

SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Irked by meagre fuel price cut, man donates 9 paise to PM fund

KARIMNAGAR (TELANGANA), JUN 6 (PTI): Irked by the recent meagre cut in fuel prices, a man in Telangana today 'donated' nine paise to the prime minister's relief fund.

Chandu Goud (38) of Chandrapet village in neighbouring Sircilla district stumped officials at the grievances day meet when he presented a cheque for nine paise favouring the PMRF, saying it was the amount by which petrol price was reduced recently in the state.

"After 16 days of hike, fuel price was reduced by 9 paise, so I decided to donate it to PM's relief fund", Goud was quoted by officials as having told them.

He said petrol price was reduced to Rs.82.91 per litre from Rs.83.

Petrol and diesel prices were cut by 1 paise per litre each on May 30, the first reduction after 16 days of relentless price hikes that triggered derisive comments.

State-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) first announced a reduction of 60 paise -- the biggest since daily price revision was introduced in mid-June last year, only to retract it within a couple of hours citing a technical error.

Congress president Rahul Gandhi had slammed the reduction saying if this was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's idea of a "prank", it was "childish and in poor taste".

Chamling runs SKM down as 'Jail Party'

BHAICHUNG NOW 'PLAYING' POLITICS FOR DELHI PARTY: CM

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Addressing the gathering at Chauribotey today, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling ridiculed opposition Sikkim Krantikari Morcha as 'Jail Party'.

"SKM party's new name is Jail Party. Its supporters are ready to welcome their leader once he comes out of jail. Their leader is in jail because he siphoned government money meant for distribution of cows to the people of Sikkim. He was convicted by the Courts and went to jail because of which the laws don't allow him to contest the coming elections in Sikkim," contended Mr Chamling.

"Only antisocial people



are supporting this Jail Party as their leader is also one of them. No sensible and respectable person is with the Jail Party. If such a party comes to power, then there will be Goondaraj in Sikkim. Our peace loving people should not run after this party. SDF

party has given peace and security in Sikkim. If you do not take responsibility, then Sikkim will see anarchy and you will have to pay protection tax," Mr Chamling added.

Continuing with his unloading on Opposition parties, Mr Chamling also lashed out against Bhaichung Bhutia and his newly

formed party, Hamro Sikkim Party.

"A football party has been opened in Sikkim and its leader is Bhaichung Bhutia. He played for 30 years for East Bengal and Mohun Bagan in Kolkata. Any club that gave more money,

he played for that club. Now he is old and wants to play politics and like football, he is playing politics in Sikkim for a Delhi party. Hamro Sikkim Party wants to do away with the local protection laws and rights of the people of Sikkim," alleged Mr

turn to pg03

Union Defense Minister to inaugurate 578m tunnel at Theng

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Union Defense Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, is expected to arrive in Sikkim on 07 June to inaugurate the 578m tunnel constructed at Theng in North Sikkim to by-pass the landslide prone zone and difficult geographical terrain. The project was entrusted to Project Swastik, a sister organization of Border Roads Organisation, in May 2016.

Theng Bhir, a permanent trouble spot, is on the road that connects high altitude border posts as well as tourist

destinations and district headquarters and alpine valleys North Sikkim especially Gurudongmar, Yungthang, Lachen and Lachung.

BRO sources informed that the Defense Minister will take a defense chopper from Bagdogra Airport to North Sikkim to inaugurate the tunnel.

This will be the first ever visit of Ms Sitharaman to Sikkim after assuming the charge of Defense Minister last year. After inaugurating the tunnel, she is expected to have a meeting with Defense personnel, sources inform.

Let Sikkim be a Garden State says Chamling

CM'S PUBLIC OUTREACH CAMPAIGN REACHES WEST PENDAM

SUMMIT REPORT/ IPR

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

"LET SIKKIM be turned into a Garden State with trees and flowering trees on both sides of the road," said Chief Minister Pawan Chamling today while directing the Departments of Roads & Bridges and Forest to undertake plantation drives on roadsides across the State.

The CM was addressing the public at Chauribotey under West Pendam constituency in East Sikkim on the second day of the second phase of his Public



Outreach Campaign/ Jan Sam- park Jan Seva Abhiyan.

He also appealed to all to car-

ry out plantation drives on a massive scale throughout this month and leave no land barren whether

private or government premises and even in bazaar areas.

turn to pg02

SKM takes out car rally to create awareness on L-T seat reservation issue

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has alleged that Chief Minister Pawan Chamling has been trying to mislead people on the Limboo and Tamang seat reservation issue, contending that his "changing statements" on the issue were evidence of this. The party has further alleged that it was the "total failure" of the SDF government due to which the Limboo and Tamang seats have still not been reserved in Sikkim.

An SKM press release further alleges that the State Government was not sincere towards the

issue.

The release informs that SKM has started a car rally from West Sikkim to generate wider awareness on the L-T seat reservation issue.

The rally is being led by SKM chief coordinator, Sangha MLA Sonam Lama, and is joined by leaders, youth and members of SKM's frontal organisations.

The rally was flagged off from Convoy Ground in Gangtok and around 300 vehicles have joined the rally and received a grand welcome at Tashiding today.

The rally concluded today at Singling in West Sikkim.

RBI hikes rate by 25 bps to 6.25%; home, auto loans to go up

MUMBAI, JUN 6 (PTI): RBI today hiked the key rate for the first time in over four years -- by 0.25 per cent -- to curb inflationary pressure from high oil prices, a move which will translate into higher EMIs for home, auto and other loans.

With all its members voting for the increasing, the 6-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) surprised markets by raising the repo rate, at which it lends to other banks, to 6.25 per cent but kept its policy stance as "neutral".

The reverse repo rate, at which it borrows from banks, was also raised by similar proportion to 6 per cent.

This is the first increase in interest rate since January 28, 2014 when rates were hiked by a similar proportion to 8 per cent.

In the subsequent years, RBI cut interest rate on six occasions. In its last revision, on August 2, 2017, rates were cut by 25 basis points to 6 per cent.

In the second bi-monthly monetary policy of the 2018-19, RBI saw major upside to inflation from higher oil prices but kept its GDP growth outlook unchanged at 7.4 per cent for the financial year.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation was projected at 4.6 per cent for the April-September period and 4.7 per cent in second half of 2018-19 fiscal.

Anticipating firming of interest rate, several banks including SBI, ICICI and Bank of Baroda had in last one week raised lending rates by up to 0.1 per cent making loans costlier for their borrowers.

The MPC, headed by RBI Governor Urjit Patel, said it decided to increase the policy repo rate by 25 basis points and keep the stance neutral.

Consequently, the reverse repo rate under the LAF stands adjusted to 6 per cent, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate to 6.5 per cent.

Patel said the MPC reiterates its commitment to achieving the medium-term target for headline inflation of 4 per cent on a durable basis.

The decision of the MPC is consistent with the neutral stance of monetary policy in consonance with the objective of achieving the medium-term

NYK Namchi conducts debate on Sustainable Development Goals

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Nehru Yuva Kendra, Namchi, conducted a thematic debate on Sustainable Development Goals [13 & 14] of the United Nations on World Environment Day, 05 June, at Hotel Blue Tamarind in Namchi, a press release informs.

The programme was attended by Chairperson, Namchi Municipal Council [NMC], Udai Chandra Rai, as chief guest and had Municipal Executive Officer, NMC, Rajiv Rai, as special guest accompanied by coordinator of Doing Good Organisation, Namchi, Kul Prasad Chettri, United Nations Volunteers-District Youth Coordinator [UNV-DYC], NYK Namchi, Sangita Dahal, members of different youth clubs of South district, volunteers of Doing Good organization and National Youth Volunteers of South Sikkim.

On the occasion, a quiz competition on environment was also held among the



participants.

For the thematic debate, six speakers spoke on "Beat Plastic Pollution" for five minutes each. Sanjay Rai secured the first position with Rewaj Subba and Bijay Rai bagging the second and third positions respectively.

Addressing the gathering, UNV-DYC, Ms Dahal, highlighted

the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action) and 14 (Life below Water) and 15 (Life on Land).

"Sikkim is ahead of the rest of the world in Sustainable Development Goals of UN," she expressed.

MEO, NMC, Mr Rai, in his address said, "We should care

for our environment like a mother does a child. Plastic is everywhere, from the deepest oceans to the top of the hills. We should now refer to dustbins as resource-recovering bins since nowadays we can put even waste to productive use."

Speaking on waste management, the NMC Chairper-

son said, "We are focusing on waste segregation at source itself. Soon Namchi will be a Smart City so people of Namchi should also be smart to live here. The NMC is also ready to setup plastic recycling plant to manage waste plastic. I request everyone living in Namchi to start management of waste from home itself."

Chamling runs SKM down as 'Jail Party'

contd from pg01

Chamling.

"Politics is a serious matter and not a sport or a game. Bhaichung likened Sikkim's peace and tranquility to the quiet of a cemetery. What kind of democracy and peace does he want? Does he want to revert Sikkim to monarchy and its attendant oppression? He will not be accepted by the people of Sikkim. He is just an agent of outsiders," said Mr Chamling.

Highlighting Sikkim Democratic Front's policies, Mr Chamling stressed that his government has provided equal rights and facilities to all communities in the State.

"Elections are approaching in Sikkim and many parties will open here. These parties become active during election time and disappear after elections," Mr Chamling said, adding that the only consistent for the people has been the SDF.

Summer School to meditate on agri tech for Climate Change commences at CAEPHT

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Summer School 2018 on the theme, "Adaptation of Energy Efficient Agricultural Technologies for Climate Change Mitigation," commenced at the College of Agricultural Engineering & Post Harvest Technology [CAEPHT] in Ranipool on 04 Jun.

Organized by CAEPHT and sponsored by ICAR, New Delhi, the 21-day programme has the participation of 25 scientists and will involve lectures, demonstrations, discussions, field visits and practical classes on latest developments in the area of climate change adaption and mitigation strategies, a press release informs.

