the court asked the government.

"Till the time you (Centre) get the permissions, shall we ask the monkeys not to procreate and tell them not to bite people," it asked.

The bench said the issue of controlling the monkey population was pending since 2001 and the Centre was yet to develop a mechanism to reduce their numbers. Agriculture activities in northern India has been stopped and even central Delhi has become increasingly unlivable.

It was hearing a PIL

filed in 2001 by advocate Meera Bhatia seeking directions to the authorities to take steps to deal with the menace of monkeys and dogs in the city.

The bench noted that even the Delhi government and a committee set up on court orders to develop an action plan to control the simian population, have not taken any steps.

It directed the committee to hold a meeting in a day and come out with a time line within which it would take steps to sterilise the monkeys.

The court said a member each from NGO Wildlife SOS and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) would be part of this panel, which will also draw up a project estimate for sterilisation of the monkeys and will forward it to the central government.

The WII was directed to ensure that it applied for all requisite permissions within three days and the central agencies were asked to process these applications within four weeks.

During the arguments, Wildlife SOS told the court it had successfully carried out surgical sterilisation by laparoscopy of 500 monkeys in Agra and said it could replicate the results in the national capital too if it received the cooperation of the authorities.

KKR banking on home advantage against SRH, says Kuldeep

KOLKATA, MAY 24

(PTI): Two-time champions Kolkata Knight Riders will relish home advantage when it takes on a struggling Sunrisers Hyderabad in Qualifier 2 of the on-going Indian Premier League, said the team's left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav.

KKR are lucky to play the two knock-out playoff matches at the Eden Gardens. The two-time champions ousted Rajasthan Royals last night here en route to its fourth win on the trot.

Next up is Sunrisers Hyderabad, who have lost four matches in a row -- the latest defeat coming against Chennai Super Kings in the Qualifier 1 in Mumbai -- and the visitors will have to quickly adjust to the conditions at Eden Gardens to stop KKR from entering its third IPL final.

"Obviously it will be difficult for them (Sunrisers) to come from Mumbai and play here. Mumbai wicket has true bounce whereas the Eden track aids spin. It's our home ground, so it's very easy for us to play here," Kuldeep, who returned with a tidy 1/18 from his four overs, said after KKR's win last night.

KKR, however, are not underestimating Sunrisers, whose performance has been on the wane after topping the table in the league stages.

"We are not looking at the results. It does not matter whether they lost four in a row or we won



four. Winning our next match is the priority at the moment," Kuldeep said.

"It's knock-out stage. Every game is very important from here on. They are a very good side and we are up for a good contest."

Kuldeep provided the crucial breakthrough last night to dismiss Ajinkya Rahane for the second time in three matches this season as Rajasthan choked from being 109 for 1 in 14 overs to be restricted to 144 for 4 in pursuit of 170.

"He (Rahane) was batting very well. I just bowled a wrong one in a good area," the spinner said.

"It was very important to get that wicket as he was batting very well."

The collapse began right after the second strategic timeout and Kuldeep said they executed their plan perfectly in breaking Rahane's 82-run partnership with Sanju Samson, who hit a 50.

"They were going well and the discussion at the timeout was to

break the partnership. We were looking for wickets. Later on PC bhai (Piyush Chawla) got Samson and took the game away from them," he said.

Kuldeep and Chawla stood up and delivered for KKR last night as Sunil Narine had a lean day.

"We were playing with three spinners and sometimes your best bowler goes through bad patches. Myself and PC had to stand up for him and we did well," Kuldeep said.

"I'm bowling just normal, focusing on basics and backing my strengths. In this format, if you try much you can go for runs."

Kuldeep also praised Andre Russell for his man-of-the-match performance. Russell hit unbeaten 49 from 25 balls to prop up KKR's total.

"It was an extraordinary innings. He also bowled well at the death and deserved the award," he said about Russell, who gave away just 22 runs from his three overs.



