



# SummitTIMES

## Hamro Sikkim Party launched in Daramdin

REBYNA RANA/PTI  
DARAMDIN, 31 MAY: A little more than a month since the formation of Hamro Sikkim Party was announced in New Delhi on 26 April, the party was formally launched today at Daramdin, West District. Former Minister Ran Bahadur Subba, former Indian football captain Bhaichung Bhutia, founding members and a large number of people were gathered at Daradmin bazaar for the party's launch.

Bhaichung and RB Subba have been named as senior vice presidents of the party putting to rest any speculation on one of the two being probable candidates for the president's post. It was informed that the party will declare the name of

WILL WORK WITH YOUTH FOR NEW SIKKIM: BHAICHUNG BHUTIA



its president soon and the choice will be as per people's wishes. The vice presidents

are Tirtha Sharma, Dr. Bina Basnett, DS Limboo, Anu Bhattarai, Tara Shrestha and Dilip Rai.

Launching a scathing attack on Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, Bhaichung said corruption is

rampant in the state and there has been no development in Sikkim over the past four decades.

"History will remember Pawan Chamling as a communal and corrupt CM, Lifa Barney [distributing cash] CM and Murti banaune [statue maker] CM," he stated.

"Chamling is a dictator and his party, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), is a dictatorial party," he added.

Bhaichung said that the people of the state are scared to question the ruling party's development claims as well as the "prevalence of rampant corruption" due to fear of retribution.

"When I was playing international football for the country, I had sought land in Sikkim to set up an academy so

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## Bypoll results: Opposition snatches Kairana from BJP to score 11/14; limits BJP and allies at just 3

NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW/MUMBAI/PATNA, MAY 31 (PTI): Dealing a body blow to the ruling BJP, opposition parties today emerged victorious in 11 out of 14 bypolls while limiting the saffron party and its allies at just three and snatching the high-profile Kairana Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh with a united force.

With prestige at stake in every single bypoll in run-up to the 2019 general elections, the opposition leaders latched onto today's results across 11 states to claim sliding popularity of the Narendra Modi-led government, even as the BJP asserted that the PM -- which it described as 'P' for performance and 'M' for Mehnat (hard work) -- would decide the Lok Sabha polls next year.

However, opposition leaders saw a big boost for strengthening non-BJP unity with the ruling party losing Kairana Lok Sabha seat in the politically important UP to a united Opposition after a communally-charged election campaign, while similar appeared the result for Bhandara-Gondiya LS constituency in Maharashtra.

The BJP retained another LS seat from Maharashtra, Palghar, where it had faced a challenge from its own ally Shiv Sena but the Opposition could not pose a united fight. BJP's Rajendra Gavit won the seat, defeating Shiv Sena's Shrinivas Wanaga.

Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray, however, alleged "discrepancies" in counting of votes for Palghar.

In Nagaland, the

fourth LS seat for which bypoll was held, went to the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), a BJP ally in the north-eastern state.

While the LS bypoll results were equally divided at 2-2 between the BJP-led alliance and the opposition parties, figures for the 10 assembly bypolls came as a big setback for the ruling party which could win just one (in Uttarakhand). The Congress bagged three (in Meghalaya, Karnataka and Punjab) and others got six -- JMM two in Jharkhand; CPI (M), SP, RJD and Trinamool one each in Kerala, UP, Bihar and West Bengal, respectively.

The Congress also won one assembly seat in Maharashtra without contest after all other parties withdrew their candidates.

The party, which retained RR Nagar assembly seat in Karnataka and another in Meghalaya, termed the bypoll results as the people's mandate against four years of the Modi rule and the beginning of the end of the BJP empire.

"The writing on the wall is clear. The BJP's exit and success of the Congress and its allies are guaranteed," Congress leader Pramod Tiwari told reporters.

The results appeared more marked against the BJP after taking into account the parties that had held these seats earlier. While the BJP alliance retained two LS seats -- one in Maharashtra and another in Nagaland -- it lost two others -- UP's Kairana and Maharashtra's Palghar.

In assembly seats, the

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## 15-day internship prog for students at DC Office

SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 31 MAY: 24hours Inspired in collaboration with the office of District Magistrate, East has announced an 'Internship Fortnight', a 15-day internship for school and college students at the District Magistrate's Office in Gangtok during their summer break, a

press release informs. The initiative, as per the release, is to ensure that students engage in something productive during their summer holidays.

As a part of the internship, District Collector's Office will invite students from colleges and schools to come forward and get hands on under-

standing of the functioning of the DC office.

"We believe that this programme will provide a better perspective to the students in learning about the working of the DC office and encourage them towards public service. Our office is happy to collaborate with 24hours Inspired as our

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## Suspension footbridge at Mantam Lake to be completed soon

WANGCHUK BHUTIA  
MANGAN, 31 MAY:

"CONSTRUCTION of the 155 metre long Suspension Footbridge at Mantam Lake in Upper Dzongu will be completed as early as possible as the work is underway on a war-footing," assured Sub Divisional Magistrate, Dzongu, Tshering Dorjee Bhutia, today.

He further added that once the suspension bridge is completed, the bridge will make access easier for the residents of the two cutoff Gram Panchayat Units - Tingvong and Sakyong-Pentong.

"Due to incessant rainfall over the past few days, the whole area was filled with water. The District Administration had to use a motor boat to ferry people across Mantam Lake. However, the water level decreased yesterday and motor boats cannot be used anymore. If weather permits, vehicles too shall start plying normally along the Mantam route to Tingvong and beyond," the SDM stated.



## Day 2 of bank strike, cashless transactions bring relief for tourists



NITESH R PRADHAN  
GANGTOK, 31 MAY:

The nationwide bank strike continues to affect locals and tourists in the Himalayan State of Sikkim.

The situation on the last day of the strike witnessed closed ATMs across the capital with no transactions whatsoever.

"We knew about the strike before our arrival hence we did carry cash. If the strike is not lifted tomorrow, we may just be in trouble," says a tourist hailing from Mumbai, Arjun Shetty.

Another tourist from Durgapur, West Bengal, Mrinimoy Banerjee, stated that she has been mostly using her card in places where cards are accepted and has been avoiding using hard cash.

Small eateries along the capital which are often frequented by many middle income tourists however have no such facilities.

When enquired some stated poor network often made it difficult for them to use it for business. However, many cafes, restaurants, hotels and shops in the capital have swiping machines which has provided the people particularly the tourists some relief.

"There is absolutely no problem with online transactions and I am quite satisfied with the online money transfer in Gangtok," stated another tourist from Chandigarh, Ranjit Singh Sodhi.

Locals seem to be more affected by this ban with many complaining of not being able to pay school fees and other monthly loans particularly related to vehicles and flats.

"What can we do other than to wait for this strike to end? I absolutely am cashless right now, I need to pay for my flat," said a private corporate employee working with an insurance firm in the capital.

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## Karpu Chyangay wraps up at Anden Wolung Gumpa

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 31 MAY:**

Sherduk Rinpoche led the prayers and blessing ceremony on the conclusion of 'Karpu Chyangay' at Anden Wolung Gumpa in Daramdin, West Sikkim, on 30 May. The Karpu Chyangay was organised by the Wolung Gumpa Committee as part of Saga Dawa celebrations from 13 to 30 May, a press release informs.

The concluding day of the two-week puja was attended by area MLA, DN Sherpa, accompanied by the SDF Constituency Level Committee president, advisors, executives and devotees.

The Rinpoche and the Gumpa Committee expressed gratitude towards the MLA for his support towards augmentation of gumpa infrastructure granted from the Government, the release adds.

**SDF Govt not sincere about LT Assembly seat reservation: LTVC**

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 31 MAY:**

Limboo Tamang Voluntary Committee [LTVC] has said that the Sikkim Democratic Front led State Government "is not sincere towards the Limboo-Tamang seat reservation issue".

In a press release issued today, LTVC has said that the recent meeting of SDF legislators on 29 May passed 13 proposals but left out the 16-year-old pending demand of the LT communities.

The committee mentions that although the issue has been pending for 16 years, the State Government has not only 'failed' to reserve the LT seats but also failed to protect the tribal lands.

LTVC has asserted that all tribal lands in the State should be protected. The committee has further asked the Limboo and Tamang MLAs in the State Assembly to press the demand in the house.

The release further informs that LTVC has presented a memorandum to the Governor for the protection of Limboo and Tamang lands.

A similar memorandum will be submitted to the Chief Minister, reads the release.



## KARMAPA CLAIMANT DAWA SANGPO DORJEE's BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED

**NAMCHI, 31 MAY:** Devotees celebrated the birthday of Dawa Sangpo Dorjee, whom they revere as the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, at Norbu Yangdub Chholing Monastery in Diu Damthang, South Sikkim, at a programme organized by Diu Damthang Committee members.



## PCEA members call on Govnr at Raj Bhavan

**GANGTOK, 31 MAY:** Four members of Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs [PCEA] - Sambhaji Shahu Chatrapati, Mohammad Salim, Professor Sugata Bose and Gurjeet Singh Aujla - called on Governor Shrinivas Patil at Raj Bhavan in the evening today. The members were accompanied by Director, Committee on External Affairs, Lok Sabha Secretariat, Dr Ram Raj Rai.

A press communiqué received from Raj Bhavan informs that it was a courtesy call by the Members of Parliament, part of Parliamentary Committee headed by MP, Shashi Tharoor, who had arrived in Sikkim on 30 May on a two-day visit.

During a brief interaction with the Governor,

the members expressed their delight on the opportunity to visit the State known for its cleanliness, eco-friendly developmental initiatives and tourism industry. The committee, during the day, had visited Indo-Chinese Border Post at Zero point, Nathu-La.

It may be mentioned that the committee has been tasked to submit the report on Sino-Indian relations and had reached Sikkim after their visit to Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.

The Governor provided a brief insight on the State's history, identity and its achievements especially in woman's security, empowerment, communal harmony and absence of any religious and gender discrimination in Sikkim's society.

## GPU level farmers training held in Parrengaon



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 31 MAY:**

Mavedir organized a daylong Gram Panchayat Unit level training on organic farming for the farmers of Parrengaon Gram Panchayat Unit in West Sikkim today, a press release informs.