The programme was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor, CAEPHT, Prem Jit Singh, accompanied by Dean, CAEPHT,



Dr PP Dabral, and Dean, Horticulture College, Bermiok, Dr SK Sharma.

Course director, Dr. Deep-

ak Jhajharia, who is also an Associate Professor at CAEPHT, stressed that global warming

was a burning issue facing the world at present. The scientists will deliberate on the same during the Summer School, he added.

Let Sikkim be a Garden State says Chamling

contd from pg01

"We must do plantation in all areas and should not leave a single area unused. The Forest Department will provide saplings for the same," he added.

"There is still need for SDF in Sikkim. My 32-day tour of Sikkim is not a political programme but a government engagement. It has been organized to understand the requirements in villages and to address them," he explained.

"We will be conducting HPV cervical cancer vaccination for adolescent girls of 09-14 years of age. The vaccines have arrived in Kolkata and will come to Sikkim soon. Our girls will be protected from sexual cancer once this vaccination starts in the State. Do not pay heed to some baseless rumours being circulated on social media about this vaccination," the CM added.

He also spoke on the Government's decision to rename Sikkim Government College,

Tadong as Nar Bahadur Bhandari Degree College in memory and tribute to former Chief Minister Nar Bahadur Bhandari.

"I will be visiting the college on 10 Jun," he said.

He vocalized his resentment towards the caste and class divisions that is being propagated by some people in the state and called upon the people and especially the youth to shun all concepts of this kind and shelter the communal harmony and brotherhood that the state is synonymous with.

The CM directed the Panchayats to oversee immediate completion of the pending developmental works in the area and stated that the job of the State Government is to frame plans and policies but the onus is upon the officials and the general public to see that such visions see the light of the day with proper implementation and timely completion.

Taking note of the various developmen-

tal demands placed by the people of the constituency, like Car Parking Plaza, upgradation of the power transformer in the area, Indoor Stadium for Pendam Senior Secondary school, Community Halls, safe drinking water facilities, upgradation of existing halls of the schools in the area amongst others, the CM assured immediate fulfillment of these demands.

Earlier, Area MLA Gopal Baraily placed various demands of the Constituency.

The outreach campaign saw numerous felicitations being presented to the Chief Minister in gratitude for his visions of making Sikkim a model State and also as a congratulatory gesture for setting the record of being the longest serving Chief Minister in the country.

The highlight of the campaign was the release of cheques to beneficiaries of the Chief Minister's Start-Up Sikkim Scheme.

District Election Officers to ensure 100% verification of polling stations by next month

GANGTOK, 06 JUN [IPR]: A review meeting with all District Election Officers through video conferencing was convened by the Chief Electoral Officer today.

Progress on Summary Revision of electoral rolls 2018 with regard to house to house verification by Booth Level Officer [BLO] was reviewed. The CEO directed BLOs to ensure 100% house to house verification with special focus to include the Divyang voters.

The CEO also directed District Electoral Officers [DEOs] to ensure 100% verification of Polling

Stations and rationalisation of Polling Stations by 31 July as per the schedule conveyed by the Election Commission of India.

All DEOs have been asked to submit their respective District Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation [SVEEP] Action Plan and come up with innovative awareness programmes involving the young voters.

"The college admission time may be utilised for generating awareness among the college goers for Electoral Literacy," the CEO added.



Board of visitors' annual meet held in Boomtar Jail

NAMCHI, 06 JUN [IPR]: MLA Namthang Rateypani, South Sikkim, Tilu Gurung, who is also the Chairperson of Board of District Prison, Namchi, chaired the annual coordination meeting of the Board of Visitors at Boomtar Jail in Namchi today.

The meeting was also attended by District Collector [South], Prabhakar Verma, District Medical Superintendent, Namchi District Hospital, Dr DC Sharma, Superintendent, District Prison, Santosh Pradhan, Joint Director, Agriculture & Horticulture, Sunita Pradhan, alongside Zilla Panchyat members, prison staff and administrative members.

At the onset of the programme, Ms Gurung and the officials inspected the prison namely the female and the male wards, kitchen, legal aid clinic, visiting room, dispensary, green house and the kitchen garden.

During the course of the inspection, District Prison Superintendent, Mr Pradhan, apprised the officials present about the infrastructure of the prison and highlighted the key areas of development that are still required for the prison upkeep.

Addressing the gathering, Ms Gurung spoke about the significance of board of visitors meeting at Namchi District Prison whereby the officials can assess the various developmental projects undertaken in the prison at close quarters. She announced that a projector set will be procured for the prison inmates soon for the purpose of entertainment where documentaries by IPR Department will be screened for them weekly.

Additionally, she also highlighted the imperative need to reinforce positive affirmation amongst the inmates and to inculcate the healthy habit of reading, teaching, skill development and positive motivation.

active need to reinforce positive affirmation amongst the inmates and to inculcate the healthy habit of reading, teaching, skill development and positive motivation.

"Under Trial Prisoners [UTP] should have faith in the judiciary process. They should equally contribute in upliftment of the society by reforming themselves," said Ms Gurung.

Furthermore, she assured to expedite the grievances brought forth to by the UTPs and jail authorities in a timely manner.

Superintendent, Mr Pradhan, mentioned that the District Prison in Boomtar was established in the year 2006 and currently has a total number of 94 inmates. He informed that the District Prison facilitates accommodation for UTPs of South and West District.

He also spelt out the aims and objectives of the visitors meeting which he said is a platform where the board members monitor correctional programs, suggest new avenues for improvement and examine individual or collective grievances alongside providing constructive feedback. He also highlighted the various areas of development present and underway at the prison premises.

An interactive session with the UTPs and the board of visitors was also held on the occasion wherein the UTPs put forward their grievances pertaining to categories such as medical, judicial and executive before the chairperson of the board to which Ms Gurung provided her valuable inputs and suggestions in order to resolve these grievances at the earliest.

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RBI hikes rate by 25 bps to 6.25%; home, auto loans to go up

contd from pg01

target for consumer price index (CPI) inflation of 4 per cent within a band of +/- 2 per cent, while supporting growth, he added.

Headline inflation has been sharper than anticipated and it remained above the 4 per cent target in last 6 months, with RBI maintaining status quo during the period.

As per the latest print, retail inflation inched up to 4.58 per cent in April.

The domestic economic activity has exhibited sustained revival in recent quarters and

the output gap has almost closed, Patel said.

Investment activity, in particular, is recovering well and could receive a further boost from swift resolution of distressed sectors of the economy under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, he added.

However, he said: "Geo-political risks, global financial market volatility and the threat of trade protectionism pose headwinds to the domestic recovery."

RBI said the pick-up in the momentum of inflation excluding food, fuel and Housing Rent

Allowance has imparted persistence into higher CPI projections for 2018-19.

Crude oil prices have been volatile recently and this impacts considerable uncertainty to the inflation outlook both on the upside and the downside, it said.

Since the last MPC meeting in early April, the price of Indian basket of crude surged from USD 66 a barrel to USD 74.

Assuring that the RBI would continue to be vigilant on inflation, Patel said that "domestic economic activity has exhibited revival in recent

quarters and output gap has almost closed".

Investment activity is recovering well and could get a further boost from resolution of distress sectors of the economy under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

All members of the MPC Chetan Ghatge, Pami Dua, Ravindra H. Dholakia, Michael Debabrata Patra, Viral V Acharya and Urjit Patel voted in favour of the hike in interest rate.

The minutes of the MPC's meeting will be published by June 20, while the third bi-monthly meeting for the

current fiscal is scheduled on July 31 and August 1, 2018.

The BSE Sensex surged almost 276 points to end above the key 35,000-mark even as the RBI hiked the policy rate by 0.25 per cent on inflation concerns.

It saw some decline in day's gains briefly after the policy announcement but recovered.

RBI retained the GDP growth forecast for 2018-19 at 7.4 per cent on hopes of further boost to investments and higher consumption. Besides, it kept its stance neutral.

Gangtok on Thursday, 06 June

Temp: 27°C/16°C
Forecast: Times of sun and clouds, a shower or thunderstorm around in the afternoon.
Sunrise: 04:40 AM
Sunset: 6:28 PM

Section 144 imposed in SLA vicinity

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

The East District Administration has imposed Section 144 around the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for sitting of the House which begins from 08 Jun.

A press release informs that the order is issued to ensure smooth proceedings inside the Assembly and to maintain the sanctity and decorum of the House and to ensure maintenance of law and order in the vicinity of Sikkim Legislative Assembly complex.

The order will come into force from 9 a.m. on 08 Jun and will remain in force till the end of sitting unless withdrawn earlier.

Section 144 Cr. PC, 1973 prohibits people from assembling in groups outside the Assembly complex in order to prevent any untoward incident which is likely to disrupt or adversely affect the sanctity and decorum of the Assembly and may further lead to disturbance to the public peace and tranquility.

It also prohibits any assembly of five or more persons sologaneering, shouting, rioting, protesting, staging a dharna or demonstration, picketing, poster, wall writing or carrying out any other activity whatsoever it may be, which may cause disturbance to the public peace and tranquility in the area falling within 300 meters radius from the outer boundary of the Assembly Secretariat.

The order, however, will not be applicable to law enforcing agencies namely Magistrates, Police personnel, Army, CRPF, Para Military Forces and any other such persons who are lawfully engaged in maintaining law and order.

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SFA C-Div commences with victories for Young Boys and Sasosians FC

SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Sikkim Football Association's C-Division Football Tournament kicked off here at Paljor Stadium this afternoon. Young Boys Academy, Gyalshing, and Sasosians Football Club have started the league with victories. The inaugural day of the league had SFA president, Menla Ethenpa, as chief guest.

