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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## CM to keep busy till Budget Session

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 JUL:

The Chief Minister's Office issued a circular today informing that the Chief Minister, PS Tamang [Golay] will not be able to meet the public from 19 Jul till 02 Aug as he will be engaged in preparation for the upcoming Budget Session that starts on 29 Jul. The CM will meet Officers for urgent official matters only, it is further informed.

## 11 more die in Assam floods

### GUWAHATI, JUL 19 (PTI):

Eleven more people died in Assam floods, taking the toll to 47, while 48.87 lakh people were affected in 27 of the 33 districts of the state, an official report said on Friday.

A total of 1.79 lakh hectare agricultural land was submerged and around 90 per cent of rhino habitats -- the Kaziranga National Park and the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary -- are under water.

Of the 11 deaths, five were reported from Dhubri district and three each from Barpeta and Morigaon, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said.

In its bulletin, the ASDMA said 48,87,443 people of 3,705 villages are reeling under the impact of the flood, the ASDMA said.

## 26 govt teachers relieved from re-employment service

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 JUL:

The State Government today released 26 government school teachers from the re-employment/ extension of their services.

An order issued by the Human Resource Development Department today informs that the "order of re-employment/ extension" issued in respect of the 26 teachers is hereby relieved with immediate effect."

Most of the teachers affected by the order were Graduate Teachers for mathematics while one each were PGTs for commerce, language and Political Science.

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# Former PI criticizes Akshay's public appeal

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 JUL:

Former Police Inspector, Sonam Lachungpa, today demanded that the State Government take appropriate action against ADGP Akshay Sachdeva for the 2013 lathicharge at the then Sikkim Krantikari Morcha head office in Tadong. Mr Lachungpa alleged that the lathicharge was an "illegal" act and Mr Sachdeva should be accordingly punished.

The matter, it may be recalled, is already in the Supreme Court and has been playing out in the public domain ever since the ADGP convened a press conference on 17

July and appealed for public support against the online smear campaign being mounted against him.

Today, the former PI, who had taken voluntary retirement and was an SKM supporter when the lathicharge incident happened and claims that even he was "attacked" in the lathicharge, lashed out strongly against Mr Sachdeva.

Addressing a press conference, he said that the lathicharge of 2013 was uncalled for and contended that the DC, unlike what was being claimed by Mr Sachdeva, could not have given the order for the lathicharge

since he was not at the spot when the incident happened.

Mr Lachungpa also said that the way the lathicharge was carried out was wrong.

"He locked the gate and started beating people inside the building. That is not how lathicharge is done. Lathicharge is meant to disperse crowds, not trap and beat them up," he stated.

Further stating that even the inquiry commission has said that the lathicharge was illegal, Mr Lachungpa said that Mr Sachdeva should also be charged with trespassing, assault and attempt to murder.

He also questioned Mr Sachdeva's intention behind holding the press conference and stated that he cannot hold such a press conference without prior permission of the State Government.

"The matter is subjudice so how can he hold the press conference. He doesn't have faith in the judiciary? Is he a police officer or is he a politician?" said the former police officer.

Mr Lachungpa said that Mr Sachdeva should have been suspended 6 years ago and stated if SDF was still in power he would not have been suspended even today.

## ICAR-KVK East Sikkim awarded Krishi Vigyan Protsahan Puraskar



### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 JUL:

KVK East Sikkim, ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute, Tadong, Gangtok has been awarded "Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Rashtriya Krishi Vigyan Protsahan Puraskar - 2018" as the Best KVK in ICAR-ATARI, Zone VI Guwahati.

The award was presented by Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar on the occasion of ICAR's 91st Foundation Day on 16 Jul, 2019 at NASC Complex, New Delhi, a PIB release informs.

Joint Director, Dr RK Avasthe, ICAR-NOFRI and Sr Scientist and Head, Dr Raghavendra

Singh, KVK-East Sikkim received the award from the Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. The award carries a Certificate, Citation and cash prize of Rs 2.25 lakhs.

The award was given to the KVK-East Sikkim based on the performance of last five years for the economic and social benefit of the farming community of East Sikkim. During the reporting period, the KVK conducted more than 70 on farm trials (OFTs) on various new organic production technologies and 68 front line demonstrations (FLDs) of proven technologies

covering about 400 farmers, the release mentions.

Additionally, the KVK has conducted large number of training programmes for various stakeholders during the period. The KVK has undertaken various Cluster Front Line Demonstrations on oilseeds and pulses under NMOPP, NFSM and TSP.

