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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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*Bureaucratic  
reshuffle  
touches 12  
Secys, shifts  
several other  
senior officers*

## SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 JUN:

The bureaucratic reshuffle which was always round the corner given that a new government has taken office in Sikkim, arrived in strength today with the State Government transferring around 30 senior officers to new responsibilities. There are a dozen Secretary-level officers in the latest string of transfer orders. In keeping with tradition, the transfers were announced just as the Chief Minister left the State on a rather long tour.

Additional Chief Secretary, Dr K Jayakumar, moves from Science & Technology Department to take charge of Tourism & Civil Aviation while also holding additional charge of Raj Bhawan. He replaces TT Bhutia who has been transferred to Mines, Minerals & Geology Department.

Secretary, Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department, Ambika Pradhan, is now the new Secretary, Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department, while LB Chettri moves from Cooperation Department to take charge as Secretary, UD&HD, relieving Ganga Devi Pradhan who moves to Science & Technology Department.

Secretary, Commission for Backward Classes, HK Sharma, has been transferred and posted as Secretary, Cooperation Department, while SD Dhakal, Secretary, Transport Department, who had been recently handed over additional charge of the Chief Minister's Office, has been transferred as Secretary to the CM, CMO.

The Secretary, Mines, Minerals & Geology Department, SB Subba, has in turn been transferred and posted as Secretary, Transport Department.

Similar transfers have also been affected at the Under Secretary and above levels, significant among which is the transfer of Bhawani P Rai, PS to the former CM, who has been repatriated and posted as Additional Director [Archives], Cultural Affairs & Heritage Department; Tarzan Subba, Additional Director, Pension Office, who is now the CEO, Gangtok Smart City Ltd on deputation; Sherpa Chopel Katuk, Additional Director, Labor Deptt, who is now Addl Director, CMO; Dhan Kumar Chettri, Joint Director, RM&DD, who has been transferred as OSD, CMO on deputation; Sabita

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## Terminated OFOJ appointees protest against DoP circular cancelling appointments

### SAGAR CHETTRI GANGTOK, 10 JUN:

A section of beneficiaries of One Family One Job [OFOJ] scheme from different parts of the State staged a protest today at Tashiling Secretariat demanding that the Department of Personnel immediately withdraw its recent circular directing Department heads to withhold and cancel appointments of those who joined duty when the Model Code of Conduct was in force.

They have also demanded the immediate release of pending salaries of OFOJ employees, who have been working under different departments since January this year.

On this two-point demand, the protesting group met the Commissioner-cum-Secretary of DoP and submitted a memorandum. They also interacted with the Special Secretary of the department.

Speaking to media persons after the meet-



ing, they said that the DoP department must immediately withdraw its circular directing that appointments of those who joined duty after 08 March be withheld and cancelled. "Around 9,000 youths

fall under the second list of the scheme, who joined during March and such decision can put the future of these youth in the dark," they said.

Speaking on the second demand, they men-

tioned that OFOJ employees who got their order on 12 January and immediately joined their duties in different departments have been working sincerely.

"But many of these

employees have not received a single penny so far. So our second demand is the immediate release of pending salaries of these employees," they demanded.

They also expressed

their dissatisfaction on the interaction with the DoP officials.

"Although we had a thorough discussion with senior officials of the department, the matter could not be resolved

because they do not have the dispatch register for the appointment orders. We were told that the dispatch register had been sent to the CMO prior to the election. Due to this we cannot check if the appointment orders were dispatched before the Model Code of Conduct came into force," they alleged.

Responding to media queries on the issue, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha spokesperson, Jacob Khaling, who is also the Political Secretary to the Chief Minister, mentioned that most appointment orders under the OFOJ scheme were dispatched on 21 February and some on 05 March, however, he alleged that they were handed over only after the Model Code of Conduct was enforced in the State.

Further alleging that these orders were kept by former Ministers and MLAs who distributed them after the enforcement of MCC and some

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## CM on six-day Delhi visit



### REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 10 JUN:

Chief Minister, PS Tamang [Golay] left for a six-day visit to New Delhi today. He will be attending the NITI Ayog meeting in Delhi later this week. During his stay, the Chief Minister will also meet Union ministers and political leaders. He will be discussing matters related with the development of Sikkim,

a CMO official informed.

This is Mr Tamang's second visit to Delhi as Chief Minister. He had gone earlier to attend the oath-taking ceremony of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi on 30 May.

Similarly, RMD Minister, Sonam Lama also left for New Delhi today. He has been invited by RMD Union Ministry to attend a programme and meetings with the ministry.

## Kathua gangrape: 3 including mastermind given life term, 3 others 5 year jail

### SUMIR KAUL PATHANKOT (PUNJAB), JUN 10 (PTI):

A court on Monday sentenced three men including a temple caretaker to life imprisonment till last breath for the gang rape and murder of an eight-year-old nomadic girl in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir shortly after convicting them along with three others for the ghastly crime that shook the nation 17 months ago.

Sanji Ram, the mastermind and caretaker of the 'devasthanam' (temple) where the crime took place in January last year, Deepak Khajuria, a Special Police Officer,

and Parvesh Kumar, a civilian--the three main accused--were spared death penalty, a punishment sought by the prosecution during the year-long in-camera trial in the court of judge Tejwinder Singh here.

The three were convicted under Ranbir Penal Code(RPC) sections relating to criminal conspiracy, murder, kidnapping, gang rape, destruction of evidence, drugging the victim and common intention, prosecution lawyer Santokh Singh told reporters outside the court.

They were also awarded

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## Sikkim's Infant Mortality Rate comes down by 4 points

**GANGTOK, 10 JUN (IPR):** As per Sample Registration System (SRS) survey of India, which is conducted by the Registrar General of India, the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in the State has come down to 12.

The SRS survey for 2017 was released in May 2019 which shows a four point decrease in the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) of Sikkim. From 16 infant deaths per thousand live births in a year in 2016, the IMR has decreased to 12 infant deaths per thousand live births in a year.

Sikkim is now ranked fourth at the national level, a level up from rank sixth in 2016.

India's National Population Policy (NPP) 2000 seeks to achieve the long-term goal of population stabilization by 2045, at a level consistent with the requirement of sustainable economic growth, social development and environment protection.

The immediate objective of the NPP 2000 was to address the unmet needs for contraception, healthcare infrastructure and health personnel, and to provide integrated service delivery for basic Reproductive and Child Healthcare (RCH) to bring down the IMR to less than 30 per thousand live births per year.

The medium-term objective was to bring the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) to replacement levels by 2010 through vigorous implementation of inter-sectoral operational strategies, one of them being assured survival

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## PNGS team returns with 25 medals from Kukkiwon Cup



### SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 JUN:

Paljor Namgyal Girls School team has returned from the International Tae-Kwon-Do Competition, Kukkiwon Cup, Tae-Kwon-Do Han Madang 2019, held from 05 to 07 June at Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi, with a rich haul of 25 medals.

The competition was organised by IDSO-Indian Dojang Sports Organ-

isation. The PNGS team bagged nine gold medals, eight silver medals and eight bronze medals.

A press release of the school informs that the PNGS Tae-Kwon-Do team comprised of students from classes III to XII.

The release adds that seven States from India and teams from Afghanistan and Nepal participated in the championship.

The PNGS team was

invited by the Chairman, Organising Committee, Grand Master Jeonghee Lee Kukkiwon and the Government of the Republic of South Korea.

"Though temperature wise the weather was not so favorable at all for the children but potentially and technically well equipped PNG Girls were able to print a permanent mark in this competition," the release states.

## SDF sits on dharna protesting heckling, OFOJ job cancellations and appointment of Golay as CM

### SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 JUN:

Sa dharna outside the District Administrative Centre here today pressing a three-point agenda – protesting the inaction on the heckling of their president Pawan Chamling in the Legislative Assembly, the cancellation of several appointment made under the One Family, One Job scheme, and the continuation of PS Tamang [Golay] as the Chief Minister even though he is disqualified from contesting elections.

The party also submitted a memorandum on their issues to the Chief Secretary, District Collector [East] and Superintendent of Police [East]. Senior leaders, party workers and youth of the party sat on daylong dharna here carrying placards and banners announcing their issues.

SDF spokesperson, MK Subba, stressed that the heckling of Mr Chamling by SKM



supporters sitting in the Visitors' Gallery of the Legislative Assembly on 03 June was "unfortunate, objectionable and condemnable."

What has been even more unfortunate is that despite a week having passed since the incident, the Speaker has not taken any action against anyone thus far despite the clear

disrespect shown not only the SDF president but also the Legislative Assembly itself.

Mr Subba demanded that all involved in this incident be arrested and action taken against them as per the law and rules and procedures and conduct of business in the Assembly.

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## Legal Services Camp held in Yangang



### SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 JUN:

District Legal Services Authority (South) and Taluk Legal Services Committee (South) in co-ordination with the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority organized a Legal Services Camp at Government Senior Secondary School, Yangang, South Sikkim on 09 Jun, 2019.

As per a press release, the purpose of a Legal Services Camp is to spread awareness about welfare legislations on various Schemes and to strengthen the community's access to the schemes being implemented by the Legal Services Authority and other Departments of the Government.

The aim is also to identify and connect people to welfare schemes

to ensure that fruits of the welfare schemes are passed on to the eligible people. The Camp also looks upon understanding the legal needs of the people by addressing their legal problems and giving appropriate legal advice.

The camp at Yangang focused on NALSA (Legal Services to the Workers in the Unorganized Sector) Scheme, 2015.

The program was launched by the Chairperson, DLSA (South), Jiwani Kumar Kharka in presence of the Secretary DLSA (South), Jwala D Thapa.

During the program, two video clips were shown to the public broadcasting the benefits of National Legal Services Authority and Sikkim State Legal Services

Authority.

Stalls had been set up with representatives from the Health Department, Social Justice Empowerment and Welfare Department, Police Department and Labor Department giving out information relating to various relevant schemes from each of their Departments.

The Panel Advocates also disbursed information on the legal services provided by the SSLSA and DLSA, specifically Free Legal Aid. The health camp also provided check-up, diagnosis as well as advice to the attendees.

There were more than 400 persons who attended the program and received benefits from the Camp, the release adds.

## Meeting discusses Measles-Rubella vaccination campaign

### GYALSHING, 10 JUN (IPR):

The coordination meeting regarding District Task Force for immunization (DTFI) for Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccination campaign 2019 under District Hospital, Gyalshing was held at the Conference Hall of District Administration Centre (DAC) Rabdentse, West Sikkim today.

The meeting was presided over by ADC (W), Karma L Lepcha along with CMO(W), Dr Tsheten Namgyal, DRCHO, Dr Anusha Lama, Sr WO, SK Alley, CDPO(W), HB Shanker, Dy Director(HRDD), KD Bhutia, Dy Director(HRDD), PL Limboo and other officials.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on MR vaccination campaign implementation strategy besides other key aspects of the vaccination campaign in the district.

The ADC asked all the line departments, educational institutions and other related departments to extend their full cooperation and support within their respective jurisdictions to ensure

successful conduct of the campaign.

He instructed the Education, ICDS departments to furnish the list of students to the Health Department well in advance so that no child is left without vaccination and ensure enormous support from the District administration.

At the outset, DRCHO, Ms Lama informed the meeting that in order to ensure proper implementation of the vaccination campaign the collective and effective involvement of all the departments is very important. She asked all the departments to come forward with committed effort in order to achieve the objective of the campaign i.e. to rapidly build up immunity for both measles and rubella diseases and ensure that all the children should receive MR vaccine during the campaign.