In the inaugural match today, Young Boys Academy started the league with an easy victory over JVC-Singtam



which was thrashed 7-0.

Santosh Limboo scored four goals for Young Boys Academy in the 46th, 59th, 67th and

70th minutes while his teammates, Pritam Sunam [57th], Sushil Limboo [63rd] and Bishwa Darjee [89th], contrib-

uted a goal each for the team.

Likewise, Sasosians FC outplayed Sumin Football Club 2-0 in the second match of the day.

Pema Wangchuk in the 57th minute and Bishal Tamang in the 90th minute scored one goal each for Sasosians FC.

Twelve clubs have been registered this time in the State C-Division League.

The other participating teams are Chujachen Sports Academy, Ranipool Football Club, Sikkim Himalayan Sport-

ing Club, Kumar Sporting Club, Nimtar Football Club, Sikkim Boys Football Club, Dzongri Football Club and Young Orchid.

On 07 Jun, the first match will be played between Ranipool FC and Sikkim Himalayan Sporting Club while Nimtar FC will take on Sikkim Boys FC in the next match.

As part of the inaugural event, SFA president also handed over certificates for Santosh Trophy 2018, which had arrived recently, to members of the State team.

BJP Sikkim unit condemns CM's L-T claims

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Baratiya Janata Party Sikkim Pradesh has strongly criticized and condemned the claims of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling on the Limboo Tamang Scheduled Tribe status issue made on 05 June at Saramsa Garden.

The party asserted that according to Scheduled Tribes status to any community was a Central subject and that the SDF government cannot take credit for it.

A BJP press release further claims that the Sikkim CM played no role in securing ST status for the Limboo and Tamang communities and has mocked the CM's frequent claims of having done so.

The release adds that even the central OBC status has not been given by the SDF government but the party has been lying to the people on this as well.

The party has advised the CM to maintain the dignity and decorum of his post.



BSI and SVVP observe World Env Day

GANGTOK, 06 JUN [PIB]:

Botanical Survey of India, Sikkim Himalayan Regional Centre [BSI, SHRC] along with Sikkim Vijnana Vikasha Parishad [SVVP] and Himalayan Science Society [HSS], Sikkim jointly celebrated World Environment Day on 05 Jun at SHRC in Gangtok.

Scientist In-charge, BSI, Dr Dinesh Agrawala, executive members of SVVP, Dr TK Mandal and

Dr. Shiva, and Dr Tika Prasad Sharma from HSS highlighted on the theme "Beat Plastic Pollution".

An educative documentary on plastic pollution was also screened followed by distribution of "NO TO PLASTIC" badge.

During the occasion, Dr Agrawala also administered the "NO TO PLASTIC" pledge and urged all to be responsible and conscientious consumers

of plastic containing products and to spread the same message to others.

A plantation drive of medicinal as well as rare and endangered plants were also carried out during the occasion.

The programme was also attended by the trainees of the Green Skill Development Programme who had successfully completed their training.



Win for Sikkimese girl at India Skills Regional Competitions '18

NITESH R PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Sikkim's Angilina Subba has won in the category of Health & Social care in the Northern Chapter of India Skills Regional Competitions 2018 which concluded here at Indira Gandhi Pratisthan in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh on 02 June.

The winners of the regional level skill competition will further participate in the World Skills India national level competitions leading to the World Skills Competition to be held at Kazan, Russia in

2019. The national skill competition will be held in July, 2018.

Daughter of Stephen Subba, Angilina hails from Singtam in East Sikkim and is pursuing Nursing at Apollo School of Nursing in Hyderabad.

It may be mentioned here, World Skills India is an initiative of the National Skill Development Corporation [NSDC] under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India. The NSDC, through its World Skills India initiative, has been

leading the country's participation at World Skills International competitions since 2011.

The key objectives of World Skills India are; to give platform where emerging professionals can display their workplace skills with utmost perfection, facilitate cooperation between government, industry and academia, create nationwide awareness, ownership and participation across various skills and help Indian youth attain world class standards of competence, excellence and productivity.

Chamling ignorant about professional sports: Bhaichung

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Senior vice president of Hamro Sikkim Party, Bhaichung Bhutia, has spoken out against the criticism and allegations made against him and his party by Chief Minister Pawan Chamling during his speech at his Public Outreach Campaign in Cheuribotay today.

"The statements of the CM show that he is ignorant about professional sports. He has accused me of playing only for money but he has no idea what he is talking about. In 25 years, he has done nothing for sports in Sikkim. All sportspersons play for fees and it is called professionalism. This is how athletes, sportspersons and footballers play in professional sports. Messi is from Argentina but plays for Barcelona FC of Spain. Sunil Chhetri is from Delhi but is playing in Bengaluru FC. Chamling has no idea about sports," said Mr Bhutia.

On allegations of not helping Sikkimese footballers to play in big clubs of Kolkata, Mr Bhutia said that he and his club, United Sikkim FC has recommended many footballers from Sikkim for football clubs outside the State.

"They went for trials and some of them succeeded and got to play for clubs. Some of the footballers we have recommended to the coaches of the big clubs are now doing well and playing professional football," he added.

He countered the above allegation with, "In 25 years, how many leaders have been allowed to come forward by Chamling? He has not produced even one leader in Sikkim and he himself behaves like a king. He is comparing me with Chogyal rule but I have come here in politics to oust the monarchy of Chamling in Sikkim."

Responding to the allegation that HSP is a party from Delhi, Mr Bhutia said that the CM "is growing old and at 67 years of age, tends to lose his memory."

"He is forgetting that SDF is a part of NDA and NEDA also which is under BJP and now he is terming our party an outsider party. He also has to go and deal with Delhi and I know that he cannot strongly place the demands of Sikkim with Delhi and always has to bow down to Delhi," Mr Bhutia said.

Regarding land in Gangtok being given by the government to Mr Bhutia, he said that he was given that land for his contributions to Sikkim. He questioned what the SDF ministers and party leaders have done to deserve land plots in Gangtok.

World Environment Day at Kalzang Gyatso School

MANGAN, 06 JUN [IPR]:

Kalzang Gyatso Senior Secondary School observed World Environment Day at Kabi in North Sikkim on 05 Jun with Forest Minister Tshering Wangdi Lepcha attending as chief guest accompanied by area MLA, Ugen Nedup Bhutia, as guest of honour and Zilla Panchayat Adhyaksha [North], Namdey Lepcha, as special guest.

The school held a marathon for various categories including the open category called the "Green Run."

A group of 15 students along with two teachers and Deputy Education Officer from New Delhi who are in the State as part of an exchange programme called "Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat" were welcomed by the students, teachers and



staff of Kalzang Gyatso SSS.

It may be mentioned here, the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat programme is a flagship programme monitored by the PMO, New Delhi under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and is under the Human Resources & Development Department in the State.

Area MLA, Mr Bhutia, brought to light many of the issues regarding the school's requirement and necessities while also mentioning a list of demands that were already fulfilled by the State Government.

Chief guest Mr Lepcha, in his address, spoke on the importance of complete plastic ban in the State and stressed on the need of replacing personal tumblers instead of plastic packaged waters. He also drew attention on the large number of tourists entering the State and the responsibility of safeguarding the environment.

Group learning session held for Mamring School teachers

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Under the Education Quality Improvement Programme [EQUIP], a group learning session was held for teachers of Mamring Senior Secondary School, East Sikkim, today to help enhance their competencies for quality improvement in education, a press release informs.

Principal, Prahlad Sharma, conducted the event as resource person supported by teacher facilitator, Chiran Kafle.



Motivational videos were also screened to help teachers feel responsible and competent in their jobs in the present scenario.

Mamring SSS is attached to the Tadong Cluster of EQUIP headed by Doma Zimba [Principal, Tadong Senior Secondary School].

Sherpa community being sidelined says Denzong Sherpa Association

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Denzong Sherpa Association [DSA] has expressed disappointment over the statement made by Chief Minister Pawan Chamling during his Jan Sampark Abhiyan programme at Saramsa Garden on 05 Jun wherein Mr Chamling, they allege, alienated Sherpa community of Sikkim from land right protection.

A press release issued by DSA general secretary, Dhendup Sherpa mentions that after the notice of National Commission of Scheduled Tribes to the State Government in 2017, Mr Chamling had openly said that he will not allow the protection of Sherpa land under Revenue Order No. 1 even if the Centre grants the demand placed by Sherpas of Sikkim.

The recent SDF legislators meet's decision to stop fielding Sherpa candidates from Bhutia-Lepcha constituency and now CM's statement about the land protection of all the communities barring the Sherpa community of Sikkim has added insult to their injury, the release states.

"It is now evident that the demand of land protection of Sherpas under Revenue Order

No. 1 is side-lined by Chamling Government. Therefore, Sherpa of Sikkim will now decide its social and political future on its own," adds the DSA release.

The Sherpa Association has appealed to all the Sherpa organisations and Kiduks to get ready to stand for their constitutional rights as guaranteed by Article 371F of the Constitution of India.

SummitTIMES

Dry Thoughts

Water supply and the woes of an urban tourist town

Not easy to editorialize on important issues when one's thoughts keep wandering off to more mundane concerns about how the families will manage when they return home after a hot, muggy, sweaty day at school, office or shopping and find that a bath has now become a luxury – a toss-up between washing clothes or the self.

Sitting in offices, similar worries surface, wondering whether the office staff will survive a visit to the toilet that has not seen reliable water supply for a while now. It becomes difficult to comment on political developments when one awaits the spurts and trickle with which water supply coughs into homes. Thankfully, the water supply has been disrupted only for short bursts this pre-monsoon, but the rainy season promising to be bountiful year as well, there are no guarantees for what the next three months hold. But before one can draw solace from the assurance that the supply lines have been reinforced, the thoughts wander off to wonder what music the musical fountains at Selep Tanki must be playing (if the musical fountains are still there).