The KVK has also initiated the "Doubling the Farmers Income (DFI) -2022" at Thanaka Martam in the year 2017. The hard work of all the KVK SMSes, administrative staff of ICAR-NOFRI and KVK, drivers, laborers was reflected in the award, the release states.

## Sikkim shines in first Eastern India Strength Lifting C'ship



Three teams could not participate due to bad roads

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 JUL:

Sikkim Strength Lifting Association [SSLA] felicitated the Sikkim team members today for their outstanding performance in the first edition of Eastern India Strength Lifting & Incline Bench Press Championship 2019 held from 12 to 14 July at Gyalshing in West Sikkim.

The association has also thanked every organization and individual for their support and contribution for the grand success of this national level championship in the State.

The three-day championship was organized

by Sikkim Strength Lifting Association in collaboration with Department of Physical Education, Sikkim Government College, Gyalshing. A 50-member SSLA team represented Sikkim in this first ever Eastern India Strength Lifting & Incline Bench Press Championship.

In the championship, Punai Uraw bagged two gold medals for Sikkim and emerged as the Champion of the Champions in senior men category, while Ranju Sundas also won two gold medals for Sikkim and also lifted the trophy of the Champion of the Champions in senior women category.

Ram Dhoj Rai bagged two gold medals for Sikkim and adjudged as the

Champion of the Champions in master's category.

Likewise, Khiney Mukhia and Leomit Lepcha won two gold medals each for Sikkim, Pempa Tamang one gold medal and one silver medal and Atish Tamang won one gold medal for Sikkim.

Pahelman Limboo, Chandra Kala Subba and Srijana Subba won two silver medals each for the State and Bhim Subba won one silver medal. Similarly, Ashok Rai and Sujana Chettri won one bronze medal each for the State.

The felicitation function was held here at White Hall complex, which had Secretary to Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Dr RK Ta-

mang as the chief guest. He was accompanied by Joint Director SYA Department, BB Rai and chief advisor Thakur Rai, chief convener Rinzing Wangyal Chopel and other members of the sports wing of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party.

In his address, the Secretary congratulated the association for successfully hosting a national level championship in the State. He further congratulated the State team members for their outstanding performance and for winning medals and laurels for the State.

He expressed his best wishes to all lifters for future competitions. Dr Tamang also assured to extend

turn to pg02

## Priyanka's 'arrest' disturbing, arbitrary application of power shows BJP govt's insecurity: Rahul

### NEW DELHI, JUL 19

(PTI): Congress leader

Rahul Gandhi on Friday hit out the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh for the "illegal arrest" of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Sonbhadra, saying this "arbitrary application of power" to stop her from meeting those injured in a clash reveals the BJP dispensation's increasing insecurity in the state.

Congress general secretary in-charge Uttar Pradesh East Priyanka Gandhi was Friday stopped from proceeding towards Sonbhadra district to meet those injured in the clash that claimed 10 lives, and taken to a guesthouse by authorities after she staged a sit-in.



The Congress claimed that Priyanka Gandhi had been taken into police custody.

"The illegal arrest of Priyanka in Sonbhadra, UP, is disturbing. This arbitrary application of power, to prevent her

from meeting families of the 10 Adivasi farmers brutally gunned down for refusing to vacate their own land, reveals the BJP Govt's increasing insecurity in UP," Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet.

## Agri Secy summoned to explain irregularities and malpractices in Deptt

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 JUL:

The Agriculture Secretary, it is learnt, has been summoned to meet the Chief Secretary "after seeking appointment as soon as possible" with regard to "irregularities and malpractices" in the Agriculture Department.

A letter from the Joint Secretary to the CS dated 10 July, while requesting the Agriculture Secretary to meet the CS, reminds him that a Sikkim Unemployed Agriculture & Horticulture Graduate Association delegation had met the CS on 02 July and had submitted a memorandum to him.

The memorandum, the letter adds, was recommended to the Agriculture Secretary "with clear directions 'no deviation will be permitted' in the appointment of HDOs, ADOs, VLWs."

The letter then gets into the Agriculture Secretary's failure in submitting his tour programme to the Chief Secretary even once throughout the current financial year.

"Your presence is mostly known from newspapers and social media," the JS writes.

Also selected for criticism is the Agriculture Secretary's, "without understanding the pros and cons,"

giving "ample time" to a Joint Director of NITI Aayog [a "D.S. level officer"] and his colleague recently "which was also published with photographs in a local newspaper."