Stressing on spreading mass awareness regarding the vaccination, she emphasized on circulating informative materials at public places and asked the IPR department to make an optimal

use of effective communication tools such as social media, electronic media, print media etc.

She further informed about the involvement of the services of ASHA and Anganwadi workers for the campaign. The training of the required staff to ensure the hassle-free conduct of vaccination campaign was also stressed upon.

The vaccination campaign will be started after summer vacations in the district. The campaign will be carried out in schools, community centers and health facilities. All children from 9 months to less than 15 years of age will be given a single shot of Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccination during the campaign.

Pertinently, the Measles-Rubella campaign is a part of global efforts to reduce illness and deaths due to measles and rubella/CRS in the country. India, along with ten other WHO South East Asia Region member countries, has resolved to eliminate measles and control rubella/congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) by 2020.

## Power Minister chairs meeting with Power Grid officials

### GANGTOK, 10 JUN (IPR):

A meeting chaired by Power Minister Mingma N Sherpa with officials of Power Grid Corporation was held at Jalipool Power Grid Guest House on 09 June.

The meeting, held with the objective to review and take stock of the power distribution system in the state under the Comprehensive Scheme for Strengthening of Transmission & Distribution System had the presence of Executive Director, PGCIL, NK Ohdar, Senior General Manager (Rangpo station) C Nandi, Deputy GM (Tokal station) H Jena,

GM (Gangtok station) SK Purokyaastha and Chief Manager (Mangan station) HP Gurung alongside engineers deputed at Power Grid Corporation.

The Minister reviewed the state of affairs of all Power Grid Corporation office setups based within Sikkim and thoroughly examined the project status of the ongoing projects in the state.

Similarly, assessment and compensation issues, speedy forest clearances in order to resume tower erection and transmission line work, sub-station composition and current vacancies in

respective stations were discussed extensively.

The Minister also looked into the pressing demands of lack of Field Engineers required for projects across Sikkim and assured all help to resolve genuine matters in a timely manner.

He was also apprised about the structure of the High Level Implementation Committee. A second meeting with the members of the committee in the month of July to discuss the progress of work, status of work undertaken by Power Grid Corporation Sikkim will be pursued stated the Minister.

### Kathua perpetrators acted as if law of jungle prevalent in society: Judge

**PATHANKOT (PUNJAB), JUN 10 (PTI):** Holding that perpetrators of the gangrape and murder of a girl in Kathua acted as if there is a "law of jungle" prevalent in the society, judge Tejwinder Singh summed up the enormity of the crime with a touching couplet by Mirza Ghalib which says that hunters had placed the net near a nest and the young one was caught before it could take its first flight.

In his judgment after hearing arguments from both sides for 367 days, Singh sentenced three accused to life imprisonment for criminal conspiracy and murder and three more to five years in jail for destruction of evidence. One accused was acquitted. Singh started his order with the couplet from Ghalib's ghazal -- "Pinha tha daame-sakht qareeb ashiyaan ke, udhne hi nahi paye the ki girftar hum hue".

Also cited by the Supreme Court in a 2011 case of murder of a sex worker in West Bengal, the couplet poignantly summed up the Kathua case which shook the conscience of the nation.

### HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

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### Terminated OFOJ...

even after the formation of the new government in the State, he stated that such appointment orders should be considered "duplicate and fake".

Any work or joining after the enforcement of MCC is invalid and illegal, therefore, would be cancelled, he added.

However, he claimed that through this circular, the department has only suspended joining order for the time being to make it more legal and with legal backing. The department will re-verify the process and no genuine beneficiary will be left out but they will get new valid appointment orders, he stated.

### Sikkim's Infant...

of infants and children. Sikkim has achieved both the short term and medium term objectives of NPP and is contributing toward population stabilization of our nation and the world.

The department has worked as per the strategies and objectives of the National Population Policies in its right earnest towards lowering of Infant deaths in the state in a team spirit headed by the Commissioner cum Secretary.

The health care providers from grass-roots level up to the policy makers, the state Government, constant support of AnganWadi Workers (AWW) and Helpers of numerous ICDS centers present throughout the state have each put in their bit to achieve this success.

Workers like Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) who have guided pregnant mothers throughout their pregnancy for safe childbirth followed by visit to each and every newborns up to 45 days in their homes and giving Home Based New Born Care (HBNC) and beyond.

Our Health service providers from nursing cadre manning remotest of sub-center facilities, Male Health workers, attendants, Doctors, Specialists, Programme officers looking after different National Health Programmes, IEC cell, administration section of department and the state policy makers from the level of Sub-Centers, PHCs and District Hospitals up to Referral level i.e. STNM Hospital have greatly contributed in achieving this herculean task of lowering the IMR of our state.

Special programmes like Proud Mother Scheme for mothers and children, and not forgetting the support of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, have played significant roles in the achievement. The health department continues to strive towards single digit IMR and saving each and every infant born in the state.

### ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

#### URGENTLY REQUIRED:

**Urgent Recruitment for a waiter with atleast 3 years experience and one kitchen helper. Contact: Hotel Paramount, Dentam, West Sikkim- 9735909625 / 8348285444**

#### PLOT FOR SALE:

**Vacant plot measuring 0.38 Acres for sale at Amdo Golai, Deorali. Contact: 09717191985/097474651223**

#### INTERESTED TO BECOME A YOGA TEACHER?

**CRITERIA** – Academic qualification of minimum higher secondary pass

Complete yoga syllabus will be provided by SYVC Gangtok absolutely free of cost. After one year of basic training and service (karma yoga)/ volunteering in the Centre, the candidate would be sent for Yoga Teacher Training Course at Shivananda Yoga Ashram. After TTC, the candidate would be appointed on part time basis at the Yoga Centre in Gangtok. College students can also apply. If required, food and accommodation would be provided.

**Interested candidates may contact**

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#### LAND FOR SALE

A vacant plot measuring 0.38 Ha. (16552.80 sq – ft) is for sale at Amdo Golai (above the main road), Gangtok. For more information please contact – 9717191985/9474651223.

#### WANTED

**HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER .**

**Contact: 9933443442/9800500696.**

#### KUTSE SHEGU

The 49th day Kutse Shegu of Late Doma Bhutia w/o Lakpa Thendup Bhutia who left for her heavenly abode on 01.05.2019 falls on 18.6.2019 (Tuesday). All relatives, friends & well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Below Law College, Helipad, Lower Burtuk, Gangtok, East Sikkim.

**Lakpa Thendup Bhutia(Husband), Kesseng Norbu Bhutia(son) & all family members.**

**Mob: 9800655921/ 6294186876.**

### Kathua gangrape...

different jail terms for various offences under the RPC which will run concurrently with the life term besides a fine of Rs one lakh each, Singh said. If they do not deposit the fine, they will have to serve additional six months in jail, he added.

Singh said a life term means they will be in jail till the end of their natural life.

The other three accused--Sub Inspector Anand Dutta, Head Constable Tilak Raj and special police officer Surender Verma -- were convicted for destruction of evidence to cover up and handed down five years in jail and Rs 50,000 fine each, Singh said.

The court acquitted the seventh accused Vishal Jangotra, son of Sanji Ram, giving him the 'benefit of doubt', according to Mubeen Farooqi, who represented the victim's family in the court.

The court pronounced the much-awaited verdict away from the gaze of media which gathered in full strength outside the premises. All the 7 accused were present in the court room.

According to eyewitness accounts from inside the courtroom, where the media was barred, Ram and Khajuria reacted with shock when the operative part of the verdict was read out by the judge. Some family members of the two men collapsed in the court complex on hearing the news of them being sent to jail for life.

A 15-page charge sheet filed in April last year said the eight-year-old girl was kidnapped on January 10 that year and was raped in captivity in a small village temple, exclusively manned by Ram, after keeping her sedated for four days. She was later bludgeoned to death, it said. The crime branch of J&K Police had filed the charge sheet against eight persons, including a juvenile.

The trial against the juvenile is yet to begin as his petition on determining his age is to be heard by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court.

The prosecution team, comprising lawyers J K Chopra, S S Basra, Harmander Singh and Bhupinder Singh, said it demanded capital punishment for the main accused and may go in for appeal against the sole acquittal.

National Commission for Women(NCW) Chairperson Rekha Sharma welcomed the conviction but said she was expecting capital punishment for all the six convicts. She said the state government should appeal in higher court.

The day-to-day trial commenced in the first week of June last year at the district and sessions court in Pathankot in the neighbouring state of Punjab, about 100 km from Jammu and 30 km

from Kathua, after the Supreme Court ordered on May 7, 2018 that the case be shifted out of J and K.

The apex court order came after lawyers in Kathua prevented Crime Branch officials from filing a charge sheet in the sensational case.

The Crime Branch held Ram, his juvenile nephew and his son Vishal, and two SPOs Khajuria and Verma. Raj and Dutta, who allegedly took Rs 4 lakh from Ram and destroyed crucial evidence, were later arrested.

The charges of rape and murder were framed by the district and sessions judge against seven of the eight accused.

The court framed charges under relevant sections of the RPC including Sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 302 (murder) and 376-D (gang-rape), according to the prosecution.

The court also framed charges of destruction of evidence and causing hurt by poisoning under Section 328 of the RPC.

All the accused, barring the juvenile, were shifted to the Gurdaspur jail in Punjab following an intervention by the Supreme Court which also restricted appearance of the defence lawyers and limited it to one or maximum of two per accused.

The charge sheet said the girl had gone missing while grazing horses.

Investigators said the accused juvenile had abducted the girl on the pretext of helping her find her horses.

The abduction, rape and killing of the child was part of a carefully planned strategy to remove the minority nomadic community from the area, the charge sheet said.

The horrific crime also led to tensions in the then PDP-BJP coalition government headed by Mehbooba Mufti. Two BJP ministers--Chandra Prakash Ganga and Lal Singh-- had to quit for their open support to the accused.

Former J and K chief ministers Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti hailed the court order and hit out at state BJP leaders.

"Amen to that. The guilty deserve the most severe punishment possible under law. And to those politicians who defended the accused, vilified the victim & threatened the legal system no words of condemnation are enough," Abdullah tweeted.

"Welcome the judgement. High time we stop playing politics over a heinous crime where an 8 year old child was drugged, raped repeatedly & then bludgeoned to death. Hope loopholes in our judicial system are not exploited & culprits get exemplary punishment," Mehbooba tweeted.



*Situation bad in Bengal but Prez rule shouldn't be imposed: CPI(M)*

**NEW DELHI, JUN 10 (PTI):** CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said on Monday that the law and order situation in West Bengal is bad but President's rule should not be imposed in the state. Talking to reporters, Yechury said the ground report should be known to get an understanding of what is happening there.

"In principle, we have always been against the President's rule. The law and order situation in Bengal is bad but it does not mean that President's rule is imposed in the state," he said.

Three people have been killed in clashes between the workers of the Trinamool Congress and the BJP in the state's North 24 Parganas district on Saturday.

West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday amid the incident of violence over which the Home Ministry has also issued an advisory to the state government. The TMC termed the Centre's advisory a conspiracy against its dispensation.

## Governor hands financial assistance to 3 organizations



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 10 JUN:**

Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad today handed over financial grants to representatives of three organisations includ-

ing a school. The financial assistance was sanctioned during the visits of the Governor to these organisations, a Raj Bhavan press communiqué informs.

The assistance in-

Singtam and Rs 25,000 to Dentam Senior Secondary School for strengthening library facility.