Spoilt-with-abundance Gangtok, one must mention here, has begun empathizing with the bone-dry miseries of Namchi and other locations around South Sikkim which have been complaining of water supply shortage for many years now. And now, one learns that the Saramsa to Ranipool stretch at the foot of the capital too has water woes. But then again, Gangtok does not suffer from short-supply, or may be it does but more on that later. The problem here is the supply line which is temperamental, suspiciously erratic and perennially troublesome. "Fitters" are in high demand to fix the lines which appear to be too demanding and needy of attention. Every year, in fact every few months, one hears of the concerned department having solved the water supply network for good, and yet, every day, some part of Gangtok is left parched. One is now being told that metering will solve the problem. Unlikely, because meters record water usage and does not repair pipelines. But that is what Gangtok has been told.

May be there is a problem of short supply as well. Gangtok's water lines were planned for Gangtokians, but for the past month or so, Gangtokians have been outnumbered by tourists. If "locals" cannot find a taxi which will take them, then, stretching the same analogy, there is clearly the same pressure for its taps as well. Since departments are there to plan things better, a simple question – is anything extra done to cater to the demand for water when the population of Gangtok doubles during peak tourist season? Who are we kidding, of course, no such planning or projection was undertaken. And hence the same amount of water needs to be apportioned among double the number of people. Sikkim, after all, does not have a system of commercial water supply for its hotels. This also explains why the hitherto ubiquitous to Darjeeling and Kalimpong water trucks have become near permanent fixtures outside hotels. But this still does not explain the daily complaints of erratic water supply.

For news hounds, tracing down "sources" in government departments is of little help because the "out" slot on the name plates makes it obvious that domestic duties of providing water for the kitchen and bathrooms has superseded affairs of the State. And then there are so many VIPs seeking retreat in Sikkim away from the heat and dust of the metros that just keeping pace with their engagements throws up more sweat than a mug-full of rationed water can refresh.

Yes, the luxury of running water does leave us open to cantankerousness when the supply snaps; imagination and coherence run dry along with the taps and readers have to end with having to wade through such meltdowns...

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

Syrian refugees in America: The forgotten psychological wounds of the stress of migration

ARASH JAVANBAKHT
theconversation.com

War in Syria and the refugee crisis have been the subject of a heated debate in United States politics, leading to a travel ban and drastic reduction in the number refugees to the U.S. this year. We occasionally hear about brutal deaths and starvation of civilians in Syria from the news, as a far concept happening in another world. This is a group of people who may justifiably feel betrayed by the world.

But what do we know about those who made it to the U.S. before the travel ban? How hard were they hit by the horrifying experience of war, torture and living in refugee camps? And how are they coping with years of exposure to trauma and stress prior to arrival in the U.S. and the stress of migration?

Our research team, Stress, Trauma, and Anxiety Research Clinic STARC at Wayne State University, has been exploring the psychological impact of traumatic experiences in Syrian adult and children refugees. We believe our findings underscore the need for immediate attention to the mental health of this population.

THEIR EXPERIENCE BEFORE LANDING IN THE US

Before the civil war, Syria was a relatively stable country. In a short period, Syrian civilians found themselves in the chaos of a very confusing disaster. Access to food, water and medical care became extremely limited, and people survived – and still do – day by day.

It is hard to know which group is fighting which, and what they want from civilians within their momentary territory. Children and adults are often exposed to explosions, direct threat of death, sight or news of death, mutilation, or torture of their loved ones.

Those who had enough resources to leave, and the luck of surviving the flight, ended up in refugee camps in Turkey, Greece or other nearby countries. There, they often lived in terrible conditions for a couple of years, having left their dead or living family members and belongings in Syria.

A very small group, who have gone through a detailed vetting, have ended up in European countries, and a much lower number have in the U.S. (less than 0.5 percent). Those who end up in the U.S. have been in a camp for about a couple of years. So, despite what some may believe, getting a refugee status in the U.S. was not easy before the travel ban.

WHAT IS POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER? Post traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, is a consequence of exposure to extreme traumatic experiences such as combat, torture, assault, rape, robbery or serious motor vehicle accidents. Such experiences switch the brain to "survival mode," attempting to avoid re-traumatization. Symptoms include high anxiety, avoiding reminders of trauma (sights, sounds, smells, memories), emotional numbness, hyper-vigilance, frequent intrusive



Two refugee children play at Tolan Park, a research and treatment center in Detroit, the site of the author's research.

memories of the traumatic experience, nightmares and flashbacks.

PTSD is often accompanied by depression, which by itself is one of the most debilitating medical conditions. One could imagine how hard it is for a person with the above symptoms, to venture out and explore the new environment, which is an important behavior needed for successful assimilation.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH?

Focus of resettlement of Syrian refugees has been on immediate minimum housing and financial and physical health care needs. Mental health, which requires greater language and cultural familiarity, has typically not been a priority before and after arrival in the U.S.

Our bilingual team at STARC, many of whom are refugee doctors, took the challenge of screening Syrian and Iraqi refugees for common consequences of exposure to extreme traumatic experiences and stress of migration. Screening happened within the first month of arrival in the U.S., after a mandatory physical health screening.

Our findings are alarming: 1 in 3 men and women screen positive for PTSD (similar to the lifetime prevalence in Vietnam War veterans), nearly half show a high level of depression, and half exhibit high anxiety. Half of children show high anxiety. Nearly 80 percent separation anxiety in children restricts their ability to go to school and explore their new world. The number one concern expressed by teachers is their difficulty attending school because of high separation anxiety. This is especially critical because cumulative research shows serious negative effects of untreated childhood trauma on mental and physical health in adulthood.

WHAT ARE WE DOING FOR THEM?

The situation of refugees is complicated by chronic stress of migration, lack of resources, and difficulty navigating the complicated U.S. medical system.

PTSD, and other consequences of trauma, are

treatable, and we have effective methods of addressing them. However, access is limited by lack of providers skilled in treatment of trauma who are fluent in culture and language. That has led to efforts in using creative methods of addressing trauma and stress in refugees.

Despite the unwelcoming attitude of the current administration toward Muslim refugees, the state of Michigan has been more hospitable, providing support for a few projects addressing trauma in refugees. Our group has focused on less costly, more easily disseminated methods of addressing stress, specifically for children.

With support from the state and a few foundations, and in collaboration with the community, we provide mindful yoga to mothers and art, dance and movement therapy for children in a culturally familiar context, with a focus on emotional stress. Our pilot data shows feasibility, participation by refugees and community building. These interventions have led to reduction in symptoms of stress, especially separation anxiety symptoms.

One of our most touching experiences was when we learned that a Holocaust survivor wants to donate to our research. "I identified with them and I identified with the children. My heart was breaking for these people, so it brought back memories. I was a refugee child," the person told us.

BOTTOM LINE

Migration has always happened for happy or sad reasons, and it will continue. We can do a lot to protect the refugee families, and those children who will be future American adults, against the profound lifelong negative impact of trauma, depression and forced migration. These measures can assure a productive, functional and well-assimilated future for them. We as citizens may have to take charge and make that decision, before it is too late.

[the writer is Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Wayne State University]

Spending time alone in nature is good for your mental and emotional health

BRAD DANIEL
theconversation.com

Today Americans live in a world that thrives on being busy, productive and overscheduled. Further, they have developed the technological means to be constantly connected to others and to vast options for information and entertainment through social media. For many, smartphones demand their attention day and night with constant notifications.

As a result, naturally occurring periods of solitude and silence that were once commonplace have been squeezed out of their lives. Music, reality TV shows, YouTube, video games, tweeting and texting are displacing quiet and solitary spaces. Silence and solitude are increasingly viewed as "dead" or "unproductive" time, and being alone makes many Americans uncomfortable and anxious.

But while some equate solitude with loneliness, there is a big difference between being lonely and being alone. The latter is essential for mental health and effective leadership.

We study and teach outdoor ed-



ucation and related fields at several colleges and organizations in North Carolina, through and with other scholars at 2nd Nature TREC, LLC, a training, research, education and consulting firm. We became interested in the broader implications of alone time after studying intentionally designed solitude experiences during wilderness programs, such as those run by Outward Bound. Our findings reveal that time alone in nature is beneficial for many participants in a variety of ways, and is something they wish they had more of in their daily life.

REFLECTION AND CHALLENGE

We have conducted research for almost two decades on Outward Bound and undergraduate wilderness programs at Montreat College in North Carolina and Wheaton College in Illinois. For each program, we studied participants' experiences using multiple methods, including

written surveys, focus group interviews, one-on-one interviews and field notes. In some cases, we asked subjects years later to look back and reflect on how the programs had affected them. Among other questions, our research looked at participant perceptions of the value of solo time outdoors.

Our studies showed that people who took part in these programs benefited both from the outdoor settings and from the experience of being alone. These findings build on previous research that has clearly demonstrated the value of spending time in nature.

Scholars in fields including wilderness therapy and environmental psychology have shown that time outdoors benefits our lives in many ways. It has a therapeutic effect, relieves stress and restores attention. Alone time in nature can have a calming effect on the mind because it occurs in beautiful, natural and inspirational settings.

Nature also provides challenges that spur individuals to creative problem-solving and increased self-confidence. For example, some find that being alone in the outdoors, particu-

larly at night, is a challenging situation. Mental, physical and emotional challenges in moderation encourage personal growth that is manifested in an increased comfort with one's self in the absence of others.

Being alone also can have great value. It can allow issues to surface that people spend energy holding at bay, and offer an opportunity to clarify thoughts, hopes, dreams and desires. It provides time and space for people to step back, evaluate their lives and learn from their experiences. Spending time this way prepares them to re-engage with their community relationships and full work schedules.

