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RELATIONSHIPS: JUSTIN BIEBER**

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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## Govt mourns passing away of former CS

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:**

The State Government today declared a holiday for Wednesday, 04 September, to mourn the passing away of former Chief Secretary, ND Chingapa, who had passed away on 29 August and whose funeral is scheduled for Wednesday.

A government notification issued by the Home Department today, while registering the government's sorrow over the passing away, informs that all government offices, educational institutions and PSUs shall remain closed on Wednesday as a mark of respect for the departed soul.

## Man slapped with Rs 23,000 fine for traffic-related violations in Gurugram

**GURUGRAM, SEP 3 (PTI):**

The Gurugram traffic police on Tuesday issued a challan of Rs 23,000 to a two-wheeler rider for multiple violations under the amended Motor Vehicle Act, an official said.

Dinesh Madan, a resident of east Delhi's Geeta Colony, was penalised for not carrying necessary documents and driving without helmet. He was caught by police outside the district courts.

"He could not produce necessary documents such as RC, insurance papers, driving licence and the pollution certificate. Hence, traffic cops fined him Rs 5000 for RC, Rs 5,000 for driving licence, Rs 10,000 for pollution certificate, Rs 2,000 for third party insurance and Rs 1,000 for not wearing helmet or turban," said Subhash Bokan, PRO of the Gurugram police.

"I wasn't wearing a helmet and didn't have the registration certificate. The traffic policeman asked me to hand over the key of my scooter but I refused. He immediately printed a challan of Rs 23,000 and seized my vehicle," Madan said, adding that the value of his scooter was just Rs 15,000. "I even got a copy of the registration on WhatsApp from my home but by then the police officer had printed the fine. The amount could have been less had he waited for a while. I just want that the fine be reduced. From now onwards, I will always carry my documents," he added.

The PRO of the Gurugram police said the vehicle had been impounded.

"We have noticed in many cases that commuters don't carry necessary documents," he said, adding that they had assured Madan and other violators that on the production of documents later, their fine would be reduced accordingly.

## IMF's sport climbing competition in Sikkim ignores local climbers

**We have not been informed or invited, complain SMA and SSCA**

**SAGAR CHHETRI  
GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:**

Sports climbers from Sikkim have expressed their disappointment over not getting an opportunity to participate in the upcoming All India Indian Mountaineering Foundation [IMF] Sport Climbing Competition to be held this month in Sikkim. They have alleged that neither the concerned association of sports climbers nor local sports climbers were informed or invited for the event.

It has to be mentioned here that Sikkim is hosting the fourth edition of All India Indian



Mountaineering Foundation [IMF] Sport Climbing Competition from 06 to 08 September at Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure & Ecotourism [IHCAE] at Chemchey in South Sikkim under the aegis of Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi. The competition will have experienced climbers from all seven IMF zones spread

all across the country.

Addressing a press conference, advisor to Sikkim Mountaineering Association [SMA] and Sikkim Sports Climbing Association [SSCA], Satish Bardewa stated that it was a matter of pride that Sikkim was hosting the national sports climbing. However, the concerned association and sports climb-

ers of Sikkim were not informed and invited for the event, he said.

Mr Bardewa stated that IHCAE is an asset for the State and if local climbers do not get the opportunity to participate in an event being held in Sikkim then it is very unfortunate.

SMA and local climbers are asked to help out

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## Nok Air to start Guwahati-Bangkok flight service

**GUWAHATI, SEP 3 (PTI):**

Thailand based low-cost carrier Nok Air will start direct non-stop flights from Bangkok to Guwahati twice a week from September 22, an official said on Tuesday.

Director of Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), India, Isra Stepanaseth addressing a press conference here said the flight was being introduced as people from North East constitute 12 per cent of the 1.55 million Indian tourists who visit Thailand.

Stepanaseth said the people from Thailand and NER share common traditions, culture and culinary and TAT is working with Nok Air to serve tourists from both countries.

India accounts for bulk of the tourist inflow to Thailand and also a considerable number from his country visit India, he said, adding, "there is a demand here

and we are happy to serve people from all the North East states".

The TAT official said 1.3 million Indian tourists had visited Thailand from January to August this year against 1.55 million from January to December last year.

Giving details of the new flight services, the airline's Director-Group Concorde Jyotsaiban Sehgal said the flights would be on Wednesday and Saturday from the Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi International airport in Guwahati.

The less than three-hour flight from Bangkok to Guwahati would be on Thursday and Sunday, Sehgal said.

The 15-year old Nok Air with 14 Boeing 737-800 and eight Bombardier aircraft aims to provide seamless service for four more destinations in Thailand - Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Phuket and Hat Yai, she added.

## India hands over Rs 2.2 cr school building to Nepal

**KATHMANDU, SEPT 3 (PTI):** India has handed over to Nepal a new school building costing Rs 2.2 crore in Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's home district Jhapa, a media report said on Tuesday.

The new building of Shree Schoolchaun Higher Secondary School was jointly inaugurated by Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Manjeev Singh Puri, and Attorney General, Agni Prasad Kharel, on Monday, the Himalayan Times reported.

Established in 1965, the school offers plus two programmes, the report said, quoting a statement from the Indian embassy.

The school has about 1,150 students of which 60 per cent are girls. The school is an educational institution of repute in Nepal's Jhapa District, which is also the home district of Prime Minister Oli.

The new building is a two-storey infrastructure comprising 25 class rooms, a multipurpose hall and furniture, the report said.

India recently provided Rs 233 crore to the Nepal Government for various infrastructure projects, including roads and reconstruction of houses destroyed in the massive earthquake in 2015 which saw the death of over 9,000 people.

The decision was taken during the 5th meeting of the Nepal-India Joint Commission attended by the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

## Still awaiting official confirmation that Sikkim's sacred peaks will see no mountaineers: Passang Sherpa

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 03 AUG:**

Passang Sherpa, Coordinator, "I am 371F Campaign," who had also contested the recent Lok Sabha elections as an independent candidate, has questioned claims that the Ministry of Home Affairs has withdrawn its decision to open Sikkim's sacred peaks for mountaineering and called on the people to remain vigilant against what he says "fictitious news."

In a press release issued today, Mr Sherpa has highlighted that although news reports have surfaced claiming that MHA has revoked its decision to open Sikkim's sacred peaks for mountaineering, neither has MHA updated its website with this information now has it officially issued any communiqué to this effect. Even Press



Information Bureau, the central government's information agency has not reported on this development, he adds.

Given this scenario, Mr Sherpa states, "It is a fact that a meeting was conveyed by the Ministry of Home Affairs on 30 Aug, 2019 to review the decision to open sacred peaks of Sikkim for mountaineering. The meeting was attended by MHA officials, Chief Sec-

retary of Sikkim and the representatives of Indian Mountaineering Foundation. However, the official decision or notification to this effect is yet to be issued by the Ministry. Thus, the tall claim of state government and Chief Minister of Sikkim about withdrawal of notification on Kanchenjunga is unsubstantiated."

"Therefore, we the people of Sikkim must remain vigilant and alert against such fictitious news and claims until Ministry issues official notification withdrawing the notification on opening of sacred peaks of Sikkim for Mountaineering," he adds, while reiterating that MHA officially withdraw the notification before 13 Sept, 2019, when Sikkim worships Khangchendzonga on Pang Lhabso.

## DMs can refer to tribunals names of NRC-excluded people not seeking redressal: MHA

**NEW DELHI, SEP 3 (PTI):**

District magistrates in Assam have been empowered to refer names of people excluded from the recently-published final NRC and who prefer not to seek any redressal to foreigners' tribunals to decide whether to declare them foreigners, the Home Ministry has said.

As many 300 tribunals have been set up in Assam where people whose names were excluded from the final National Register of Citizens (NRC) can approach to establish their Indian citizenship.

"In case no appeal is preferred under paragraph (8) of the Schedule appended to the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, the District Magistrate may refer to the Tribunal for its opinion the question as to whether



the person is a foreigner or not within the meaning of The Foreigners Act, 1946 (31 of 1946) in terms of sub-paragraph (1) of paragraph 2," a home ministry notification said.

Of the 300 tribunals, 200 new came into existence on Monday while 100 have been functioning for long.

According to the final NRC released on Saturday, out of a total 3.3 crore applicants, 3.11 crore fig-

ured in the list and names of about 19 lakh residents were excluded.

"The final order of the tribunal shall contain its opinion on the matter whether the appellant is eligible for inclusion in the NRC or not and it shall also contain the opinion of the tribunal as to whether the appellant, if his appeal is rejected, is a foreigner or not within the meaning of the Foreigners Act, 1946.

turn to pg02

## Kashmir Press Club denounces curbs on scribes, demands lifting of communication blockade

**SRINAGAR, SEP 3 (PTI):** The Kashmir Press Club (KPC) on Tuesday expressed serious concern over the "unprecedented communication blockade" in the Valley and criticised the authorities for allegedly asking some senior journalists to vacate their government accommodation.

The KPC also said this is nothing but "harassment aimed at coercing journalists to toe a particular line".

Denouncing the curbs imposed on media and journalists in Kashmir, the press club's executive committee said in a meeting that due to "unprecedented communication blockade" affecting mobile telephony, Internet and telephone landlines, journalists have been "crippled, overwhelmingly disabling them from reporting the ground situation".

Since the communication blockade was imposed in the re-



gion on August 5, the club took up the issue with government authorities on several occasions, urging them to restore mobile phones, Internet and telephone landlines to journalists and media outlets, including newspapers, and also the club itself, it said.

"But all these efforts have proved to be futile as these services have not been restored to journalists till date," the KPC said

in a statement. It said currently, hundreds of journalists -- both local and visiting and media workers -- are forced to wait in queues for their turn to file assignments at the makeshift Media Facilitation Centre here. "The centre is equipped with only five computers and a low speed Internet connection," the statement said.

Despite repeated reminders by the press club, the Director-

ate of Information and Public Relations has not made any attempt to enhance services including open access to WiFi for journalists at the centre until Internet and telephone facility is restored in the Valley, the KPC claimed.

"The Kashmir Press Club demands that the government restore internet and telephone facility to journalists and media outlets," the statement read.

"The executive committee meeting also expressed serious concern over the harassment of Kashmiri journalists and pressure tactics adopted by the government.

"It is noted with concern that at least three senior journalists... were asked by the government to vacate the government accommodations as soon as possible, which is nothing but harassment aimed at coercing journalists to toe a particular line," it said.

## Summit Times in Nepali



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**Thank You!**





## Salman Rushdie's 'Quichotte' on Booker Prize 2019 shortlist

Aditi Khanna

**LONDON, SEP 3 (PTI):** Mumbai-born Salman Rushdie's tragicomic novel 'Quichotte' is among six titles from around the world to be named on the shortlist of the 2019 Booker Prize for Fiction released in London on Tuesday.

The 72-year-old former Booker Prize winning British Indian novelist has famously also won the Booker of Bookers for 'Midnight's Children' during anniversary celebrations of the prestigious literary award. This year he is shortlisted alongside another former winner, Margaret Atwood, besides Lucy Ellmann, Bernardine Evaristo, Chigozie Obioma, and Elif Shafak.

"Like all great literature, these books team with life, with a profound and celebratory humanity," said Peter Florence, founder and director of the Hay Festival and Chair of the Booker Prize judging panel this year.

The shortlist was selected from 151 submitted books published in the UK or Ireland between October 2018 and September 2019.