In addition to the above financial assistance from Governor's discretionary fund, the Governor also handed over Rs 25,000 each from his personal account to Sikkim Bihari Jagran Manch and Dentam Sr. Secondary School towards strengthening the library in a bid to inculcate reading habit among students and youths.

The Governor also conveyed his blessings and good wishes to the organisations for their social and charitable initiatives.

## Tadong college annual fest 'Fusion' concludes



**SHRAVAN CHETTRI**  
**GANGTOK, 10 MAY:**

Fusion, the annual festival of Nar Bahadur Bhandari Government Degree College [NBBDC] organized

in association with Students Representative Council concluded today. Addressing the gathering Principal, Bina Pradhan thanked the students for their dedication towards organizing the festival and she also highlighted the college's achievements in academics and sports.

Ms Pradhan requested the current government to look into issues like scarcity of equipments, lack of faculty, proper playground facility, demand for post graduate courses, maintenance of infrastructure, etc.

Attending the event as the chief guest, HRD Minister, Kunga Nima Lepcha expressed his appreciation towards the college management, faculty and students for

their immense hard work and dedication for successfully hosting the festival.

While responding to the demands, Kunga Nima Lepcha said that the NBBDC is one of the oldest colleges in the state and the demands will soon be fulfilled. He further added that the students and youth are the base of a strong nation and state and there needs to be some difference between literacy and wisdom.

Guest of honor, HRD Principal Secretary, GP Upadhyay said that the college has been performing well and the issues placed by the college will be looked into.

Painting and photography exhibition was held wherein various aspiring photographers and painters from the college participated. Cultural programs along with annual prize distribution were also held for the students and non-teaching staff.

## MUSS car rally concludes at Singtam



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 10 JUN:**

The third phase of Golden Jubilee Car Rally commemorating 50 years of Manav Dharma propagation in Sikkim culminated at Singtam, East Sikkim, on Saturday. The Spiritual Car Rally flagged off from Gangtok on Saturday was led by Sadhvi Mahatma Akhilesh Baiji, Manav Uthan Sewa Samiti (MUSS) In-charge for North East region.

The car rally was flagged off from Sambhala Ashram, Gangtok and passed through places like Kabi, Phamtam, Phodong, Mangan, Mangshila, Dikchu, Makha and concluded at Singtam.

Similar car rallies were organized in the month of February and May. The first car rally flagged off from Melli, South Sikkim, to Gyalshing via Daramdin and Soreng in West Sikkim.

The second car rally flagged off from Ravangla Bazaar passed through places like Namchi, Namthang Rangpo. The car rally covered Rorathang, Rhenock, Rongli and Machong and concluded at Pakyong Bazaar.

During the Rally, the Sadhvis addressed people at different places and appealed them to adopt Manav Dharma for the betterment of mankind.

## Minister chairs meeting of Printing & Stationery Dept



**GANGTOK, 10 JUN (IPR):** Minister for Printing & Stationery Department, LN Sharma chaired a departmental meeting with the officials and staff, at the Conference Hall of Soochna Bhawan, today.

During his address, Mr Sharma greeted the gathering and urged everyone to work sincerely with full dedication so as to make the department vibrant and efficient.

Innovative ideas, suggestions were also welcomed by the Minister and he stressed that they should collectively work for the development of

the department.

He encouraged every single employee to celebrate the Saturday "Care and Cure" holiday as declared by the government and to follow new office time scheduled by the government with strict discipline.

Minister assured his full cooperation and support towards the department.

Earlier, Secretary, KP Sharma placed numerous demands like printing building, separate staff quarter, additional financial assistance, regular security personnel

and to review new cadre policy of the department. LN Sharma assured that all the demands placed would be looked into at the earliest.

Principal Director, GC Lepcha briefed about the history of Sikkim Press and placed the report of the department to the Minister.

Earlier welcome address was delivered by Bikash Rai, Deputy Director Printing & Stationery Department and Vote of Thanks was proposed by Additional Director Printing & Stationery Department, AB Gurung.

## CRH conducts workshop on Hospital Infection Control

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 10 JUN:**

The Hospital Infection Control Committee (HICC) of Central Referral Hospital (CRH) conducted a training programme was held on 07 June on topics such as hand hygiene, biomedical waste management and personal protective equipment, a press release informs.

The resource persons for the training were Dr Dechen C Tsering, Member Secretary, HICC and Dr Rekha Sharma, member, HICC. They were assisted by Infection Control nurses, Pema Laden, Tashi Doma and Priya Ravi of Operations Department of CRH.

"Preventing healthcare associated infections is a high priority, and we work alongside healthcare teams to

ensure all measures are taken to reduce infections and prevent transmission. Our staff members are actively involved in providing information to healthcare workers, patients and visitors on how to reduce the risk of infections through education, audits, surveillance, posters, pamphlets and other tools," Medical Superintendent, CRH, Dr Gautam Dey said.

Healthcare-acquired infections are one of the most common complications of health care. They are a significant patient safety issue, and can also be an Occupational Health and Safety issue. A well-functioning Infection Prevention and Control programme helps minimize these risks for our patients, residents, visitors and

our staff, he said.

The Central Pollution Control Board has also recently declared CRH as model facility for Biomedical waste management, the release mentions. CRH will now be imparting training to other hospitals of the north east region on biomedical waste management, Dr Dechen C Tsering said.

The HICC, CRH is dedicated to preventing and controlling the transmission of healthcare associated infections to patients, clients, residents, healthcare workers, visitors and others and regularly imparts education and training to all healthcare workers under the guidance and supervision of the Medical Superintendent, CRH, Dr Gautam Dey, the release mentions.

## Duga Block Farmer's Advisory committee meets



**NITESH R PRADHAN**  
**GANGTOK, 10 JUN:**

A review meet of Block Farmer's Advisory committee was held at Bhurung village, East Sikkim, today. The meet had the presence of officials from Agriculture department and farmers from the village and Duga BAC. Block Technology Manager, Darshan Upreti, Duga BAC counseled the farmers on various aspects of farming during the meet.

"With adoption of Integrated Farming System and capacity building, Sikkim has a bright future in agriculture and horticulture," he stated. Agriculture Technol-

ogy Management Agency (ATMA), Government of Sikkim which provides information and helps farmers in their occupation also aims to double income of farmers by 2022.

Advisor, Khem Kumar Chettri, BFAC held that sharing knowledge about the technical advancement and forms of farming is the key for any sustained efforts to improve agricultural development. He thanked the department for providing him with the knowledge which has helped him become a self sustained individual.

The farmers interacted with the officials and shared their problems

wherein many have felt the need to recognize the field of farming and agriculture as a valued job option which can also be seen as a highly rated profession.

It was further informed that Farmers Producers Organisation (FPO) help locally grown products in their production and in marketing with FPOs established across Sikkim under Co-operative department with seven in East district alone.

Members of FPOs have appealed to farmers to contact them for any help related to production and marketing of their locally grown products.

## Animal Husbandry Minister chairs first coordination meeting



**GANGTOK, 10 JUN (IPR):** Animal Husbandry Minister, Lok Nath Sharma chaired the first coordination meeting with the officials of Animal Husbandry, Livestock, Fisheries and Veterinary Services at the departmental training centre, Sokeythang, today.

Minister, Mr Sharma, expressed his strong determination to work for the department to ensure upliftment of farmers at village level, economically. Mr Sharma, in his articulation, co-related the indispensability of AHLF&VS department with the lives of people and said, "Animal Husbandry Deptt directly touches everyone's life and fulfills essentially of living healthy life". He also thanked Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) for entrusting him with such great responsibility to serve these departments.

He urged officials to come out with positive, creative and innovative ideas and to chalk out five years plan and act accordingly in proper coordination and cooperation of every sectors, directorates under AH, LF &VS and concerned line departments like Agriculture and Horticulture as well.

He advised to select at least two GPUs in every district and to make them exemplary model village through result oriented activities. Minister directed the Secretary to strengthen districts in terms on allocation of manpower and imple-

mentation of schemes and activities to ensure surplus production and marketing.

Minister Sharma urged officials to extend complete cooperation and contributions from their level to generate better output in a team work and also advised for maintenance of rules and officials timings with utmost sincerity. He suggested to deliver assigned

responsibilities in appropriate way and assured to reward for their dedications and exemplary works in the entire journey of next five years. He stressed to believe in their capacity of work delivery rather than following other ways to impress the government.

Secretary AHLF &VS, Dr Kumar Bhandari proposed welcome address and wished a great learning experience under the leadership of the new Minister. Referring his interaction with the concerned Minister, Dr Bhandari said that the Minister has deep interest to work in AHLF&VS Department and expressed expectations of strong possibilities for reformation and improvements in cattle rearing, milk production and piggy farming under Minister's guidance.

Principal Director, AHLF&VS presented overview of the structure and activities of the department and further elaborated various components like Livestock Farms of Piggery, Goatery, Poultry, Livestock Production and achieve-

ment figures, dairy development, breeding, feed and fodder section, monitoring and quality control, SARAH & Animal

Welfare, Extension and Training to Farmers, Veterinary Services, Disease Investigation Cell, statistics, fund allocation and also proposed fund requirement for 2019-20.

Principal Director also underlined constraints being faced by the department particularly in resource allocation, drugs and medicines, infrastructure development, manpower, bio security measures in different livestock farms, cereal grain production for livestock feed, etc.

Managing Director Sikkim Milk Union(SMU), Dr AB Karki drew lights on milk procurement and inputs, marketing and facilities being provided to the milk producers. He also informed that the Milk Union is planning to purchase cow dung and urine besides milk from the farmers and shared initiatives to increase types of milk in the market. With the view to reduce use of plastic in milk packaging, he shared upcoming initiative of the Milk Union to install milk dispensing system at various places in near future.

Director Fisheries drew lights on major ongoing schemes and activities, production details and fish seeds. Earlier, all the officials and Staff of the department extended warm welcome to the Minister by offering khadas.

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## Stop Ignoring Domestic Violence

*Too many lives are being left scarred*

It is not rare for the Daily Situation Reports compiled by Sikkim Police to include incidents in which a wife has been so brutally battered that the neighbors called in the cop. There have also been instances when the brutality has ended in a death. Not all domestic spats lead to violence, and it is even rarer for victims of domestic abuse ending up as perpetrators of a violent crime although desperation has led some wives to that extreme as well. And yet, domestic violence continues to be largely ignored, intentionally and because of the internalization that a patriarchal society so easily infects. It is, however, necessary that Sikkim begins a conversation about a reality which it continues to ignore. It is not as if the monstrosity of domestic violence does not hit home often. In recent years, one may recall, a lady was allegedly beaten to death by her husband in West Sikkim. Then there was the incident in Gangtok not that many years ago when a woman was beaten so brutally by her husband through the night that she never woke up after falling unconscious. The entire neighbourhood had heard her screams, then whimpers and then silence, and still no one had intervened. There has also been a case of domestic abuse leading to suicide [alleged as a murder cover-up by the victim's brother] in one of the more crowded residential areas of Gangtok. All of these in recent years.

One episode in which a suffering wife ended up stabbing her husband to death in West Sikkim included a rare case of intervention. The cycle of violence, as per the panchayat representative who had filed a police complaint, started around two months before the death and had been reported to the police. Clearly, there was time to address the violence before it ended in a fatality. It is also safe to assume that in the Gangtok incident as well, the fatal beating was not the first time that the wife suffered violence. It is obvious that in all cases, neighbours and the elders of the society ignored the ugliness by convincing themselves that they had no 'business' getting involved because it was a 'family matter'. This hesitation to engage occasionally leads to a fatality and almost always condemns a victim to continue suffering in silence... unattended.