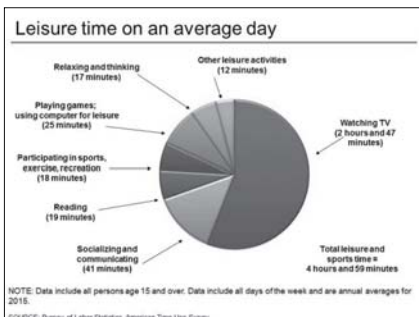
PUTTING IT TOGETHER: THE OUTDOOR SOLO

Participants in programmed wilderness expeditions often experience a component known as "Solo," a time of intentional solitude lasting approximately 24-72 hours. Extensive research has been conducted on solitude in the outdoors because many wilderness education programs have embraced the educational value of solitude and silence.

Solo often emerges as one of the most significant parts of wilderness programs, for a variety of reasons. Alone time creates a contrasting experience to normal living that enriches people mentally, physically and emotionally. As they examine themselves in relation to nature, others, and in some cases, God, people become more attuned to the important matters in their lives and in the world of which they are part.

Solitary reflection enhances recognition and appreciation of key personal relationships, encourages re-

turn to 05





Vegetable production training in Upper Bhaluthang

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUN:

Mevedir conducted training on vegetable production for farmers of Yangtey GPU at Bhaluthang in West Sikkim on 04 Jun, a press release informs.

The programme was attended by representative of Horticulture & Agriculture Department, Srijana Chhetri, Zilla Panchayat, Roshan Khatiwada, Ward Panchayat, Sashi Kala Chhetri, along with master trainers from Mevedir, Nir Maya Chhettri and Biren Tiwari, and 30 farmers from Yangtey GPU.

Ms Chhetri explained about the technical part of poly tunnel cultivation and preparation of soil mixture for growing planting materials in plug trays.

Master trainer from Mevedir, Ms Chhetri, demonstrated on nursery keeping of various crops in the modular tray inside the poly tunnels. Soil mixture preparation and planting of seeds of cauliflower, brinjal, cabbage, chilli and tomatoes was demonstrated with hands on training being provided to the participants.

Zilla Panchayat, Mr Khatiwada, encouraged farmers to adopt such modern technologies and increase vegetable production in the GPU.

Likewise, Ward Panchayat, Ms Chhetri urged the farmers to participate in such trainings and make no room for any complaints. She added that the State Government has been promoting farmer friendly policies and highlighted on the initiatives of the District Administration to cover all fallow land in the district. Incentives will be provided to progressive farmers, she added.

Shillong recovering from violence, rise in tourist footfall

SHILLONG, JUN 6 (PTI): Authorities today briefly lifted the curfew imposed in Shillong and other “vulnerable areas” for the first time as the situation improved, a senior official said, nearly a week after violent clashes between local Khasi people and Sikh community members rocked the areas.

No new report of clash was received today, paving the way for increase in tourist footfall in Shillong, called the “Scotland of the East”.

The curfew imposed in 14 “vulnerable areas” was lifted for seven hours from 5 am to 12 noon in view of the improved situation, East Khasi Hills District Deputy Commissioner P S Dkhar said.

They had been continuously under curfew since June 1.

The prohibitory order was reimposed after 12 noon till 7 am tomorrow. In rest of the city, the curfew was clamped back from 6 pm till 5 am tomorrow, Dkhar told PTI.

Shillong had been in the grip of violence since May 29 following a fight between Sikh residents in city’s Punjabi Lane area, and Khasi drivers of state-run buses. More than 10 people, including police-



men and CRPF personnel, were injured in the clashes that followed the fight.

Meghalaya Governor Ganga Prasad urged people to maintain peace and not dent the image of the state.

In a statement, he said events of the past week have caused a lot of concern to peace-loving citizens, and urged them to support the government in maintaining peace.

“Disruption of normal life due to violence dents the image of a peaceful state like ours and will have a negative

impact on the state’s economy, especially during the peak tourist season,” he said.

Prasad also urged people to be wary of rumours as “fake news” could be deliberately circulated by unscrupulous people.

Deputy Commissioner Dkhar said most shops opened in Police Bazaar and Iew Duh (Bara Bazaar) and people were visiting them.

With the situation easing out, tourist flow has started to increase in the picturesque capital of Meghalaya, which

means ‘abode of clouds’.

Assam Tourists Taxi Association started ferrying tourists from Guwahati to Shillong, sources in the association said.

Holidayers were seen in good numbers at the popular Cathedral in Shillong, a cynosure of tourists. Hoteliers facing large-scale cancellation of previous bookings heaved a sigh of relief with tourists beginning to arrive from today.

Minority commission member Manjit Rai met senior police and civil officials where

he was briefed on the situation. Rai, who visited a gurudwara in Punjabi Lane, said the report will be tabled before the Commission tomorrow.

A high-level committee formed by BJP-backed Meghalaya Democratic Alliance government to find a permanent solution to issue of relocation of the Sweeper Colony inhabited by Punjabis, got into action today and asked the departments concerned to submit relevant documents within this week.

Speaking to reporters after the panel’s first sitting today, Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong, who heads the committee, said: “We have directed the Shillong Municipal Board, urban affairs department and law department to submit all documents and court cases relating to the land within this week for the committee to study in detail on the matter.”

“After this, the committee will accordingly recommend a feasible and permanent solution to the state government for relocation of the Sweepers Colony, which has been a long pending issue,” he said.

Stating that the terms of reference of the committee

is to examine relevant documents relating to the relocation of the Sweepers Colony, he, however, said they need to know the factuality about land and occupants to decide on the issue.

The committee chairman said the decision to constitute the panel does not mean that the government wants to buy time but to show that it wants to find ways to solve this issue.

“We are committed to reach a solution,” he said.

The deputy chief minister said he does not see any problem in relocating the colony. Relocating them does not mean deprivation but it is for the good of everybody “because we don’t know the sentiment of the mob”, he said.

Tynsong said the committee is waiting for the details about the number of employees working under Shillong Municipal Board. According to him, it would be too early to say whether there are illegal settlers in the area. On opposition Congress’s demand for a judicial inquiry, he said it would be meaningless to institute the inquiry since the main cause behind the violence is known to the government.



Bengal govt hikes bus, taxi fares, blames Centre for high fuel prices

KOLKATA, JUN 6 (PTI): The West Bengal government today decided to increase bus and taxi fares by Re 1 owing to high fuel prices, Transport Minister Suvendu Adhikari said and blamed Centre for the “additional burden” on common people.

This is the first time that the bus fares in the state is being increased after 2014. At present, a passenger has to pay Rs 6 for the first stage of four km in an ordinary bus, while travelling in a mini-bus cost Rs 7 for the first two km.

Bus fares increase after that at different stages.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee held a meeting with private transport operators and transport minister and other officials at the state secretariat to discuss the demands of private bus and taxi operators before declaring the hike.

After the meeting, Adhikari said the government was forced to increase the bus fare because of high diesel prices. “It is the central government which is responsible for the additional burden on the common people as it has failed to control high fuel prices,” he said.

“We have decided to hike bus fare by Re 1 at the initial stage and proportionately thereafter for buses and mini-buses run privately or by the state,” he said, adding the fares for all commercial passenger vehicles run on diesel will benefit from the increase in fares.

There will also be a hike in taxi fares, he said.

Bus and mini-bus operators had given a call for strike in Kolkata and adjoining North and South 24 Parganas districts tomorrow demanding immediate hike

in the fares.

“The rate of hike may not have fulfilled the demands of the bus operators, but keeping in mind the hardship of passengers, I hope they will accept it,” the minister said.

Tapan Banerjee, general secretary of the Joint Council of Bus Syndicate, one of the largest public transport bus unions in West Bengal, said: “We will discuss the government’s decision to hike the fare by Re 1 - whether it will be adequate to meet our additional expenses owing to high diesel prices, apart from steep hike in insurance and spare parts, before taking a decision on tomorrow’s strike call.”

Adhikari said the transport department will press in additional government buses to ensure normal services tomorrow in case private operators decide to go ahead with the strike.

McLeod Russel to sell 8 tea gardens in Upper Assam

GUWAHATI, JUN 6 (PTI): Bulk tea producer McLeod Russel India has decided to sell eight of its tea gardens in Upper Assam, manufacturing 10.5 million kilos annually, to M K Shah Exports Limited (MKSEL).

An understanding has been reached between the two companies and MKSEL has agreed to purchase the eight tea estates located in Doomdooma circle of Dibrugarh district, a press release issued by MKSEL said here today.

The tea gardens to be acquired by MKSEL are Beesakopie, Raidang, Daimukhia, Samdang, Baghjan, Bordubi, Koomsong and Phillobari.

The combined grant area of these eight plantations is 9,350 hectares and the area under tea is 5,700 hectares, it said.

The estates have a combined work force of 11,000 workers.



The deal is expected to be concluded soon and MKSEL, which has been a debt-free company, would finance it through a combination of debt and equity, the release added.

The release, however, did not mention how much MKSEL will pay for owning the eight plantations.

MKSEL at present manufactures 7.5 million kilos of tea annually from its existing tea estates in Assam and post this acquisition, the combined entity shall manufacture 18 million kilos annually with a work force of more than 17,000 workers.

KVK East Sikkim celebrates World Environment Day in Martam

GANGTOK, 06 JUN [PIB]: Under the theme “Beat Plastic pollution”, this year’s World Environment Day was celebrated by Krishi Vigyan Kendra [KVK], East Sikkim, with a daylong programme at the premises of Gram Prashasan Kendra in Martam village, East Sikkim on 05 Jun.

During the celebration, farmers-scientists interaction session was conducted which had the participation of 33 farmers of Thanka Martam, Lingtam and Yangthang village along with staff of ICAR-KVK East.

The function commenced with plantation of different species of tree saplings collected from Forest Department, Ranipool at the Panchayat compound. During the plantation drive, 100 different species of tree saplings, 300 mandarin saplings and 600 Hybrid Napier Suckers were distributed among the villagers.