Resource persons of the programme informed the participants about the aims and objectives of the State-wide Organic Mission and State Government's schemes for the farmers.

Ward Panchayat, Pramila Rai, who was present as the chief guest encouraged the farmers to work cohesively with the government to make the GPU self-sustainable and a leader in the production of spices like ginger, turmeric and cardamom.

Other resource persons emphasized on locally available plants and herbs with microbial resources which could be used in preparing formulations of bio fertilizers like fermented plant

extract as a good pest repellent.

During the interaction session the farmers highlighted water scarcity problems in the area and urged the concerned officials to address the problem.

The purpose of regular annual internal inspections of kharif and rabi crops was explained to the farmers.

The officials also urged the farmers to give accurate information to the internal inspectors.

## Never used cash for votes: SDF

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 31 MAY:** Sikkim Democratic Front has expressed its displeasure over the 'irresponsible statement' of Sikkim Rajya Manch president, RN Chamling accusing SDF of distributing money to gain people's support.

SDF has asserted that the SRM president should know that SDF has been formed for immediate and long term development of the people of Sikkim and has

been working sincerely on its policies and principles since the past 25 years.

An SDF press release issued by its publicity secretary, Chudamani Mishra, mentions that SDF is a people's organisation formed by majority of the people of Sikkim and it should not need money to get people's support. Even during elections, there has been no need for the party to use money for votes, the release adds.

## SKM forms block level committee for Chakung GPU



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 31 MAY:** Sikkim Krantikari Morcha conducted a Block Level Committee formation meet at Chakung under Soreng Chakung Constituency in West Sikkim today in the presence of its CLC president, Binod Basnet, CLC general sec-

retaries, Singraj Subba and Rosen Tamang, and Nari Conveners, Louis Gurung and Dilku Legai Gurung. An SKM press release informs that a Block Level Committee was formed for Chakung GPU with Nima Tshering Lepcha as its president.



## SKM's Jan Chetna Yatra of East Sikkim concludes

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 31 MAY:** The ongoing Jan Chetna Yatra of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's press & publicity and social media wing in East Sikkim concluded today at Gnathang-Machong constituency. The yatra,

led by vice-president Birendra Tamling, had started in April from Tashiding, West Sikkim and covered all constituencies of the district. It has now covered all the 12 constituencies of East Sikkim, informs an SKM press release.

## 15-day internship prog for students at DC Office



**contd from pg01**

on ground partner for this intervention," DC East, Kapil Meena said.

According to Chief Learning Officer, 24hours Inspired, Dewaker Basnet, students from schools and colleges are eligible to apply for the internship programme.

The students will be selected on the basis of the essay which they have to submit to the organizers at 24hoursinspired@gmail.com.

The students are directed to submit a page long essay on why they want to apply for the internship, informs the release.



## Mega cleanup drive at Assangthang

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 31 MAY:**

The office of the Additional District Collector [Dev], Namchi, in collaboration with Block Administrative Center, Namchi, and Assangthang Gram Panchayat Unit carried out a mega cleanliness drive at the GPU on 26 May as a part of 'Himalayan Cleanup' campaign, a press release informs. The drive was participated by ADC [Dev], Milan Kumar Subba, BAC officials and staff, youths and local residents of the GPU.

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**Gangtok on Friday, 01 June**  
**Temp:** 26°C/15°C  
**Forecast:** Intervals of clouds and sunshine, a thunderhower in a couple of spos in the afternoon.  
**Sunrise:** 04:41 AM  
**Sunset:** 6:26 PM

Samajik Adhikarita Shivir conducted in Gangtok

**GANGTOK, 31 MAY [IPR]:** Samajik Adhikarita Shivir, a mega distribution camp for allocation of assistive aids and appliances under Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana [RVY] to senior citizens under BPL category and to Divyangjan under ADIP scheme was held at Chintan Bhawan today.

Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment, Krishan Pal Gurjar, attended the event as chief guest accompanied by State SJ&EWD Minister, Tulsi Devi Rai, Chief Secretary, AK Shrivastava, Additional Chief Secretary, GP Upadhyaya, Joint Secretary, SJ&E Ministry, Surendra Singh Meena, Mayor, SS Choudhary, District Collector, East, Kapil Meena, and officers and staff of the department.

Addressing the gathering, the Union Minister briefed about the scheme and how

turn to pg05



Tadong School observes World No Tobacco Day in Lumsey

**ARPAN PRADHAN GANGTOK, 31 MAY:** Tadong Government Senior Secondary School, Gangtok observed World No Tobacco Day as part of SAATHI Community Outreach Programme at Lumsey in 5th Mile, Tadong.

Eighty volunteers of SAATHI Club of Tadong SSS along with Principal, Doma L Zimba, co-ordinator of SAATHI and teachers car-

ried out an awareness rally from Sikkim Milk Union gate premises to Lumsey village.

The participants displayed placards with slogans highlighting the ill-effects of use and abuse of tobacco and related substances to one's health.

The student volunteers also performed a street play and other performances to generate awareness against the use of tobacco.

The residents of Lumsey appreciated the initiative taken by Tadong SSS and mentioned it to be the first of its kind.

"Such programmes will benefit the society. Lumsey is not an exception when it comes to alcoholism, substance abuse and other related problems. It extends gratitude to the school and students for the noble initiative," expressed one of the residents, Nirmala Chauhan.

KVK South conducts training for farmers in Belbotay

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 31 MAY:** Daylong training and awareness programme for farmers was organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, South Sikkim, at Belbotay under Lungchok-Kamarey GPU of South district in the presence of Panchayat president, Deo Raj Rai, as chief guest, a press release informs.

At the onset of the programme, Subject Matter Specialist [Soil Science], Wilson Rai, informed the farmers about the procedure of soil sampling for soil testing while SMS [Horticulture], Yangchenla Bhutia, detailed about organic package and practice of okra var Sikkim Local 1.

Likewise, SMS [Agronomy], Dr Nation Cham-



ling, highlighted about the Integrated Nutrient Management in Paddy while SMS [Extension], Meena Pradhan, informed about the formation of Joint Liability Groups for Credit Linkage.

Inputs like mushroom spawns, paddy seed and okra seed were also distributed to the farmers.



World No Tobacco Day at Springdale School

**SUMMIT REPORT MANGAN, 31 MAY:** Springdale School, Dikchu, East Sikkim, observed World No Tobacco Day today with active participation from its students and teachers. The students prepared placards and posters which broadcast messages on negative effects of tobacco use, smoking and other related issues. Nima Choden Lepcha, a teacher, explained the harmful effects of smoking and use of tobacco products.

Bypoll results: Opposition snatches Kairana...

contd from pg01

BJP and its allies failed to retain Noorpur in UP and Shahkot in Punjab, while Congress, CPI (M), Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Trinamool retained their respective seats.

The BJP retained Tharali in Uttarakhnad, but lost Noorpur in UP to the SP. Naeemul Hasan of SP trounced BJP's Avni Singh in Noorpur.

In Bihar, RJD won Joka-ihat by defeating BJP ally JD(U) by a huge margin. The result is being seen as a big jolt to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar who dumped the RJD and Congress last year to join hands with the BJP to form a new coalition government in the state.

A buoyed Tejashwi Yadav of RJD said Kumar should immediate resign if he has some conscience left.

Commenting on the results, senior BJP leader and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh said one has to take two steps backward before a big leap and the BJP is "going to take a massive leap."

BJP's Subramanian Swamy, however, had a word of caution for the party and said the "this huge setback in by polls is due to Hubris".

"But the trend is easily reversible if party stops rewarding sycophancy and has more participatory decision making ethos amongst those leaders whom the public find credible. BJP has infrastructure to bounce back but needs a new ethos," he said.

AAP leader and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said the results reflect the anger against

the Modi government.

The UP results came as the biggest upset for the BJP with the joint opposition candidate, RLD's Tabassum Hasan, wining in Kairana. The seat had fallen vacant after death of the BJP candidate Mriganka Singh's father, Hukum Singh.

Former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav called the results "a defeat of divisive politics".

CPI (M) leader Sitaram Yechuri said BJP's loss at its "laboratory of communal and hate politics", Kairana, clearly showed that people did not accept the ruling party's governance that is "destroying" the unity and integrity of India. He, however, feared that the loss would push the RSS-BJP to spread communal tensions to consolidate the "Hindutva votebank" ahead of the 2019 general elections.

In Punjab, Congress' Hardev Singh Ladi wrested Shahkot from the Shiromani Akali Dal. Chief Minister Amarinder Singh hailed the victory as a "vindication" of the government's people-centric policies.

Trinamool's Dulal Das won Maheshtala bypoll in West Bengal, defeating BJP's Sujit Kumar Ghosh. The Left came third.

In Kerala, Left's Sajji Cheriyan won Chengannur bypoll. The Congress came second and the BJP third.

JMM retained Silli and Gomia seats in Jharkhand. In Gomia, JMM's Babita Devi defeated AJSU nominee Lambodar Mahto, while BJP came third. In Silli, JMM's Seema Mahto defeated AJSU chief Sudesh Mahto.

World No Tobacco Day observed at STNM

**GANGTOK, 31 MAY [IPR]:** World No Tobacco Day was observed today at General Nursing and Midwifery School, STNM Complex in the presence of Mayor of Gangtok Municipal Corporation, Shakti Singh Choudhary, as chief guest.

In his address, Mr Choudhary stressed that awareness needs to begin right from the individual and personal level, from within family and friends to the public.

Director, Health Services, Dr S Lama, gave a presentation on the overview of National Tobacco Control Programme in Sikkim while Psychiatrist, STNM Hospital, Dr CS Sharma, conducted an interactive session on "Quitting Tobacco" which shed light on the subject on World No Tobacco Day.



Additional Secretary, UDHD, also addressed the gathering stating that whatever help and co-operation was required from the department regarding licensing and proper management of shops and stores selling tobacco products would be looked into effectively.

Likewise, Councillor, Sandhya Prasad, added that the responsibility lies on oneself and it was up to all to take the matter seriously.