Kohli tags PM in online fitness challenge, he accepts

NEW DELHI, MAY 24

(PTI): India captain Virat Kohli has challenged Prime Minister Narendra Modi in an online fitness dare, which the PM accepted and promised to post a video of his workout regimen.

The initiative, called the 'Hum Fit Toh India Fit' challenge, was started by Sports Minister Rajavardhan Singh Rathore, who posted a short video of himself doing push-ups.

He tagged Kohli, shut-

tler Saina Nehwal and actor Hrithik Roshan in the video, challenging them to post their own exercise videos.

Kohli responded to it yesterday by posting a video of his gym training and tagged his actor wife Anushka Sharma, former captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Modi.

"Challenge accepted, Virat! I will be sharing my own #FitnessChallenge video soon," Modi tweeted from his personal handle.

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

NFL teams to be fined if players kneel during anthem

NEW YORK, 24 MAY: The American football league said players who do not stand for the Star-Spangled Banner can stay in the locker room until it has been performed.

The NFL also vowed to "impose appropriate discipline on league personnel who do not stand and show respect for the flag and the Anthem".

Players said the protests were against police brutality of African Americans.

"It was unfortunate that on-field protests created a false perception among many that thousands of NFL players were unpatriotic," said NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell in a statement accompanying Wednesday's new policy.

"This is not and was never the case. This season, all league and team personnel shall stand and show respect for the flag and the Anthem."

NFL players were previously required to be on the field for the anthem, but there was no firm directive to stand during the song.

The policy includes the provision that clubs can develop their own rules - so long as they abide by the league's directive - to handle players



who do not wish to stand.

It does not state how much clubs will be fined should their athletes protest on the field, but gives them the option to impose penalties on any player who breaks the new rules.

The statement comes a day after NFL teams pledged \$90m (£67m) towards social justice initiatives, under an agreement reached with all 32 teams in the league.

The debate over the kneeling protests began in 2016, when San

Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick refused to stand for the anthem.

Similar demonstrations spread across the league, where most players are African American.

Some knelt, as Mr Kaepernick had done, while others linked arms to show solidarity for the movement.

President Donald Trump was highly critical of the protests, calling them "disgraceful" and unpatriotic. He also urged the players to be fired.

US Vice-President Mike Pence walked out of an NFL game because players from Mr Kaepernick's team knelt during the anthem.

The NFL Players Association (NFLPA) issued a statement following the policy announcement saying they were not consulted.

"NFL players have shown their patriotism through their social activism, their community service, in support of our military and law enforcement and yes, through their protests

to raise awareness about the issues they care about," the statement reads.

"The vote by NFL club CEOs today contradicts the statements made to our player leadership by Commissioner Roger Goodell and the Chairman of the NFL's Management Council John Mara about the principles, values and patriotism of our League."

The NFLPA also said it will be reviewing the policy and will challenge aspects that are inconsistent with the agreement in place between the league and the union.

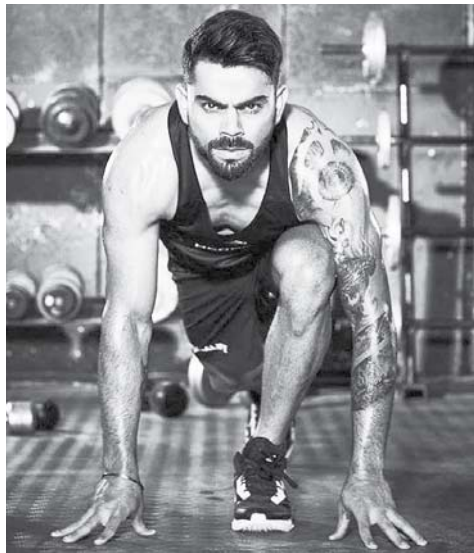
Jed York, owner of the San Francisco 49ers team, abstained from voting on the new policy.