"A picaresque tour-de-force of contemporary America, with all its alarms and craziness. Rushdie conjures a celebration of storytelling and language that will delight lovers of Cervantes, lovers of daytime television and lovers of life," was the comment of a five-member judging panel in reference to Rushdie's latest work, which is inspired by the classic 'Don Quixote' by 16th century Spanish author Miguel de Cervantes.

Canadian author Margaret Atwood is shortlisted for 'The Testaments', which the judges describe as "terrifying and exhilarating". Lucy Ellmann is shortlisted for 'Ducks, Newburyport', Bernardine Evaristo for 'Girl, Woman, Other', Chigozie Obioma for 'An Orchestra of Minorities', and Elif Shafak for '10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World'.

The judging panel said this year's shortlist offers an insight into different worlds from the dystopian setting of Gilead, the monologue of an Ohio housewife and the tragicomic tale of a traveling salesman in America; to mostly female, mostly Black, British lives across generations, the trials of a young Nigerian man on a quest to improve his prospects and true allegiances within the brothels of Istanbul. Florence noted: The common thread is our admiration for the extraordinary ambition of each of these books. There is an abundance of humour, of political and cultural engagement, of stylistic daring and astonishing beauty of language.

"Anyone who reads all six of these books would be enriched and delighted, would be awe-struck by the power of story, and encouraged by what literature can do to set our imaginations free."

Gaby Wood, Literary Director of the Booker Prize Foundation, adds: It was hard to watch the judges narrow down their longest to this shortlist: they were so committed to all 13 of the books they'd chosen just over a month ago that the discussion was intense.

# SDF criticizes Golay's 'SDF a drowning ship' comment

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:**

Sikkim Democratic Front has criticised the statement made by Sikkim Krantikari Morcha president and Chief Minister, PS Tamang [Golay] during the mass joining programme held at Saramsa Garden on Monday. In his address, Mr Tamang had said that SDF's ship will drown because of

Pawan Chamling.

In a press release, SDF spokesperson, JB Darnal has said that the SDF government and former CM Pawan Chamling worked in the interest of the people of Sikkim and for the progress and prosperity of the people of Sikkim in last 25 years and established the glory of Sikkim in the country and the world.

PS Tamang can never accomplish what Mr Chamling has, he has said.

Winning and losing is part of democracy but it seems SKM is not capable of accepting a democratic system, the party has said.

SDF has alleged that after losing the election from Namthang-Rat-eypani in 2014, Mr Tamang did not thank his

supporters or met party workers who were facing police investigation.

The party has further said that Mr Tamang is drunk on power and does not realise or accept the mistakes he has made in the past.

Accusing the SKM government of victimizing government employees, SDF has said that it is the murder of democracy.

The former ruling party has further accused SKM of creating an environment of fear in the State.

Mr Tamang disappeared after losing the 2014 election leaving behind his people and MLAs so he should not worry about the ship of SDF party after forming government with thin majority, SDF has further stated.

## 313 more families join BJP, party aims to reach 1 Lakh by 10 Sept

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:**

313 household from various constituencies of West Sikkim joined Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) in an event held in Gyalshing today.

The joining members were from Maneybong-Dentam, Zoom Salghari, Gyalshing, Daramdin, Yuksom Tashiding, Yangthang and Rinchenpong, a BJP press release informs.

The event was attended by BJP-Sikkim

president, DB Chauhan, and Maneybong-Dentam MLA, NK Subba and Rinchenpong MLA KS Lepcha.

Mr Chauhan informed that the ongoing Sangathan Parv (membership drive) of the BJP has already seen more than 60,000 people join the party and that the party was trying to reach one lakh by 10 September.

He also informed that BJP will soon further intensify its activities in Sikkim.

## North holds Signature Campaign for POSHAN Abhiyan



**MANGAN, 03 SEPT (IPR):** Social Justice and Welfare Department, Government Sikkim, North District in association with District Administration Centre, Mangan, North Sikkim organized a Signature Campaign today for Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) Abhiyan as part of the program's nationwide launch.

The signature campaign was held at District Administrative Centre, Mangan today.

Poshan Abhiyan is a multi-ministerial conver-

gence mission with the vision to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by 2022. The objective of POSHAN Abhiyan to reduce stunting in identified Districts of India with the highest malnutrition burden by improving utilization of key Anganwadi Services and improving the quality of Anganwadi Services delivery.

It aims to ensure holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers and children.

The entire month of September will be celebrated as Rashtriya Posh-

an Maah (National Nutrition Month).

Present during the session were District Collector, North, Tenzing T Kaleon, Additional District Magistrate, North, Surat Kumar Gurung, Additional District Collector (Development), North, Somnath Adhikari, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Mangan, Karma Thendup Bhutia and CD-POs from North District.

Before the signature campaign, DC/N, Mr Kaleon administered the 'POSHAN' pledge to Government employees present in front of the DAC.

## ED arrests K'taka Cong leader Shivakumar on money laundering charges

**NEW DELHI, SEP 3 (PTI):** The ED Tuesday arrested Congress's trouble-shooter from Karnataka D K Shivakumar here in connection with a money laundering case following repeated questioning over the past few days, officials said.

The former cabinet minister and sitting MLA from Kanakapura seat appeared before the central probe agency for questioning for the fourth time on Tuesday at its headquarters in Khan Market here.

After a long session of grilling, Shivakumar was placed under arrest as per provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said.

The agency wants the Congress leader to be put through custodial interrogation and hence he was arrested, they said.

Shivakumar will be produced before a court here on Wednesday by the Enforcement Directorate for seeking his custody, they said.

The central agency had in September last year registered the money laundering case against Shivakumar, Haumanthaiah, an employee at Karnataka Bhavan in New Delhi, and others.

The Karnataka Congressman had denied any wrongdoing and had said that for playing an "instrumental role" in

ensuring safe stay of Gujarat Congress MLAs in a Karnataka resort during the Rajya Sabha polls in 2017, amid allegations that the BJP was trying to poach them, I-T searches were conducted and ED subsequently took action against him.

When Sonia Gandhi's political secretary Ahmed Patel fought the Rajya Sabha election from Gujarat in 2017, Shivakumar had hosted 44 Gujarat Congress MLAs at the resort to keep the flock together.

During the recent political crisis in Karnataka too, Shivakumar tried to wean away the dissidents and woo them back to the Congress fold. But the Congress-JDS government fell and B S Yediyurappa went on become the chief minister, heading a BJP government.

While making his first appearance before the agency here on August 30, Shivakumar had said that he would cooperate with the ED in the probe. "It is my duty (to appear)... I have to respect the law. We are lawmakers and law abiding citizens. They (ED) have summoned me.... I don't know why they have called me under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)."

"But, let me see, hear them. I am ready to face them (ED)," he had told reporters out-

side the ED office.

Congress party leaders in Karnataka on Tuesday cried foul saying their colleague was a victim of vendetta politics, a charge rejected by the BJP leaders.

State Congress chief Dinesh Gundu Rao accused the BJP of using investigating agencies to "vindictively targeting" opposition leaders and said the party stood with Shivakumar while former MP V S Ugrappa called it witch hunting and took exception to the leader being summoned on Ganesha Chaturthi day for questioning.

Shivakumar had to appear before the agency after the Karnataka High Court last week dismissed his petition challenging the summons issued to him by the ED.

The ED had filed a PMLA case against him and others based on a charge sheet (prosecution complaint) filed by the Income Tax Department against them last year before a special court in Bengaluru on charges of alleged tax evasion and hawala transactions worth crores.

The I-T department has accused Shivakumar and his associate S K Sharma of transporting huge amount of unaccounted cash on a regular basis through 'hawala' channels with the help of three other accused.

## Animal Husbandry Secy visit Dairy Plant



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:**

Animal Husbandry Secretary SB Subba along with Principal Director Dr Nima Tseten and Director (Dairy) Dr BM Chettri today visited the Milk Dairy Plant at 5th Mile to inspect the plant's activities and operations, a press release informs.

Later, the Secretary visited the administrative

building where he had a brief interaction with the officers and staff.

He called on the personnel to come up with new ideas and develop a proper mechanism to increase milk production in the state and suggested that the dairy plant work in coordination with the Department. The Secretary has assured full cooperation in the future.

## Elderly man loses bag in bus; Noida cops raise money for medicine

**NOIDA (UP), SEP 3 (PTI):** An elderly man who lost the cash to buy his medicines on a bus got help from unexpected quarters on Tuesday: the staff at a local police station chipped in to make up for the loss.

The senior citizen, suffering from paralysis, had arrived in Greater Noida from Farukhabad in the morning and was on his way to Dadri to consult a doctor and buy medicines.

He got down at at Pari Chowk and soon realised that he had forgotten his bag on the bus. He was spotted by a police team from Knowledge Park Police Station, an officer said.

"Realising that he had missed his bag which contained money and

clothes among some other essentials, he panicked. A police team brought him to the police station around 9 am," SHO, Knowledge Park, Arvind Pathak said.

"The man was worried and unable to recall details. He told us that he is from Farrukhabad and that he has lost his bag in the bus," he added.

Seeing his plight, around 50 police personnel on duty including those who were leaving after completing their night shift voluntarily raised Rs 3,880 which were handed over to the man, he said.

"We tried to calm him down at the police station and offered him breakfast.... He left for Dadri after around an hour," the SHO said.

### IMF's sport..

during disaster and rescue operations but when there is a platform to perform, they are ignored, he stated further adding that this will adversely affected the morale of climbers.

He further mentioned that local climbers have been winning medals in national and regional level sports climbing events but they have not got an opportunity to perform in their home State. He also expressed his disappointment over not being informed and invited for the event.

There are around 25 sports climbers in the State, he informed.

### DMs can refer..

"The final order of the tribunal shall be a concise statement of facts and conclusion based on which the tribunal has arrived at its decision," the notification said.

The ministry has already said adequate judicial process is available for the people left out to appeal to the foreigners' tribunals within 120 days from August 31, when the final NRC was published.

### ANTHYESTI KRIYA

The anthyesthi Kriya of Late Hemlata Basnett who left for her heavenly abode falls on 7th of September 2019 at Gom, South Sikkim. All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering our prayers for the departed soul on 7.09.2019 at Gom, South Sikkim.



**Family Members**  
**Sankar Das Rai (Husband), Roshan Rai (son) & Rushma Rai (daughter)**  
**Phone 97733358518**

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# Limboo feature film Thetlong to premier on 21 Sept



## SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:

The premier show of Limboo feature film 'Thetlong' will be held at Manan Kendra on 21 September. This is the first

Limboo language feature film produced from Sikkim based on a Limboo novel of the same name 'Thetlong'.

The film has been produced under the banner

of Opera Entertainment and is directed by Kishore Subba. Bishal Senehang and Dibya Limboo are in the lead roles along with Sanjeeta Subba, Munna Subba and

other artists from Sikkim in supporting roles. The film has subtitles in English. There are four songs in the film.

Addressing a press conference here today, producer of the film, Mani Tamling mentioned that the 2-hour long feature film has done its best to showcase language, culture, tradition of Limboo community and also trying to promote tourism in Sikkim.

Most of the shooting took place in West Sikkim and most of the film's cast is from Sikkim except for a few who are from Nepal. The total budget of the film was around Rs 36 lakh.

"We have put in our best efforts to make a good feature film. We are

very positive and hopeful that people will love the film," Mr Tamling said. He also shared plans to organize charity shows at Kathmandu, United Kingdom, Hong Kong and other countries in the near future.

Likewise, lead actress from Sikkim, Dibya Limboo expressed her happiness on her debut in the feature film. She stated that the whole journey was a learning experience under the guidance of experts and senior artists.