It is time that the government and the people collaborated to save women from abusive relationships. But domestic violence unfortunately remains blindsided in Sikkim's over-exuberance to claim that women in Sikkim are empowered and that there is no gender discrimination here. While there can be no denying that at the government policy initiative level, women have been empowered in Sikkim, the same cannot be said for the social engagement on gender issues. While women in Sikkim are not denied opportunities or equality at the policy level, the same cannot be said about how the society at large responds to gender issues and nowhere is it more disturbing than in the society's continuing disregard of women in distress. Women who stand up and say enough and seek justice and rescue might receive it, but that is an engagement with the State. Not all women in distress seek out help, their trauma and fear overpowering them. But the signs are always obvious and the beatings and abuse rarely quiet. At least the immediate neighbours and close friends are in the know, and while some might even offer comfort and advice, no one steps up to lodge an official complaint.

This response is not unique to Sikkim and domestic violence is overlooked, even excused and denied across the world. But that does not make it acceptable. It is important that organisations responsible for women's welfare and empowerment reach out wider awareness on where people can lodge complaints of domestic violence. Complaints, whether from the victim or anonymous, should fetch immediate response and the concerned agencies in turn should have trained counselors and access to police assistance to reach the victims and rescue them. There are many theories on why domestic violence is so common and what factors trigger it. One of these explanations looks at external factors in the offender's environment, such as family structure, stress and social learning. When domestic violence is ignored by everyone even when it is obvious, the perpetrator sees it as an endorsement and continues with the deviance. By putting in place systems which proactively encourage people not to ignore this abomination, at least one causative factor would have been addressed. Agreed, domestic violence is too widespread and complicated to offer any easy solutions, but a start has to be made somewhere and what is suggested above is as a good a place to begin as any.

## Attitudes to gender and sexual diversity: changing global trends

MICHAEL SEAN PEPPER  
*theconversation.com*

Changes in geopolitical forces are sweeping rapidly across the world, affecting the lives of many, for better and for worse. In much the same way, attitudes towards gender and sexual diversity are dynamic. They are moving towards greater acceptance in some parts of the world, while in others there is push back against this diversity.

The result is that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people are experiencing increasing freedom to express their diversity in some countries and communities. But in others they face discrimination, abuse, violence and even death because they don't fit into the expectations of what certain sectors of society consider to be the norm.

The determinants of gender and sexual diversity can be understood from several perspectives. These include biological or physical sex – what we see or can measure; gender identity – how people identify independently of their biological sex; and sexual orientation.

Together, all elements contribute to a person's gender expression. In other words, how they live their lives. Gender expression in turn is context dependent, and this includes the society in which people live.

The problem is that those who wish to impose their own beliefs frequently overlook the extent – and complexity – of natural human diversity.

### BIOLOGICAL SEX DETERMINATION

Biological sex determination starts in the first trimester of pregnancy with the differentiation of the gonads (ovaries and testis). Male development is driven by the Y chromosome; X chromosomes (in the absence of a Y chromosome) drive development in the female direction. There are variations on this theme, some of which defy a binary classification.

This is followed by the development of the internal reproductive organs and external genitalia. In males this is androgen dependent and in females, estrogen dependent. There is an indeterminate phase early in the development of external genitalia, and variability can occur at any point in the process.

One of the ways in which diversity between people manifests is through what is now referred to as “disorders of sex development”, previously referred to as intersex or hermaphroditism.

People whose physical sex characteristics do not fit into culturally established gender norms feel strongly that the word “disorder” should not be used. Rather, they argue, it should be seen as a naturally occurring variation in development. Use

of the terminology “differences in sex development” might therefore be more appropriate.

Surgery is often performed early in childhood on people who don't fit into the binary classification of male or female with regard to their external genitalia. The aim is apparently to allow these people to fit into a socially accepted gender category.

Genitalia are often “corrected” towards female. But if this is done at a time in early infancy when the individual has not had a chance to establish their gender identity, it may create a disjunction between gender identity and physical identity later in life.

In addition, there are many consequences related to the surgery. These can include infertility, incontinence, scarring, loss of sexual pleasure, pain, mental suffering and depression.

### GENDER IDENTITY

What determines gender identity?

From a biological perspective, it appears that the determination of gender identity occurs once the gonads and organ systems are in place. During development, our gender identity is female by default. The brain becomes masculinised in the presence of testosterone and remains feminised in the absence or inactivity of testosterone.

One well recognised naturally occurring variation may be that the degree of masculinisation of the genitalia does not reflect the degree of masculinisation of the brain. When gender identity does not correlate to physical sexual characteristics, this may result in transgenderism. People in this situation may decide to transition to achieve a match between their physical and psychological sex.

Identifying as transgender has previously been classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “gender identity disorder”. On May 25 of this year, in the most recent International Classification of Diseases manual, the WHO reclassified transgenderism as “gender incongruence” rather than as a mental health disorder. Gender incongruence has now been moved to a new chapter dedicated to sexual health, which it is believed will reduce stigma while ensuring access to healthcare.

The reclassification came about because the WHO now has a better understanding that gender incongruence per se is not a mental health condition.

With regard to sexual orientation, although the mechanisms which determine individual preference have not been determined, both genetic and epigenetic factors are believed to be involved.

### DIFFERENCE VERSUS DISORDER

Embracing human gender and sexual diversity requires acceptance of the fact that alignment between physical sex, gender identity and sexual

orientation does not necessarily adhere to heteronormative rules. Each facet may be determined independently of the others in the course of the development of an individual, both in utero and in post-natal life.

When does a difference or a variation become a disorder or a disease?

One answer might lie in linking the difference or variation to subjective distress or suffering. Take for example heart disease or cancer. A person is subjected to distress or suffering as a result of the condition, which in this case is referred to as a disorder or a disease.

If the difference or variation per se does not cause distress or suffering, it should not be considered a disorder or a disease, even though distress or suffering may be imposed by others, which is frequently the case in LGBTI individuals. In societies where gender diversity is accepted, the magnitude of externally imposed distress and suffering is reduced.

There are numerous countries that have moved closer to embracing gender and sexual diversity.

For example, the state of Minnesota in the US is moving towards banning “conversion therapy” for people whose sexual orientation differs from a heteronormative pattern, while Taiwan has recently become the first country in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage.

Similarly, the move by Malta to ban “normalisation” surgery on infants will allow for the self-determination of gender identity in people with differences in sex development. And several countries and communities are moving towards a gender neutral option on official documents.

But other countries have gone in the opposite direction and have hardened their stance. Examples include recent legislation enacted in Kenya and a ban on transgender people being allowed to join the military in the US.

### FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Self-expression is a fundamental human right. Gender and sexual diversity are part and parcel of being human. This is a fact. It is also a fact that this diversity occurs in many other species.

Whether or not one wishes to embrace this diversity is a separate issue.

Acceptance of diversity should not be predicated on scientific data. Furthermore, data in any shape or form is unlikely to convince people who wish to impose their own beliefs.

The key question is: does anyone have the right to judge?

*[the writer is Director of the Institute for Cellular and Molecular Medicine, University of Pretoria]*

## The problem with mindfulness

MASOUMEH SARA RAHMANI  
*theconversation.com*

Mindfulness, it seems everybody's doing it. You might have even tried it yourself – or have a regular practice. Thanks to the help of an app on your phone that speaks to you in dulcet tones, you are reminded to “let go” and to “observe your breath”. From the public education to healthcare, the corporate world to the criminal justice system, parliament to the military, mindfulness is promoted as a cure all for modern ills.

Yet the evidence for the efficacy of mindfulness is not strong. In an article published in Perspectives on Psychological Science, a number of psychologists and cognitive scientists warn that despite the hype, scientific data on mindfulness is limited. They caution:

“Misinformation and poor methodology associated with past studies of mindfulness may lead public consumers to be harmed, misled, and disappointed.”

Studies on mindfulness are known for their numerous methodological and conceptual problems. This includes small sample sizes, lack of control groups, and insufficient use of valid measures.

To this list, the possibility of competing interests can also be added. In a recent example, the mega-journal PLOS ONE retracted a meta-analysis on mindfulness after concerns were raised over the methodology behind the results, including “double counting” and “incorrect effect estimates”. The PLOS retraction also cited undeclared financial conflicts of interest by the authors. The journal noted that none of the authors agreed with the retraction.

Despite these issues, mindfulness has never been more popular and its influence in mainstream culture is massive, as can be seen in the creation of a new professorship in mindfulness and psychological science at the University of Oxford.

The position was created by the Oxford Mindfulness Centre, which became affiliated with the university's Department of Psychiatry in 2011, after initially establishing as a private company in 2007 and later registering as a charity. It has since

become a key player in shaping both the academic studies of mindfulness and the public's perception of the practice.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a type of meditation derived from the Buddhist tradition. It encourages the observation of present thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations in a non-judgemental way. But how did it gain such prominence in

al reflection.

The advocates of this reform projected modern Western values onto Buddhist teachings who claimed to teach the “pure” Buddhism as taught by the historical Buddha himself.

Contemporary meditation teachers, including Jon Kabat-Zinn (JKZ), the founder of Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) – an eight-



Western mainstream culture?

For a start, the modern concept of Buddhism that Westerners relate to today did not exist a century ago. This new style of Buddhism is known as “Buddhist Modernism”, or “Protestant Buddhism” – a reform movement of the late 19th century.

This form of Buddhism was developed as a result of the influence of Christian missionaries and to the colonialism and imperialism of South-East Asia by European nations. To respond to their colonial situation, the elite of the movement reshaped Buddhism by aligning it to Western science and philosophy. This was done by representing Buddhism as rational, universal and compatible with science – with an emphasis placed upon meditation and person-

week programme that offers mindfulness training to help people with stress and pain – inherited and popularised this version of Buddhism.

When pressed about the Buddhist elements of their courses, teachers such as JKZ argue the technique is not Buddhist, but the “essence” of the Buddha's teachings. These are said to be “universal” and compatible with science. Or as JKZ has put it, “the Buddha himself was not a Buddhist”.

These associations with Buddhism allows advocates of mindfulness to relish the legitimacy associated with the historical Buddha – yet at the same time avoid any undesired “religious” connotations. Likewise, when mindfulness is declared as “universal” then it seems to be less about Buddhism and more about a

“basic human ability”.

### SCIENCE AND MINDFULNESS

The idea that mindfulness is secular because it is scientifically tested is a common strategy used by advocates of mindfulness to disassociate the practice from its religious foundation and to promote it in clinical and educational settings.

It is well documented that JKZ intentionally downplayed the Buddhist roots of mindfulness to introduce it in clinical settings. In JKZ's own words, he “bent over backward to structure it [MBSR] and find ways to speak about it that avoided as much as possible the risk of it being seen as Buddhist”. In essence then he translated Buddhist ideas into scientific and secular language.

This approach takes advantage of the authority of science in modern Western cultures as well as the perceived opposition of “science” with “religion”. And by aligning mindfulness with science, its opposition to “religion” is implicitly conveyed.

### LEGITIMATISING MINDFULNESS

Appealing to science and empirical studies are not the only methods that mindfulness leaders have used to lend explicit legitimacy to mindfulness. The flourish of MA and PhD programmes, specific journals, conferences, university affiliated research centres – and now the professorship – demonstrate the movement's efforts to legitimise and secure the future of mindfulness as an academic enterprise.