"I think there are a lot of reasons, and I'm not going to get into all of those reasons," Mr York told reporters, according to ESPN.

"But I think the gist of it is really that we want to make sure that everything that we're doing is to promote progress. And I think we've done a good piece of that so far."

New York Jets CEO and chairman Christopher Johnson said he prefers that players stand for the national anthem but will not make them pay any fines.

Virat's fitness challenge to PM opens floodgates; Oppn leaders present dares on fuel price, jobs et al



NEW DELHI, MAY 24 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi's acceptance of a 'fitness challenge' from cricketer Virat Kohli opened a floodgate of dares from opposition leaders -- ranging from reducing fuel prices to depositing Rs 15 lakh in the bank account of each Indian.

Accepting the 'Hum Fit Toh India Fit' challenge posed to him by Sports Minister Rajavardhan Singh Rathore, who posted a short video of himself doing push-ups, Kohli had last evening extended the challenge further to his wife and actress Anushka, Prime Minister Modi and cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

After the prime minister accepted Kohli's challenge today morning, saying he will soon share his own 'Fitness

Challenge video', various leaders started posing their own dares to Modi on issues ranging from spiralling fuel prices to death of protestors in police firing in Tamil Nadu.

The challenge, which has since gone viral on Twitter, involves a person posting his or her fitness video on the social media platform while tagging others to do something similar to promote fitness.

However, this 'fitness challenge' soon appeared turning political with Congress president Rahul Gandhi leading the opposition charge by asking Modi to accept the challenge to reduce spiralling fuel prices or face a nationwide stir by his party.

"Dear PM, Glad to see you accept the @imVkohli fitness challenge. Here's one

from me: Reduce fuel prices or the Congress will do a nationwide agitation and force you to do so. I look forward to your response," Gandhi wrote on Twitter using the hashtag '#FuelChallenge'.

Congress communications in-charge Randeep Surjewala also took a dig at Modi for remaining "silent" on the rising fuel prices and posed a 'challenge' to him to utilise Rs 10 lakh crore "looted" through central excise on petrol and diesel, for helping reduce the fuel prices and restore the "economic fitness" of the common man.

Party spokesperson Sanjay Jha put up picture of his degree certificate on Twitter and dared Modi to show his degrees too, apparently referring to an earlier controversy over the prime minister's ed-

ucational qualifications.

Dear Mr Modi, @narendramodi, I am putting up my BA, MA and MBA degrees here. Are you ready for the #DegreeFitHaiChallenge ? I await your response with high expectations, Jha tweeted.

Rebel JD(U) leader Sharad Yadav reminded the prime minister of the promise made by him on bringing back black money stashed abroad before the BJP came to power at the Centre and asked him to accept the challenge of depositing Rs 15 lakh to Rs 20 lakh in accounts of each of the citizens.

Kindly accept my challenge. #bringbackblackmoney, Yadav said.

Joining leaders posing challenges to Modi, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav dared him to provide jobs to young, relief

to farmers, promise of no violence against Dalits and minorities.

Would you accept my challenge @narendramodi Sir? the former Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar asked Modi.

Referring to the killing of 11 people in police firing as they protested a project in Tamil Nadu's Tuticorin, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor asked the prime minister to take up the compassion challenge.

Tharoor said Modi felt sorry for Americans following a shootout in Orlando in the United States in 2016, but has allegedly been silent on the Tuticorin violence, referring to death of at least 13 persons in police firing during a protest demanding closure of a Vedanta group plant on pollution concerns.