"It was a learning experience to work in the film and it has also boosted my confidence and morale which would help me to work better in upcoming projects," she said.

# Pang Lhabsol celebrations begin in Rabong



## SAGAR CHHETRI GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:

The 36th edition of Pang Lhabsol celebrations at Rabongla got underway today at the Cho Dzo Lake premises.

Tourism Minister, BS Pant, was present as the chief guest and also inaugurated the new volleyball court at the premises.

The inaugural session, which was attended

by officials of Rabongla sub-division and local dignitaries, featured a series of cultural and musical performances.

On the occasion, Kapinzel Social Foundation presented a play based on Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

It is informed that Pang Lhabsol Celebration Committee, Rabong, has introduced 'a giving Pledge' with the instal-

lation of a donation box at the venue for Kapinzel Social Foundation which runs a children's home. The donation box will be formally handed over to Kapinzel Social Foundation by the Chief Minister on 13 September.

An intra-Sikkim volleyball tournament also began today. In the inaugural match, Lingding beat Kewsa VI.

# Texas shooter sacked from job before killing seven: police

**WASHINGTON, SEPT 3 (AFP):** A man who killed seven people in the US state of Texas was fired from his job prior to carrying out the shooting, law enforcement officials said on Monday.

"Our suspect went to work at Journey Oilfield Services. He was there for a short time and was terminated by his employer," Michael Gerke, the Odessa police chief, told a news conference.

Following the dismissal, both the suspect and his former employer called police to complain "because they had a disagreement over the firing," he said.

The suspect -- identified the previous day as Seth Aaron Ator, 36 -- also called an FBI tip line but made no threats, Gerke added.

FBI special agent Christopher Combs also confirmed the firing, but said that it was not the spark for the shooting,

which took place on Saturday. "He showed up to work in a very distressed mental state, so it's not because he got fired," Combs told media.

"When he showed up to work, he was already enraged." The Saturday incident began when troopers tried to pull over a gold-colored passenger vehicle on the Interstate 20 highway.

That led to a frantic shootout spread out over several miles on roads between the cities of Midland and Odessa in the west of the state.

The assailant died in a shootout with police outside an Odessa movie theater.

The shooting, which came less than a month after a gunman killed 22 people in the Texas city of El Paso -- less than 300 miles (480 kilometers) west of Odessa -- has ignited fresh calls for steps to stem the US scourge of mass shootings.

# Toll rises to 16 dead, more than 100 wounded in Kabul blast: Official

**KABUL, SEPT 3 (AFP):** The toll from a massive blast claimed by the Taliban in Kabul has risen to 16 dead -- all civilians -- with scores more wounded, an official said Tuesday.

Monday night's attack took place in a residential area near Green Village, a large compound that houses aid agencies and international organisations.

Interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said the blast was caused by a tractor packed with explosives that had been parked alongside a wall by Green Village.

"Sixteen killed, 119 wounded in last night's attack," Rahimi said, noting a search-and-rescue operation had lasted through the night.

Green Village is separate from the nearby Green Zone, a walled-off and heavily fortified part of Kabul that is home to several embassies including the US and Brit-

ish missions.

The Taliban claimed the attack, which came as US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad was in Kabul to discuss a proposed deal that would see the US withdraw troops from Afghanistan in return for insurgent security guarantees.

Residents in the area around Green Village were furious that their neighbourhood, which has been targeted before, had been hit once again and blamed the international presence.

Locals set tyres on fire, sending plumes of thick, acrid smoke into the morning sky, and closed off a main road alongside the scene of the attack.

"We want these foreigners to move out of our neighbourhood," local resident Abdul Jamil told AFP.

"This is not the first time we suffer because of them... We don't want them here anymore.

# Workshop on the Code of Civil Procedure



## SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

Sikkim Judicial Academy organized a workshop on the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, for Civil Judges of all the districts of Sikkim.

The Workshop focused on topics such as Jurisdiction of Court, Pecuniary jurisdiction (Section 6), Place of suing (section 15-Section

25, Institution of suits (Section 26)), Summons and Discovery (Section 27-Section 32), Written Statement, Set-Off and Counter-Claim under Order VIII, Discovery and Inspection under Order XI, Admissions under Order XII CPC, 1908 and Production, Impounding and Return of Documents under Or-

der XIII of THE Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.

Justice Harish Tandon from the High Court of Calcutta was present as the resource person who shared details about landmark judgments on all the said topics and discussed the principles laid therein.

The salient features of the provisions of the Code were also discussed.

# Painting competition on Jal Shakti Abhiyan

## SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:

A painting competition was organised by the Sikkim Manipal College of Physiotherapy (SMCPT) under the Jal Shakti Abhiyan on 31 August, a press release informs.

The competition was held among Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPT) students on the theme, "Water Recycling and Ecosystem Management". 15 students participated in the competition.

Water conservation and Management methods were discussed during the event by Col Uma Kant Singh, Head



General Services, Sikkim Manipal University (SMU).

The competition was judged by Col Uma Kant Singh, Assistant Professor Kiran Priya Rao, and Assistant Professor Dr

Bikram Tiwari.

Taliwapang Jamir (BPT 3rd year) stood first, Niyar Snigdha (BPT 3rd year) and Nikita Gurung (BPT 2nd year) stood second and third respectively.

# EESL plans to set up EV charging stations in Kolkata, New Town

**KOLKATA, SEP 3 (PTI):** State-owned Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) on Tuesday said it is in talks with the West Bengal government for setting up electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in the metropolis and adjoining New Town area.

The New Town Kolkata Development Authority (NKDA), the West Bengal Transport Department, Power Department and the Urban Development Department are involved in installing the proposed EV charging stations, officials said.

"We are planning 400 public EV charging stations in the city and New Town. Soon, a deal with



NKDA will be inked," EESL Regional Head Sudeep Bhar said.

"We require land for the EV stations at viable locations. We have submitted a proposal to carry out the capex and maintain the infrastructure for 10 years. There will be some revenue sharing with the landowner," he said.

A clear guideline for electricity cost of the charging stations is

yet to be worked out, but talks are already in progress in this regard, the officials said.

EESL has also given a proposal to the state government to supply electric sedans on lease.

"There are two models we are offering. One is 'dry lease' at Rs 22,500 a month for a period of 6 years, and the other is for drivers, which will be about Rs 37,000 a month," Bhar added.

# Awareness programme by KVK

## SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

An awareness programme on the 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan' was organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, West Sikkim, at Sindrang-Naku Chumbung GPU today.

The programme was attended by Zilla Panchayat Member of Singyang Chumbung GPU, Senior Scientist cum Head & Subject Matter Specialists of KVK, West Sikkim and 33 farmers.



The Senior Scientist spoke about water conservation and rejuvenation of water bodies,

regulating industrial consumption, harvesting of rainwater and reuse of waste water.

# Episcopal Installation at Believers Eastern Church

## SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 SEPT:

Believers Eastern Church Diocese of Sikkim organised Episcopal Installation and Welcome Service of Emmanuel Mor Julian Episcopa here at Believers Eastern Church Sichey on Tuesday. Emmanuel Mor Julian Episcopa has been given the responsibility of the leadership of Believers Eastern Church Diocese of Sikkim.

The programme had Dr Antonius Mor Eusebius, Arch Bishop, Siliguri Diocese as the chief guest



and was accompanied by a senior and respected pastor, PS Tingmoo, Joseph Tamang from Nimitar Baptist Church, Unit-

ed Christian Welfare Society of Sikkim president, Elder Patrus Gurung and other pastors and leaders from different churches.

# BJP legislature party stages walkout from WB assembly



**KOLKATA, SEP 3 (PTI):** The BJP legislature party staged a walkout from West Bengal assembly as they were not allowed to hold a discussion on an adjournment motion on "political violence" in the state. BJP MLA Swadhin Sarkar along with BJP legislative party leader Manoj Tigga had brought the adjournment motion.

Although BJP was allowed to read out the motion, Speaker Biman Banerjee did not allow any discussion on it.

Following this the BJP legislative party trooped to the well of the house and shouted slogans against the government.

They then staged a walkout from the house for the day.

The BJP presently has six MLAs in the house, out of whom five were present at the Assembly during the day.

"We wanted a discussion on the adjournment motion on ongoing political violence in the state - the way a

sitting MP, MLAs are being assaulted. It is a matter of great concern for all of us. Democracy is under threat in Bengal," Sarkar said. "But we were not allowed to hold the discussion. Is this the way that an Assembly functions, where democratic voices, opposition voices are silenced in Bengal?" he said.

BJP MP Arjun Singh suffered head injuries on Sunday when police allegedly baton charged him at Kankinara in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district.

West Bengal BJP President Dilip Ghosh was allegedly heckled by TMC supporters on Friday during his 'Cha Chakra' programme at Lake Town area in the northern part of the city, a saffron party leader claimed.

TMC MLA from Bongaon Biswajit Das, who had switched over to BJP after the Lok Sabha poll results, was assaulted by alleged TMC activists on Friday in his locality.

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## A Support System for Quality Education

*Help teachers make learning relevant and fun*

Education is reasonably universal now, so access to classrooms is no longer an issue. And this Thursday is also Teacher's Day, which makes it even more apt to speak some about the profession which arguably has the deepest impact on our lives. More than the details of lessons learnt from textbooks, the memories that stay longer with most people are of the teachers who taught them. Every person invariably has a teacher who either inspired the entire class to chase their dreams or toed the other end of the spectrum and actively engaged in stifling imaginations, enforcing norms and dictating conduct. This Teacher's Day, let's go over what role teachers can play in preparing students for life.

The pressure of examinations and competition, and the tendency to prioritise rote over comprehension has handicapped the teaching fraternity into becoming problem solvers, handing out answers and solutions for students to mug-up instead of assisting students find their own answers and expressions, encouraging them to enquire more and develop faculties that question more often instead of accepting things as dished out. Several attempts have been made to correct this approach and at least in the Indian context, all efforts have failed thus far. Because students look up to teachers, it is important for teachers to offer themselves as role models, but it would be even better if teachers could introduce their wards to personalities worth emulating and inspiring students to excellence. Teachers should ideally motivate and inspire students towards learning, not hand-hold them through the syllabus till the exams and then pick up another batch to repeat the same.

If one agrees that these are the qualities one seeks in teachers, the obvious question that follows is, can one be trained for such a role? And do the existing models of 'training' focus enough on these aspects of teaching? Only trained teachers will be able to answer these questions, but fact remains that these should not even be issues that distract from more important policy interventions. Teachers, ever since modern education was introduced, were required to be qualified. For how long have B. Ed. courses, for example, been offered? For a very, very long time. And yet, it is only now that precious resources and attention is being invested in getting even already appointed teachers with impressive on-job experience to acquire these degrees. If the teacher appointment process had not been blatantly usurped by enthusiastic proponents of nepotism, India and Sikkim would have been deliberating weightier issues of education by now. Appointment of deserving and qualified teachers should always have been a given, and then one could engage in more meaningful discussions on how to retain the better teachers, appoint better facilities in schools and update syllabus and teaching methods.

Sikkim's pursuit of quality education is welcome, but for it to get anywhere, the ennui that HRD Department has become will have to be shaken off first. Ironically, this is the one aspect that remains missing from all discussions on the delivery of quality education. The ideal teachers and the perfect students, will after all, need the support of at least a reasonably functional Human Resource Development Department which is as motivated to appoint better facilities in schools [by way of libraries, laboratories and even basics like electricity, toilets and running water] as it is excited by the opportunity to conduct trainings, order books or organize workshops. Sikkim is lucky to have a substantially big pool of new teachers who are motivated and genuinely interested in making a difference in the lives of students under their care. It is important that the school management committees and local communities support them in efforts to make classrooms more vibrant and learning more fun and relevant. It is important for people to find ways to get more involved with their neighbourhood schools (to begin with) even if their wards are not enrolled there and offer assistance and support to these institutions to be able to deliver quality education.

### WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/ indecorous language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence.

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## How to get kids talking about their school day

JESSICA COOKE & SHERI MADIGAN  
*theconversation.com*

"How was your day at school?"

"Fine."

Does this sound familiar? This is the dreaded response to a well-intentioned question that parents might ask.

The robot-sounding response is what parents hear when their child limits the information they share with parents, or has stopped sharing information, about their school day.

When parents hear "fine," they may react in different ways. Some parents may seek out information by asking more questions. However, research has shown that asking too many questions can feel invasive, especially to developing teenagers.

Other parents may stop asking altogether because they are tired of hearing the same response. However, research has shown that children who perceive low communication from their parents report more mental and behavioural health difficulties.

As a result, parents may feel discouraged. How can they get their kids to talk about their school day, without irritating them or having them shut down?

### COMMUNICATION AT DIFFERENT AGES

Across all ages, studies have found that parental communication can protect against low self-esteem and poor academic achievement. High parental involvement can also positively influence children's school engagement, educational goals and academic outcomes. And notably, positive communication can strengthen feelings of connectedness between parents and children.

But like all aspects of development, communication skills unfold over time.

### KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 1

School day conversations with young children typically revolve around school subjects, new friendships or concrete experiences. For example, a young child might share: "I played on the monkey bars at recess!"

You can further support your young child's development by organizing and labelling their experiences. For example, "I saw that Joey took your toy today. How did that make you feel?" It can also be helpful to label emotions for children, by verbalizing what you notice, such as: "It sounds like you were feeling angry because Joey took your toy."

### GRADES 2 - 3

Friendships become increasingly important to

your child. They may be more interested in talking about their new peer relationships than schoolwork. Try showing interest by asking about their friends, such as: "Tell me about your friend. What do they like to do at recess?"

### GRADES 4 - 5

Kids might start to view your questions as demands, leading to less information sharing. It may be easier to approach questions by asking about your child's peers to start a conversation. You might try asking: "What do your friends think about the new science teacher?"

### GRADES 6 - 12

The establishment of personal identity and independence is an essential part of adolescence. As a result, your teen may seek out more privacy and share less information with you. You can support these developmental milestones by demonstrating your interest in their opinions allowing your teen some privacy when needed, and allowing them to take part in family decision making.

Regardless of your child's age, keep in mind that the quality of frequent but small positive conversations you have with your child over time outweigh the importance of lengthy, drawn-out conversations.

### TIPS FOR GETTING KIDS TO OPEN UP

Communication is a two-way street. How can parents communicate with children when they don't seem responsive?

#### 1. ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The question "How was your day?" is considered a closed-ended question because it can be answered with one word. Certainly, for some kids, this question could prompt a lengthy chat. But for others, these questions result in the conversation stoppers discussed above.

If that's the case, try to get the discussion going with an open-ended question like "Tell me what you liked most about your day." Or you could reflect on something you noticed as a lead-in: "I see you are in a mixed grade with older kids now. What did you notice about the Grade 4s?"

#### 2. AVOID MANY QUESTIONS RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL

Kids are often quite tired at the end of the school day. If they are not up to talking right away, try to hold back on your questions until they have had time to relax and have a snack. Once refuelled, they may be up for sharing about their school day.

#### 3. FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION, VARY YOUR ANGLE

You might want to know something specific about your child's day, like whether they were bullied or if someone caused them to feel upset. However, asking direct questions like "Why are you so mad?" can feel like an invasion of privacy.

If you're concerned about your child, start with a different angle to the question. You could take an indirect route, like "You seemed upset after school, what happened?" Or, begin a conversation with a broader question first, such as: "Do you think any kids in your class are being bullied?"

#### 4. LISTEN BEFORE YOU TALK

Parents who listen communicate that they are interested in and understanding of their child. But becoming a good listener can take practice. When your child tells you about their day, put away devices, try to maintain eye contact and provide your undivided attention.

#### 5. PROMOTE PROBLEM SOLVING

If your child mentions they are struggling in some way at school, such as with a peer or teacher, or in understanding their math homework, avoid trying to fix it for them.

Rather, use it as an opportunity to foster problem solving by encouraging your child to come up with a few possible solutions to their problem. Then help them pick what seems like the best solution, and then evaluate with them whether the solution was effective or not. If not, go back to the drawing board together and try again!

#### 6. IF NECESSARY, SEEK HELP

If your child stops opening up about their daily activities, it can be worrisome. This is especially if the case if your once-chatty child has suddenly become a closed book. If you notice drastic changes in your child's behaviour, it is worth checking in with your child's family doctor, teacher or seeking services from a mental health professional.

Committing to communicating with our kids means taking the time to really connect with them. If parents repeatedly ask questions that are intentional, caring and engaging, they may soon be surprised to see that their kids are the ones who want to talk about their school day without being prompted!

*[Jessica Cooke is PhD student, Department of Psychology, University of Calgary; Sheri Madigan is Assistant Professor, Canada Research Chair in Determinants of Child Development, Owerko Centre at the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute, University of Calgary]*

## Technostress: how social media keeps us coming back for more even when it makes us unhappy

MONIDEEPA TARAFDAR,  
CHRISTIAN MAIER &  
SVEN LAUMER  
*theconversation.com*

If you ever find yourself looking forward to a holiday because you'll be able to switch off your smartphone then perhaps you're suffering from social media "technostress". The constant stream of messages, updates and content that social media apps deliver right to our pockets can sometimes feel like a social overload, invading your personal space and obliging you to reply in order to maintain friendships.

You'd think an obvious response to this problem would be to stop using our devices or deleting the apps. But we have recently published research showing that, when faced with this pressure, many of us end up digging deeper and using our phones more frequently, often compulsively or even addictively.

Conventional wisdom implies that when people are faced with a stressful social situation, for example, an argument with someone – they cope with the stress by distancing themselves. They take a walk, go for

a run, play with their kids. But when the stressful situations stem from the use of social media, we find people tend to adopt one of two very different coping strategies.

We surveyed 444 Facebook users from Germany three times over a year to find out how they responded to social media technostress. Sometimes, as we might have expected, they diverted or distracted themselves with unrelated activities such as hobbies. But counter-intuitively, we found it was more common for people to distract themselves by using social media even more.

Social media apps and websites are what we call feature-rich technologies, meaning there are lots of ways to use them. On Facebook, you can play games, read the news, plan a holiday by looking at travel related posts, or chat with your friends. Each of these actions is done in a different context and takes you into a different realm within the app. This allows you to view a single app in different ways.

So if, for example, you experience social media technostress from a friend's post about cruelty to animals or from losing a game, you can "get

away" from that stress by diverting your attention to something more pleasant and relaxing within the app.

Such diversions sound harmless at first. But they can suck you into a never ending loop of social media technostress and social media diversion that keeps you stuck on the source of your stress. This can even form a symptom of addiction, where you constantly look for a short-term fix from the very thing that is causing you long-term problems. Alarmingly, we found that the more you use social media, the more likely you are to do this.

Concern over the potential negative effects of social media have led governments to start acting to protect citizens. US lawmakers have proposed banning features of social media that may have addictive properties, such as infinite content feeds and autoplaying of videos.

### BEHAVIOUR SHAPES HARMFUL EFFECTS

Yet while such features may be designed to keep people using social media for longer, it's also becoming clear that it's how people use their apps and how they react to social media that shapes any harmful ef-

fects. If people see social media as a stress buster as well as a stress creator, then they are more likely to increase their use in response to the pressure it generates.

The first step to tackling this kind of reaction is awareness. If we can become more aware of all the different ways we behave on social media, we'll be more likely to separate the harmful effects from the more benign ones, and so avoid using it in a harmful way.

So the next time you're feeling technostress from social media, it might be better to put your phone down altogether rather than seeking refuge even deeper in your apps. Otherwise, before you know it, you may have spent minutes or even hours of "dead" time doing nothing other than flitting from one function to another in order to divert yourself.

*[Monideepa Tarafdar is Professor of Information Technology, Lancaster University; Christian Maier is Assistant Professor, Department of Information Systems and Services, University of Bamberg; Sven Laumer is Professor of Information Systems, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU)]*



# Assam doctors abstain from work to protest colleague’s killing

**GUWAHATI, SEP 3 (PTI):** Doctors in Assam were on a 24-hour strike on Tuesday to protest the assault on an elderly colleague at a tea garden that led to his death, officials said.

Emergency services have been kept out of the purview of the stir.

Seventy three-year-old Dr Deben Dutta had succumbed to his injuries after being assaulted by relatives of a tea garden worker who died while undergoing treatment at a hospital at Teok Tea Estate in Jorhat district on Saturday.

Responding to a call by the Assam unit of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), doctors at government and private hospitals as well as consultation chambers stayed away from work from 6 am but attended emergency services, health department officials said.

The stir affected services in six government medical college hospitals and civil hospitals, family referral units and primary health centres. The doctors attended on patients in the emergency and casualty departments, they said..

Doctors of Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) took out a procession here to protest the attack, demanding justice for the slain doctor and security for medicos.

They also staged sit-ins at several medical institutions.

One of participant doctors said, “We demand a permanent solution to attacks on medicos on duty.”



Another doctor said that because of a few persons, the medicos are scared of extending services to all the people.

“The attack has undermined the service provided by doctors in rural areas and is compelling us to rethink about working there,” a doctor of another hospital said.

“The people’s representatives from the tea garden areas are silent (over the issue). It is their duty to guide those who indulge in violence and prevent them from doing so,” he said.

While doctors claimed that emergency services are unaffected due to the stir, the patients said they faced problems due to the stir.

Gynaecologist Dr Nili-ma T Haque told PTI that operation theatres functioned normally.

“I have assisted in four deliveries so far and am attending serious patients,” she said.

Shreya Nath, a young intern at GMCH said she and her colleagues at-

tended critical patients.

Paresh Kalita, a resident of Chandmari area of the city, said his five-year old son was suffering from fever but there was no doctor at a private nursing home.

“I called up my child’s pediatrician and she prescribed medicines over the phone. She asked me to bring my son to the nursing home once the 24-hour stir is over,” he said.

The IMA has demanded that the Assam government ensure exemplary punishment to the culprits and beef up security measures like installing surveillance cameras in all health establishments, including those in tea gardens.

More than 30 people have been taken into custody from Teok tea estate in connection with the doctor’s killing.

Inspector General of Police (law and order) Deepak Kedia visited the tea estate to take stock of the situation.

Jorhat Deputy Commissioner Roshni

Aparanji Korati had ordered a magisterial inquiry into the assault on Dutta, who was working in the tea garden hospital after his retirement without remuneration.

Following the incident, the Amalgamated Plantations Private Ltd that owns Teok Tea Estate, has declared a “lock out” in the tea garden till further notice as it “apprehended further danger to life and property of managerial personnel and their families”.

Teok tea estate sources said Dr Dutta after his retirement was working in the hospital without remuneration for the benefit of the garden workers.

In Jorhat town doctors, pharmacists and para-medical personnel held a dharna in front of the deputy commissioner’s office demanding action against those responsible for the assault on Dr Dutta, besides amending law to ensure security for the medicos.

IMA state branch president Satyajit Borah

had said that incidents of assault on doctors in the state are on the rise.