But although mindfulness claims to offer a staggering collection of possible health benefits – and aligns itself with science and academia to be seen as credible – as yet there is remarkably little scientific evidence backing it up.

That's not to say a lot of people don't find it beneficial. Indeed, many people practice mindfulness everyday and feel it helps them in their lives. The problem is though that there is still a lot researchers do not know about mindfulness – and ultimately the field needs a much more systematic and rigorous approach to be able to support such claims.

*[the writer is Research Associate in Anthropology of Religion, Coventry University]*



# Apprised PM, HM on situation in West Bengal: Governor

**NEW DELHI, JUN 10 (PTI):** West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi Monday said he has apprised Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah about the prevailing situation in the state, where post poll violence has claimed nearly a dozen lives so far.

This is for the first time Tripathi met the prime minister and the home minister after the Lok Sabha elections.

"I have apprised the prime minister and the home minister about the situation in West Bengal. I can't disclose details," he told reporters here after meeting Shah.

Asked about the possibility of imposition of President's rule in West Bengal, he said there was no such discussion during his meetings.



The governor's visit to the national capital came amidst a verbal war between the Centre and the West Bengal government on the issue of post-poll violence in the state. On Sunday, in an advisory,

the Home Ministry had expressed "deep concern" over continuing violence in West Bengal, saying the "unabated violence" even after the Lok Sabha polls appears to be a failure on part of the

state government. "The unabated violence over the past weeks appears to be a failure on the part of the law enforcement machinery of the state to maintain the rule of law and inspire confidence

among people," the advisory said.

The West Bengal government hit back at the Centre saying there were a few "stray post-poll clashes" in West Bengal and the the situation in the state was "under control". In a letter to the Centre, Chief Secretary Malay Kumar De said "firm and appropriate actions" were initiated in all cases of violence without any delay.

According to the MHA, the latest reports indicated that four persons were killed on Saturday in post-poll clashes in North 24 Parganas district.

Earlier too, there have been reports of violence in which several people lost lives in various parts of West Bengal, the official said, quoting the advisory.

## MHA advisory deep-rooted conspiracy by BJP to grab power in oppn-ruled states: TMC



**KOLKATA, JUN 10 (PTI):** The Trinamool Congress Monday wrote to Union Home Minister Amit Shah alleging that the MHA advisory to the West Bengal government is a "deep-rooted conspiracy" by the BJP and an "evil ploy to grab power" in opposition-ruled states. The BJP, however, termed the allegations baseless and claimed that the law-and-order situation in the state has completely broken down.

TMC secretary general and West Bengal minister Partha Chatterjee, in a letter, claimed that the Ministry of Home Affairs has drawn conclusions without verifying the ground reality or taking a report from the state government. "We, on behalf of the Trinamool Congress, lodge our strong objection to the advisory issued by the MHA and urge that the same be withdrawn forthwith," he said.

In the advisory sent to the West Bengal government on Sunday, a day after BJP and TMC workers clashed in Sandeshkhali area of North Parganas district, the MHA had expressed "deep concern" over the continuing post-

poll violence in the state, and asked it to maintain law and order.

Criticising the advisory, Chatterjee said, "We have reason to believe that it is an evil ploy to grab power in states run by parties politically opposed to the BJP." "Moreover, this is a deep-rooted conspiracy and game plan to malign the state government and capture the Bengal administration through undemocratic, unethical and unconstitutional means."

Blaming "BJP goons" for violence and chaos across the state, the TMC leader alleged that as the MHA and the saffron party are being headed by the same person, it is "quite obvious" that "whatever the BJP desires, the MHA is implementing it with closed eyes, throwing all constitutional propriety to the wind". "In a democracy, the Centre and states work in tandem. Instead of taking the state government into confidence and verifying the ground situation, the unilateral issuance of an advisory by the MHA is an insult to the people of Bengal and an assault on the glory, culture, and heritage of the state," Chatterjee said.

Reacting to the TMC allegation, state BJP president Dilip Ghosh said the MHA was absolutely right in sending the advisory. "The law-and-order situation has completely broken down... The MHA has done the right thing. If the TMC is saying that the Union home minister and the BJP president are the same person, then the same rule applies in Bengal as well.

"The chief minister, home minister and party supreme are the same person (in Bengal). So, does that mean all the decisions taken by the state government are politically motivated?" Ghosh said. Senior BJP leader Mukul Roy also accused the state government of not cooperating with the Centre and violating the federal structure.

On Sunday night, the West Bengal government sent a letter to the MHA, saying that the situation in the state was "under control", and there was no failure on the part of its law enforcement agencies. The BJP has claimed that five of its workers were killed in the violence in Sandeshkhali, while the ruling TMC said that one was killed.

## MLA marries woman who lodged rape case against him

**AGARTALA, JUNE 10 (PTI):** MLA Dhananjay Tripura of Tripura's ruling party IPFT has married a woman who had accused him of raping and deceiving her. "Yes, I have married the woman at Chaturdas Devata temple in Agartala," Tripura told reporters here Monday. The Indigenous People's Front of Tripura MLA's counsel Amit Debarma said the legislator married the woman at Chaturdas Devta Temple on Sunday.

Debarma said the marriage was held and both parties have come to a compromise and no further complaint would be lodged against each other. The bride is now happily residing at Gandacherra, in Dhalai district. Valid docu-

ments would be submitted to the concerned authority on Tuesday morning for securing the marriage certificate. The woman had filed a case against the MLA on May 20 at Agartala Women's Police Station accusing him of raping and deceiving by not marrying her. In her complaint, the woman had claimed that she was "socially engaged" to the IPFT MLA from Rimavally constituency.

She had claimed that the legislator maintained an intimate relationship with her, but later refused to tie the nuptial knot. The MLA was booked for raping the woman. The Tripura High Court had on June 1 rejected the anticipatory bail plea of the MLA.

## Journalists, activists hold march to protest arrest of Kanojia, two others

**NEW DELHI, JUN 10 (PTI):** A group of journalists and activists held a protest here on Monday over the arrest of scribe Prashant Kanojia and the editor and the head of a Noida-based TV channel by the Uttar Pradesh police, alleging that it is an attack on the freedom of expression.

They demanded the immediate release of Kanojia, Anuj Shukla, who is the editor of Noida-based TV channel Nation Live, and its head Ishika Singh, who have faced police action over release of alleged objectionable content against Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

The journalists, many wearing black arm bands and holding placards, held a symbolic march from the Press Club of India in central Delhi towards the Rail Bhawan circle and back in the scorching heat and raised slogans against the Yogi government.

Kanojia's wife Jageesha Arora, who also joined the protest, said, "My husband's arrest is absolutely illegal and unconstitutional. So, now, people can get arrested for writing something on social media and using humour."

The protest was held jointly by members of the Editors Guild of India, Press Club of India, Indian Women Press Corps, South Asian Women in the Media, Press Association and several other independent journalists and activists.

"Today, journalists can get arrested for using humour and irony in a social media post. This incident is a direct attack on freedom of expression," alleged Siddharth Varadarajan, founding editor of news portal The Wire.

"Kanojia had served for around two years at our organisation (The

Wire) before moving on to a new job earlier this year," he added. Senior journalist Neerja Chowdhury, who took part in the protest too, also alleged that the arrest of the three persons amounted to an attack on the freedom of expression.

Activist Shabnam Hashmi also demanded immediate dropping of the charges against Kanojia, Singh and Shukla and sought their release.

The Editors Guild Sunday had condemned the arrest of Kanojia Singh and Shukla over alleged objectionable content related to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, describing the police action as an "authoritarian misuse of laws" and an effort to intimidate the press.

An FIR was registered against Kanojia at Hazratganj police station in Lucknow on Friday night in which it was alleged that the accused made "objectionable comments against the CM and tried to malign his image".

Kanojia had shared a video on Twitter and Facebook where a woman is seen speaking to reporters of various media organisations outside the CM's office, claiming that she had sent a marriage proposal to Adityanath.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court on Monday agreed to hear on Tuesday a plea challenging the arrest of Kanojia.

A vacation bench comprising justices Indira Banerjee and Ajay Rastogi took note of the submission by a lawyer that the plea filed by the spouse of the arrested scribe needed urgent hearing as the arrest was "illegal" and "unconstitutional".

The journalist's wife has filed a habeas corpus (bring the person) petition, challenging the arrest of Kanojia.

## SKM announces Rs 5 lac award for ward with highest margin win

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 JUN:**

A constituency-level coordination meeting of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha was held at Denchung under Poklok-Kamrang constituency in South Sikkim on Monday. The meeting was chaired by working president, MP Subba and was attended by senior leaders, workers and SKM candidates for the 2019 elections, Samdup Bhutia, Tilak Basnet, RK Basnet along with district level works and supporters of SKM party.

An SKM press release informs that working president, Mr Subba stated that every party worker needs to take responsibility to fulfil

the mission and dream of the Chief Minister, PS Tamang to make Sikkim prosperous and developed. He urged party workers to deliver their responsibility sincerely and also thanked them for bringing the party to power.

Senior vice-president, Bhoj Raj Rai expressed his confidence that SKM would win all three seats in the upcoming by-election in the State and encouraged the party workers to work hard to ensure high margin victory for the party. He announced Rs 5 lakh reward for the ward from where the party wins with the highest margin.

Frontal organisa-

tion vice-president and former MP, Nakul Das Rai stated that the SKM government has already done many works in a very short time and this is just the beginning. He also expressed his confidence that SKM would win the by-election with a huge margin. Nari Shakti [south/west] vice-president, Rama Tamang also addressed the meeting.

The release informs that another constituency-level coordination meeting was also held in Martam-Rumtek constituency. In the meeting, 71 SDF families joined SKM and were welcomed to the party by SKM spokesperson and candidate of this election, Sonam T Venjungpa.

## Workshop on Blockchain Technology begins at ICAFI Univ



**GANGTOK, 10 JUN [IPR]:** Minister for Urban Development & Housing Department, Arun Upreti, inaugurated a 15-day workshop on "Block Chain Technology" at ICAFI University, Sikkim, today.

Addressing the inaugural programme, the Minister said, "This event serves as a platform for students to eagerly follow evolving technologies and make the next generation ready for this

technology revolution."

The main objective of the workshop is to give an early exposure to students to new advanced technology areas that will benefit them in their future and careers.

The workshop will mainly focus on Basics of money, transactions and financial system, History of ledgers, accounting and blockchain, Blockchain basics, Introduction of cryptocurrency, Types of blockchain,

Smart contract introduction, Use cases of Blockchain Technology and Blockchain solution demo.

Blockchain is a leading software platform for digital assets. It is a data structure used to create a decentralized ledger and is composed of blocks in a serialized manner.

Faculty members, students and other dignitaries were present in the inaugural session of the workshop.

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Eight essays put the spotlight on the journey caused by hydro projects in Sikkim and the region, the cost exacted by this "development" and some of the states it birthed, not all of which have been shared before.

Also finding place in this collection is the arrival of Climate Change and its impact on Sikkim and how the State could negotiate with this new disruption.

**THE BIRDS HAVE LOST THEIR WAY**

Edited by TSHERING EDEN AND FEMA WANGCHUK

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# Yuvraj Singh: A hero who made everyone fall in love with white ball cricket

**KUSHAN SARKAR**

**NOTTINGHAM, JUN 10 (PTI):** Yuvraj Singh will forever remain an enigma in Indian cricket -- one of the country's greatest white ball players who could never really crack the Test code.