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US demands two Venezuelan diplomats leave within 48 hours: State Dept

Missile that
downed
MH17 came
from Russian
military:
investigators

UTRECHT, MAY 24 (AFP): Investigators probing the 2014 downing of flight MH17 said today for the first time that the missile which shot down the plane over eastern Ukraine travelled from a Russian military brigade. The Joint Investigation Team “has come to the conclusion that the BUK-TELAR that shot down MH17 came from 53rd Anti-aircraft Missile Brigade based in Kursk in Russia,” top Dutch investigator Wilbert Pau-lissen said. “The 53rd Brigade forms part of the Russian armed forces,” he told reporters at a press conference in the Netherlands. The Malaysians Air-lines flight was blown out of the sky over conflict-wracked east Ukraine on July 17, 2014 en route from Amster-dam to Kuala Lumpur. All 298 passengers and crew, most of them Dutch, were killed in the disaster. But there were 17 nationalities on board including Australians, Britons, Malaysians and Indonesians. The investi-gators had previously con-cluded that the plane was brought down by a Rus-sian-made BUK missile system brought in from Russia and fired from ter-ritory in Ukraine held by Moscow-backed rebels. But they have stopped short of directly saying who pulled the trigger. Now the team has painstaking recreated the route taken by the missile convoy from Kursk across the border into Ukraine using videos and photos. Paulissen added the team had “ascertained that the BUK-TELAR has a number of unique char-acteristics. These charac-teristics as such served as a type of fingerprint for the missile.” Moscow has repeatedly denied any involvement in the downing of the Boeing flight 777, putting the blame instead on Kiev. The probe being led by The Netherlands is fo-cusing on some 100 peo-ple suspected of having played an “active role” in the incident, but investi-gators have not yet pub-licly named any suspects. Chief investigator Fred Westerbeke said Thursday the probe was now in its “last phase” but added there was “still work to be done”.

WASHINGTON, MAY 24 (AFP): The United States ordered two top Venezuelan diplomats to leave within 48 hours in a tit for tat response to Caracas’ expulsion order against the top two US diplomats there. “This action is to reciprocate the Maduro regime’s decision to declare the Charge d’Affaires and Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Caracas personae non grata,” State Department spokes-woman Heather Nauert said in a statement yesterday. The Charge d’Affaires of the Venezuelan embassy and the Deputy Consul General of the Venezuelan consulate in Houston had likewise been declared personae non gra-ta and were directed to leave within two days, she said. Venezuela’s move to ex-pel US diplomats earlier this week followed a US tightening

of sanctions over President Nicolas Maduro’s controver-sial re-election as president over the weekend. The Venezuelan president declared US charge d’affaires Todd Robinson and deputy head of mission Brian Naran-jo “personae non gratae.” Caracas has claimed it was the victim of a “political and financial lynching” -- accusa-tions Nauert branded “unjus-tified.” “Our Embassy officers have carried out their official duties responsibly and con-sistent with diplomatic prac-tice,” Nauert said. “We reject any suggestion to the contrary.” Maduro announced the expulsions after being official-ly proclaimed the winner of Sunday’s election in the South American nation mired in an acute economic crisis and facing growing international isolation.



The vote was boycotted by the main opposition parties and widely condemned by the international community, including the United States, which denounced it as a “sham.” On Monday, Presi-dent Donald Trump tightened sanctions against Caracas, making it harder for the Mad-uro regime to sell off state as-sets. “I repudiate all the sanc-tions that are sought against the Bolivarian Republic of Ven-ezuela, because they harm it, they generate suffering for the people of Venezuela,” Maduro said in response the next day. Maduro promised to present

evidence that both diplomats were engaged in a political, mili-tary and economic “conspiracy,” Robinson, the charge d’affaires, denied the allegations. Washington and Caracas have not exchanged ambassa-dors since 2010, and relations between the two countries have been tense since the late leftist President Hugo Chavez, Maduro’s mentor, assumed power in 1999. The deeply unpopular Maduro was declared the win-ner of Sunday’s election with 68 percent of the vote, but with a record abstention rate. Days before the elections, 11 soldiers were arrested for planning destabilizing actions against Maduro, and they were ordered to prison on Tuesday, the Foro Penal advoca-cy group said. Venezuelans are reeling un-der an deepening crisis, with