The letter stays with this topic, adding, "As if this is not enough, you took the same set of officers to the Chief Minister at Samman Bhawan, same evening without bothering for standard protocol."

"Needless to say, it was not considered necessary for them to call on the Chief Secretary, which is normally the case," the letter concludes.



## Month-long Srawani Parva celebration at Chaar Dham

**GANGTOK, 19 JUL (IPR):** Siddheswara Dham is organising a month-long "Srawani Parva" 2019 at Solophok, Namchi. During the month long festival, on each of the four Mondays, Rudraabhishek, Hawan, Maha Aarati will be organised. The festival will

begin from 22 July, 2019. Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad has consented to attend the inaugural day as chief guest. On the last Monday i.e. 12 Aug, 2019, the Chief Minister of Sikkim, PS Tamang [Golay] has consented to attend the occasion as chief guest.

Bhandara for all devotees shall be organised with the support of various NGOs of Namchi and surrounding on every Monday. All Devotees are invited to be a part of the Srawani Parva Celebrations at Siddheswara Dham, Namchi.

## Two PNGS teams in National Grand Finale of Robotex India



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 19 JUL:**

Two teams from Paljor Namgyal Girls Senior Secondary School, Gangtok, have made it to the National Grand Finale of Robotex India, to be held on 27 and 28 July at Shanti Business School, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, a press release informs.

Under the mentorship of PGT Physics and ATL in charge, Ivan Dorjee Lepcha, the ATL\_PNG Robotics teams for Lego Line Follower and Open Line Follower categories bagged 3rd positions at the recently held Regional Rounds of Robotex

India in Delhi on 13 July, thereby qualifying for the Nationals.

Lego Line Follower Team comprises of Bath Sheba Lepcha, Perna Pradhan and Sristika Sharma. Open Line Follower Team has Anisha Adhikari, Nikky Kumari and Nivedita Tamang. All the students are studying in class XII Science.

Robotex International is an annual event and the biggest robotics festival on the planet. Thousands of engineers, executives, students and families come together to be inspired by industry leaders, examine new

startups, build robots for various challenges and learn about the latest technology innovations. Robotex International will be hosted in Tallinn, Estonia, and Robotex Asia will take place in China on August 16-18, 2019.

Robotex India started in the year 2018 in which students are selected from regional rounds for the Nationals. The winners of Robotex India will represent the country at Robotex Asia and later in Robotex International.

PNGSSS had participated in Robotex Nationals in 2018 too.

## Vegetable prices soar in Punjab, Haryana after rains; tomato selling at Rs 60-70 per kg

**CHANDIGARH, JUL 19 (PTI):** Prices of vegetables such as tomato, peas and beans have surged sharply over the last one week in Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh owing to supply crunch caused by heavy rains in the region.

Retail price of tomato has almost doubled from Rs 30-40 per kg to Rs 60-70 per kg, while that of peas have risen sharply to Rs 100 per kg from nearly Rs 70 per kg earlier, traders said Friday.

The supply of tomato has reduced drastically from states like Himachal Pradesh. Besides, supply of other vegetables from Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana too has

been affected after heavy monsoon rains.

Retail prices of other vegetables like beans and cucumber have also increased.

Cauliflower was selling at around Rs 60-80 per kg from Rs 50 per kg earlier, price of beans has jumped to Rs 70-80 per kg from Rs 50 per kg. Potato prices of 'pahari' variety have risen to Rs 30 per kg from Rs 20 per kg.

Bitter gourd was selling in the range of Rs 50-60 per kg as against Rs 40 per kg earlier, carrot prices have gone up from Rs 40 per kg to Rs 60 per kg, while cucumber prices have risen from Rs 20-30 per kg to Rs 40-50 per kg.

Lemon prices have also increased to Rs 30-40 for 250 grams from Rs 20-25 for the same weight earlier.

Bottle gourd prices have jumped from Rs 30 per kg to Rs 60 per kg, while okra was selling at Rs 60 per kg as against Rs 40 per kg earlier. Coriander prices have also doubled from Rs 20 per 100 gram earlier to Rs 40 for the same weight, while prices of chillies too have gone up, traders said.

However, prices of onion have remained stable at around Rs 25 per kg, they said.

The prices are likely to stabilise after a few days once the weather clears, a trader said here.