Health Education Officer presented the vote of thanks.

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**NOTICE**

The date for conducting the written examinations for the post of Revenue Inspector/Survey Inspector/Junior Land Record Officer as advertised vide Advertisement No: 06/SPSC/EXAM/2018 DATED: 10/04/2018 under Land Revenue & Disaster Management Department, Government of Sikkim, through Direct Recruitment is hereby fixed as per detailed given below:-

Papers	Mode of Examination	Date	Time	Venue
Paper- I	MCQ/ Conventional	01.07.2018	10:00 am to 12:00 pm	Will be intimated in the ADMIT CARD.
Paper – II	MCQ		01:00 pm to 04:00 pm	

The eligible candidates may download their admit cards from 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018 to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2018 (midnight) from the official website of Sikkim Public Service Commission i.e. [www.spssckm.gov.in](http://www.spssckm.gov.in).

Admission to all the stages of examination for which candidates are admitted by the Commission viz: Written Examination and Viva-Voice will be purely provisional, subject to their satisfying the prescribed eligibility conditions. If on verification at any point of time before or after the Written Examination and Viva-Voice, it is found that the candidates do not fulfil any of the eligibility conditions, their candidature for the examination/post will be cancelled by the Commission.

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Last Date for Registration for admission to UG courses in the following Government colleges of Sikkim for the academic year 2018-19 is 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018, no application shall be entertained after the specified date and Last Date for the payment of Fees through Online and Offline Mode (uploading of Demand Draft Details) is 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018. (In favor of E- collection Account HRDD Payable at Gangtok), no payment shall be entertained after the specified date. Students seeking admission in Government colleges are directed to apply through website: [www.sgcregistration.com](http://www.sgcregistration.com) / [www.rusasikkim.com](http://www.rusasikkim.com) or through Mobile App.

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9	Women Arts College Khamdong, East Sikkim
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11	Sikkim Government B.Ed College, Soreng

Important dates:

- I. Submission of online registration: 29<sup>th</sup> May – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018
- II. Last date of submission of Fees: 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018
- III. 1<sup>st</sup> Merit list generation: 16<sup>th</sup> June 2018
- IV. 1<sup>st</sup> Merit list last date of admission: 26<sup>th</sup> June 2018
- V. 2<sup>nd</sup> Merit List generation: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018
- VI. 2<sup>nd</sup> merit list last date of admission: 5<sup>th</sup> July 2018
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Note: Admission for Sikkim Government B.ed College, Soreng will be notified shortly.

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# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

## 'Other Workers' Have Taken the Lead

*So, while traditional occupations are supported, think for the "others" as well*

Some years, in fact, more than some years ago, a workshop/ seminar ambitiously titled, "Job Profile, Life Management, Skills Orientation Program for Educated Youth of Sikkim" travelled across the State for a week. It was an ambitious initiative given the number of commas dividing the many tasks it aimed to address apart from being a workshop and a seminar bundled into one. The basic idea was obviously to support the skill and capacity development initiative underway at the time and being earnestly enough pursued to still make the news occasionally. The idea was well placed though in that it was help the youth still in school zero in on their future prospects well in time. That special focus, however, did deliver better than the tokenism which has traditionally plagued departmental, especially HRDD, undertakings and that was unfortunate because agriculture, despite what the Organic enforcement might want us to believe, is no longer the highest employer in the State.

As per the latest set of Census 2011, cultivators and agricultural labourers [as of 2011] make up 46.5% of the total workers in Sikkim. That is a substantial number, but a decade earlier, this segment made up a majority of the workers at 56.4% in 2001. Perhaps for the first time in Sikkim's history, "other workers" now make a majority of the workforce at 51.8%, having grown from their proportion of 42% in 2001. Agriculture is not receiving any new hands, so in the seven years that have passed since the last head-count, the number of other workers could have grown substantially more. The definition of "other workers" as per the Census operation is very loose, it is anyone who is not a cultivator or an agricultural labourer or a household industry worker. Simply put, the aspiration to become farmers has dulled substantially in Sikkim, and even as this trend needs to be addressed more seriously, one needs to also address the counseling needs of an increasing number of young who aspire to join the "other workers" club in Sikkim. In that sense, the skill development effort mounted through the Livelihood Schools was a move well ahead of its time and one which should be refined and made more effective to meet the aspirations of Sikkim's young; job profiling and skills orientation should hence deliver more lucidly.

Even as this happens, Sikkim needs to also address the falling proportion of farmers. It needs to recognize that enterprise is not developed to a level high enough to become a majority employer and agriculture deserves to be reinforced to provide the foundation for its economic plans. This is also important because projections for agriculture are ambitious in Sikkim with an intense Organic Mission underway here.

The setting is also perfect. Nature endows Sikkim as the land of bountiful, agriculture is a traditional occupation and organic farming is a well advised value addition for the farms here. What is however still a worrying reality is the lethargy that continues to define the Horticulture and Agriculture Departments and the inexcusable disinterest with which they engage with the farmers. And no, And no, enforcing the ban on non-organic produce does not count as engagement because engagement would require supporting organic farming (and there is a difference) which they have clearly not done a great job of.

Given the expansive presence of government in all sectors then, it is hardly surprising that agriculture, like any other private sector activity here, is yet to shine. Granted there have been flashes of excellence, but these are either individual achievements or targeted project interventions. The universal pursuit to grow more and grow relevant is not palpable yet. Not enough young are obviously taking to revamped traditional occupations and economies. The support mechanism has been instituted in most cases, but most are blowing bubbles because government officials continue to talk down to the stakeholders instead of deliberating with them to refine the State's policy.

That said, the problem is also not only in the support that the State provides its farmers or entrepreneurs; it is also in the attitude of the farmers and the entrepreneurs themselves. They are, let's accept it, simply not driven enough to realize that the market is thirsting for some local enterprise, but entrepreneurs refuse to display the motivation or the hunger to succeed. The State, if anything, is guilty of making the people lethargic. Locals, anywhere in the world, are rarely well disposed towards hard work. In Sikkim, the spoon-feeding by the State machinery makes hard work an even rarer commodity. The spoon however has rubbed thin and the sooner people realize this, the faster will Sikkim boom sustainably.

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# How parenthood continues to cost women more than men

ISABELLE SIN & GAIL PACHECO  
theconversation.com

New Zealand's Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, is about to become a first-time parent next month, and her partner, Clarke Gayford, will set an example by becoming a stay-at-home dad.

But Jacinda and Clarke's plan is still the exception rather than the rule. Mothers tend to take more time than fathers away from their careers when they have children, and they pay a significant price.

Our research, published today, shows how parenthood contributes to the gender pay gap. It penalises all women, particularly those who are on high incomes, and sets them on a trajectory of lower lifetime earnings relative to their male peers.

### GENDERED RESPONSE TO PARENTHOOD

In New Zealand, the gender pay gap has fallen over the past 20 years and it is now below 10%. Earlier research shows that a high proportion of the gender pay gap can't be explained by differences in observable information, such as age, education, occupation and industry, and nor is it due to differences in productivity.

New Zealand is similar to the rest of the world in that the gender pay gap is larger among parents than people without children, although the reasons for this are not entirely clear. Our research uses newly combined data to describe what happens to men's and women's employment and wages after they become parents.

It shows a strongly gendered labour response to parenthood: women dramatically decrease their employment and work fewer hours if they are employed, whereas men's employment and hours worked barely change. Mothers, particularly those with high incomes before parenthood, experience lower monthly incomes and hourly wages than before they had children.

These reductions are larger the longer they are away from paid work, and persist for at least ten years. Furthermore, high-income women who return to paid employment soon after becoming parents experience dramatically and persistently slower rates of income growth compared to before. They are therefore likely to have much lower lifetime earnings than similarly high-income men who become fathers.

Changes in employment and earnings for women after giving birth are likely to be related to social norms as well as the ability to breastfeed. We need to ask why so few men become the primary caregiver of their children?

### EMPLOYMENT GAPS

Our work shows that few men stop paid employment after having a child, but only three out of five first-time mothers do any paid work before their child's first birthday.



Women with higher incomes and those with higher qualifications before parenthood return more quickly to work after childbearing and maintain higher employment rates. Only 45% of mothers with no qualifications are employed ten years after their first baby, compared with over 60% of those with a school or higher qualification and nearly 70% of those with a bachelor's degree.

Women who became mothers when aged 25 to 34 have higher employment rates after having children than older women. The employment rate of those who became mothers when aged under 25 is lowest (only 34% in their child's second year). Before becoming mothers, Māori and Pacific women are far more likely not to be employed than Pākehā (New Zealander of European descent) women, but this gap narrows in percentage point terms after they become mothers. Pākehā mothers have a 59% employment rate in their child's tenth year compared with 41% for Pacific mothers and 45% for Māori mothers.

### MONTHLY WAGE EARNINGS

Monthly wage earnings are driven by a combination of hourly wages and monthly hours worked. They are important for a parent's ability to support his or her family and for lifetime earnings. Across every pre-parenthood income quartile, employed women experience decreases in monthly earnings when they have children, while men do not. The decreases are larger for women who return to work more slowly.

Time out of employment matters more for high-income women, but even those who return to work quickly experience much slower income growth after becoming parents. Prior to parenthood, these women were on a trajectory to be very high earners, and the dampening of their income growth helps explain why relatively few women appear in the highest income brackets. Their fast return to employment does, however, increase their earnings lead over their slower-returning colleagues.

In contrast, low-income women who are employed experience small monthly income decreases with parenthood and similar income growth

rates before and after having children. However, this isn't necessarily a positive sign, as it could merely indicate that they were underemployed before motherhood.

In terms of ethnic differences, monthly income for Māori, Pacific Peoples and Asian mothers in paid employment is slightly higher in the second year after their child's birth than in the second year before it. Over the same period, employed Pākehā mothers experience the largest decrease in monthly income.

### WORK HOURS AND WAGES

Employed mothers work a median of 27 hours, down from a pre-parenthood median of 40 hours. The longer

a woman spends out of work the fewer hours she works on average upon her return. Women who return to work in the first six months work a median of 30 hours, those who returned in months 7 to 12 work a median of 27 hours, and those who return after month 12 work a median of 22 hours. Men work a median of 41 hours both before and after becoming parents.