hyperinflation projected by the IMF to reach 13,800 percent this year and dire shortages of food and medicine. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled the country to escape the growing deprivation. Washington has previous-ly slapped sanctions on Mad-uro and his senior aides, and banned US entities from buying any more debt from Caracas or state oil company PDVSA. The European Union said it was also weighing new sanctions after the election was marred by “irregulari-ties” and failed to meet inter-national standards. Caracas is facing increasing international isolation, with the United States, the Europe-an Union and the 14 countries of the Lima Group -- which includes Argentina, Brazil and Canada -- refusing to recognize the election result.



The missile that brought down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over Ukraine four years ago was from a Russian military convoy, Dutch investi-gators have said. Detailed analysis of video images has established that the Buk missile which hit the plane came from a Russian-based military unit. All 298 passengers and crew died when the plane came down over eastern Ukraine on 17 July, 2014.

China says report on President Xi asking Pak to relocate LeT chief Saeed shocking, baseless

BEIJING, MAY 24 (PTI): China today dismissed as “shocking” and “baseless” a media report that President Xi Jinping has asked Pakistan to relocate the Mumbai terror attack master-mind and JuD chief Hafiz Saeed to a West Asian country, amid mounting international pressure on Islamabad to act against him. According to the report, a close aide of the prime minister of Pakistan said that Xi made the suggestion to Shahid Khaqan Abbasi during their meeting on the sidelines of the Boao Forum in China last month. “At a 35-minute meeting, at least 10 minutes of the dis-cussion dealt with Saeed. The

Chinese President was keen on pressing the Prime Minister to find an early solution to keep Saeed away from the limelight,” an unnamed close aide of Abbasi was quoted as saying. Reacting to it, Chinese For-eign Ministry spokesperson’s office said today the report was “shocking and baseless”. “It is shocking and baseless that’s all we can say,” the official from the spokesperson’s office told PTI here, declining to comment fur-ther on the report. Considering the close rela-tions enjoyed between China and Pakistan, there is sense of disquiet here over the report in the backdrop of the current tus-

sle between the Pakistan govern-ment headed by Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) and the pow-erful military. Earlier this month, Pakistan’s ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif, who has been dis-qualified to hold public office for life by the Supreme Court in the Panama Papers case, admitted Pakistan’s involvement in 26/11 Mumbai terror attack. Without naming Saeed and Jaish-e-Mo-hammad chief Masood Azhar’s militant organisations operating in the country with impunity, Sharif said: “Militant organisa-tions are active in Pakistan.” “Call them non-state actors, should we allow them to cross the border and kill over 150 peo-

ple in Mumbai? Explain it to me. Why can’t we complete the trial,” he said in an interview to Dawn newspaper, which created furore in Pakistan. Saeed carries a USD 10 million American bounty for his role in terror activities. He is the mastermind behind the 2008 Mumbai terror attack in which 166 people, including six US na-tionals, were killed. While Saeed has been de-clared a global terrorist by the United Nations after the Mum-bai terrorist attacks, China has put repeated technical holds on India, US, UK and France’s ef-forts in the UN to list Azhar as a terrorist for his involvement in the Pathankot terrorist attack.

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KINDLY CHECK THE RESULT WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETE

13 transgenders will contest 2018 Pak general elections: report

ISLAMABAD, MAY 24 (PTI): For the first time, at least 13 transgender persons will con-test the general elections in Pakistan this year with two of them contesting for the Na-tional Assembly, a media re-port said. Transgenders were in-cluded for the first time in the cen-sus, published in August. The survey identified only 10,418 transgender people out of a population of nearly 208 mil-lion in Pakistan. The importance of the par-ticipation of the transgenders was discussed yesterday at a national consultation where their political inclusion and

empowerment for social pro-gress was highlighted, the Ex-press Tribune reported. The consultation was or-ganised by All Pakistan Trans-gender Election Network (APTEN) in collaboration with the Election Commission of Pa-kistan (ECP). The meeting was attended by all the potential candidates and representatives from their assigned constituencies, it said. Of the 13 transgender can-didates, two will contest for National Assembly and the rest for provincial assembly seats, the report said. Pakistan’s election com-mission on Monday proposed