# Cardamom saplings distributed to Chuba Perbing farmers

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**NAMCHI, 19 JUL:**

The department of Horticulture and Cash Crop Development Department distributed 60,000 saplings of large cardamom to 120 progressive farmers of Chuba Perbing under area expansion programme of large cardamom under MIDH for South District today.

The programme was attended by area MLA and SNT Minister, Sanjeet Kharel who



congratulated all the beneficiaries and urged

them to convert this benefit into their ad-

ditional source of income. He appreciated

## Babri Masjid demolition case: SC asks special judge to deliver verdict within nine months

New Delhi, Jul 19 (PTI): The Supreme Court Friday asked the special judge conducting trial in the politically sensitive 1992 Babri Masjid demolition case, involving BJP veterans such as L K Advani, M M Joshi and Uma Bharti, to deliver the verdict within nine months from today.

A bench of Justices RF Nariman and Surya Kant said the recording of evidence in the case should be completed within six months.

The bench also directed the Uttar Pradesh government to pass appropriate orders within four weeks to extend the tenure of the special judge, who is set to retire on September 30.

The top court said the extension of tenure of the special judge will only be for the purpose of concluding the trial and delivering the verdict in the case.

During the extended tenure, he will remain under the administrative control of the Allahabad High Court, it said.

The special judge had on Monday moved the apex court seeking six more months to conclude the matter.

Besides Advani, Joshi and Uma Bharti, the accused against whom conspiracy charge was invoked in the case on April 19, 2017, by the Supreme Court include former BJP MP Vinay Katiar and Sadhvi Ritambara.

Three other high-profile accused Giriraj Kishore, and Vishwa Hindu Parishad leader Ashok Singhal and Vishnu Hari Dalmia died during trial and the proceedings against them have been abated.

## Ktk CM twice ignores Guv's deadline to prove majority, trust vote delayed to Monday

**BENGALURU/NEW DELHI, JUL 19 (PTI):** Tottering on the brink collapse, the JD(S)-Congress coalition government in Karnataka on Friday ignored the Governor's deadline twice for proving the majority on the floor of the state Assembly, setting off a constitutional crisis and a fresh legal battle.

As the assembly failed to take up the voting on the confidence motion to decide the fate of the 14-month-old government, the unending political drama sparked by the resignation of 15 MLAs of the ruling coalition a fortnight ago is set to spill over to next week with Speaker K R Ramesh Kumar adjourning the House till Monday.

All eyes were on Governor Vajubhai Vala on his next course of action.

Before adjourning the house towards the fag end of the day, the Speaker made it clear that a finality would be put to the motion of confidence moved by Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Monday and the matter would not be prolonged further under any circumstances, to which the government agreed.

Kumaraswamy and the Congress moved the

Supreme Court accusing the governor of interfering with the Assembly proceedings when the debate on the trust vote was underway and sought clarification on its July 17 order causing hindrance in issuing whip to the legislators.

The court had held that the MLAs cannot be compelled to participate in the Assembly proceedings.

Kumaraswamy told the apex court that the governor cannot dictate the House on the manner in which the debate of confidence motion has to take place

In his second missive to Kumaraswamy, the governor expressed his "prima facie satisfaction" that the government has lost its majority confidence of the house.

"When the allegations of horse-trading are widely made and I am receiving many complaints, it is constitutionally imperative that the floor test be completed without any delay and today itself.

"I, therefore, require you to prove your majority and complete and conclude the floor test procedure today," Vala told Kumaraswamy in the second letter since

Thursday.

The governor said he was receiving various reports about the attempts being made for horse-trading.

"This can be averted only if the exercise of conducting the floor test is conducted at the earliest and without any delay," the governor said.

As he was speaking on the confidence motion, Kumaraswamy said, "I have received the second love letter" from the governor. He has got 'gnanodaya' (awareness) now. Governor talks about horse-trading in the letter... was he not aware of it till now."

"Let us do politics... we are also here...we will not fear and run away. Why couldn't the governor see horse-trading when the MLAs were resigning."

Governor Vala fixed a second deadline asking the chief minister to complete the floor test shortly after the 1.30 pm deadline set on Thursday night for the JD(S) leader to prove his majority ended without the assembly taking up voting.

The House was also locked in an intense debate on when the trust vote process should be completed.

the dedication of the department to support farmers of the state.

Additional Director Horticulture, BL Dahal highlighted the programme and also sensitized the progressive farmers about cardamom cultivation.