The Assam Valley Consultative Committee of Plantations Associations (CCPA) and Tea Association of India (TAI) have also condemned the incident.

In Kolkata Indian Tea Association and the Consultative Committee of Plantation Associations condemned the “brutal and fatal assault” which led to the doctor’s death.

Vivek Goenka, the chairman of the two associations said in a statement on Tuesday that “Nothing can justify the perpetrators’ indulgence in the murderous violence and attack which was unleashed on the 73-year old doctor”.

He urged Assam government to take a firm policy to enforce the rule of law and prevent any form of violence in the tea gardens. He also sought appropriate steps to punish the culprits and ensure safety and security of those working in the tea sector.

## Arunachal guv urges Union minister to help set up food processing units

**Itanagar, Sep 3 (PTI):** Arunachal Pradesh Governor Brig (Retd) Dr B D Mishra on Tuesday requested Union minister Rameshwar Teli to help the state in setting up food processing units.

The governor, during a meeting with the Minister of State for Food Processing Industries at Raj Bhawan here, explained to him that timely transportation of agricultural and horticultural produces is

very difficult due to the mountainous terrain of the state.

“Arunachal Pradesh is leading in the production of organic food in the country. The best solution to address the issue is to set up small and medium food processing industries in different locations where agro-horti products are in surplus,” a Raj Bhawan communi-qu quoted the governor as saying.

The governor also

requested Teli to organise training programmes for progressive farmers and youths of the state so that they can work as apprentices in renowned industries.

Such programmes will encourage them to become entrepreneurs, the governor said.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Industries Minister Tumke Bagra were also present in the meeting, the communique added.

## Only 3 out of 429 human traffickers in Andhra, WB convicted in past 10 yrs: Study



**NEW DELHI, SEP 3 (PTI):** Only three out of 429 human traffickers in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal have been convicted in the past 10 years, according to a new study that analysed case documents such as charge sheets, FIRs and police general diaries related to 198 such cases.

The study was conducted by several NGOs such as HELP in Andhra Pradesh, Goranbose Gram Bikash Kendra and Partners for Anti-Trafficking (PAT) - a consortium of eight community-based organisations in West Bengal.

It found that 68 human traffickers have been given bail, and investigation linked to five accused have been continuing for over a decade now.

The study also revealed that 31 out of the 429 human traffickers appear to be repeat offenders who are accused in multiple cases of human trafficking, and all their victims were children and adolescents.

These 31 have committed 91 (or 19 per cent) of total crimes analysed for this research.

The study found that out of the 429 named offenders only three have been convicted with punishments ranging between five to seven years of imprisonment, whereas 10 have been acquitted due to lack of evidence in cases that continued over several years. Investigation in the rest of the cases is underway.

“The low conviction and high acquittal figures found in the research cast doubts in the efficacy of investigation by law-enforcement agencies in human trafficking cases,” said Snigdha Sen, who conducted the analysis by studying legal documents availed from courts and police stations.

Sen, who is also an activist, studied these cases that involved more than 173 survivors of human trafficking from West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.

“The findings reaffirm the belief that traffickers enjoy a high degree of impunity because of the lacklustre investigation, and lack of retribution encourages them to carry on with their crimes

that leads to surge in incidents of human trafficking,” she added. The research indicated that currently, traffickers - who are in the business of recruiting girls and young women and selling them off in Maharashtra, Delhi, Telangana or Goa - have little accountability to the system.

“As they grow wealthier, they recruit others to join them in spotting, recruiting and trafficking other vulnerable children and adolescents. The reason these investigations are so prolonged and prosecutions are so weak is that over 99 per cent of these cases are investigated by police of local police stations, who have restricted time and resources for their investigation,” said co-researcher Roop Sen, a human rights activist who has been working on the issue for over 20 years.

These NGOs, who conducted the study, have come together to support survivors of human trafficking for their rehabilitation and protection under an access to justice programme called ‘Taateesh’.

## Central team arrives in Assam to assess flood damage

**GUWAHATI, SEP 3 (PTI):** An inter-ministerial team of the Central government reached Assam on Tuesday to visit and assess the flood affected areas.

The Central team will have a meeting with senior officials of Assam Government on the damage and loss of the human lives, and properties under various departments, an official release said. After that, the team will leave for their field visit in concerned districts on Wednesday, it added.

“The team will visit the districts -- Nalbari,

Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Morigaon, Golaghat, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Dhema-ji and Dibrugarh -- for an on-the-spot assessment of the situation in the wake of floods in 2019 in the state,” the statement said.

During their visit, the team will interact and discuss with the district administration and other concerned departmental officials.

The team will leave for New Delhi on Friday.

At least 91 people were killed and several lakh were affected in flood in Assam this year.

## DoNER minister to lay foundation stone for NERAMAC building in Guwahati

**NEW DELHI, SEP 3 (PTI):** DoNER minister Jitendra Singh will lay the foundation stone for North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited (NERAMAC) marketing complex in Guwahati on Wednesday.

The construction of the building is funded by the North Eastern Council under its scheme for Marketing Support Agri-horti Produce in NE region, an official release said.

“The NERAMAC is continuously making all efforts for the development of the farmers of the northeastern region and double their income by the end of 2022. Hence, the construction of this building infrastructure at the heart of the north-



east in Guwahati will be the step forward in this direction,” it said.

The NERAMAC Limited, incorporated in 1982 as a central government enterprise, is a marketing organisation in the field of agri-horti sector of the northeastern region.

Its registered office is in Guwahati operating under the administrative control of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER).

## Child trafficking: SC expresses anguish over ‘fight’ between NCPCR & WB SCPCR



**NEW DELHI, SEP 3 (PTI):** The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed anguish over the “fight” between the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and the West Bengal State Commission for Protection of Child Rights on a matter related to alleged trafficking of children from an orphanage in the state. The apex court said it was concerned about the children who are there at the orphanage or shelter home.

“What is this happening? It is very unfortunate that two statutory bodies are fighting like this. It is sad that both of you cannot come to a conclusion for the welfare of these children,” a bench comprising justices Deepak Gupta and Anirudha Bose said.

“We are not bothered about the Centre or West Bengal commission. We are bothered about the poor children who are

in the shelter home,” the bench said. The top court is hearing an appeal filed by the NCPCR against a Calcutta High Court order staying its proceedings in a case related to alleged gross violation of rights of orphaned children in West Bengal.

The NCPCR had alleged that the West Bengal government had illegally formed ad-hoc committees for adoption and given away orphans for adoption in gross violation of law and rules. The apex court had stayed the proceedings and the August 29, 2017 order of the Calcutta High Court.

The counsel appearing for the NCPCR told the apex court on Tuesday that Solicitor General Tushar Mehta would represent them in the case and he was arguing another matter before other court. The bench, which posted the case for hearing on Wednesday,

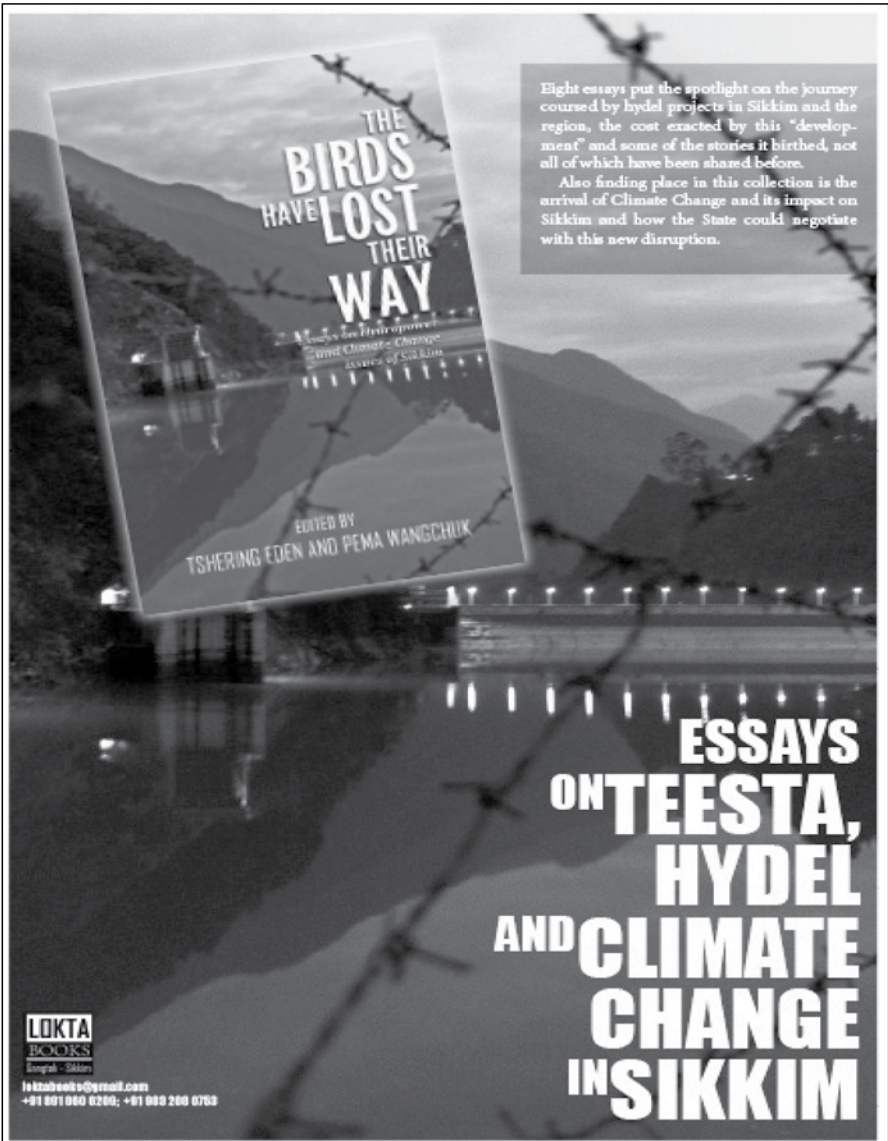
told the NCPCR’s counsel that it would not adjourn the matter tomorrow.

In the high court, the NCPCR and the state government were at loggerheads over the alleged trafficking of 17 children from an orphanage in Jalpaiguri district.

The NCPCR had blamed the local administration for the thriving of the trafficking racket but the state government had questioned its jurisdiction in the high court.

The high court, in its order, had stayed the proceedings initiated by the NCPCR after taking note of the plea filed by Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), CID, State of West Bengal.

It was alleged by the ADGP before the high court that NCPCR had no jurisdiction as the West Bengal State Commission for Protection of Child Rights was seized of the matter.





# Neymar and PSG left to pick up pieces as transfer saga ends

**PARIS, SEP 3 (AFP):** Neymar’s decision to join Paris Saint-Germain in 2017 was motivated by a desire to establish himself as the best player in the world, but a troubled time in the French capital has left the Brazilian at risk of wasting the best years of his career.

The closure of the transfer window has finally brought to an end the lengthy saga surrounding the future of the world’s most expensive player, who will stay at PSG having failed to get the move back to Barcelona he craved.

His former club could not complete a deal to rescue the 27-year-old from his apparent nightmare in Paris, with Neymar so determined to return that sports daily L’Equipe reported he offered to pay 20 million euros from his own pocket towards the fee.

PSG paid 222 million euros for his services, while committing reported wages of 36 million euros a year.

Yet he has not done nearly enough at the Parc des Princes in two seasons marred by injuries and interrupted by off-field distractions.

In August 2017, the desperation of PSG’s Qatari owners to win the Champions League appeared to fit with Neymar’s own obsession with emerging from Lionel Messi’s shadow and winning the Ballon d’Or.