It isn't just a decrease in hours that contributes to the wage gap. Across our sample (which is not representative of the population and so differs from the official gender wage gap), women earn 6.8% lower hourly wages than men of the same age and education. The wage difference is 5.7% between men and women without children, but 12.5% between men and women who are parents.

When men become parents, their hourly wages aren't significantly affected. Women, on the other hand, pay a price. Their hourly wages decrease by 4.4% compared with the wages they could have expected without children. This wage penalty for motherhood varies substantially with how long the woman stays at home. The longer they stay at home, the bigger the drop in their hourly wages. Only some of this drop in pay can be explained by mothers moving to lower-paying industries and occupations.

Our research shows that parenthood exacerbates pre-parenthood gender wage gaps, with time out of work and reduced hours both playing major roles. We believe that we won't see equality in the labour market until it is just as common for a dad to stay home with the kids as it is for a mum. While many mothers may want to take time away from work to raise their children, this should be a personal (or family) choice and not the result of traditional gender roles.

*[Isabelle Sin is Lecturer in Economics and Econometrics, Victoria University; Fellow, Motu Economic and Public Policy Research, Victoria University of Wellington; Gail Pacheco is Professor of Economics, Director of the NZ Work Research Institute, Auckland University of Technology]*

# Viruses can cause global pandemics, but where did the first virus come from?

ARINJAY BANERJEE, KAREN MOSSMAN & VIKRAM MISRA  
theconversation.com

Viruses such as Ebola, influenza and Zika make headlines. They grab our attention with their potential to cause widespread disease and death.

But where did these viruses first come from?

Unlike bacteria, viruses aren't living organisms — they can't reproduce on their own. Instead, they hijack cells to multiply, spread and cause disease.

But what if it wasn't always this way?

Scientists studying a so-called giant virus called a Tupanvirus (named for the South American Guarani God of Thunder) found that it, unlike the viruses we encounter today, had an almost complete machinery to take care of itself.

This recent discovery has refuelled the debate over the origin of viruses.

### FROZEN VIRUSES

There is no physical fossil record of viruses like there is for the dinosaurs.

One way scientists detect viruses, and study their origins, is to look for their genetic material — molecules of DNA or RNA — in animal tissues and soil.

Even though the movies might have you believe otherwise, viral

genetic material has never been detected in fossilized plant leaves or in insects trapped in amber.

However, some ancient viruses have been detected in permafrost in Siberia, and there are hopes of discovering more as global warming continues to thaw ground that has been frozen for thousands of years. Until then, we remain limited in our ability to precisely reconstruct the origin of viruses.

### VIRUS EVOLUTION

Viruses are microscopic organisms that require a living cell, often called a host, to multiply. They largely consist of genetic material (either DNA or RNA) wrapped in a protein coat.

These DNA and RNA sequences may change over time, accumulating modifications to the genetic code that favour the survival of the virus. Scientists can look at these genetic sequences to estimate how different viruses are related and how they may have evolved.

These studies have shown us that viruses do not have a single origin; that is, they did not all arise from one single virus that changed and evolved into all the viruses we know today. Viruses probably have a number of independent origins, almost certainly at different times.

One assumption scientists make when considering the origin of vi-

ruses is that each co-evolved with its host. For example, the herpes virus that infects humans evolves over time, adapting so that it will continue to retain the ability to infect human cells.

If we consider that all life forms on Earth began in the ocean, then it's reasonable to believe that viruses evolved with their hosts in the seas. As these creatures moved onto land and evolved, viruses also evolved and gained the ability to infect terrestrial organisms.

Earlier this year, scientists discovered evidence that some viruses may be millions of years old and have been in existence since the first vertebrates existed. But this doesn't explain the origin of viruses per se.

### ORIGIN STORIES

One theory hypothesizes that viruses arose from circular DNA (also called a plasmid) that can replicate independently and move between cells, transferring genetic information from one organism to another. For example, some plasmids carry the genes responsible for antibiotic drug resistance. According to this theory, the plasmid escaped from cells and evolved in a way that allowed it to enter another cell to produce viruses.

Another theory suggests that viruses could have evolved from more complex free-living organisms, such

turn to 05





## RBI Gangtok to observe Financial Literacy Week from 04 Jun

### SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 31 MAY:

With the aim of furthering financial literacy and creating awareness on key financial topics, Reserve Bank of India will be observing Financial Literacy Week 2018 from 04-08 Jun with "Consumer Protection" as the theme. The inaugural event is scheduled to be held at RBI Gangtok on 04 Jun, a press release informs.

The focus during the Financial Literacy Week will be on four related themes namely Knowing your liability for unauthorized electronic banking transaction, Banking Ombudsman [an easy mechanism for complaints redressal], Good practices for a safe digital banking experience and Risk and return [the right mix].

It may be mentioned here, the RBI has, since 2017, earmarked one week in a year as the Financial Literacy Week in order to create awareness among the consumers of financial services about their rights, responsibilities, good practices and resolution mechanism in a fast changing digital financial landscape.

The activities during the week will involve display of financial literacy material in bank branches, ATMs and bank websites and conduct of financial literacy camps through the Financial Literacy Centres of banks, the release adds.

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## Viruses can cause global pandemics...

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as bacteria, or cells. A recent study showed that a protein called ARC that is important for memory in humans can form virus-like particles and transfer RNA between cells. Perhaps similar ancient proteins evolved to move from one organism to another.

And then there was that recent discovery of the giant Tupanvirus in a Brazilian soda lake. Lakes like this are very salty and have a high pH. They may mimic the conditions of aquatic environments on Earth billions of years ago.

Tupanvirus has a more complete set of protein-making machinery than any other known virus. Unlike other viruses, it's probably not as dependent on the cell it infects to replicate. This discovery has reignited interest in the theory that viruses arose from complex, free-living cells.

### WHICH CAME FIRST?

Both the theories above assume that cells existed before viruses, and that viruses potentially evolved in the presence of cells.

But there is yet another hypothesis that proposes that viruses existed first, even before cells. In a prehistoric world, viruses might have existed as self-sustaining entities, a sort of ancient machine that could probably reproduce its genetic material. Over time, these prehistoric viruses may have formed complex, organized structures that eventually evolved into cell-like entities.

For the time being, these are only theories. The technology and resources we have today cannot confidently test these theories and identify the most plausible explanation for the origin of viruses.

An alternative — yet seemingly impossible — strategy would be to isolate or identify viruses in their primitive forms on other planets such as Mars. Staying on Earth seems like a more plausible approach.

The ongoing discovery of new viruses, like Tupanvirus or a 30,000-year-old relative of giant DNA viruses (Pithovirus), may allow us to piece together the puzzle of their origins.

[Arinjay Banerjee is PhD Candidate in Veterinary Microbiology, University of Saskatchewan; Karen Mossman is Professor and AVP Research, McMaster University; Vikram Misra is Professor of Veterinary Microbiology, University of Saskatchewan]

# Mamata advises development boards to use funds properly

### SUMMIT REPORT

KALIMPONG, 31 MAY:

In an administrative review meeting held on 30 May of two districts [Darjeeling and Kalimpong] along with GTA and other development boards, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee advised the development boards to put the funds provided by the government to good use.

She laid emphasis on addressing the problems of water, roads, sewage and solid waste management in the hills.

She also expressed unhappiness over the development boards' execution of various schemes being implemented in the hills.

The West Bengal CM directed the authorities to distribute government funds in two phases- first as the advance money



and second after review of the work done under the scheme.

"The poor must get the advantage," she said.

She further stressed on promoting tourism in the Hills and expressed her dissatisfaction over the delay in the completion of different projects in the Darjeeling Hills by the Tourism department.

"The projects are get-

ting delayed for no reason," she said and questioned whether those agencies responsible for the projects were working properly.

She directed the State Tourism secretary, Atri Bhattacharyya, who is also the Home Secretary to employ one nodal officer for monitoring the projects.

Ms Banerjee stressed on home stays while

highlighting the prospect of tourism in the Darjeeling Hills.

Stressing on the water problems in the Hills, District Magistrate, Dr Viswanath informed that the CM had asked the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to prepare a Detailed Project Report on water projects in the Hills.

The CM is scheduled

to meet CII officials next week in Kolkata to curb the water problems in the Hills, he said.

Ms Banerjee further directed the DM, GTA, municipality and the PHE to call a meeting and discuss various water problems in the area and its solutions.

She also asked the Tourism Department to work with Mirik Municipality for de-filtration of the Mirik Lake, construction of a garden and pathways in and around the lake.

MLAs from the Hills raised issues like the introduction of Nepali language in West Bengal Civil Services [WBSCS] and West Bengal School Service Commission [WBSSC], 'slow construction' of the upcoming medical college in Kurseong and other problems in the Hills.

## Samajik Adhikarita Shivar conducted in Gangtok



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it has impacted the life of senior citizens throughout the country since its launch on 01 Apr 2017. He said that the aim of the scheme is to lessen the dependency of senior citizens and enable them to do their own tasks by overcoming their physical limitations.

Mr Gurjar also congratulated the State Government for great implementation of schemes in the State and also highlighted the many Central schemes which have been formulated for the overall upliftment of the society. He also urged the East District Administration to submit a list of children's names who are in need of cochlear implant and assured that the Central Government will do the needful in procurement of the implants.

State SJ&EWD Minister, Ms Rai, in her address talked about the necessity of having an environment which is friendly for integrating people with disabilities in mainstream society. She also highlighted the many schemes which have been implemented by the State Government by giving equal opportunities to people with disabilities and making them a part of the social mainstream.

The Minister briefed the gathering about various schemes like the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016, Sikkim Grant of Award for Marriages with disabled persons, various facilities like easy availability of loans, etc and talked about the various Special Schools and Spastic Societies in the state. She informed that the department is providing various types of welfare services to the differently abled persons with an aim to raise their social,

educational and mental well-being to cope with the challenges in their daily lives.