The man from Chandigarh will be remembered for giving India two world titles, one while coughing blood and suffering from a rare germ cell cancer.

Yet, as he called time on international cricket, one couldn't help but think what could have been if he had finished with 100 Tests instead of the 40 that had he played.

His batting in full flow was unadulterated joy, his off the field persona has always been a topic of curiosity and his power to remain relevant in the best and worst of times makes him a fascinating character.

Left-handers are born graceful but if they are powerful, it gives them that extra edge. Yuvraj had that.

If Sourav Ganguly's grace was like enjoying a long drive in companionable silence, Yuvraj's brute power was like experiencing a pillion ride on a Hayabusa on the same highway.

Both has its own distinct charm which is dif-



ficult to ignore.

Being the son of a pushy father, who wanted to fulfil his own unrealised dreams, Yuvraj initially lived Yograj Singh's dream.

Coming from Desh Pram Azad's stable, Yograj, whose career coincided with that of the great Kapil Dev, could never come to terms with his failure as an international cricketer, with just one Test match under his belt.

So failure possibly wasn't an option for Yuvraj, 37, whose favourite roller skates (he was an age group champion)

found a place in the junkyard.

He had to become a cricketer and he did become a bloody good one.

If Kapil Dev's contribution was massive in 1983, in terms of impact, Yuvraj's 300 plus runs and 15 wickets was gold standard performance during the 2011 World Cup.

He was a man cut out for the big occasions, whether the Natwest final at Lord's, the six sixes off Stuart Broad in a must-win World T20 game in Durban or the quarter final half century against Australia at

Ahmedabad, he could bring his A game to the fore in testing situations.

In that Indian lineup, barring Virender Sehwag, no one hit the ball harder than Yuvraj.

Had he not hit those six sixes, God knows what exactly would have Lalit Modi marketed and how big a tournament Indian Premier League would have been.

Yet it will remain a mystery as to why he couldn't deliver in IPL. Teams would empty their coffers to buy him only to be left high and dry.

Also something would drastically change

when he would wear the white flannels.

Self belief would be replaced by self doubts, the footwork not as assured as it is in coloured clothing.

He had a problem on slow decks against slow bowlers. He could never really get going against Muttiah Muralitharan.

The technical problems stayed but he was able to build his game around that and the 300-plus ODIs bear testimony to his ability.

It was a pity that Yuvraj couldn't become the Test player he should have been. A part of it

was that he was never consistent and to be fair, he was fighting for a middle order slot with Ganguly in his early days.

He remained confused as to where he belonged. By the time he could have got settled in the side, he was fighting the biggest battle. The battle of life, cancer.

"It was like touching the sky and then falling down at light speed and hitting the ground hard. All this happened so quickly," said Yuvraj.

His story post 2011 was a triumph of life rather than achievements on the cricket field.

Ill health took its toll and he was never the same player again. In the 2014 World T20 final on a slow Mirpur track, his 11 off 21 balls was the biggest reason for India's defeat against Sri Lanka.

He did make those sporadic comebacks but his fitness standards had dropped and the 2017 Champions Trophy was where his epitaph was written.

Still, Yuvraj was, is and will remain one of India's greatest ODI cricketers. His name would always be taken in the same breath as Sachin Tendulkar, Kapil Dev and Virat Kohli. No one can take that away from him.

## Investors throng jewellery store as owner 'disappears'



**BENGALURU, JUN 10 (PTI):** Hundreds of investors thronged a prominent city jewellery store Monday after an audio clip surfaced where a person alleged to be the owner is heard saying he is going to commit suicide as he was fed up with corruption. The owner was also into the chit fund business. As soon the audio went viral, investors including a large number of women with their children started gathering at the IMA Jewellers headquarters at Shivajinagar near here demanding action against Mohammed Mansur Khan, the owner. The person is heard addressing police that he was committing suicide as he was fed up with corruption in the state and central government.

In the audio, he is also heard accusing central and state officials of harassing him, compelling him to take the extreme step. He also asks police to sell all his wealth and jewellery to pay investors and is heard accusing a politician of taking Rs 400 crore from him and not returning it. Investors claimed they had invested crores in the firm.

Police have deployed adequate force around the jewellery shop to prevent any untoward incidents.

Deputy commissioner of police of Bengaluru East division Rahul Kumar Shahapurwad appealed to investors to lodge complaints with police with whatever proof they have. He also made it clear that they have no information about Khan and asked people not to jump to any conclusion.

Police suspect that at least 26,000 investors from across Karnataka have been cheated.

Meanwhile, police have sounded alert at airport, bus-stand and railway station to track the jeweller.

Police and investors said his mobile phone has been switched off and he is not traceable. "... He has switched off his mobile phone and he is untraceable," commercial street police inspector B K Shekhar said.

Gultaz Banu, an investor, claimed she had invested about Rs nine lakh in the company.

"Since he was paying very high returns we relied on him. I sold all my jewellery to deposit in his company. Today I am left with nothing," Banu said.

Most of those who invested in the company belong to the minority community, working as autorickshaw drivers, beedi manufacturers, carpenters and street vendors, police said. Two years ago, the income tax department had conducted searches at the IMA business establishments.

## It's time to move on: Yuvraj calls time on international career

**MUMBAI, JUN 10 (PTI):** Not just international cricket, Yuvraj Singh Monday also bid adieu to the IPL, the cash-rich event in which he was costliest cricketer in 2015 but was picked up at base price this time.

Bucking the international trend of continuing IPL stints after international retirements, Yuvraj said he was clear about ending his sojourn with glamorous event last year itself.

The 37-year-old, who went for a record Rs 16 crore to the Delhi franchise back in 2015 turned up for the Mumbai Indians this year after being picked for a reduced base price of Rs one crore.

"Last year only I had thought that this year's IPL will be my last," an emotional Yuvraj said addressing the media here.

"I am not available for IPL. I have retired from BCCI and international cricket. I am looking forward to play outside India (in T20 leagues)," He captained Kings XI Punjab and the now defunct Pune Warriors. He also represented Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad.

The left-handed batsman, who played just four matches for Mumbai Indians and scored 98 runs at an average of 24.50 including a half-century

this year, felt it would have been better had he got more opportunities to play and bow out on a high.

"I was confused with my career and how I would end it. I would have been satisfied if I could have played more games in IPL 2019, would have been happy to leave the sport with that.

"But you don't get everything in life. I had decided last year that this IPL would be my last and I'll give it my best shot," Yuvraj, who has scored 2750 runs in 132 IPL matches at a strike rate of 129.71, confessed.

However, he now wants to continue playing in other domestic T20 cricket leagues around the world if he gets the approval from the BCCI.

"I want to play T20 cricket. At this age I can manage to play some kind of fun cricket. I want to go and enjoy my life. It's been too stressful just thinking about my international career, performing and big tournaments like the IPL," said Yuvraj.

"Now I would like to enjoy myself. With BCCI's permission I would like to go and play. Just have fun for this year and maybe next year, whatever is left in me.

"It's been a very long and hard journey and I think I deserve that," he added.

## Anand beats Wesley So, joint fifth at Norway chess

**STAVANGER (NORWAY), JUN 10 (PTI):** Former world champion Viswanathan Anand pulled off an easy win over Wesley So of United States to be joint fifth after the fifth round of the Altibox Norway chess tournament here.

Anand proved why he is hailed as the speed king when he easily managed a draw in the Armageddon game as black and won 1.5-0.5 against Wesley.

With his third victory on the trot after two losses in the first two rounds, Anand took himself to joint fifth position in the super tournament that is for the first time trying out a format that gives decisive results in each round.

For Anand, the writing was on the wall in the Armageddon where he had seven minutes compared to 10 that Wesley got being white.

The 'draw-odds' being order of the day for black, Wesley was expected to go for the King. However, the Filipino-turned-American decided to fight on strategic grounds that did not work as a good idea.

Wesley chose an unorthodox queen pawn



game wherein Anand had no troubles equalising out of the opening.

The pieces changed hands at regular intervals and the Indian ace was at his best in finding some wily manoeuvres that kept Wesley at bay.

In the end, the players reached a rook and pawns endgame which was just a draw. Meanwhile, reigning world champion and local star Magnus Carlsen continued with his winning ways and accounted for Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France in another Armageddon of the day.

All five games in the 10-player tournament

were decided in the tiebreaker in the fifth round. Carlsen took his tally to eight points with his fourth victory in the tiebreaker.

Yu Yangyi of China emerged on the second spot on 6.5 points with another fine performance that saw him get past Americal Fabiano Caruana.

Levon Aronian staged a comeback at the expense of Ding Liren of China to share the third spot along with Wesley on six points while Anand is now joint fifth with Ding Liren.

Shakhriyar Mamedyarov of Azerbaijan stands

on the seventh spot on 4.5 points a full point ahead of Caruana. Vachier-Lagrave is ninth with just three points. Alexander Grischuk of Russia is on 2.5 points and needs some big scoring in the remaining four rounds.

Results round 5: Wesley So (Usa, 6) lost to V Anand (Ind, 5); Ding Liren (Chn, 5) lost to Levon Aronian (Arm, 6); Maxime vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 3) lost o Magnus Carlsen (Nor, 8); Yu Yangyi (Chn, 6.5) beat Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 3.5); Shakhriyayr Mamedyarov (Aze, 4.5) lost to Alexander Grischuk (Rus, 2.5).

## Ferrari appeal after Vettel penalty hands Hamilton Canada GP win

**MONTREAL, JUN 10 (AFP):** Ferrari said Sunday they will appeal against the five-second penalty that cost Sebastian Vettel victory in the Canadian Grand Prix. Five-time Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton maintained Mercedes' record winning start to the season when he was handed the controversial victory courtesy of a disputed stewards' decision, despite crossing the finish line just behind the German. Vettel was deemed to have forced a charging Hamilton towards a wall after running off at a chicane and rejoining across a strip of grass.

The Briton had to brake and pull out of his overtaking manoeuvre, prompting the stewards to impose the time penalty on Vettel.

"Where could I go?" protested Vettel. "They're stealing the race from us."

Ferrari team principal Mattia Binotto later said the team would be appealing against the penalty. "At the moment, we, as a team, are naturally disappointed," said Binotto in a statement posted on the Ferrari official website. "As for Seb, I don't think he could have done things differently, which is why we have decided to appeal the Stewards' decision."

Under the sport's regulations, Ferrari have 96 hours from the end of the race to gather evidence to support their appeal.

Vettel drove his car back to the garage instead of into parc ferme and refused to attend the post-race interviews.

He stormed off to the Ferrari motor home before being persuaded by

his team to return for the podium ceremonies. On the way he walked into parc ferme and swapped the number one for the winner from in front of Hamilton's Mercedes with the number two in front of the empty space for his car. The pro-Ferrari crowd booed Hamilton on the podium, but Vettel told them: "Don't boo Lewis -- you should boo these decisions, not him."

It was a record seventh victory in Canada for Hamilton and the 78th of his career.

It extended Mercedes' season-opening run to seven successive wins.

Vettel was classified second ahead of his Ferrari team-mate Leclerc. Valtteri Bottas was fourth in the second Mercedes followed by Max Verstappen of Red Bull and Daniel Ricciardo of Renault.

Hamilton had suffered problems before the start. A hydraulics leak, discovered in the morning, required two hours to strip down and repair his power unit and then a slow getaway for the formation lap created more alarm.

But as the start lights went out, he kept cool to resist Leclerc and stay within sight of Vettel who built a lead of 1.6 seconds on the opening lap from pole position.