“I would love for us to meet in two years and see what his value will be compared to today. At least double,” said PSG



president Nasser Al-Khelaifi at the time.

## - MISSING AT KEY MOMENTS -

However, since moving to the Parc des Princes, Neymar has appeared in barely half of his club’s matches.

When he has played he has frequently been brilliant, scoring 51 goals in 58 games. He has won back-to-back league titles and one Ligue 1 player of the year award.

But the Champions League is what really matters, and when it has really mattered in Europe he has been absent. Foot injuries saw him miss three of the four Champions League knockout matches the club have played since his arrival.

Without him, they lost in the last 16 to Real Madrid in 2018 and then to Manchester United this year.

After suffering a broken

foot for the first time in February 2018, Neymar missed the rest of PSG’s season to be ready for the World Cup. Brazil went out in the quarter-finals.

In January this year, Neymar fractured the same foot, missing the crunch part of PSG’s season during three more months out.

He has since missed the Copa America with an ankle injury and was accused of raping a Brazilian woman at a Paris hotel in May -- the case was dismissed in August by a Brazilian judge.

Neymar has never learned French and has often appeared too busy with off-field distractions, including throwing lavish birthday parties and making a cameo appearance in his favourite Netflix series.

## - GOOD FOR THE PSG BRAND? -

He remains one of the biggest sporting celebrities on the planet, but he must put the last few months behind him quickly and deliver, otherwise there may well be nobody rich enough who is willing to take a chance on buying him next year.

PSG supporters have made clear their unhappiness towards Neymar, yet those feelings can still change if he brings success on the pitch.

In the boardroom, there is also the realisation of his commercial value -- when Neymar arrived, Al-Khelaifi spoke of “a project of two brands: we’re associating the Neymar brand and the PSG brand.”

They have since signed major sponsorship and endorsement deals with the likes of Nike, with Neymar’s presence alongside Kylian Mbappe playing a

major role.

“PSG are a young club who need a big media profile to help them develop. That is what Neymar has brought, just like Zlatan (Ibrahimovic) or (David) Beckham before him,” French sports marketing specialist Jerome Neveu told AFP.

Ending the Neymar experiment might have allowed PSG to start afresh, although Mbappe and coach Thomas Tuchel had stated their wish that he stays.

“I like Neymar, I want to keep playing with him, with Kylian and with everyone,” said Tuchel recently.

Now all eyes will be on Neymar to see if he can put this episode to bed, although his three-game Champions League suspension means it may be some time yet before he makes any genuine impact.

## Kohli eclipses Dhoni to become most successful Indian Test captain

**KINGSTON, SEP 3 (PTI):** Virat Kohli has surpassed Mahendra Singh Dhoni to become India’s most successful Test skipper after the team recorded its 28th win under his leadership, a 257-run hammering of the West Indies here.

The 28 wins have come from 48 matches for Kohli as captain. His predecessor Dhoni led India to 27 wins from 60 Test matches during his tenure.

Sourav Ganguly and Mohammad Azharuddin are third and fourth in the list of successful Indian Test skippers with 21 and 14 wins respectively.

Overall, former South Africa skipper Graeme Smith remains the most successful skipper in the world with 53 Test wins, followed by ex-Australia captain Ricky Ponting, who recorded 48 Test wins in

his captaincy tenure.

India have made a superb start to the World Test Championship and the win in the second match not only helped them sweep the series 2-0 but also put them on top of championship points table.

With 120 points from two games, India lead the nine-team table even though Pakistan, Bangladesh and South Africa are yet to begin their bilateral campaigns in the championship.

Under Kohli, India have achieved some memorable victories in both India and abroad. Earlier this year, India clinched their maiden Test series in Australia, beating the hosts 2-1 in their own backyard.

In the match here, India entered the fourth day needing eight wickets to win and Kohli’s men completed the task

after lunch, dismissing the hosts for 210 in 59.5 overs in their chase of a near-impossible target of 468.

The bowling quartet of Ishant Sharma (2/37 in 12 overs), Mohammed Shami (3/65 in 16 overs), Jasprit Bumrah (1/31 in 11 overs) and lone spinner Ravindra Jadeja (3/58 in 16.5 overs) were relentless in their pursuit of keeping the home team batsmen on a tight leash.

Such was India’s dominance in the two Tests that West Indies couldn’t even cross 250 in any of their four innings and the only half-century was scored by Shamarh Brooks (50) in this game.

It was one of the most satisfying tours for skipper Kohli as his team claimed dominating triumphs in all three formats (3-0 in T20Is, 2-0 in ODIs, and 2-0 in Tests).

## The impact of England success on women’s football – from top to bottom



### SUZANNE WRACK theGuardian

Following record-breaking television audiences for England at the Women’s World Cup, research has revealed a big rise in fans of the women’s game and a large increase in pitch bookings by women’s teams.

The FA Women’s Super League season kicks off on Saturday and, according to the WSL sponsors Barclays and a YouGov poll, an impressive third of adults consider themselves interested in the women’s game, while 69% of those believe women’s football deserves the same profile as the men’s game and 28% of people who followed the World Cup are becoming fans of women’s football.

Kelly Smith said the research shows the women’s game is ready to step away from being defined by the men’s game and “can stand on its own”.

“I do think that is down to the last couple of tournaments,” the former England and Arsenal striker said. “Making it accessible for everyone has been huge, so the women’s game can be proud of what it has achieved. But it must continue to evolve and develop.”

“Women need to be respected and given the same platform to perform. By doing this the quality gets higher and higher and with that comes better live and television attendances, sponsors, etc.”

The news is a boost to clubs and to the Football Association, which has been working hard to translate support for the

national team into active interest in the domestic league. Measures taken include Manchester and London derbies being hosted on the opening weekend at the Etihad Stadium and Stamford Bridge respectively, games at the Tottenham Stadium and London Stadium in the next three months, a women’s football weekend on 16-17 November when there is no Premier League action (much like non-league day); and targeted investment to market key games.

With 46% of people who have been to a match reported to have been surprised with how professional it was and 74% thinking it underrated, evidence is clear of professionalism and investment improving the quality of the play and driving audiences.

Barclays’ record investment, believed to be closer to £18m than the £10m widely reported, is set to continue the evolution of the game at the top. However, a part of the deal also includes a commitment to the grassroots with a pledge to make football available to all girls in school by 2024 through its support for the FA Girls’ Football School Partnerships. This is aimed at tackling the number of female adults denied access as children, currently 75%, and will see 100 hubs delivering football in 6,000 schools across England.

Adult women, though, are increasingly pushing back against their historical exclusion, with the football pitch booking site Playfinder revealing a 204% increase in book-

ings for women’s football from the eight weeks leading up to the World Cup to the eight weeks following its kick-off on 7 June.

The Playfinder co-founder and chief executive, Jamie Foale, said the booking site “showed a during-the-game increase” and that a big proportion were for repeat bookings. It has also reported a 192% increase in mixed-team bookings.

“Much has been written about how the Women’s World Cup was able to generate huge viewing figures and that does filter down to the grassroots game,” Foale said. “During the Women’s World Cup it was obviously summer and people don’t tend to play regular games, they’ll play more spontaneously. It’s around this time of the year that we see the regular games being booked in and we’ve had a 35% increase on last year in terms of women booking regular games.”

The company has allocated 50% of its marketing budget to promoting the women’s game, having committed to ensuring that at least half of the users on its platform will be female or mixed teams by the next Women’s World Cup in 2023. Foale described its commitment as “something that we see, selfishly, as a big growth market”, continuing the trend of brands that view the women’s game as one of the biggest areas for growth in a saturated football marketplace.

Articles on women’s football still draw “no one cares” comments. Yet clearly people do.

## Oman favourites but we are hoping for an upset: Stimac

### PHILEM DIPAK SINGH

#### NEW DELHI, SEP 3 (PTI):

India football coach Igor Stimac on Tuesday said his team is capable of upsetting Oman in their World Cup qualifying opener but conceded that the visitors will start outright favourites in the September 5 clash.

Stimac, who took charge of the team in May, predicted a tough match on Thursday, considering that India have never won any FIFA-recognised match against Oman.

“Realistically, Qatar and Oman are the favourites in our group. We have never won an official match against either of them. So it’s not going to be easy at all. In Guwahati we are going to give everything on the pitch, aiming to win it,” Stimac told PTI in an interview.

“Results are important now and they are our priority. We have used the last few months wisely. I feel we are ready for the challenge,” said the 51-year-old who had experimented with the line-ups during the Kings’ Cup (in June) and Intercontinental Cup (in July). The last meeting between the two teams ended in a goal-less draw in a friendly game in December last year in the run-up to this year’s Asian Cup.

## Mithali Raj retires from T20Is to focus on 2021 ODI World Cup

### NEW DELHI, SEP 3 (PTI):

Indian women’s cricket great and ODI captain Mithali Raj on Tuesday announced her retirement from T20 Internationals, a format in which she signs off as the country’s leading run-scorer despite a controversy-ridden last leg.

The 36-year-old said she wants to focus on her ODI career, keeping in mind the 2021 World Cup in New Zealand. The veteran’s announcement came as a surprise, considering that she last week made herself available for the home series against South Africa, beginning September 24.

“After representing India in T20 internationals since 2006, I wish to retire from T20Is to focus my energies on readying myself for the 2021 ODI World Cup,” said Mithali in a BCCI statement.

Mithali ended her T20 career with 2364 runs from 89 matches at an average of 37.5 and a highest score of 97 not out. She made her T20I debut in 1999 and played her last match in March against England in Guwahati. Mithali is also the first Indian woman to reach the landmark of 2000 T20 runs.

The senior opener captained the country in 32 T20 Internationals, including the three World Cups in 2012 (Sri



Lanka), 2014 (Bangladesh) and 2016 (India).

With the announcement, she can now put all her focus on the 50-over World Cup in 2021. She had captained India to their second World Cup final in 2017, a feat that gave a much needed impetus to women’s cricket in the country.

“It remains my dream to win a World Cup for my country and I want to give it my best. I thank the BCCI for their continuous support and wish the Indian T20 team good luck as they prepare for the home series against South Africa women,” said Mithali who captained India in their first ever T20 International back in 2006.

The Jodhpur-born player, who was no more a sure starter in the T20s playing eleven, was earlier expected to retire after the home series against

England in March. After expressing her desire to play the five-match series against South Africa last week, Mithali seems to have had a change of heart. Speculation was rife over Mithali’s future in T20s ever since she was controversially left out of the playing eleven for the World T20 semifinals against England last year.

The dropping blew into a major furore during which she accused the then coach Ramesh Powar of trying to destroy her career. It is widely believed that she has had a fallout with T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur, who had backed her ouster from the team at the time.

The controversy ended after Powar was sacked and W V Raman came in as the new coach of the team.

A senior BCCI official



# Eight dead, 26 missing as dive boat sinks in flames off California

**OXNARD (US), SEPT 3 (AFP):** Eight people were dead and more than two dozen missing and feared deceased Monday after a scuba diving boat caught fire and sank off the California coast, with passengers trapped below deck by the roaring blaze.

Fire crews in helicopters, small boats and a Coast Guard cutter battled the fierce pre-dawn fire on the 75-foot (23-metre) Conception, which had been on a diving excursion around Santa Cruz Island, just west of Santa Barbara in southern California.

But the blaze and intense heat prevented them from breaching the vessel's hull to search for survivors before the craft sank, the Coast Guard said. A dense fog further complicated rescue efforts. "Four victims have been recovered thus far as deceased," Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown told a news conference.