Free aids/appliances, scholarships for education and Special Schools for differently abled were some of the programmes highlighted by the Minister.

Joint Secretary, Ministry, Mr Meena, in his address spoke about the RVY scheme and called for heightened awareness in society about the special requirements of persons with disabilities.

The opening address was delivered by DC East, Kapil Meena, who briefed about the programme and talked about the scheme's implementation through the sole implementing agency, Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation [ALIMCO].

"Out of a total of 794 beneficiaries comprising of differently abled persons and senior citizens in the East district, 210 beneficiaries will receive the appliances today and the rest will be distributed by the Block Development Officers at Block level. 1935 numbers of Aids and Assisted living devices worth Rs 54.83 lakh will be distributed today," the DC informed.

He also added that the distributed materials included various kinds of assisted living devices namely that of walking stick, elbow crutches, walker crutches, wheel chairs, hearing devices and spectacles.

On stage token distribution of assisted living devices were also handed over to the beneficiaries by the Union Minister.

Earlier, the welcome song was presented by students of Special School for Hearing Impaired and a token of appreciation was handed over to the students by the Union Minister.

## Riverfront cleanliness drive from Indira bye pass to Arithang

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 MAY:

Forest Department officials, eco-clubs of Deorali Girls Senior Secondary School and Arithang Junior High Club along with their green teachers participated in a cleanup drive from Indira Bye Pass to Arithang in the capital today as part of the riverfront cleanliness drive organized by Forest Department in collaboration with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, a press release informs.

The drive coordinated by Divisional Forest Officer [Territorial East Division] and supported



by ENVIS, Sikkim was also participated by CISF Unit Teesta TDL-III

personnel of Rambi Bazaar in Darjeeling, West Bengal and members

## Mission Jyoti launched in Gyalshing



GYALSHING, 31 MAY [IPR]:

'Mission Jyoti: Flame of Fearlessness', an awareness campaign on Child Rights, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences, Suicide and Drug Abuse, was launched today at the Community Hall in Gyalshing in a function organized by West District Police Department.

In her address, Area MLA, Chandra Maya Subba, who attended the event as chief guest, said that society should be free from all kinds of abuse. She congratulated

students of different schools who participated in debate and poster making competitions organized as a part of the campaign. She urged them to be an example to the society and direct people towards good path as they are responsible for molding the future generation of the State.

The programme was also attended by District Collector, West, Dr AB Karki, and District & Sessions Judge, Suraj Chettri, as guests of honour.

Dr Karki appreciated the audi-

ences' enthusiasm and requested them to be active and aware on issues relevant to child abuse and drug abuse.

Superintendent of Police, West, Tenzing Loden Lepcha, gave presentations on Child Sexual Abuse, Substance abuse and Mental Health.

The participating schools were provided with Mission Jyoti Kits which included complaint boxes, booklets and pen drives containing presentation of Mission Jyoti and Komal Videos on Child Abuse.

# Hamro Sikkim Party launched in Daramdin

Contd from pg01

that the football talents can be nurtured. The government did not give me land but the government readily gives land to corporates. The CM has sold all the land and rivers of Sikkim in the name of development which went only to a few who were close to him," said Bhaichung.

Questioning Chamling's claim that he has provided fruits of development to all corners of the state, the former India captain alleged that essential services like roads, water and electricity were not available to the people, particularly those living in rural areas.

"There are 30-32 hydel power projects operational in

Sikkim even as the chief minister claims that the state sells electricity to foreign countries like Bangladesh.

Unfortunately, the Sikkimese people do not get uninterrupted power supply," the Hamro Sikkim Party leader said.

"When Hamro Sikkim Party comes to power we will ensure 24 hours continuous power supply, drinking water and good roads. The CM says that Sikkim is supplying power to Delhi and even wants to sell abroad but we say first ensure proper power supply within Sikkim," said Bhaichung.

Speaking on corruption allegations against the CM, Bhaichung said, "If he is clean then he should allow CBI to probe

into the corruption allegations. Because of the CBI fear, the Chief Minister cannot strongly place Sikkim issues with the Centre and is always on the backfoot as he is tainted. He cannot deliver the demands of the Sikkim pending before the Centre like tribal status for the Nepali communities and Assembly seats for the Limboo and Tamang communities."

He further accused the SDF government of fragmenting Sikkimese society in the name of caste and religion.

"He talks of supporting Gorkhaland but never asked his MPs to place a bill in the Parliament. Now he has reached an agreement with West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee not to support the

Gorkhaland demand or Bimal Gurung," alleged the former footballer.

"We together with the youth will make a new Sikkim and prepare the future of Sikkim. We want to make leaders from every section of the society. Our party's constitution does not allow any member to become MLA or CM for more than two terms. This means that new generation will get opportunities to become MLA or CM," said Bhaichung.

"This party is not RB Subba or Bhaichung's party, it is the people's party. We had worked hard to make SDF win the elections in 1994 but in these 25 years, the SDF has forgotten its principles. The SDF is not in favour of the poor

people of Sikkim. West Sikkim was where SDF was born and now time has come to uproot it from West Sikkim. We will start from ward-level," said RB Subba.

Earlier, RB Subba and Bhaichung Bhutia along with others unfurled the party flag following puja. They also released a newsletter Bhoomiputra which is the mouthpiece of the party.

The welcome address was made by Prem Karki which was followed by a short speech from Indra Hang Limboo, Tara Shrestha, Dr Bina Basnett, Anu Bhattarai and Tirtha Sharma who spoke about the ideals and programmes of Hamro Sikkim Party and why they became a part of Hamro Sikkim Party.



# India seek winning start in Intercontinental Cup against Chinese Taipei

**MUMBAI, MAY 31 (PTI):** A fairly impressive AFC Asian Cup qualifying campaign being the confidence-booster, the Indian football team begins its preparations for the continental showpiece by taking on Chinese Taipei in the lung-opener of the Intercontinental Cup here tomorrow.

The four-nation tournament, with teams from three separate continents -- Chinese Taipei, Kenya and New Zealand -- apart from the hosts, was conceptualised to test the Indian team ahead of the Asian Cup to be held in the four cities of the UAE from January 5 and February 1.

The Stephen Constantine-coached side has come into this tournament after a 13-match unbeaten streak from June 2016 to March this year. The team booked a



berth for the Asian Cup in October 2017 with two matches left to be played.

A 1-2 loss to Kyrgyzstan in the last match of the Asian Cup qualifying campaign in Bishkek in March snapped the 13-match streak but that

match has been rendered inconsequential by then.

India will enter tomorrow's match with a psychological advantage as they are the highest ranked side at 97th, besides also having an impressive head-to-head record against the

East Asians. India have beaten Chinese Taipei thrice while drawing once in the past decade.

Tomorrow's match at Mumbai Football Arena at Andheri will also see star striker Sunil Chhetri inch towards the milestone

of 100 matches for the country. He will be playing his 99th international match in India jersey.

A winning start in the tournament would be important in terms of reaching the final to be held on June 10. But Constantine has said that no team in this tournament will be an easy opponent.

"I am not one for records as teams and players change all the time and they (Chinese Taipei) will be coming to try and beat us. Under Gray White, they have improved and will be very organised. We will show them the respect they deserve, but of course winning the game is our aim," he said.

Chhetri said the "desire to win among the players is 100 per cent".

"I am fully fit and we are ready for the tournament. It was mixed bag

when we first arrived for the camp. There were players some of whom had not played for almost a month while there were some who joined the camp straight from an AFC Cup match. I love playing for India and will give my best what I can," he said.

Chhetri, who has been in roaring form for some time now, will have the likes Balwant Singh and Jeje Lalpekhlua for company upfront.

The likes of Halicharan Narzari, Udanta Singh, Bikesh Jaiu and Mohammed Rafique will be vying for spots in the midfield.

And, the experienced Sandesh Jhinghan, Pritam Kotal, Souvik Chakrabarti and Anas Edathodika will be among the key men in the defence while Gurpreet Singh Sandhu is expected to man the Indian goal.



## Japan coach Nishino turns to old guard for World Cup

**TOKYO, MAY 31 (AFP):** Japan will hope star power can reverse their flagging fortunes after new coach Akira Nishino named his 23-man squad for the World Cup in Russia on Thursday.

The former JFA technical director, who took charge after Vahid Halilhodzic was fired last month, signalled his intentions by turning to his old guard, including talismanic forward Keisuke Honda and playmaker Shinji Kagawa.

Japan, beaten 2-0 by Ghana on Wednesday in Nishino's first game

as coach, face Colombia, Senegal and Poland in Group H at the World Cup.

Squad (teams Japanese unless stated otherwise): Goalkeepers -- Eiji Kawashima (Metz/FRA), Masaaki Higashiguchi (Gamba Osaka), Kosuke Nakamura (Kashiwa).

Defenders -- Yuto Nagatomo (Galatasaray/TUR), Tomoaki Makino (Urawa), Wataru Endo (Urawa), Maya Yoshida (Southampton/ENG), Hiroki Sakai (Marseille/FRA), Gotoku Sakai (Hamburg/GER), Gen Shoji, Naomichi Ueda (Kashima).

## Sardar, Lakra return to Indian side for Champions Trophy

**NEW DELHI, MAY 31 (PTI):** Former captain Sardar Singh was today brought back to bolster the Indian hockey team's mid-field while Birendra Lakra was included to shore up the defence line-up for the upcoming Champions Trophy, beginning on June 23 in Breda, The Netherlands.

Hockey India announced the 18-man squad for the last edition of the prestigious event and made a lot of changes to the side, to be led by goalkeeper P R Sreejesh.

Sardar was not part of the Indian team, which had a disappointing outing at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. He was expected to reclaim his place in the side after being included in the national training camp in Bengaluru.

Also making a comeback to the side is Lakra, who like Sardar, was not part of the CWG squad.

The selectors have dropped defenders Rupinder, Kothajit Singh and Gurinder Singh while Jaramanpreet Singh and Surendra Kumar were included.

Among the strikers, the axe fell on Lalit Upadhyay and Gurjant Singh as Ramandeep Singh earned his place back.