Tyre wear was a key factor on the Isle Notre-Dame as track temperatures touched 50 Celsius and Hamilton bided his time.

Vettel pitted from the lead for hard tyres on lap 25 and rejoined in third leaving Hamilton to push on his worn rubber as Vettel clocked the fastest lap behind new leader Leclerc.

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# IHC rejects bail for Zardari, his sister in fake bank accounts case

**BY SAJJAD HUSSAIN**  
**ISLAMABAD, JUN 10 (PTI):** A Pakistani court Monday rejected a plea for pre-arrest bail for former president Asif Ali Zardari and his sister in the fake bank accounts case, a ruling that paves the way for the country's top anti-graft body to arrest the accused duo.

A two-member bench of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) rejected an application seeking extension in the pre-arrest bails of Zardari and Faryal Talpur. However, they could not be arrested as the bench reserved the verdict and only announced it when the duo had left the court.

The arrest warrants were issued on Sunday by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), the anti-corruption watchdog, which is probing them in the fake bank accounts case.

The case pertains to the use of alleged fake bank accounts to keep money and transferring it out of Pakistan.

According to the NAB officials, the duo made transactions of Rs 150 million through alleged



fake bank accounts.

After rejection of the bail, the two can be arrested anytime by the NAB, which already has set up two teams for it.

Zardari and Talpur, however, have an option to lodge appeal in the Supreme Court against the verdict.

The cases against Zardari are part of the investigations being conducted by NAB in pursuance of the Supreme Court's verdict in the

money laundering of billions through fake accounts case.

On May 14, the anti-corruption unit furnished details of inquiries, investigations and references in the fake accounts case.

In the report, NAB listed down at least eight cases where Zardari's link had been established. It further added that 22 inquiries and three investigations were underway while three

references had been filed. In December 2015, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) began a discreet investigation into certain bank accounts through which multi-billion rupee transactions were made.

By June, the FIA had several high-profile names on its list but was unable to make headway for several reasons.

The Supreme Court intervened and then chief justice Mian Saqib

Nisar took notice of the 'slow progress' in the money-laundering case. In July, Zardari's close aides Hussain Lawai, Taha Raza and two others were arrested.

The apex court also ordered the formation of a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to quicken the pace of the investigation.

The JIT identified 11,500 bank accounts and 924 account holders at the start of their investigation.

## SCO meeting agenda on counter terrorism not aimed at "targeting" any country: China

**BY K J M VARMA**  
**BEIJING, JUN 10 (PTI):** The SCO summit in Bishkek this week would discuss economy-related issues and security cooperation with a focus on counter terrorism, but it is not aimed at "targeting" any country, China said on Monday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan are attending the meeting amidst frosty Indo-Pak relations.

The 19th summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will be held the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek on June 13-14. Prime Minister Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping would also attend the summit. Pakistan Prime Minister Khan will also take part in the meeting.

The SCO is a China-led eight-member economic and security bloc. Its founding members include China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan were admitted to the Beijing-based regional security grouping in 2017.

This week's SCO summit will be the first major international event being attended by Modi after his re-election. He would meet President Xi and Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the summit.

India has said that no bilateral meeting has been planned between Prime Minister Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Khan on the sidelines of the SCO Summit.

Tensions between India and Pakistan worsened after the Pulwama terror attack and both the countries were almost on the brink of a war after India's military planes struck a terrorist training camp in Pakistan's Balakot on February 26 and Pakistan carried out a counter-offensive the next day.

India has not been engaging with Pakistan following the attack on the Air Force base at Pathankot in January of 2016, maintaining that talks and terror cannot go together.

Briefing journalists here on the SCO summit, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Hanhui said the meeting would review the past year's work of the grouping and draw up a plan for cooperation this year.

"The institutional building of the SCO would be discussed involving economic and security cooperation, particularly on counter terrorism. Security and develop-



ment are two major issues focus of the SCO," he said.

"The establishment of the SCO is not to target any country but summit of this level would certainly pay attention to major international and regional issues," he said in response to a question whether the thrust of the summit would be to oppose the US' trade frictions with China and other countries.

China routinely asserts that the SCO in which it plays a dominant part is not aimed at forming a military alliance.

Since the admission of India and Pakistan into the SCO, Chinese officials have been expressing hope that both the countries would make use of the organisation to improve relations and not to make it a platform to highlight their differences.

Zhang also said this year's summit could also discuss issues like multilateralism and protectionism in the context of US trade tensions China besides several other countries including India.

"As for the ongoing unilateral protectionism and bullying practices in the world, they are close to the hearts of all countries," he said.

"We have not set an agenda beforehand but some participating countries will be interested in these topics. Some leaders will express their views on these matters. It is only natural to see that is happening," he said.

He also said the China-US trade war and the "spectre" of emerging trade frictions between the US and India could become important part of the discussions between the two leaders.

"Whether they will talk about trade frictions between China and the US and the spectre of trade frictions between the US and India, such things are not surprising. I believe this could become an important topic in his bilater-

al meetings with the related leaders," he said.

China and the US have been in an escalating conflict over trade for the past year. The scope of the battle has expanded in recent months as Washington has tightened trade restrictions on Chinese telecom giant Huawei.

Chinese officials hope that India, which is also facing trade frictions with the US specially over termination of its designation as a 'beneficiary developing country' under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), would join the fight against Trump's protectionist policies.

"Trade protectionism and unilateralism are very much on the rise. How to respond to the bullying practices of the US, its practice of trade protectionism this is an important question not only to China, but also has direct bearing on the recovery of global economy," Zhang said.

Zhang also said Xi would also meet Pakistan Prime Minister Khan where the two leaders would focus their talks on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and counter terrorism related issues. "Our bilateral relations are growing very well. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) framework (in which the CPEC is a part) and in terms of counter terrorism framework we have carried out cooperation with very fruitful outcomes," Zhang said.

"Such outcomes are good for two economies and have played positive role in promoting our respective security and regional stability. I am sure meeting between the two leaders will focus on the pressing issues in bilateral relations, regional and international issues," he said.

In recent years the SCO has made counter terrorism cooperation one of its main focus areas.

## Priti Patel backs Boris Johnson as British PM race gathers pace

**BY ADITI KHANNA**  
**LONDON, JUN 10 (PTI):** Indian-origin Conservative Party MP Priti Patel, a vocal pro-Brexiteer who was among the candidates many expected to also contest, on Monday threw her support behind Boris Johnson instead.

Patel's decision came as the race for a new British Prime Minister to succeed Theresa May gathered pace on Monday, the deadline for all the candidates to file their nominations.

Johnson, a former foreign secretary in the Theresa May Cabinet, is seen as a frontrunner to take over as Conservative Party leader and Prime Minister. Patel, a former UK international development minister, said that she believes Johnson is also the right candidate to strengthen Britain's bond with countries like India.

Boris Johnson will bring a spirit of optimism and the ability to lift our standing in the world by strengthening the living bridge between our two great nations, said the 47-year-old Patel.

It is about time that we strengthen the political bonds between UK and India, following the recent decline. We must grow our bonds into a very special relationship built on centuries of diplomacy, trade and common values, and importantly, our people to people ties that continue to enrich our countries and our links, she said.

Her intervention comes as Tory MPs on either side of the Brexit divide begin to pick the candidates they are backing in the prime ministerial race, which remains wide open with nearly a dozen hopefuls in the fray.

Their stand on Britain's exit from the European Union (EU) will be the defining factor, as Brexit was the issue that ultimately led to May being forced to announce her date for departure from Downing Street.

May officially stepped down as the leader of

the Conservative Party on Friday but remains as PM until her successor is chosen.

Each of those eyeing Downing Street are also trying to make a serious policy pitch in an attempt to sway as many Tory MPs as possible to vote in the first round of the ballot, which will whittle down the list to two candidates who will be put forward for a vote by the wider Conservative Party membership to choose a new leader in the coming weeks.

Johnson, 54, so far the bookies' favourite in the race, has pledged to cut income tax bills for people earning more than GBP 50,000 a year if he wins the race to succeed May as Prime Minister.

His pledge instantly attracted an Opposition backlash, with the Labour Party accusing the ruling Tories of being out of touch with public sentiment.

Pakistani-origin Sajid Javid is using his position as UK home secretary to pledge an improved visa offering for overseas students from countries like India after Brexit.

I want to see more international students come to our country. If they're coming here to study at our great universities, and if they want to work afterwards, we should make it easier for them to stay and work. We need a more positive attitude to this and I think the country would welcome it, said Javid.

Javid has attracted the backing of the popular Scottish Conservatives leader Ruth Davidson as well as a few other prominent Tory MPs.

UK foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt has also made a serious pitch for leadership, relying on what he believes are his strong credentials as a negotiator. He has some high-profile ministers in his camp, including work and pensions secretary Amber Rudd and Foreign Office Minister for Asia Mark Field.

UK environment secretary Michael Gove, one of 11 who have ex-

pressed plans to contest the leadership race, has faced calls to drop out after he admitted using cocaine several times more than 20 years ago.

However, he looks determined to carry on with his bid saying he is "undaunted" by criticism because he believes he can deliver Brexit.

Among some of the others who formally launched their leadership bids on Monday include UK health secretary Matt Hancock, who called for a 'fresh start', and former Brexit Secretary Dominic Raab, who unveiled proposals to redirect GBP 500 million a year from the UK's aid budget to create an international wildlife fund to save endangered species and habitats.

International development minister Rory Stewart has been holding conversations with the public over the past few days as part of his strategy, with former ministers Andrea Leadsom and Esther McVey among some of the other key contenders. Whereas candidates in the past needed just two MPs supporting them, the Tory party's influential 1922 Committee which conducts the election process decided to change the rules earlier this month in a bid to speed up the contest, requiring a minimum of eight MPs for each candidate.

After nominations close on Monday evening, all 313 Conservative MPs will vote for their preferred candidate in a series of ballots held on June 13, 18, 19 and 20 to narrow down the contenders one by one until only two are left.

Due to another rule change, candidates will need to win the votes of at least 16 other MPs in the first ballot and 32 colleagues in the second to proceed.

The final two will be put to the over 120,000 members of the wider Conservative Party in a vote from June 22, with the winner expected to be announced about four weeks later.





# Girish Karnad remembered: The smartest, most talented

**MUMBAI/NEW DELHI, JUN 10 (PTI):** Political leaders, theatre personalities and the artistes from the entertainment sphere on Monday condoled the death of Girish Karnad, saying they will miss the brilliance of the iconic playwright-actor-director and his immense contribution to arts and culture.

Karnad, 81, died on Monday after prolonged illness at his Bengaluru residence. He was a progressive voice that championed the freedom of expression. He worked across industries - Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Hindi and Marathi. President Ram Nath Kovind called Karnad's death an irreparable loss to the world of Indian theatre.

"Sad to hear of the passing of Girish Karnad, writer, actor and doyen of Indian theatre. Our cultural world is poorer today. My condolences to his family and to the many who followed his work #PresidentKovind," the tweet by the president read.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised Karnad for speaking up about causes dear to him. "Girish Karnad will be remembered for his versatile acting across all mediums. He also spoke passionately on causes dear to him. His works will continue being popular in the years to come. Saddened by his demise. May his soul rest in peace," the tweet by the PM read.

Politician and CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury also condoled Karnad's death.

"Heartfelt condolences on passing away of one of modern India's treasures, Girish Karnad. A writer, dramatist, director and actor par excellence. He stood out for his commitment to social upliftment, equality and secularism. It is a huge personal loss too," Yechury tweeted.