July 25-27 as possible dates for holding the general elections in the country. The Election Act 2017 un-der Article 48 A and B trans-gender community are includ-ed in the vulnerable commu-nity which means that they shall not be required to stand in queue and will be given pri-ority of right to vote, Qamar Naseem, member of the Chief Minister’s Special Community on Rights of the Transgender Persons (K-P) and member of the National Task Force said. “The polling station staff will ensure that they will cast their votes as soon as they will reach the polling station,” he said.

Naseem further said that last time four transgender per-sons contested general elec-tion but they could not do it in proper order. However, this year the community has constituted APTEN which will provide them (transgender) a platform from where they will contest election in an organised man-ner, the report said. “It is about time that the transgender community of Pa-kistan has rightful representa-tion,” Naseem said, adding that the announcement of candi-dacy and contestation in elec-tions by transgender persons is historic given the staggering

rates of violence and discrim-ination faced by trans-people throughout the country. Additional Director Gen-eral (Gender Affairs) Nighat Sid-dique said, “In the upcoming electoral process, the ECP will ensure a friendly and inclusive system for the transgender community not only as voters but also as candidates.” It is a great achievement that transgender persons have been included in the upcoming elections and the commission will formulate a viable strategy to facilitate transgender com-munity in the electoral process as voters and candidates, she added.

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VROOM VROOM! Model Hailey Baldwin looks smokin in her shiny black dress at the 2018 Whitney Gala sponsored by Audi.

DEEPIKA PADUKONE'S NEXT FILM TO BE A SUPERHERO FLICK

Deepika Padukone had not signed any films after working in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Padmaavat. The dimpled beauty had gained a lot of appraisal for her last release in which she had portrayed the role of Queen Padmini. And since then people have been waiting for the actress to announce her next project.



Padmaavat was released in the month of January this year. And it has almost been four months but there were no signs of the actress working on a new project. There were reports of DP going to work in the biopic made on the Mumbai queen mafia Sapna Didi. But that project too came to a halt due to the actress' back pain. And also her co-star of the film, Irrfan Khan had to go abroad to get himself treated.

But now several sources have revealed that Deepika is all set to start working on a

film. What's more? It is going to be a superhero film which will see the actress performing deadly stunts. A source told Filmfare, "After going through several scripts, Deepika has finally locked one and this is a massive superhero film. Deepika will have various action scenes which fans haven't seen her doing before. The untitled film will be produced by Fox Star and she's quite excited about it already."

The source also revealed that it is going to be a big budget film and something similar to the Hollywood flick Wonder Woman.

what, specifically, is making you feel so good. That way, you can recreate the feeling tomorrow. **GEMINI:** You may have gotten a financial boost lately in the form of some sort of raise or reward, Gemini. The day ahead will make you realize that more discipline and work will be necessary if you want to continue to prosper. There's no need for anxiety, but it's a good day to put together a strategy for the future, one that's airtight, waterproof, and fail-safe! **CANCER:** You're almost certainly in a phase of psychological transformation, Cancer, and there have recently been major changes in your circle of friends and associates. Today provides an opportu-

nity to assess just where you are and how far you've come. For instance, you could be introduced to a new team that compels you to display your talents. For an extrovert like you, this is right up your alley. **LEO:** You might feel a little worn out right now, Leo, as if you haven't been getting enough vitamins or rest. Or you could feel like you're losing track of issues that are important to you, such as your children's progress in school. You need to slow down a bit whether you want to or not. Today, give top priority to all the commonplace details of your daily life. **VIRGO:** If you're in love, Virgo, you'll love today. You could plan