# Pakistan's Amir aims for win of a lifetime against England

**LONDON, MAY 31 (AFP):** Mohammad Amir has had some of the greatest and undoubtedly the worst days of his career in England -- sometimes during the very same match.

But fresh from helping bowl Pakistan to a crushing nine-wicket win over England in the first Test at Lord's, the left-arm paceman hopes he can enjoy the "best memory" with a series win in the second and final Test at Headingley, starting Friday.

Amir, who burst on the world scene as a teenager, got his name on the Lord's honours board with a six-wicket haul against England in 2010.

But in the same game at the 'home of cricket', Amir was caught up in a spot-fixing scandal at the which led to a jail sentence and a five-year ban.

That same season, Amir took three wickets for 20 runs in 11 overs at Headingley during a sensational bowling display as an Australia side featuring Ricky Ponting, Michael Clarke, Michael Hussey and Steven Smith were dismissed for just 88 in the first innings of the second 'neutral' Test.

The match, which Pakistan eventually won by three wickets, saw Amir stake a claim to 'The Ball of the 21st Century' when an all-but-unplayable delivery that pitched on the middle-and-leg stump of Mitchell Johnson seamed away late to clip the top of the left-hander's off-stump.

Amir, who helped Essex win the English County Championship last season when he also



starred in Pakistan's outstanding one-day Champions Trophy final victory over arch-rivals India at The Oval, has rarely hit those Headingley heights in Test cricket since his return to the international stage two years ago.

Amir, however, took five wickets -- including four for 36 in the second innings -- as Pakistan outclassed England in all areas to win inside four days at Lord's on Sunday.

"It's a big achievement winning in Test cricket in England against England at home," Amir said on Wednesday.

"If we win the series I think it will be the best memory of my life," the swing bowler added.

Pakistan will be forced into a change, with Fakhar Zaman set to replace Babar Azam after his fellow batsman suffered a bro-

ken arm facing all-rounder Ben Stokes at Lord's.

England have recalled opener Keaton Jennings in place of the dropped Mark Stoneman, who managed just 13 runs in total at Lord's.

"You will only get judged on the amount of runs you score," said Jennings, one of Alastair Cook's 12 opening partners in the six years since Andrew Strauss's retirement.

England made a late addition to their squad, with uncapped left-arm seamer Sam Curran called up Wednesday after Stokes suffered a hamstring strain.

Regardless of Stokes's fitness, England may recall all-rounder Chris Woakes, if only to bolster their fallible batting, in place of fast bowler Mark

Wood. Despite their lamentable Lord's showing, James Anderson insisted England could bounce back by squaring the series at the Yorkshire home ground of captain Joe Root.

The team received a barrage of criticism after Lord's but Anderson, England's all-time leading Test wicket-taker, said: "The outside noise is always there, and it's a bit louder when you perform badly.

"We'll try to block out the noise -- from whoever is shouting out," he added, suggesting a "bit of a luck" may be all England need to improve on a run of six defeats in their last eight Tests.

If England are seeking inspiration, they could look to the Headingley example of the West Indies.

Last year, the tourists suffered a humiliating innings and 209-run defeat by England in the first Test at Edgbaston, only to enjoy a five-wicket victory in the second Test as Shai Hope became the first batsman to score hundreds in both innings of a first-class match at Headingley.

England, though, might settle for one century by any member of their faltering top order, let alone two, right now.



## CWG gold medallist Sanjita Chanu fails dope test

**NEW DELHI, MAY 31 (PTI):** Two-time Commonwealth Games champion weightlifter Sanjita Chanu has tested positive for a banned anabolic steroid and she has been provisionally suspended, the international federation said today.

International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) said on its website that Sanjita, who had won a gold in the women's 53kg category in the recent Gold Coast CWG, has tested positive for testosterone.

"IWF reports that the sample of Ms. Sanjita Chanu Khumukcham (IND) has returned an Adverse Analytical Finding for Testosterone (S1.1 Anabolic Agents). As a consequence, the Athlete is provisionally suspended in view of a potential

anti-doping rule violation," IWF stated.

"In any case where it is determined that the Athlete did not commit an anti-doping rule violation, the relevant decision will also be published," the IWF added.

The IWF did not give details, such as the dates, of the dope test sample collection, saying "it will not make any further comments on the case until it is closed".

Sanjita had taken part in the 53kg class in the World Championship in Anaheim (US) in November last year, finishing 13th with a total lift of 177kg.

She lifted a total of 192kg top win the gold in 53kg in Gold Coast. She had also won a gold in the 48kg category in the 2014 CWG in Glasgow.

# I want to write a good detective novel: Ruskin Bond

**ZAFRI MUDASSER NOFIL**

**NEW DELHI, MAY 31 (PTI):** Ever since he came out with his first book at the age of 17, Ruskin Bond has uncountable works to his name, be it short stories, novels, poems and essays and the octogenarian author now wishes to try his hand at something he hasn't done till now - a detective novel.

Bond says he read a lot of Agatha Christie and detective stories of other writers since the age of 10.

"Occasionally I have written about stories related to crime but I have never attempted a traditional detective story. So I want to write a true detective story," he told PTI in an interview.

Bond has written a number of novels, essays, poems and children's books. He has also written over 500 short stories and articles that have appeared in magazines and anthologies.

On his 84th birthday on May 19, he came out with his latest book "Ranji and



the Music Maker". Published by Penguin Random House imprint Puffin India, the book is about young Ranji who once in the middle of his languid holiday, stumbles upon assorted musical instruments in the storeroom - first a shrill flute, then a

blaring little trumpet and, finally, a too-big drum that may have once sounded a battle march.

Ranji stages impromptu concerts down the road, not sparing his neighbours, the cats around his porch, or the peace-loving

inhabitants of the zoo.

"The book was set off, inspired you might say, by the photograph of a small boy playing his flute for a kitten sent to me by a reader in Sri Lanka. I imagined the little boy as Ranji," says Bond.

On his writing journey, Bond says, "When I ventured into writing at the age of 17, I wanted to be a good and successful writer. I just wanted to write good stuff - poems, prose, stories, essays, everything."

Reading is also very important for Bond. "My first book was a big one of nursery rhymes." As a boy he wanted to emulate his favourite authors and be one of them himself.

On children's books of today, he says he is happy that more and more publishers are now coming out with books for kids.

"Now you have books for different ages. There are good illustrators too," he says.

On graphic novels, he says he doesn't get absorbed into them. "I liked the old

comic books, especially the funny ones like Popeye and Beetle Bailey."

Bond also says he is a good typist but he stopped using the typewriter 10 years ago as he had some stiffness in his hand.

"My publishers now have the task to type my manuscripts and send me the printouts. I still prefer a pen, a decent and simple ball point pen," he says.

Bond was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, and grew up in Jamnagar, Dehradun, New Delhi and Shimla. As a young man, he spent four years in the Channel Islands and London. He returned to India in 1955. He now lives in Landour, Mussoorie, with his adopted family.

At the age of eight, Bond escaped his jail-like boarding school in the hills and went on to live with his father in Delhi. His time in the capital is filled with books, visits to the cinema, music, and walks and conversations with his father a dream life for a curious and wildly imaginative boy, which turns tragic all too soon.



# Lanka Prez Sirisena accuses PM of shielding Rajapaksa, others in graft probe

**COLOMBO, MAY 31 (PTI):** Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has accused Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe of shielding former strongman Mahinda Rajapaksa, his family and supporters in corruption cases, in a fresh jolt to their ruling coalition.

The unity government of Sirisena's Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP) was plagued with crisis ever since former President Rajapaksa's new party pulled off a stunning victory in February's local elections seen as a referendum on the ruling alliance.

A new turn of events in the continued political crisis came yesterday when Sirisena addressed a public gathering to commemorate a leading Buddhist monk who was instrumental in the then Opposition's victory over Rajapaksa in 2015.

Referring to a speech by the monk at the event where he



was faulted for accepting the leadership of the SLFP after becoming the president, Sirisena said it was due to him that Wickremesinghe became premier and the current government was able to stay afloat.

"I made Ranil Wickremesinghe the prime minister with just 47 seats when Mahinda Rajapaksa had two thirds of the seats," Sirisena blasted.

"There are people who are trying to make out that it is I who obstructed the prosecu-

tion of corrupt members of the former regime. If you want to know the truth, ask the relatives of Wasim Thajudeen and their lawyers," he said of Thajudeen, a rugby player who was killed in 2012 and the Rajapaksa blamed for it.

Sirisena suggested that Wickremesinghe had "cut deals" with the Rajapaksa and was protecting the corrupt.

Several members of UNP led by Wickremesinghe have been accused in central bank

Treasury bond scam of 2015.

The SLFP and the UNP had formed a national unity government after 2015 elections but both parties have differed on several issues.

Sirisena said he had telephoned the Air Force chief yesterday to ask who ordered the release of helicopters for former president Rajapaksa to travel to his southern province home soon after his defeat in January 2015.

"I was told that the then Air Force commander had been told that I wanted helicopters given, but they didn't even inform me about such a thing," he said, suggesting it was done by Wickremesinghe.

Sirisena said he was also unaware of the 100-day reform programme unveiled by the UNP-led government soon after his election. During the programme, the government introduced the 19th amendment to the constitution which pruned presidential powers to

dissolve parliament.

Sirisena said his SLFP support was the key factor in adopting the 19th amendment.

In response, UNP's Kabir Hashim said his party was taking the ownership of the programme. "The 100-day programme was something all parties had signed up for. We were able to introduce far reaching democratic reforms by implementing the 100-day programme," Hashim said.

Sirisena in March had replaced Wickremesinghe as the law and order minister amidst fresh violence between majority Sinhala Buddhists and minority Muslims in the Kandy district despite imposition of nationwide emergency.

Later in the month, Sirisena had further reduced the responsibilities Wickremesinghe, while suspending Parliament for about a month in April in the backdrop of the ongoing political turmoil in the country.



## China welcomes India, Pakistan agreement to observe 2003 ceasefire

**BEIJING, MAY 31 (PTI):** China today welcomed India and Pakistan's decision to observe the 2003 ceasefire agreement to stop cross-border firing along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir and expressed hope that the two countries will properly resolve their differences.

The Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan on May 29, during a conversation over the hotline, agreed to fully implement the ceasefire pact of 2003 in "letter and spirit" forthwith to stop cross border firings in Jammu and Kashmir.

"We commend the positive actions taken by both sides," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told media briefing here.

"We hope that both sides could properly resolve their disputes through dialogue and consultation and maintain regional peace and stability," she said.

The LoC has been witnessing increasing hostilities in the last few months.

According to Defence sources in New Delhi, a total of 908 incidents of ceasefire violations by Pakistan Army were reported till May 29 in the current year as against 860 incidents during 2017.

Indian DGMO Lt Gen Anil Chauhan and Pakistan's Maj Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza had reviewed the prevailing situation along the LoC and the International Border in J and K, following which both sides agreed to fully implement the 15-year-old ceasefire understanding.



Senior North Korean official Kim Yong Chol and US secretary of state Mike Pompeo have had a "good" meeting in New York. The rare visit comes ahead of the potential summit between the leaders of the two countries next month. The White House has said the on-off meeting on 12 June in Singapore is "expected" to take place still, despite some jitters.

## Moscow invites N Korea's Kim to visit

**MOSCOW, MAY 31 (AFP):** Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Pyongyang today invited North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to visit Russia, Moscow said, during the first meeting between the head of the reclusive state and a Russian official.

"Come to Russia, we'll be very happy to see you," Lavrov told Kim in remarks released by the Russian foreign ministry.

Lavrov passed greetings from Russian President Vladimir Putin to Kim, saying he wished him success in the "major



undertakings that have been initiated on the Korean peninsula", the ministry said in a statement.

Lavrov was the first Russian official to be received by Kim, Rus-

sian news agencies said. "It was the first official meeting with him face to face," TASS quoted a source in the minister's delegation as saying.

The Russian foreign

ministry also released pictures of the two men shaking hands and smiling.

Russia's top diplomat arrived in Pyongyang earlier today, ahead of a landmark summit between Kim and US President Donald Trump. His visit comes amid a flurry of diplomatic activity to organise next month's summit, with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also meeting Kim's right-hand man Kim Yong Chol in New York late yesterday.

Last month North Korea's foreign minister Ri Yong Ho held rare talks

with Lavrov in Moscow as Pyongyang moves to improve strained ties with global powers.

Washington wants North Korea to quickly give up all its nuclear weapons in a verifiable way in return for sanctions and economic relief.

Pyongyang has a different view of denuclearisation and remains deeply worried that abandoning its deterrent would leave it vulnerable, especially while the United States maintains a robust military presence in South Korea.

## Pompeo, North Korea Vice Chairman hold talks in US

**WASHINGTON, MAY 31 (PTI):** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and senior North Korean official Kim Yong Chol have held talks in New York, ahead of a potential historic summit between President Donald Trump and Chairman Kim Jong-un in Singapore on June 12.

The meeting between North Korea's ex-spy chief with America's top diplomat came amid efforts to revive the prospects of the summit between Trump and Kim.

Kim Yong Chol is the most senior North Korean official to visit the US in 18 years.

Pompeo said in a tweet: "Good working dinner with Kim Yong Chol in New York tonight. Steak, corn, and cheese on the menu".

The meeting was said to have lasted around 90 minutes.

The high-ranking North Korean official, who will meet Pompeo again on Thursday, arrived at New York from Beijing.

"Pompeo has arrived in New York for meetings with North Korea Vice Chairman Kim Yong Chol as we continue to actively

prepare for Trump's potential summit with North Korean Chairman Kim in Singapore and emphasise our commitment to the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," State Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert said.

White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said the administration is preparing and expects the summit to take place on June 12 in Singapore.

"And we'll be ready, if it does, on June 12. And if it's not, then we'll be ready if it takes place on July 12," she told reporters at her daily news conference.

The United States, she said, is continuing to prepare for the meeting between the President and the North Korean leader.

Trump last week called off the summit after North Korea expressed anger at comments by American officials. The President, however, later said that he was reconsidering his decision.

"The advance team, led by Deputy Chief of Staff Joe Hagin, met with the North Kore-

an team in Singapore, and again expect to do so tomorrow. We want to thank our strategic partner in Singapore, who's been incredibly generous in agreeing to host the summit. And the President is very appreciative of Prime Minister Lee (Hsien Loong) for all of their efforts," Sanders said.

At the demilitarized zone (DMZ), the US delegation, led by Ambassador Sung Kim, met with North Korean officials as well, she said.

"Their talks will continue. So far, the readout from these meetings has been positive, and we'll continue to move forward in them," the White House press secretary said.

The conversation, she said, is going to be focused on denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

"That's what these ongoing conversations taking place now will be centred on, as well as the summit that would take place in Singapore. As long as that is part of the discussion, we're going to continue to shoot for June 12 and expect to do that," Sanders said.

## SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES

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1st Prize Rs.11 Lakhs/- 90A 6270

2nd Prize Rs.9000/-

5012 5804 9460 9674 9758

3rd Prize Rs.3,000/-

4112 4561 4631 5091 5167 5859 6589 6615 8890 9770

4th Prize Rs.1000/-

1426 1459 1890 4736 5613 6083 6350 7471 8184 8406

5th Prize Rs.500/-

1363 1734 5295 5663 5731 6820 6941 7906 8163 8949

6th Prize Rs.100/-

0031 0041 0073 0082 0086 0090 0159 0217 0219 0302

0310 0336 0351 0364 0371 0462 0467 0490 0518 0524

0525 0538 0559 0562 0570 0574 0585 0600 0603 0622

0638 0641 0658 0670 0678 0736 0805 0923 0924 0927

0962 0982 0984 1023 1042 1043 1054 1075 1088 1104

1114 1125 1129 1156 1212 1223 1241 1248 1254 1356

1381 1404 1417 1441 1457 1461 1475 1482 1488 1490

1499 1510 1521 1534 1575 1632 1643 1673 1677 1714

1738 1761 1762 1806 1820 1822 1838 1846 1903 1908

1919 1941 1965 1966 2001 2004 2179 2185 2188 2205

2232 2248 2254 2323 2371 2381 2406 2432 2451 2452

2509 2540 2593 2622 2635 2651 2748 2805 2806 2808

2812 2825 2848 2855 2902 2908 2914 2919 2932 2967

2974 2979 2987 3075 3076 3113 3127 3130 3131 3141

3160 3177 3199 3212 3237 3262 3272 3285 3297 3344

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3641 3645 3675 3702 3745 3773 3776 3879 3885 3899

3909 3918 3930 3999 4000 4011 4019 4053 4062 4068

4107 4123 4131 4149 4151 4158 4167 4195 4202 4227

4231 4299 4252 4282 4308 4326 4364 4370 4378 4384

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5636 5689 5709 5729 5747 5762 5771 5789 5796 5798

5816 5842 5849 5851 5864 5903 5925 5940 5958 5965

5968 5983 5988 5998 6026 6062 6078 6088 6096 6130

6164 6191 6196 6220 6222 6230 6293 6366 6369 6383

6430 6431 6433 6482 6495 6557 6562 6592 6594 6603

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6809 7024 6836 6853 6890 6915 6920 6926 6969 6978

6998 7833 7030 7050 7053 7073 7084 7085 7105 7119

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7868 7930 7945 7951 7973 7984 8026 8041 8048 8063

8064 8128 8140 8165 8170 8213 8240 8252 8265 8268

8279 8285 8335 8344 8356 8372 8397 8409 8435 8454

8471 8478 8482 8498 8510 8525 8537 8609 8613 8629

8650 8717 8736 8746 8771 8796 8806 8812 8823 8844

8896 8904 8918 8919 8927 8929 8944 8956 8976 8981

8993 8998 9010 9030 9034 9037 9086 9088 9096 9111

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KINDLY CHECK THE RESULT WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE

## Anthyesthi Kriya



The 12th day Anthyesthi Kriya of our beloved mother **Late Dhan Maya Pradhan** who left for her heavenly abode on Tuesday the 22nd of May 2018 falls on **Saturday the 2nd of June 2018**. All relatives, friends

and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at **Melli Dara, Near School, South Sikkim**.

*Prem Bahadur Pradhan and Shiva Kumar Pradhan (Sons), Kumari Pradhan and Indra Kumari Gurung (Daughters-in-law), Kanti Pradhan and Shanti Pradhan (Daughters), Tilak Bahadur Pradhan (Husband)*  
Contact: 9832330292, 7584935084

## KUTSHE SHEGU



The 49th Day Kutshe Shegu of our beloved father **late Kaching Bhutia (Dorjee Lohbay of Kabi Gumpa)** who left for his heavenly abode on 18th April 2018 falls on **6th June 2018**. All friends, well wishers and relatives are requested to join us in offering prayer for the departed soul at our resident at **Kabi near BAC in North Sikkim**. We would also like to thank all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement and regret our inability to thank them individually.

*Mr. Pintso Tashi Dosepa (son) 7550801904, Mrs. Namgay Bhutia (wife), Mrs. Ongmu Tongden Lepcha (Daughter) 9434870338, Mrs. Hissay Bhutia (Daughter-in-law) 7076335196, Mrs. Laden Bhutia (Daughter) 8967035867, Mrs. Dechen Dolkar Lachungpa (Daughter) 8768926989*



# BTS GOES TO NO. 1 ON BILLBOARD'S ALBUM CHART, A FIRST FOR K-POP

K-Pop is having a moment — a big one. Billboard has announced that Korean pop music boy band BTS will have the No. 1 album in the U.S. this week, a first for any K-pop artist or group.

For the as-of-yet uninitiated, BTS ("bangtan sonyeondan") now stands for their pick: Bangtan Boys, Bullet-proof Boy Scouts or the more English-friendly Beyond The Scene.

And to give you a sense of their worldwide audience, BTS was named the most Tweeted-about celebrities of 2017; the group's tweets were liked or retweeted half a billion times — reportedly more than those of either President Trump or Justin Bieber, or even Trump and Bieber combined.