South star-turned-politician Kamal Haasan lauded the rich legacy of the veteran writer and director. "Mr Girish Karnad, His scripts both awe and inspire me. He has left behind many inspired fans who are writers. Their works perhaps will make his loss partly bearable," Haasan tweeted.

Chandrashekhar Kambar, president, Sahitya Akademi said he lost a "very intimate friend" in Karnad. "He was my colleague. We wrote plays in a very competent manner. He came all the way from Bombay and acted in my play 'Jokumaraswamy'. When he got the Jnanpith Award I celebrated, when I got one he celebrated. I'm very sad," Kambar told PTI.

Choreographer-actor Prabhu Dheva recalls working with him in his 1984 film "Kadhlan" directed by S Shankar.

"He was such a nice person, intelligent and incredibly humble. He was so talented, (he was) the smartest. I still remember shooting the film with him. I remember meeting him often at airports. He always surprised me with his humility," Prabhu Dheva told PTI. Actor Sonam Kapoor wrote on Twitter,

"Rest in peace. I loved his work."

The influence of Karnad's work was massive and spread across a generation of artistes from veteran star Kamal Haasan to the younger, Bollywood actor Ali Fazal said.

"One of my first big production at the Doon School, was #GirishKarnad's 'Hayavadana'. A masterpiece that I got to perform. I remember it so vividly. An extraordinary man. He will be remembered for his unique sense of style and persona. In writing in acting and in life," Fazal wrote on Twitter.

Actor Tisca Chopra recalled how conversations with Karnad on theatre and writing have had a huge impact on her life.



"Deeply saddened at the passing of #GirishKarnad... He was kind to let me rent his house in #Bandra when I first came to Mumbai. Spent many evenings chatting with him about theatre and writing... Those chats had a deep impact on my choices at work.. #RIP dear friend. You will be missed," she tweeted.

Actor Shruti Haasan also took to Twitter and wrote, "May you rest in peace Girish Karnad sir. Your talent humour and sharp intellect will be missed." Actor Siddharth tweeted, "Rest in peace great sir. #GirishKarnad."

Though he started off his career in cinema as an actor, he is best known as a writer and thinker. Karnad was one of the most prominent artistic voices of his generation.

He was an eminent playwright with works such as "Nag-Mandala", "Yayati" and "Tughlaq", which was one of the most successfully performed plays, to his credit.

He also worked in Hindi cinema's parallel film movement in movies such as "Swami", and "Nishant".

His TV credits include "Malgudi Days" in which he played Swami's father and a hosting stint in the science magazine "Turning Point" on Doordarshan in the early 1990s.

In later years, Karnad was seen in commercial films such as Salman Khan's "Tiger Zinda Hai" and Ajay Devgn-starrer "Shivaay".

## Karnad, an intellectual giant who remained humble, say friends

**MUMBAI, JUN 10 (PTI):** As the literature world mourned the demise of veteran playwright and actor Girish Karnad, some of his old friends and colleagues from Maharashtra revealed little known aspects of his life, saying he never boasted about his intellect despite his towering stature.

Ashok Kulkarni, Karnad's Pune-based friend since their college days, said though the actor was well read and was known for his love for books, his colleagues "never felt that pressure".

"We used to discuss cinema, theatre and other forms of literature but I don't remember any time when Karnad tried to dominate the conversation with his intellect," he told PTI.

Karnad's command over several languages and his deep understanding of the literary and creative worlds made him the first non-civil servant director of Pune's prestigious Film and Television Institute of India (FTII).

He was also the only director of FTII who went on to serve as its chairman, an official from the government-run institute said.

He was FTII's director from January

1, 1974 to December 31, 1975 and later served as its chairman from February 1999 to October 2001, the official said.

Karnad was also the youngest director of FTII when he took charge of the post at the age of 35 years and, incidentally, some his students were older than him, he said.

"He introduced an 'Integrated Course' in the institute's syllabus that required students of one specialisation course to learn about other specialisations as well. It is still in the syllabus in the form of a 'Common Course', FTII Director Bhupendra Kainthola said.

Noted translator Uma Virupaksh Kulkarni recalled how her meetings with Karnad used to be "warm and pleasant".

She translated four of Karnad's dramas as well as his autobiography into Marathi, titled 'Khelata Khelata Ayushya'.

"He used to understand Marathi as his early education was in that language and never lost the grip. He was the only Kannada author who could understand Marathi, and he used to put me at ease during our discussions," she said.

"His drama 'Nagamandala' was one of the first plays that I translated into Marathi and it gave me confidence. I was already translating other forms of literature and never tried my hands at drama, but, with Karnad's support, I was able to do so," she said.

Kulkarni said she still has Karnad's letter addressed to her when she was translating "Nagamandala".

"He would initiate the conversation and always remained accessible and open to new ideas, as I was not merely translating but bringing the concepts and ideas into another language," she said.

Karnad himself translated noted Marathi playwright P L Deshpande's drama "Tuja Aahe Tujapashi", and attempted it on stage in Kannada, she added.

Karnad, 81, died on Monday in Bengaluru after a prolonged illness.

A multifaceted personality, he acted in several plays and movies that received critical acclamation.

His plays, written in Kannada, have been translated in English and several Indian languages.



**NEW DO!** Kaia Gerber stepped out in sunny New York wearing a flirty blue dress and showing off her new short locks.

## ZEE5 partners with Israeli tech company Applicaster

**BY KOMAL PANCHAMATIA TEL AVIV, JUN 10 (PTI):** OTT digital platform ZEE5 has entered into a partnership with Applicaster, one of Israel's leading global cloud platforms for media app development and management in the media space.

Applicaster will work with ZEE5 to enhance the latter's user interface and experience, leveraging its state-of-the-art tech, industry knowledge on the evolving trends across the globe.

It will also enhance ZEE5's functionality, offering a seamless content viewing experience to the viewers. "India is the world's fourth largest app market and one of the most crowded one for OTT players. ZEE5 has been a frontrunner in bringing the best-in-class experience for subscribers seeking entertainment content in multiple Indian languages.

"And today we have be-

come the first to harness the capabilities of Israeli tech start-ups and their expertise in the mobile entertainment space. With the warming up of relations between the two advanced countries, we are confident of building a winning proposition for all involved," Tarun Katial, CEO, ZEE5 India said in a statement. He added the journey over the past year has given the company immense insights in terms of the changing behaviour of OTT viewers. "This knowledge complemented by the technological prowess of Applicaster will result in a delightful experience for the ZEE5 viewers the world over," Katial said.

Applicaster co-founder and CEO Jonathan Laor said he is thrilled to partner with ZEE5. "Throughout our discussions, ZEE5's passion for delighting their customers through rich user experienc-

es was clear and matched our beliefs perfectly. We are thrilled to be chosen as ZEE5's partner of choice in realising their desire to minimise development time and integrate the best of breed components necessary to deliver an industry leading user experience to their 61.5 million active users," Laor said.

Both the parties signed the MoU in the presence of Pavan Kapoor, Indian ambassador to Israel at the Indian Embassy in Israel.

Kapoor said deals like these will set the tone for more collaborations between the two countries going forward in the field of innovation and technology.

"India and Israel share a deep bond of friendship with extensive commercial linkages. Collaborations like this will bring our people closer and enable learning and mutual prosperity," the ambassador added.

**ARIES:** Opinions, opinions! Under today's frustrating face-off between the Sun and Jupiter, people may confuse their POVs with empirical facts. And get ready for some spirited debates! Sure, you could learn something fascinating from a wise soul. Then there are people who seem immune to logic and proof. Don't get caught up in senseless arguments with know-it-alls...or trolls!

**TAURUS:** You're sexy and you know it, Taurus, but try not to lose your cool because some wildly flattering attention is coming your way. Today, as the Sun faces off with Jupiter in your intense eighth house, those live-for-the-moment adventures can lead you down an obsessive rabbit hole. Although you're turned on and lit up, try to hold out for lasting value in all partnerships.

**GEMINI:** Under today's stars, you're more naughty than nice, so unleash your mischievous side. Let your hair down and allow your inner bad girl/guy to come out to play. Get yourself glammed up for a night on the town, or inject some spice into your day by sending

the object of your affections a suggestive message or photo.

**CANCER:** Today, people's expectations (and soon, their demands!) might balloon out of proportion. Here's the rub: This whole situation might be your "fault." With the Sun and supersizer Jupiter working at cross-purposes, your ego could be out to prove something, leading you to take on responsibilities that are above your pay grade. Don't get swept up in the competitive vibes: As it's been said, pride goeth before a fall.

**LEO:** The world's your oyster as quicksilver Mercury makes a global entry into your ninth house of travel and adventure until May 6, sparking your wanderlust. Grab your car keys—or passport—and enjoy a spur-of-the-moment getaway. If you can't get out of Dodge on such short notice, consider this your long-lead nudge to start planning your late-spring or summer vacay NOW.

**LIBRA:** Body language isn't just a dialect spoken by a few—it's the universal language of love! And today, your cosmic ruler, sil-

ver-tongued Mercury, flits into your sultry, seductive erotic eighth house until May 6, inviting you to flirt with abandon. It's a time to let your desires be known, directly or with more secretive subtlety.

**VIRGO:** Even someone with superhuman powers couldn't keep up with everything you've got piled on your plate, Virgo. Compromise is mandatory if you hope to maintain some semblance of sanity, so find ways to scale back and streamline. In order to accomplish your most important work mission today, you'll need to backburner each and every nonessential to-do on your list. Tune out those around you, and you'll cross the finish line before the end of the day. Phew.

**SCORPIO:** Today's emo moon brings out your empathetic side. Don't fight those feelings, Scorpio! If you feel a surge of sadness or anger in response to a friend's plight, express it! Let the tears flow and open your heart to those who mean the most to you. Go out of your way to let them know how important they are in your world. When you need a steady shoulder and a compassionate ear, they'll be there

for you with bells on.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Pull off that oversized cashmere sweater and slip into something more glamorous—or better yet, sexier. Today, messenger Mercury wings into your amorous, glamorous fifth house until May 6, turning you into an unabashed flirtaholic. Harboring a secret crush? It's time to act on it, Archer. Plan more playful dates over the next few weeks, whether you're single or spoken for. Think: private whisky tasting or an adventurous road trip to see Hamilton on tour. You'll be a magnet for magnets, so don't be shy about approaching the power players in any room!

**CAPRICORN:** Trying to make everyone happy, Capricorn? Today's stars turn that into an exercise in futility. If you've piled one too many obligations on your plate, your stress levels are liable to peak. Your best bet is to graciously bow out of a few responsibilities in the name of preserving your peace of mind. Don't worry—the people who really count will understand. And if anyone tries to send you on a guilt

trip, remember that their emotions are not your responsibility!

**AQUARIUS:** The more is not the merrier today if it means being upstaged by someone's off-putting swagger. Don't force yourself to include a "big personality" in your plans. You need to guard your precious group hangs from disruptive forces. Of course, with the Sun in your theatrical fifth house opposing live-out-loud Jupiter in your teamwork zone, it could be YOU who's hogging the spotlight. Bring on the witty one-liners and wildly spontaneous whims. But remember, you're gathering to connect with people, not be the entertainment!

**PISCES:** It's easy to overshoot the mark today as the Sun and Jupiter face off and pump up your swagger to baller levels. Your ambition is admirable, but ignoring protocol could mean stepping on the wrong person's stilettoes. At least for today, pay attention to the power pyramid and play the political game. Take time to add a personal touch to all your professional dealings