for almost anything from a little trip together to a lifetime full of children and grandchildren. Even though your foresight sometimes overcomes your spontaneity, let yourself yield to the unexpected a little bit. The future will be a bright contrast after the comparative gloom of the past few weeks. **LIBRA:** Libra, you may feel a little tired and depressed over breakfast this morning. Domestic responsibilities sometimes overload your spirit. How about treating yourself to a short vacation - a little free time just for you? You can justify it because it's vital for your morale. Perhaps you can use the time off to draw up a weekly schedule and

make your workload seem less daunting. **SCORPIO:** This would be a good day for you to sort out your business, Scorpio. You should file important papers and get rid of extraneous materials or trivia at work. Taking the time to do this will save you even more time in the long run. As for your love life, be expressive. Clear up any old misunderstandings that could interfere with your pleasure. Above all, enjoy yourself! **SAGITTARIUS:** This is going to be a good day to see the doctor, Sagittarius, but not because you're sick. The atmosphere is ideal for getting a checkup. You've been using a lot of energy recently, and you'd be well

advised to take care of your body a bit more right now. Don't be lazy about this. Get up, eat a good breakfast, take a brisk walk, and face the day renewed. **CAPRICORN:** This should be a peaceful day for you, Capricorn. Be sure to make the most of it, because it's the calm before the storm. This could be a day of discussion and exchange with close friends or colleagues at work. It's ideal to tighten some of your professional ties. Some people might suddenly seem more reasonable than you imagined them to be, so listen up! **AQUARIUS:** "Evidence" is the word for today, Aquarius. Everyone knows that you have a facility for spending your time thinking

and analyzing. Today, on the other hand, you're going to be "seeing" things. They will be clear. It will no longer be necessary to study, ponder, and review from every angle. It's a little like you've just invented a new theory that repeatedly gets confirmed by others throughout the day. **PISCES:** You will sail through this day on the gentlest of breezes, Pisces. It's like you've just come back from a week in your country. You're calm, refreshed, and relaxed, and no amount of trouble at work can shake the feeling. You see things in a more positive light. Problems that once seemed insurmountable now resolve themselves almost without your help. Lucky you!

BLACK WIDOW GETS PRODUCTION DESIGNER; TO BEGIN FILMING IN 2019

Scarlett Johansson's Black Widow brings Red Sparrow's production designer onboard. Marvel Studios finally started to put their money where their mouth is earlier this year when they began to move forward with a solo movie for Johansson. She's been part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe since 2010 and fans have been asking for a spinoff ever since. After years of saying a movie could happen, they hired Jac Schaeffer to write the script for Black Widow in January.

The hiring of Schaeffer led to further details surfacing, including Johansson lining up a massive pay increase as the star. Even though Johansson is firmly involved, there is so far no director attached. The lack of a director isn't slowing down the pre-production process though as Black Widow looks to have found its first crew member.

Omega Underground reports Marvel has hired Maria Djurkovic to be the production designer on Black Widow. The hiring looks to be a perfect fit considering Djurkovic's last credit was Red Sparrow, a movie that generated several comparisons to what a potential Black Widow movie could be. Djurkovic is very familiar with spy/thriller movies that are also period pieces after



also working on Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy and The Imitation Game.

The hiring of a production designer at this stage indicates that the movie could be on track to start filming sometime in 2019. Marvel Studios already has lined up Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 to film at the start of the year, so if both projects film in Pinewood Atlanta, then a summer start looks likely for Johansson's solo movie. This also lines up with early reports that the movie was targeting a 2020 release. It could very well be the movie Marvel sticks on their previously announced August 2020 release date.