"Rescue and recovery efforts on the scene have located an additional four victims on the ocean floor in close proximity to the vessel," Brown said, while 26 people are missing.

Five Conception crew members were awake and jumped into the water when flames burst out around 3:15 am (1015 GMT), Coast Guard



Captain Monica Rochester said, putting the total number of people aboard the boat at 39.

The five were rescued by people on a pleasure craft called the Grape Escape, Rochester said.

Shirley Hansen, who was on the Grape Escape with her husband Bob, told the Los Angeles Times they were asleep when they heard pounding on the side of their fishing boat.

The crew, some only in underwear and two with leg injuries, had retrieved a dinghy and paddled 200 yards to the Hansens' boat.

Shirley Hansen said the men were distraught -- one had a girlfriend below-deck on the Con-

ception -- and two of the men paddled back to look for survivors, but found none. Rochester of the Coast Guard said all the passengers were believed to have been sleeping at the time. The Conception had a crowded cabin with three-high bunks below decks.

The Conception sank 20 yards (metres) off the island's northern shore, leaving only its bow exposed. US news outlets released audio of a distress call in which a crew member on the boat yells, "Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!" and "I can't breathe!"

A Coast Guard operator asks the man if the passengers can get off the boat and if the crew

has fire extinguishers, but the response is inaudible. Rochester said the Conception, which was launched in 1981 by a Santa Barbara-based company called Truth Aquatics, "has been in full compliance" with safety regulations, and that its owner was cooperating with investigators.

Glen Fritzler, listed as owner on the Truth Aquatics website, was a respected professional who only months ago received the California Scuba Service Award, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Asked whether there had been an explosion on board or a slow-developing fire, Rochester said that "the only Mayday

call we received" -- which came from the boat -- "was the vessel was engulfed in flames." The fire was put out multiple times but flared back up, the Coast Guard said, apparently because of the amount of fuel in the vessel. The boat could carry up to 1,600 gallons (6,057 litres), according to the company website.

The Truth Aquatics website said the Conception, listed as having bunks for up to 46 people, had been scheduled to return Monday from a three-day trip after visiting several diving spots around Santa Cruz Island.

The area is popular for a variety of water and outdoor sports.

## I don't want an election, says Boris Johnson in latest Brexit warning

**BY ADITI KHANNA LONDON, SEPT 3 (PTI):** British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said he does not want a general election, in an attempt to warn off rebel MPs from his party backing the Opposition with plans to block Brexit with "another pointless delay".

In a statement on the steps of Downing Street in London on Monday, Johnson said there are "no circumstances" under which he would accept a delay to Brexit, which is scheduled for October 31.

The unscheduled statement, which had sent speculation of a snap election into overdrive, came following an emergency meeting of the Cabinet amid plans by different sections of Parliament to block Britain's exit from the European Union (EU) without an agreement in place by the October 31 deadline as they return from summer recess on Tuesday.

"I want everybody to know - there are no circumstances under which I will ask Brussels to delay. We are leaving

on October 31, no ifs or buts. We will not accept any attempt to go back on our promises or scrub that referendum," warned Johnson.

"Armed and fortified with that conviction I believe we will get a deal at that crucial summit in [mid] October. A deal that Parliament will certainly be able to scrutinise," he said.

"And in the meantime let our negotiators get on with their work Without that sword of Damocles over their necks. And without an election, which I don't want and you don't want."

Johnson's latest ultimatum makes it clear to MPs on all sides of the House of Commons that he would not, under any circumstances, entertain the notion of another delay to Brexit.

Political pundits believe that in effect is a warning that he would rather let the government fold and go back to the electorate in a snap election that be willing to consider another delay to the Brexit deadline.

On a note of opti-

mism, Johnson claimed the chances of reaching a new agreement with the EU had been "rising" because the UK was preparing to leave the EU "come what may" by the latest deadline.

Earlier on Monday evening, Labour MP Hilary Benn, one of the lawmakers leading the charge against Johnson's Brexit plans, released the text of a bill which aims to prevent a no-deal Brexit on October 31, unless Parliament consents.

"The Bill has cross-party support from MPs who believe that the consequences of No Deal for the economy and the country would be highly damaging. No Deal is not in the national interest," Benn said on Twitter.

A group of opposition and rebel Conservative lawmakers are expected to support the legislation this week. The law would force Johnson to seek an extension to the Brexit process until January 2020 if he failed to agree a new deal with the EU at a summit scheduled for mid-October.

## Iran's Rouhani rules out any bilateral talks with US

**TEHRAN, SEPT 3 (AFP):** Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Tuesday ruled out holding any bilateral talks with the United States, saying the Islamic republic is opposed to such negotiations in principle.

In an address to parliament, Rouhani also said Iran was ready to further reduce its commitments to a landmark 2015 nuclear deal "in the coming days" if current negotiations yield no results by Thursday.

Tehran and Washington have been at loggerheads since May last year when US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the nuclear accord and began reimposing crippling sanctions.

The arch-foes were on the cusp of confrontation in June when Iran downed a US drone and Trump ordered retaliatory strikes before cancelling them at the last minute.

France has been leading efforts to calm the situation, with President Emmanuel Macron expressing hope during G7 talks in late August of organising a meeting



between Rouhani and Trump. "Maybe there has been a misunderstanding. We've said it several times and we repeat it -- there has been no decision to hold bilateral talks with the US," said Rouhani.

"In principle, we don't want bilateral talks with the United States," he was quoted as saying on the official government website.

"If the United States lifts all sanctions, it would be possible to talk (with them) during 5+1 meetings as in the past," he said, referring to the six major powers involved in negotiating the 2015 deal.

Iran has hit back with countermeasures in response to the US withdrawal from the deal,

which gave it relief from sanctions in return for curbs on its nuclear programme. It has already increased its uranium enrichment and stockpiles, and Rouhani said Tuesday a "third step will be enacted in the coming days" unless the remaining parties to the deal honour their own commitments.

"If by Thursday these negotiations yield no results, we will announce the third step of the reduction of our commitments," the Iranian president said.

The 2015 deal was agreed between Iran and the so-called 5+1 -- UN Security Council permanent members Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States plus Germany.

## Pak to issue multiple, on-arrival visas to Sikh pilgrims: PM Khan



**LAHORE, SEPT 3 (PTI):** Kartarpur is the "Madina" and Nankana Sahib is the "Makkah" of the Sikh community, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said and assured that his government will issue multiple and on-arrival visas to Sikh pilgrims coming from India and other countries, according to media reports on Tuesday. Khan said the government will provide Sikh pilgrims maximum possible facilities during their pilgrimage to the holy sites in Pakistan, the News International reported.

Addressing the International Sikh Convention at the Governor House here on Monday, the prime minister said, "I assure that you will be issued multiple visas... This is our responsibility. We will give you visas at the airport." Pakistan has decided to complete the process of issuance of visas to Sikh pilgrims by September 30 to facilitate their participation at the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev in Nankana Sahib on November 12. The visa process started on September 1.

The move is not a favour, it was Pakistan's obligation, the Saama TV quoted Khan as saying.

"Kartarpur is your Madina and Nankana Sahib is your Makkah. We (Muslims) can't even imagine someone keeping us away from Makkah or Madina. This is a new

visa regime so there may be some obstacles initially, but we will facilitate you fully," he said. The convention was attended by Punjab Governor Chaudhry Sarwar, federal and provincial cabinet members, and Sikh pilgrims from the UK, the US, Canada, Europe and other countries.

New Delhi and Islamabad have agreed that Pakistan would allow 5,000 Sikh visitors per day into the country through the proposed Kartarpur Corridor. The corridor will connect Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur with Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district and facilitate visa-free movement of Indian Sikh pilgrims, who will have to just obtain a permit to visit Kartarpur Sahib, which was established in 1522 by Sikh faith founder Guru Nanak Dev.

Kartarpur will also be the first visa-free corridor between the two neighbours since their independence in 1947.

Pakistan is building the corridor from the Indian border to the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, the final resting place of Guru Nanak, while the other part from Dera Baba Nanak up to the border will be constructed by India. Pakistan has repeatedly said that the opening of the corridor will not be hit by the current tension with India that has escalated after New Delhi revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

## In Iraq's Baiji, mines turn farms into killing fields

**BAIJI (IRAQ), SEPT 3 (AFP):** One man lost his uncle. Another is mourning for two sons. Farmers and herders in Iraq's Baiji say mines left by the Islamic State group turned their beloved orchards into killing fields. The improvised explosive devices, planted by jihadists trying to fend off Iraqi troops in 2015, have also discouraged scores of families from returning to their battered farming towns around Baiji, in the north of the country. "Daesh's ghosts are still here. Their crimes are still there, under the earth," said local official Abu Bashir, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

His thin face contorted into a grimace as he recalled his personal loss to those "ghosts" -- both his sons.

"We came back in March 2018 and found the area booby-trapped. There was nowhere we could feel safe," he told AFP. "As the kids were playing, a bomb exploded under my six-year-old son who was outside the house. He was killed immediately." Exactly a year later, in March of this year, unexploded ordnance also killed his 18-year-old son.

He said the experience had left him too scarred to try rebuilding his home, reduced to rubble by ferocious fighting between IS and security forces.

"A man bitten by a snake will be afraid of a rope, as the saying goes. After my two boys were killed, I'm afraid of everything," Lahib, 21, has also been touched by IS's deadly legacy. "We got our houses back but the remnants of war are still there. Daesh left us with booby-trapped homes," he told AFP.

"One of these homes blew up on my uncle. I saw it with my own eyes."

The loss pushed him to join Halo Trust, a non-profit group clearing unexploded ordnance in Baiji since June as part of the United Nations' Mine Action Service (UNMAS). In temperatures reaching 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit), Halo Trust mine searchers scanned a field near Baiji for an IS speciality: plastic jerrycans packed with explosives and rigged to pressure plates. The bombs appeared to have been planted in long rows parallel to a main thoroughfare to defend against incoming Iraqi troops.

Mine searchers used excavators to map out the bombs, then mechanically defused them so Iraqi troops could take

the components away. "When we talk as friends, it's clear no one hasn't seen injustice and explosions with his own eyes. This is why we're doing this job," said Lahib. In Baiji alone, 340 explosive hazards were removed since UNMAS operations began, with up to 25 IEDs uncovered daily.

UNMAS says the scope and complexity of IED contamination in IS-controlled areas is "unprecedented", with tripwires painted to blend in with surroundings and even Iraqi currency turned into bombs. The fear of undiscovered threats has kept around 100 families away from the area, said Abu Mohammad, another local official.

"People want to come back, live in their homes and get on with normal lives, but when they see that this guy got blown up or that guy was killed, they stay away," he said. "This soil means so much to us and we hope this kind of thing -- losing our loved ones, our children, our homes -- doesn't happen on it." More than 2,500 people remain displaced from Baiji, according to the International Organization for Migration. Returns seem to be speeding up, with some 15,000 people back in their home district since December.

For the most part, however, they are returning to an utterly destroyed moonscape. The town of Baiji is a labyrinth of mostly-abandoned buildings, still riddled with bullet holes and craters. Twisted rebar stick out from the ruins like crushed spider legs.

UNMAS hopes clearing IS-laden explosives will allow for Baiji's reconstruction, but other challenges remain.

The area is controlled by various Iraqi paramilitary factions that must approve any activity, which aid workers said slows down their work. "We get authorisation from one group but it doesn't work with the others, so we end up going to four or five different groups before we can start working," one mine removal worker told AFP.