The pump has been primed for BTS' mainstream success. Earlier this month, the band performed at the Billboard Music Awards — another first for a K-pop act



— performing its new single "Fake Love," seven young men in a tightly choreographed swirl — each taking turns to pose and preen for the crowd. People wrote of the Billboard performance, "BTS Brings Screaming Fans to Tears!" BTS also had a spot on Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve a few months ago and appeared on the American Music Awards last November.

Now, you might be thinking: "Wasn't there another

big Korean pop song a few years ago?" You're thinking of Psy's once-inescapable novelty hit, "Gangnam Style." But Psy didn't have an album chart in the U.S.

What Psy arguably did do, though, was to offer a proof of concept: It was evidence to the American music industry that U.S. listeners would be open to songs sung in Korean, with a very Korean musical aesthetic and point of view. It helped to open the doors for BTS, and K-pop more gener-

ally, in the U.S.

With those doors now wide open, could other K-pop bands be far behind? It's been a while since the British Invasion — maybe it's time for a Korean Invasion. Almost undoubtedly, other boy bands like the veteran Korean-Chinese group EXO, and all-female counterparts like Blackpink and the Korean-Japanese-Taiwanese group Twice, could be considered front-runners for following in BTS' footsteps.

# JOHN CENA REPLACING SYLVESTER STALLONE IN ACTION FLICK EX-BAGHDAD

WE wrestler turned actor John Cena is reportedly set to replace Sylvester Stallone in new action flick Ex-Baghdad, co-starring Jackie Chan. At one time, the idea of Cena replacing a legend like Stallone in any role would have seemed crazy, but at this point, the former 16-time WWE champion has become a full-on hot commodity in Hollywood. Now 41-years-old, Cena would be the first to admit that his time as an active pro wrestler is winding down, but the opposite is true for his acting prospects.

Cena first began making waves in Hollywood via a small role in Amy Schumer's 2015 comedy Trainwreck, which illustrated the muscle-bound grappler's comedic chops. Shortly after, Cena turned up in the Will Ferrell/Mark Wahlberg comedy Daddy's Home, and the Tina Fey/Amy Poehler comedy Sisters. In 2017, Cena took a more dramatic part in Doug Liman's war drama The Wall, opposite Aaron Taylor-Johnson. He also appeared in sequel Daddy's Home 2, and voiced the titular bull in the animated film Ferdinand.

This year, Cena has already starred in the comedy Blockers, and is set to play a major role in the Transformers spinoff Bumblebee. Now, That Hashtag Show reports



that the man whose wrestling persona is known for never giving up has landed a leading role in the action thriller Ex-Baghdad, starring opposite action legend Jackie Chan. Announced last year, Ex-Baghdad was supposed to mark the first time that Stallone and Chan had ever shared the big screen, but alas, that won't be the case, as Sly is out and John is in.

Ex-Baghdad's plot centers on a Chinese-run oil refinery located in Mosul, Iraq that gets attacked and overtaken. The owners of the refinery then enlist Jackie Luo - a private security contractor with an organization called the Snow Leopard Commando Unit, played by Chan - to come in and rescue their trapped employees. However, these particular attackers are less interested in wreaking havoc and more interested in stealing a fortune in oil. To stop this nefarious plot,

Luo teams up with former American marine Chris Saatchi (formerly Stallone, now Cena), and sets out to stop the bad guys from reaching their goal.

While it certainly would have been interesting to finally see Stallone and Chan kick ass together onscreen, the reasons for Stallone's exit have yet to be revealed. If he had to leave the project, there are certainly worse choices than John Cena, who looks the part, and has played military officers before. Interestingly, this is the second recent case of Cena replacing an already set star in an action film. In late April, it was announced that Cena was taking over for old wrestling rival Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson in the Robert Ludlum-based The Janson Directive.

Ex-Baghdad is being produced and made in China, and will begin filming in the country this summer.



PLAID PARTY! Supermodel Gigi Hadid mixes patterns during a day out in Manhattan.



## KIM KARDASHIAN WEST AT WHITE HOUSE FOR PRISON REFORM TALKS

Kim Kardashian West has been at the White House to discuss criminal justice reform with Donald Trump's senior adviser Jared Kushner. The reality TV star is calling for Alice Marie Johnson, who is serving a life sentence without parole for a non-violent drug offence, to be pardoned.

The 37-year-old also met the president.

Mr Trump tweeted: "Great meeting with @Kim-Kardashian today, talked about prison reform and sentencing."

The Keeping up with the Kardashians star tweeted earlier on Wednesday: "Happy Birthday Alice Marie Johnson. Today is for you."

Ms Johnson was convicted in 1997.

An online petition to grant clemency, started by her daughter, currently has more than 250,000 signatures.

Kardashian West is thought to have been involved in private discussions with Mr Kushner and his wife Ivanka Trump for several months.

# RANBIR KAPOOR CONFIRMS DATING ALIA BHATT



Rumours about Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor dating each other were doing the rounds for a while now but seems like Ranbir is in the mood to put an end to them with a confirmation. In a recent interview with a publication, Ranbir admitted that he is in a relationship with Alia Bhatt. The actor went on to say that their relationship is extremely new right now and deserves time and space to grow. Ranbir said, "It's really new right now, and I don't want to over speak. It needs time to breathe and it needs space. As an actor, as a person, Alia is - what's the right word? - flowing right

now. When I see her work, when I see her act, even in life, what she gives is something that I'm aspiring to for myself. It's new for us, so let it cook a bit."

Ranbir also talked about how it felt being in a relationship all over again. He said, "It always comes with a lot of excitement. It's a new person, it comes with new beats. Old tricks become new tricks again - you know, being charming and romantic, all of that. I think I'm more balanced today. I value relationships more. I can appreciate hurt and what it does to a person much more than I could a couple years back."



## THIS WEEK'S TOP 10 SONGS ON BILLBOARD HOT 100

1. Drake- Nice For What
2. Childish Gambino- This Is America
3. Drake- God's Plan
4. Post Malone Featuring Ty Dolla Sign- Psycho
5. Zedd, Maren Morris, Grey- The Middle
6. Lil Baby & Drake- Yes Indeed
7. Bebe Rexha & Florida Georgia Line- Meant To Be
8. Ella Mai- Boo'd Up
9. Ariana Grande- No Tears Left To Cry
10. BTS- Fake Love

THE DAY AHEAD

**ARIES:** You may feel like you're walking on burning coals today, Aries. Someone has tossed you the ball and you need to figure out what to do with it. Use your fancy footwork to keep your feet from searing as you exercise your mind to figure out your next move. Try not to be too stubborn or you'll get nowhere. The key is to stay flexible and go with the flow when unexpected events occur.

**TAURUS:** Your emotions will feel stable today, Taurus, although there may be an unexpected element trying to sneak into the equation. Be aware that people will be a bit more volatile today. Although the situation may be calm and cool one minute, it has the potential to be

explosive the next. Try to stay centered all day so you don't get thrown off course by other people's erratic emotions.

**GEMINI:** Explore deeply your innovative, irrational side today, Gemini. Your emotions may run counter to this principle, but instead of letting this put a damper on your progress, use the energy to spur you to action. Take advantage of the new gadgets and technology available to you. Incredible resources lie at your fingertips. Don't be afraid to harness their power to your advantage.

**CANCER:** You might want to stay in and not speak to anyone today, Cancer. If you decide to venture out, you're apt to run into opposition almost every-

where you turn. Don't see this as negative. Use it as incentive to work harder toward your goals. There are strong forces egging you on, so act confidently. Make sure you get your emotions out. Otherwise, they'll fester and do more harm than good.

**LEO:** You may not feel like you're exactly clicking with anything today, Leo. Adjustments will need to be made either by you or the people you're dealing with for any resolution to come about. Your emotions may feel tied to the ground, yet your mind may want to take off into the stratosphere. Dilemmas between whether to take action or stay passive could leave you paralyzed. Just go with the flow.

**VIRGO:** Examine your emo-

tions, Virgo, and trust your instincts. Unexpected forces may try to disrupt the flow of things. Keep in mind that you should have no problem keeping the situation under control as long as you stay solid and focused. The actions you take today will be long-lasting effects, so be conscious of how you use your energy. Incorporate the old as well as the new in your game plan.

**LIBRA:** This is one of those days in which you might not be fully appreciated for the wonderful breath of fresh air you bring to the group, Libra. Revenge of the stale and old may be coming into the fold today. Don't give in to negative forces trying to keep you from fully expressing yourself. Have confidence that you have what it takes

to be successful in whatever path you decide to follow.

**SCORPIO:** Don't be surprised if things don't go exactly according to plan today, Scorpio. Unexpected events are likely to pop up and disturb the course of action. Realize that these disruptions have a place in your life and that they're occurring for a reason. You might not understand exactly how or why, but that's OK. You don't need to know. Welcome these new energies into your life.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Your emotions could be a bit vulnerable today, Sagittarius, and it may be hard to find shelter from the storm. Your umbrella is a bit too drafty and water seems to be leaking in from the top. Comfort yourself by centering and enjoying a quiet

evening at home. Don't let other people's unsolved problems infect your space. Differentiate between issues that concern you and those that are out of your control.

**CAPRICORN:** Unexpected events may crop up and nudge you in the side, Capricorn. You could get the feeling that there are thorns poking out of nowhere whose sole purpose is to annoy you. Try to maintain a stable attitude and think about incorporating unconventional aspects into your daily routine. The crazy whirlwind of activity today could disrupt your emotions a bit. Don't get frustrated by things you can't control.

**AQUARIUS:** Today you have the ability to make an important breakthrough in whatever project

you work on, Aquarius. Try not to get bogged down by emotions, which may leave you feeling heavy and stale. Infuse the day with a blast of unconventional thinking. Try to adopt a new, fresh attitude toward whatever it is you want to accomplish. A new perspective is all you need to make this day productive.

**PISCES:** You may get the feeling that you're rubbing against sandpaper today, Pisces. More than likely, this is a result of issues deep inside you. Some of these emotions concern the constant tension between old and new energies clashing within your world. This is one of those days in which things come to a head. Pieces of your inner being are hitting you square in the face.