Now that the crew is starting to be assembled, it shouldn't be too much longer

before the biggest domino falls and Black Widow hires a director. Marvel's been thorough to say the least in their search after meeting with over 65 directors. A major focus for Marvel is looking to hire their first solo female director, after Anna Boden received co-directing credit on Captain Marvel with her longtime working partner Ryan Fleck. Marvel could wait to hire the rest of the film's crew around Djurkovic until after they name a director, but that could just depend on how long the search continues on. Either way, this is another step forward for Black Widow and surely not the last.

Black Widow is in development but does not have a release date.



SALMAN KHAN TURNS LYRICIST FOR RACE 3, PENS A ROMANTIC NUMBER SELFISH

Salman Khan has added yet another feather to his cap, this time by turning lyricist for his upcoming film Race 3. The actor has penned a romantic track titled 'Selfish' for the film.

Interestingly, the concept of the song was an incidental one, revealed a close source to Filmfare. It was during a creative brainstorming session, where Salman penned the lyrics on a piece of paper.

Selfish comes next in line, after Heeriye, a dance number featuring Salman Khan and Jacqueline Fernandez.

Announcing the new song on social media, actor Bobby Deol said, "Super excited for my first song in #Race3 with @BeingSalmanKhan and @AsliJacqueline! #Selfish releasing this Friday!"

Race 3 takes the Race franchise to an all-time high with action a notch higher and suspense that will leave you at the edge of your seats. Salman has been treating the audience with his action entertainers on the festive occasion of Eid for years now, continuing the tradition of presenting a commercial entertainer on Eid, the superstar is all set to release his Race 3 this year.

Produced by Salman Khan Films and Ramesh Taurani under the banner of Tips Films, Race 3 is directed by Remo D'souza and will also feature Anil Kapoor, Saqib Saleem and Daisy Shah.

LOGAN DIRECTOR'S FORD VS FERRARI CASTS CHRISTIAN BALE, MATT DAMON, & MORE

Christian Bale, Matt Damon, and more have joined 20th Century Fox's Ford vs Ferrari movie, James Mangold's follow-up to 2017's Logan. After spending the last few years in the comic book movie world, Mangold is steering away from big blockbusters. He's repositioning himself in the dramatic genre and has been



using the financial and critical success of Logan to line up several projects. Even though his Patty Hearst movie was cancelled, Mangold has been circling multiple other projects.

The one with the most heat is his adaptation of The Force, which secured a 2019 release date. He'd previously become attached to an adaptation of the children's novel Crenshaw as well as the American remake of Disorder. However, the latest one to get his attention is a Ford vs Ferrari racing movie, which has now secured a big portion of its cast.

The makers have final-

ly confirmed the casting of Christian Bale and Matt Damon for Mangold's Ford vs Ferrari film. Damon is set to play the role of Carol Shelby, the engineer who designs Ford's GT 40, while Bale will play the role of driver Ken Miles. The project also brought Outlander star Caitriona Balfe on to play Miles' wife, with A Qui-

Based on the casting so far, it appears as though the script by Jez Butterworth and John Henry Butterworth (the duo behind Edge of Tomorrow) puts the focus more on Bale's Ken Miles than it does on the man who actually builds his race-winning vehicle. There should be plenty of other roles to cast, though, including possibly some major ones depending on how much attention is given to the Ferrari side of this race.

The focus on Ford's side of the story could help differentiate the film

et Place's Noah Jupe playing their son.

With Bale and Damon now officially attached, this immediately becomes a very prestigious project. The goal is for Mangold and his cast and crew to film the movie this summer. It does not currently have a release date, but it seems likely that the project will go into production sometime this year given that the studio is already rounding out the cast.

from the other Ferrari movie in the works. Michael Mann has been trying to get an Enzo Ferrari biopic off the ground for years. However, his will be set a few years earlier. At one point, Bale was actually set to star in that movie, so it's ironic how the casting has played out, especially with Hugh Jackman now attached for Mann's film. Regardless, though, it seems Mangold's Ford vs. Ferrari film is off to a great start.

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