Gor School observes World Environment Day

SUMMIT REPORT

MANGAN, 06 JUN:

World Environment Day was celebrated at Gor Secondary School in a grand manner with the participation of its teachers and students on 05 June.

A rally walked one kilometer followed by a mass plantation drive at the school premises. Saplings of vegetables,

flowers and fruit-bearing plants were planted.

The students were also sensitized on the significance of the day in a special assembly conducted by Headmistress, Tseten Lhamu Lepcha, while one of the teachers, Angela Rai, spoke against the use of plastics.

A mass cleanliness drive was also conducted on the occasion.

Spending time alone in nature is good for...

Contd from pg04

organization of life priorities, and increases appreciation for alone time, silence, and reflection. People learn lessons they want to transfer to their daily living, because they have had the opportunity to clarify, evaluate and redirect themselves by setting goals for the future.

For some participants, time alone outdoors provides opportunity to consider the spiritual and/or religious dimension of life. Reflective time, especially in nature, often enhances spiritual aware-

ness and makes people feel closer to God. Further, it encourages their increased faith and trust in God. This often occurs through providing ample opportunities for prayer, meditation, fasting, Scripture-reading, journaling and reflection time.

RETREATING TO LEAD

As Thomas Carlyle has written, “In (solitary) silence, great things fashion themselves together.” Whether these escapes are called alone time, solitude or Solo, it seems clear that humans experi-

ence many benefits when they retreat from the “rat race” to a place apart and gather their thoughts in quietness.

In order to live and lead effectively, it is important to be intentional about taking the time for solitary reflection. Otherwise, gaps in schedules will always fill up, and even people with the best intentions may never fully realize the life-giving value of being alone.

[the writer is Professor of Outdoor Education, Montreat College]

Virat Kohli among world's highest-paid athletes; no women in top 100: Forbes

NEW YORK, JUN 6 (PTI): India cricket captain Virat Kohli is among the world's highest-paid athletes, according to a Forbes' compilation topped by American boxing champion Floyd Mayweather.

Kohli, the only sportsperson from India to be featured in the list, is ranked 83rd with earnings of USD 24 million.

Surprisingly, the 'World's Highest-Paid Athletes 2018' compilation is an all-male affair with no women being featured in the list.

Kohli, 29, is not just cricket-crazy India's biggest name but is also one of the most popular athletes in the world, "boasting more Twitter followers (25 million-plus) than all but three active sports stars", Forbes said.

The 'World's Highest-Paid Athletes 2018' list is topped by 41-year-old Mayweather, with USD 285 million earnings.

This year the Indian national cricket board 'The Board of Control for Cricket in India' named Kohli as one of just five players to receive the newly-created A+ contracts, which guarantee an annual



retainer of more than USD 1 million, it said.

"Yet like the Indian cricket mega-stars who have come before him, Kohli's big payday comes off the pitch" where he's partnered with top brands such as Puma, Pepsi, Audi and Oakley, Forbes said.

There are no women on the list.

Forbes said tennis' female sportspersons Li Na, Maria Sharapova and Serena Williams were list regulars but Li retired in 2014 and Sharapova is still dealing with the aftermath of a 15-month suspension for using a banned substance.

Williams was the only woman to feature in the top 100 last year, but her prize money dropped from USD 8 million to USD 62,000 this year after she gave birth to her daughter, Alexis, in September.

This year 40 NBA players made the cut in Forbes' annual look at

the world's 100 highest-paid athletes, breaking the record of 32 set last year by hoopsters.

Mayweather heads the world's highest-paid athletes for the fourth time in seven years, thanks to a USD 275 million payday for his August boxing match against UFC star Conor McGregor.

NBA's top earner LeBron James banked USD 85.5 million, including endorsements, over the last 12 months to rank sixth among the highest-paid athletes.

Argentine professional footballer Lionel Messi is ranked second in the list, followed by soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo.

Messi's annual salary and bonus exceeded USD 80 million, making him the highest-paid player on the pitch this year. He ranks second overall with USD 111 million, including USD 27 million through endorsement deals with Adidas, Gatorade, Pepsi and Huawei. Ronaldo's USD 108 million haul over the past 12 months trails only Mayweather and Messi.

Brazilian soccer player Neymar is the third soccer star in the

top five. He jumps 13 spots to fifth with an income of USD 90 million, including USD 19 million from endorsement partners.

Others on the list are American basketball player LeBron James (6), Tennis star Roger Federer (7), golfer Tiger Woods (16), tennis player Rafael Nadal (20) and golfer Rory McIlroy (26).

Forbes said it was harder than ever to qualify for the 100 highest-paid athletes, with the cutoff up USD 1.5 million to USD 22.9 million. The top 100 earned USD 3.8 billion, a 23 per cent jump over last year.

Salaries and prize money are up significantly, but endorsement earnings fell for the second straight year to USD 877 million as companies watch their sports marketing budgets.

The top 100 has an international flavour with athletes from 22 countries, but Americans dominate the action with 66 making the cut thanks to sky-high salaries in baseball, basketball and football. Those three sports had a combined 72 entries, Forbes added.

Lanzarote, Johnson boost for ATK

KOLKATA, JUN 6 (PTI):

Two-time Indian Super League champions ATK, who endured a nightmarish 2017-18 season, today announced the signing of attacking Spanish midfielder Manuel Lanzarote Bruno and English centre back John Johnson.

Nigerian forward Kalu Uche has also joined the squad as ATK are continuing to make headway in the off-season transfer window to shore up their defence and attack.

ATK, who finished ninth in the 10-team standings last season, have also reinforced their squad with the likes of



Balwant Singh (Mumbai City FC), Pranoy Halder (FC Goa), Shaikh Faiaz (Mohun Bagan), Arnab Mondal and Cavin Lobo (East Bengal).

Lanzarote finished last season with 13 goals in his maiden stint in India for FC Goa, while Johnson spent five seasons at Bengaluru before

switching to ATK.

"We have tried to form an all-round and compact squad. I am happy to welcome several new members to the ATK family and hope that together we can put up some great football this season," principal owner Sanjiv Goenka said in a statement.

Rino Anto returns to Bengaluru FC

BENGALURU, JUN 6 (PTI):

Bengaluru FC today announced that right-back Rino Anto has returned to the club, signing on a two-year-deal that will keep him in the club until the end of the 2019-2020 season.

The 30-year-old, who made the switch to Kerala Blasters in the ISL draft at the start of the 2017-18 season, returns ahead of the Blues' 2018 AFC Cup Inter-zone semi-final against Altyin Asyr FK.

"I'm glad to be back at this club where I made so many memories and I cannot wait to get on the pitch in a Bengaluru FC shirt once again. It's never easy to be a part of a club where the level of competition is so high, but I'm ready for the challenge," said Rino, who made 80 appearances in his first four seasons with the Blues.

Having won the I-League in his debut season with the club in 2014, Rino was part of the club's squad that won the Federation Cup titles in 2015 and 2017, reclaimed the I-League title in 2016 and also played in the AFC Cup



final of 2016, in Doha.

"We're very happy to have Rino back, he's been a star performer for us in our entire journey, including being a club captain. He's been a leader for us and has a very strong connect with the fans, who I'm sure will be equally excited to have him back.

"Rino is a national team player and we look to see him back there, representing club and country," said club COO Mustafa Ghouse.

Bengaluru take on Turkmenistan's Altyin Asyr FK in the first leg of their AFC Cup 2018 Inter-zone semi-final at the Kanteerava Stadium on August 22.

Women's Asia Cup T20: Bangladesh shock India to earn maiden victory

KUALA LUMPUR, JUN 6 (PTI):

The Bangladesh women's cricket team notched up its maiden international win over India after Harmanpreet Kaur and Co. put up a below-par batting performance to go down by seven wickets in the Women's Asia Cup T20 competition, here today.

The win is Bangladesh women's first in an international game against India across any format.

After two facile victories over Thailand and Malaysia, India put up a shoddy batting performance, scoring 141 for seven in the stipulated 20 overs, which Bangladesh surpassed in 19.4 overs.

India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan have all got four points from three games but the 'Women In Blue' are leading the standings with a net run-rate of +3.428.

Fargana Haque (52 no off 46 balls) and Rumana Ahmed (42 no off 34 balls) added 93 runs for the unbroken fourth wicket to guide the Bangladeshi women to one of their bigger victories in international cricket.

Rumana was the 'Player of the Match' for her all-round effort as she picked up 3 for 21 in 4 overs to engineer a middle-order slump when India batted.



"I am very happy for the girls," Bangladesh manager Nazmul Abedeen was quoted as saying by ESPN Cricinfo.

"They have achieved something which will help them for the rest of their lives."

It was the batting that let India down with only skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (42 off 37 balls) making a significant contribution. Along with Deepti Sharma (32 off 28 balls), the skipper added 50 runs for the fourth wicket, but it didn't come

at a fair clip. The duo consumed seven overs to score the runs.

Once both were dismissed in quick succession, the last four overs saw India scoring only 22 runs, which enabled Bangladesh to make a match of it.

It was leg-spinner Rumana, who was the pick of the Bangladesh bowlers, removing Harmanpreet, Deepti and Anuja Patil, who is known to strike a few lusty blows.

Chasing, the winners were in trouble at 49 for

3 after 8 overs before Fargana and Rumana calmly completed the task.

Fargana hit five boundaries and a six while Rumana hit six boundaries in her knock. Needing 32 off the last four overs, Fargana hit left-arm spinner Rajeswari Gayakwad for 12 in the 17th over with a couple of boundaries. Rumana, in the next over, hit Jhulan Goswami for 10 runs to bring the equation down to 10 in two overs.

Needing four off the

last over, the duo coolly ran four singles, including leg-byes, to finish the match in style. India will take on Sri Lanka tomorrow.