Iraqi parliamentarians from Sunni-majority areas, including Baiji, have also complained that the government has not allocated enough reconstruction funds to the area. "The problem is huge but the effort to fix it is small," said Iyad Saleh, programme director at Iraqi non-profit group IHSCO.

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**STROLLING THROUGH!** The musician, Liam Payne sports a casual tee with green slacks and black sneakers while out in London.

## Singer Ariana Grande Sues Forever 21 Over Look-Alike Ad Campaign

The singing superstar Ariana Grande has sued Forever 21 for \$10 million, accusing the fashion retailer and a beauty company started by its billionaire founders' daughters of piggybacking off her fame and influence to sell their wares. In a complaint filed on Monday, Ariana said Forever 21 and Riley Rose misappropriated her name, image, likeness and music, including by employing a "strikingly similar" looking model, in a website and social media campaign early this year.

She said this followed the breakdown of talks for a joint marketing campaign because Forever 21 would not pay enough for "a celebrity of Ms Grande's stature," whose longer-term endorsements generate millions of dollars in fees.

Ariana Grande has more than 65 million Twitter followers and 163 million Instagram followers. A core part of the 26-year-old's fan-base overlaps Forever 21's and Riley Rose's target markets. Forever 21 and Riley Rose did not immediately respond on Tuesday to emailed requests for comment.

Founded in 1984, Forever 21 said it recently had 815 stores in 57 countries. Its

founders, Do Won and Jin Sook Chang, are worth \$1.5 billion according to Forbes magazine. Their daughters, Linda and Esther Chang, opened the first Riley Rose boutique in 2017.

According to Grande's complaint, Forever 21 and Riley Rose misappropriated at least



30 images and videos, including by using audio and lyrics from her recent No 1 single 7 Rings, and by using the look-alike model." The resemblance is uncanny," the complaint said.

Ariana Grande's lawsuit in Los Angeles federal court seeks damages for copyright and trademark infringement, false endorsement, and violating her right of publicity. The case is Grande-Butera et al v Forever 21 Inc et al, U.S. District Court, Central District of California, No. 19-07600.

## Krushna Abhishek Says People Tell Him They've Forgotten Sunil Grover Since He Joined The Kapil Sharma Show

Actor-comedian Krushna Abhishek, whose ROFL portrayal of the character Sapna on The Kapil Sharma Show has impressed fans, told ZoomTV in an interview that he has never been compared to Sunil Grover, who quit Kapil's show after an ugly fight. "You won't believe it but no one has compared Sapna to Gutthi till date. In fact, people tell me that 'Jabse tum aaye ho, hum Sunil ko bhul chuke hai'. I have received this compliment several times," the publication quoted Krushna as saying. Sunil Grover resigned from the The Kapil Sharma Show in 2017 because of a fall-out and despite rumours of a reunion, he hasn't worked with the show host since then. His on-screen character Gutthi superseded the popularity of even Kapil Sharma.

In his interview, Krushna Abhishek said he has great respect for Sunil Grover as an actor but their styles are different and hence, his portrayal of Sapna has never been compared to Sunil Grover's Gutthi or Dr Mashoor Gulati. "Sunil is a very good actor. I grade him as a very good



actor. He has his own style. I have my own style. Akshay Kumar does a different kind of comedy, Govinda does a different kind of comedy but both are great in their own spaces. I believe that Sunil has a different style and his character doesn't match with Sapna at all."

Krushna Abhishek added that Sunil Grover is hardly ever remembered on sets since he joined the show: "No one talks about him on the show, too. Initially people did, but then we took over."

Sunil Grover has been an integral part of Kapil Sharma's comedy show, whose popularity dipped almost instantly after Sunil Grover's resignation in 2017. After quitting Kapil's show, Sunil Grover made guest appear-

## If you steal my work, do it properly: French director Jerome Salle to 'Saaho' makers

MUMBAI, SEP 3 (PTI): Prabhas' "Saaho" has some uncanny similarities with French filmmaker Jerome Salle's 2008 film "Largo Winch" and the director has criticised the makers of the multi-lingual Indian movie for creating a "bad" copy.

"Largo Winch" is an action thriller based on the Belgian comic book of the same name, and post the release of "Saaho" on Friday many social media users pointed out how the film looked like a rip-off of the successful French movie.

Salle, who was being tagged by a lot of users on microblogging site Twitter, seemed upset by the team of

"Saaho" and advised Telugu directors to at least make the copy "properly".

"It seems this second 'freemake' of Largo Winch is as bad as the first one. So please Telugu directors, if you steal my work, at least do it properly?" Salle tweeted. This is not the first time Salle has accused Telugu filmmakers for stealing his work.

In 2018, he had claimed that "Agnyaathavaasi", featuring Pawan Kalyan, was also a copy of "Largo Winch". The film was written and directed by Trivikram Srinivas.

"Sahoo", directed by Sujeeth and also featuring Shradha Kapoor, has minted over 90 crores in India.

## Kevin Hart is awake and will be 'just fine', says wife Eniko Parrish

LOS ANGELES, SEP 3 (PTI): Kevin Hart's wife Eniko Parrish on Tuesday shared that the actor-comedian is awake and will be "just fine".

Hart was hospitalised on Sunday after the vintage car he was a passenger in veered into an embankment in Malibu Hills, California.

The driver was determined not to be under the influence of alcohol, accord-

ing to a report from the California Highway Patrol. Both Hart and the driver suffered "major back injuries" and were "transported and treated at nearby hospitals".

"He is good, everybody's good. Thank God. He's fine, he's awake", Parrish told TMZ outside the hospital where Hart, 40, was treated. The actor is expected to stay in the hospital for a few days.

## Kichcha Sudeep, Who Lost 10 Kilos For A Role, Says Comments On Physical Transformation Were 'Embarrassing'

Kichcha Sudeep, who plays the antagonist in Salman Khan's Dabangg 3, says he lost 10 kilos for his upcoming film Pailwaan and said that the comments he received for his physical transformation, though good, were 'embarrassing'. Sudeep plays a boxer in Kannada film Pailwaan and he says he sports three looks in the movie. "Even though people are observing or talking about my look in the film in a good way but in the beginning, I did feel a bit embarrassed. This is worst then being dressed, you need to be perfect. The embarrassment was scary. Salman Khan has been into fitness for a long time and if he can feel like that in Sultan then what I am? I did have my fears. I was scared initially," Sudeep told PTI.

## Started doing heavy drugs at 19 and abused all of my relationships: Justin Bieber



LOS ANGELES, SEP 3 (PTI): Pop star Justin Bieber has opened up about achieving too much too soon and the negative effect the fame had on him. In a lengthy Instagram post, the "Sorry" hitmaker said at the age of 19 he started doing drugs and "abused all my relationships".

"I started doing pretty heavy drugs at 19 and abused all of my relationships. I became resentful, disrespectful to women, and angry. I became distant to everyone who loved me, and I was hiding behind, a shell of a person that I had become. I felt like I could never turn it around.

"It's taken me years to bounce back from all these terrible decisions, fix broken relationships, and change relationship habits. Luckily god blessed me with extraordinary people who love me for me," Bieber wrote.

The singer, who has been vocal about his mental health struggles, said the constant praise made him overconfident.

"I didn't grow up in a stable home, my parents were 18 (and) separated with no money, still young and rebellious, as well. As my talent progressed and I became ultra-successful, it happened within a strand of two years. My whole world was flipped on its head. "I went from a 13-year-old boy from a small town to being praised left and right by the world, with millions saying how much they loved me and how great I was. You hear these things enough as a young boy and you actually start believing it," he said.

Bieber believes there were so many people taking care of him that he never developed a sense of responsibility.

"Everyone did everything for me, so I never even learned the fundamentals of responsibility. By this point, I was 18 with no skills in the real world, with millions of dollars and access to whatever I wanted.

"This is a very scary concept for anyone. By 20, I made every bad decision you could have thought of and went from one of the most loved and adored people in the world to the most ridiculed, judged, and hated person in the world," he added. The singer credited a few people, including his wife Hailey Baldwin, for encouraging him to become a better version of himself.

"Now I am navigating the best season of my life MARIAGE!! Which is (an) amazing crazy new responsibility. You learn patience, trust, commitment, kindness, humility and all of the things it looks like to be a good man," he said.

**ARIES:** Aries, taking things for granted is the fastest way of losing them. Consider how your thought patterns might potentially block your best self from coming out. Look at the people in your life and appreciate their importance. Tip: Open your eyes and acknowledge what is in front of you.

**TAURUS:** Take a step back and really think about what you have been doing. Is this the seed you want to sow, Taurus? A balance of effort and communication leads to successful relationships. Take a good look at yourself and see where you lack. It is time to do some much-needed soul searching, and taking action.

Tip: What you put forth, you will receive. **GEMINI:** The Universe is ready to bend at your will, Gemini. Are you looking for love? The good news is that love is looking for you too. The work that you put in to make yourself emo-

tionally secure is helping you attract the kind of love you deserve. Say goodbye to the drama and hello to a simple yet amazing love.

Tip: Kiss the drama goodbye.

**CANCER:** In the words of Rhonda Byrne, "the tighter you try and hold on to something you are afraid of losing, the more you are pushing it away." Open it up and let it breathe. Things are still in the beginning phase. Too much intensity can ruin it for you. Avoid wasting time on futile relationships. Instead, focus on developing those which have more potential. Tip: Take it easy.

**LEO:** Nothing is ever perfect. That does not mean you will lose hope. You simply need to ask for help to get back up. Any storm can be weathered if the foundation is strong. Try to separate yourself from the raw emotions, and think logically if all your needs are be-

ing met.

Tip: Focus on the root of the problem to weather this storm.

**VIRGO:** Congratulations seem to be in order, Virgo. you have successfully managed to communicate your needs to your partner, and both of you are now looking at taking the next step. This is a great time to discuss how far you have come and how the future will look like. Those still looking for love, don't allow negative focus to mess up things for you. Focus on the similarities rather than differences.

Tip: Celebrate the similarities and how far you've come.

**LIBRA:** Don't let your past become an obstacle for the future you want to create. Think of this as an opportunity to start again, only this time, you have experience on your side. Let your inner child out to play. This youthful confidence will attract the kind of partner you

are looking for. Some of you might be reconnecting with the same person in a totally different way.

Tip: Let the inner child out to play.

**SCORPIO:** You have got to get a hold on those emotions, Scorpio. Pushy and clingy does not become you. Instead, focus on going with the flow. Trust yourself and the relationship you have built. What is yours will come back to you.

Tip: Go with the flow.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Sag, the Universe is shining peace, tranquility and hope upon you. What does your heart want? Let it guide you to what is truly meant for you. Allow yourself to be vulnerable. Your instincts are telling you the same thing. Tip: Listen to your gut.

**CAPRICORN:** You seem to have completely detached yourself, Capricorn. Emotional detachment can eventually become comfortable, which will

then make it difficult for you to leave. No matter how painful, feel those emotions. Open up those chakras. Meditation and grounding are the way to go.

Tip: Meditate and open up those chakras. **AQUARIUS:** Loss and disappointment are hard to deal with, Aquarius. And pushing it away will only make it worse. Appreciate what you had and grieve its loss. Sometimes, change helps you get to know yourself better. There is so much more in store for you, only if you are willing to see it.

Tip: Grieve, little one, and then let it go. **PISCES:** The fire is sizzling, the chemistry is great. What seems to be the hold up, Pisces? Go have your adventure. Let today be about love and passion. For some of you, there is a burning desire to be organised. Go crazy cleaning your sacred space. It will help make room for something new.

Tip: Don't stop yourself from going on this adventure.