Brief Scores:

India 141/7 in 20 overs (Harmanpreet Kaur 42 off 37 balls, Deepti Sharma 32 off 28 balls, Rumana Ahmed 3/21 in 4 overs)

Bangladesh 142 in 19.4 overs (Fargana Haque 52 no off 46 balls, Rumana Ahmed 42 no off 34 balls). Bangladesh women win by 7 wickets.

Plastic is children's word of the year: OUP



NEW DELHI, JUN 6 (PTI): "Plastic" has been declared the children's word of the year as it is most commonly used by them, indicating that they are aware about the hazards of plastic pollution, according to Oxford University Press.

The Oxford University Press analysed short stories submitted to BBC Radio 2's 500 Words competition.

Plastic, the ocean, Emmeline Pankhurst, Donald Trump, Brexit, Korea, Grenfell Tower, unicorns, slime and computer game Fortnite are some of the people and subjects that influence British children's creativity and use of language, says a report published today by Oxford University Press (OUP).

Plastic is the Oxford Children's Word of the Year because of its significant increase in use in the competition (a total rise of more than 100 per cent on the 2017 competition).

Children use plastic in their stories in an emotive way to convey their understanding of the damage pollution is causing to marine life, drawing on their creativ-

ity and imagination to deliver powerful descriptive imagery in stories, with titles such as The Plastic Shore, The Mermaid's Plastic Mission and The Evil Mr Plastic, OUP said in a statement.

Vineeta Gupta, head of Children's Dictionaries at OUP, was quoted in the statement as saying: "Children have shown they are acutely aware of the impact plastic has on our environment and how it will affect their own future. They have used their stories to devise imaginative ways to combat this issue and bring about change in their world." Last year, Trump was the Children's Word of the Year.

This year, US president Donald Trump took the top spot for famous people mentioned for the second year in succession.

Santa and Cinderella remain the most used fictional characters as in all other years of the competition. Of the political words/names which have grown most in frequency of use since 2017, Brexit tops the list with an increase of 182 per cent. It is mainly mentioned as an item on the news, or as a boring topic of conversation.

Preparations for N Korea summit moving along very well: Trump

WASHINGTON, JUN 6 (PTI): US President Donald Trump today said that preparations for the June 12 summit meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un are moving along very well.

The President's statement comes a day after Singapore designated a special event area of the Sentosa island tourist resort for Tuesday's historic summit, which is expected to be covered by over 2,500 journalists from across the world.

There was initially much uncertainty over whether the summit would go ahead at all, and it was briefly called off last month by Trump after a dispute with the North Koreans over the key issue of denuclearisation.

"North Korea (sum-



mit) looks like it's moving along very well. A lot of relationship being built. A lot of negotiation going on even before the trip. But it looks like it's coming along fine," Trump said at a White House event. Multiple US and N Korean teams are holding simultaneous meetings ahead of the Singapore Summit.

"We'll see what happens. But very important. It will be a very important couple of days," Trump said.

Japanese Prime Min-

ister Shinzo Abe would be at the White House later this week for talks with Trump on the latter's summit meeting with North Korea.

"We certainly anticipate the summit with North Korea that will be next week to come up, as well as trade issues and other matters," White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders told reporters at her daily news conference.

At the Foggy Bottom headquarters of the State

Department, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met his Singaporean counterpart, wherein among other things they discussed the N Korean summit which is being hosted by Singapore.

Refuting media reports, State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert said the US is not paying for the North Korean delegation to stay in Singapore.

"We're not paying for their expenses," she said.

"We have had teams negotiating not only in the Demilitarised Zone every day... meetings are taking place in Singapore as well. The meetings are a little different. The ones in Singapore tend to focus more on logistics, negotiating security, protocol, all those types of things. Those meet-

ings are ongoing," Nauert said, adding that Pompeo speaks sometimes multiple times a day with his negotiating teams.

Meanwhile, top Republican Senator Marco Rubio said that the Singapore summit is just the beginning of a process and nothing major would come out of it.

"My sense is that it will be the beginning of a process. My prediction is that at some point during this process, if I were the North Koreans, I'd want to extend this. I would imagine China is probably trying to finagle its way into it. So I think you should anticipate that at some point down the road, this will turn into a China-US-South Korea-North Korea talks," Rubio told Fox news.

To have a good deal with North Korea is going to take a little bit of time, he said.

"The important thing for us is we should not be lifting any sanctions or providing any relief until we see a clear path forward on complete and irreversible denuclearisation and getting rid of the missiles, but that may take a while. That is not going to happen in one meeting, so I think everybody needs to understand that," Rubio added.

More than 2,500 people from the local and international news media are expected to cover the event in Singapore, according to the number of registrations received by the ministry of communications and information.



India, China will work out their differences to ensure that they progress and prosper together: Bambawale

Beijing, Jun 6 (PTI): India and China will work out their differences to ensure that they progress and prosper together, Indian envoy here Gautam Bambawale said today ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bilateral talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Summit this week - their second meeting in less than two months.

"Of course, there are certain differences between us, but we will work at the differences to ensure the two countries will progress and prosper together. We are not going to be going away from each other or apart from each other. We are going to do this together," he said in an interview to China's state-run CCTV.

The informal summit between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi in April at the Chinese city of Wuhan was an "effort by the leaders of India and China, two large countries with huge populations, to talk to each other, understand each other to promote cooperation between the two countries", Bambawale said.

"Most importantly, it (summit) was a strategic communication be-

tween the leaders of the two countries. As a result of their discussion in Wuhan, the two leaders have arrived at a certain consensus: the first and most important consensus is India and China are partners in progress and economic development: the second most important consensus is that there are many more commonalities between India and China than differences," the envoy said.

"They will work together on these commonalities," he added.

On the success of Indian films in China and promotion of people-to-people contacts, the envoy said India and China should have more people-to-people exchanges. One of the ways to that is through movies.

"We are happy to see that Bollywood movies are becoming popular. The important point is by seeing the movies Chinese people will come to understand India better. By understanding India better there will be more mutual trust between people of India and Chin," he said.

"Similarly, we want to see more Chinese movies also so that we can understand China better," he added.

Sikh temple and Mosque in UK set on fire in arson attacks

LONDON, JUN 6 (PTI): A popular Gurdwara and a Mosque were set on fire in arson attacks at the same time in English city of Leeds with the police treating them as hate crimes, according to media report today.

The Jamia Masjid Abu Huraaira Mosque in Hardy Street, Beeston, was attacked, along with the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha Gurdwara in Lady Pit Lane, the BBC reported.

The main door of the mosque in south of the city centre had been set on fire at about 3.45am (local time) yesterday. A few minutes later, the door of the Gurdwara was also set on fire, the report said.

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China denies cancellation of Nepal hydro project deal with Chinese firm

BEIJING, JUN 6 (PTI): China today dismissed reports that the Nepalese government has cancelled its agreement with Chinese companies on the West Seti hydropower project, and said talks are on between the firms and Nepal on their continuation.

This report is not true," Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said here when asked whether the Nepalese government has decided to cancel Chinese firms' participation.

"This project is a commercial one. Relevant Chinese enterprises are conducting negotiations with the Nepalese side on the economic feasibility and other relevant matters," she said.

China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported from Kathmandu about widespread concerns about possible negative impact on Chinese investment after the government announced on May 29 in its annual budget for the next fiscal year 2018-19 that the West Seti project would be developed with domestic resources.

The 750 MW West Seti hydropower project in far-western Nepal was handed over to the China

Three Gorges Corporation (CTGC) in 2012.

The report came ahead of Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli's visit to China later this month.

During his last tenure as prime minister in 2015, Oli signed the Transit Treaty with China to end dependence on India for his landlocked country and to improve rail and road links between Nepal and China through Tibet.

The report also quoted Barsha Man Pun, Nepal's minister for energy, water resources and irrigation as saying that Nepal has not yet cancelled the deal with CTGC and we are ready to continue with CTGC if it is eager to develop this project".

The report said before the Nepal government's announcement, negotiations between the two sides had been stuck on a few issues including power purchase rate.

The Chinese company had termed the power purchase rate offered by Nepal as unfeasible but Nepal refused to make any revision, according to Nepali officials, the report said.

23 rescued after blast in iron mine in China; 2 missing



BEIJING, JUN 6 (PTI): Twenty-three workers were rescued today from an iron mine in China's northeast Liaoning province, hours after they were trapped by a powerful explosion that claimed the lives of 11 people and left nine others injured, authorities said.

The blast took place at 4:10 PM (local time yesterday) when miners were dropping explosives down the 1,000-metre-deep mine shaft.

The explosion killed 11 people, injured nine others who were above ground, and destroyed the hoisting system in the mine, trapping 25 miners underground.

The first batch of six miners were lifted out of the shaft at around 5:20 AM, and another 17 were lifted as of 7:25 AM, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Two others still remain missing. Search was underway. All the rescued

miners are in good conditions.

Five of the injured suffered heavy injuries.

Three rescue teams were dispatched by the provincial work safety bureau overnight. Power supply, ventilation and the hoisting system have been recovered.

The iron ore mine in Sishanling village, Benxi city, which is under construction by Huamei Group, is attached to Beijing Jianlong Group.

Though the number of deaths has reduced at mines in recent years, mining accidents are common in China.

In May, a methane gas explosion ripped through a coal mine in central China's Hunan province, killing at least five workers.

In December last year, six people were killed and 20 others injured in another accident in a coal mine in southwest Chinas Guizhou Province.



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM LAW, LEGAL, LEGISLATIVE & PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT GANGTOK, SIKKIM -737101

No. 162/LLLPAD/18

Date: 01.06.2018

NOTICE

Whereas, vide Notice No. 158/LLL& PAD/18 dated 11/05/2018, applications were invited for the post of Assistant Government Advocate-cum-Assistant Public Prosecutor from the interested advocates having more than one year of regular practice in the Bar. The applications were to be sent through registered post/speed post with AD so as to reach to the office of the LR-cum-Secretary, LLL&PA Department on or before 31/05/2018.

And whereas, it has been informed that the Post Office employees had gone on strike for a number of days during the third/last week of May, 2018, owing to which many of the aspiring candidates could not submit their application within the stipulated time.

Therefore, with a view to offer ample opportunity to all the aspiring candidates to submit their application, it is hereby informed that the applications received till **15/06/2018** shall be accepted. However, all applications should be sent only through registered post/speed post with AD. Applications received through any other mode shall not be accepted.

Sd/-

**DEPUTY SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
LAW, LEGAL, LEGISLATIVE & PARLIAMENTARY
AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT.**

R.O.No. 118/ipr/pub/classi./18-19 dt. 4.6.2018



THE GANG! Away from the formality of the red carpet, the cast of Ocean's 8 showed their personalities at the world premiere of the all-female reboot in New York.

CARRIE FISHER REGRETTED REVEALING AFFAIR WITH HARRISON FORD, CLAIMS BROTHER

"STAR WARS" alum Carrie Fisher regretted opening up about her affair with co-star Harrison Ford, her brother Todd Fisher claims in a new book.

The veteran actor, who died at the age of 60, had confessed about her "intense" secret affair with Ford on the sets the sci-fi film in her book "The Princess Diarist", which released five weeks before her death in 2016.

Fisher revealed about the whirlwind three-month romance, which took place when she was 19 and Ford was a 33-year-old married father of two.

But in her brother Todd's new memoir "My Girls: A Lifetime with Carrie and Debbie", he claims their mother Hollywood veteran Debbie Reynolds had warned her against making a disclosure about the affair.

"Neither [Fisher and Ford] of them had any illusions that they had a future together. They were simply acting on a strong mutual attraction while making a movie together, as if that's not one of the oldest stories in Hollywood.

"What Harrison and everyone else may not know is that Carrie went to mom right after the book became such



a big deal and said, 'You were right, I shouldn't have told that story.' For what it's worth, Harrison, she really did regret telling the story of that affair," Todd Fisher writes in the new book.

Fisher died on December 27, 2016 and Reynolds, aged 84, passed away a

day after her daughter's demise.

Todd Fisher says their mother could not bear the thought of his sister being alone that she "willed herself" to die a day after.

"I want to be with Carrie," he recalls Reynolds as saying.

Sanjay Dutt should have played last portions in his biopic, says Salman

Salman Khan has seen the trailer of "Sanju", a biopic on friend Sanjay Dutt's life, but believes the actor should have been a part of his story, particularly in the last portions.

Ranbir Kapoor has played Dutt's role in the film that chronicles his life from his young years to his life after jail.

"For 'Sanju', I was thinking why is somebody else playing this bit? The last 8-10 years, you cannot do justice to that. Sanju should have played the last bit," Salman said in a group interview here.

"I have seen the trailer. Raju Hirani is a very sensible filmmaker so he has made a film," he added.

Asked if he is fine with a biopic on his life, Salman said 'No'.

When prodded further about an autobiography, Salman said, "No. I anyway say things openly... But I don't want to do it."

Salman, 52, is looking forward to his Eid release "Race 3" on June 15.



THE DAY AHEAD

ARIES: Your health is likely to be glowing and your physical energy high. Aries. You'll probably want to spend some of your time today working out or otherwise getting some exercise. This gets the endorphins going so you feel that much more motivated to pursue job-related or personal projects. Relations with others should be stimulating and jovial, although not deep or intimate. Sports or games could be especially appealing.

TAURUS: Shared activities throughout the day could bring you closer to a friend or lover, Taurus. You might attend a sports event, lecture or workshop, or concert or play. You could drive into the country or just hang out together. Conversations about a

number of different subjects could increase your understanding of one another and leave you with a lot of wonderful memories of the day. Have fun.

GEMINI: Your self-confidence is likely to skyrocket today, Gemini. Good news about money could reach you while you're at home, causing family members to want to celebrate. You might be a little tired, but you'll be up for it anyway, since the news gives you a second wind. Expect a lot of compliments from your household as well as others you might happen to meet.

CANCER: More than one social event could take place in your neighborhood, Cancer, putting you in touch not only with neighbors but also with interesting

new people. These get-togethers should be jovial and congenial. You can expect a lot of stimulating conversation and physical activity like games or dancing. Valuable business contacts could be made today, although you might not be aware of it at the time.

LEO: Today could bring a lot of physical activity, possibly including workouts, sports, and dancing, as your energy, enthusiasm, and stamina are all high. Leo. Life may be mentally demanding, too, but you can handle it. Relations with friends and colleagues should be warm, congenial, and full of good-natured banter. You could be exhausted but satisfied with everything you've done by the end of the day.

VIRGO: A number of children

could cross your path today, perhaps at a social event. You might get caught up in their games and momentarily experience being a child again yourself. This could increase your appeal for love partners, Virgo, so don't be surprised if you're the recipient of admiring glances from the people around you. At some point, you might be the center of attention, perhaps telling stories. Enjoy!

LIBRA: A lot of visitors may come to your home today, Libra. Land might be discussed. At some point you'll be reminded of someone from the past and experience a momentary wave of longing to see this person again. This won't last, however. You'll be too busy relating to those present now. Expect to learn a lot and accomplish

more throughout the course of the day. Go for the gold.

SCORPIO: Expect to hear some great news from relatives or neighbors, perhaps involving money. You could hear this from more than one source, Scorpio, so it's likely true. You might spend a lot of time driving around, mainly running errands but also seeking people who are in the know. Someone you need to reach won't be in, but don't let that stop you. Continue and you'll find what you want.

SAGITTARIUS: The forthcoming completion of a frustrating project could be moved closer by one intense burst of energy from you, Sagittarius. Self-confidence and determination come together to make sure you tie up all the

loose ends and finish it all up. However, don't expect to be able to relax for long. The enthusiasm generated by the success of this project will only whet your appetite for new ones.

CAPRICORN: Today you might take a trip, Capricorn, perhaps a long-distance vacation. This may have been planned in advance, but it could just as easily be spur of the moment. You're in the position where you feel secure enough financially and established enough in your working life to cut yourself a little slack and make time for enjoyment. Do something new and different even if others think you're crazy.

AQUARIUS: Aquarius, some interesting insights could steer you in the right direction regard-

ing a goal you've been working toward for a long time. You generally prefer logic to ESP, but today your intuition is so strong that it's difficult to resist. You could also feel a burst of physical energy that spurs you on to do whatever needs to be done. Don't worry about what's rational. Follow your heart.

PISCES: Expect to spend a lot of time in the company of others, perhaps running from one social event to another. At least one could end up being helpful to your professional life. A lot of stimulating conversation could take place today, Pisces, perhaps giving you clues to opportunities or trends that you want to follow. Relations with others should be jovial, congenial, and supportive.

Incredibles 2 bats for gender equality with Elastigirl trying to save the world!

The team of Incredible 2 is battling more for gender equality as it features a very relevant plot line at a time of female empowerment in Hollywood, with the character of Elastigirl called to save the world while the character Mr. Incredible stays home to take care of the children.

The sequel is being made after 14 years and will show the adventures of Mr. Incredible, Elastigirl and their three super-powered children - Violet, Dash and Jack-Jack, picking up exactly where the original left off.

The writer and director of the films, Brad Bird, who also voices the character Edna Mode, said it was an essential choice to not jump the story forward into the future, reports variety.com.

"I'm not interested in making that story because I chose the powers around the roles that the characters had in the family," Bird told Variety.

"Fathers are always expected to be strong so I made him super strong. Mothers are pulled in 10 different directions at once so I had her



stretch. Teenagers are insecure and defensive so I made her have force fields and invisibility. Ten year olds are energy balls and babies are unknown, so maybe he has no powers, maybe he has all the powers. That works if they are the ages that they are," Bird added.

Producer Nicole Paradis Grindle said that the first movie had a lot of really strong female characters.

"Brad had the idea that he wanted Helen [aka Elastigirl] to be the one to get the mission 14 years ago. There was that and the idea that the family did not that know Jack-Jack had powers, which informed the story that he wanted to tell. It turned out that it was a very timely issue, but I like to say that this is not a message film at all, this is just the way people live," said Grindle.

Kevin Spacey allegations were 'shocking' for Mena Suvari



Mena Suvari said the recent sexual assault allegations against Kevin Spacey were "shocking".

The 39-year-old actor, who starred with the embattled actor in the 1999 Academy Award-winning film, said it was "heart-wrenching" when Spacey was accused by Anthony Rapp of having made inappropriate sexual advances towards him when he was 14-years-old.

"I think with everything that I've been seeing that everyone's been going through, it's shocking. It's really heart-wrenching," Suvari told Megyn Kelly on her show.

She said a turn in tide was around and it is important that the victims of sexual harassment are heard and get a chance to heal.

"It's important to focus on the conversation that's happening and the healing, the victims - the right thing that's to come out of this. That's sort of what I try to hope for and focus on the most. It's something that we're truly changing and moving out of," she added.

Reminiscing the time she spent working on "American Beauty", Suvari said she had a

"wonderful" time on the film sets.

"For me, having the opportunity to work on 'American Beauty' was something that was so special and so beautiful. I was so young and was so grateful to have a job. And to be working with such experienced individuals. Everyone on that set was wonderful to me. I had a beautiful experience working on that film," the actor, who played the best friend of Spacey's on-screen teenage daughter, whom his character becomes infatuated with, said.

Spacey, who won the best actor Academy Award for the film, has been lying low since he was accused but released a statement addressing the allegations in which he also came out as gay.

Later more allegations came up against the actor of him having assaulted several men both in the US and UK. Investigations are on in the both countries.

Following the claims, Spacey was fired from the hit Netflix political drama "House of Cards" and replaced by Christopher Plummer in "All the Money in the World" weeks before it was released in December last year.