The programme was also attended by Deputy Director South, Dikendra Bhujel, Deputy Director, Pratap Subba and supplier cum technical person Bikash Tamang.

"Lot of discussion has happened; I want to close it (trust motion process) today," the speaker said.

"Caesar's wife should be above suspicion; I cannot be guilty of dragging proceedings."

Kumaraswamy said, "I have made preliminary submission; we can conclude (the process) on Monday."

But BJP leader Suresh Kumar said sanctity of trust vote would be lost if it dragged on and insisted the process be completed Friday itself while his boss B S Yeddyurappa said they are willing to wait till midnight

The ruling coalition appeared to be in no hurry to face the trust vote with Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Siddaramaiah earlier in the day saying the debate may go on till Monday after which the voting would take place since many MLAs have given their names to participate in the debate.

As the deadline neared, the ruling coalition members vociferously questioned the governor's power to issue such a direction with Kumaraswamy citing a Supreme Court verdict that a governor cannot act as ombudsman of the legislature.

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

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

**WANTED**  
HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER.  
Contact: 9933443442/9800500696.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**  
This is for general information of all concerned that Hotel Parasol Residency, Panihouse, Deorali East Sikkim shall remain closed for a period of six months for carrying out necessary repairs. All concerned tour operators and clients are requested to refrain from booking or deal with any sort with regard to Hotel Parasol Residency, Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim.

**Mr. Subash Lama**  
Proprietor  
Hotel Parasol Residency,  
Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim

**BUILDING FOR SALE**  
A 5 storied building with 3 floor completed having a land area of 30x70 at DABUWA, Melli road (2km from Namchi) is for sale. Rate reasonable. Interested party please contact: **6296370905, 9733284142, 8597088755.**

Four & half Storied building on SALE, behind Hotel Agarwal at Pani House, Gangtok, East Sikkim. Interested parties may also buy flats - 2 flats - 1650 sq.ft, 1 Flat - 1186 sq.ft & 1 Flat on top (1 & half)- 3000 sq.ft. Contact: -9434751150

## MISSING:



Name : Divya Sharma  
Age : 17 yrs.  
D/O : Chandra Prasad Sharma  
Height : 4'5" (approx)  
Complexion : Fair  
Wearing apparel : Blue colour jeans pant & Shirt, black & pink colour Nike shoe.

Missing since : 22.01.2019 from Lossing Machong, East Sikkim.  
CID PS case FIR NO. 06/2019 date 08.07.2019 U/S 363/363/IPC. 1860 at CID, Police HQ, Gangtok, East Sikkim. Contact No. 03592 202087(0) 204297(F), Email: spcid@sikkimpolice.nic.in

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Governor meets Lakshya Children’s Club members

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 19 JUL:**  
Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad today granted audience to the members of Lakshya Children’s Club, Karek, Namthang, South Sikkim at Raj Bhavan, a press release informs.  
The first of its kind children’s club established on 27 May, 2018, has members aged eight to eighteen years who are mostly school children. The club intends to groom leadership through community awareness among school children, inculcate moral values, promote sports and healthy living habits and provide platform to the opinion of children



towards building better society and nation, the release mentions.  
President of the club, Deepen Rai and general secretary, Shreya Rai provided a brief account on the objectives and initiatives taken over the last one year. Interestingly, the club so far, has been able to organise World

fencing in school, besides numerous cleanliness drives during weekend holidays and vacations.  
The Governor while blessing the children for their future endeavours, expressed his pleasure in knowing several commendable initiatives taken by such young children in their village.  
He also stated that the collective effort of young children will go a long way in bringing behavioural change among adults and can inspire other village to emulate the example. He urged the children to remain consistent in their effort to serve society for a better tomorrow.

MUSS blood donation camp in Jorethang

**GANGTOK, 19 JUL:** On the occasion of Buddha Purnima, a blood donation camp was jointly organised by Daramdin and Jorethang Tehsils of Manaw Utthan Sewa Samiti at Sri Hansyog Ashram at Jorethang in South Sikkim on Thursday. A total of 64 units of blood were collected during the camp which was supported Namchi District Hospital blood bank in-charge, Dr Anju Rai and others.



SSA to take on Dzongu FC in U-17 Football League finals

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 19 JUL:**  
State Sports Academy will take on Dzongu Football Club in the final match of the ongoing Sikkim Football Association U-17 Football League 2019 here at Paljor Stadium on Saturday.

The State Sports Academy outplayed New Light Academy, Namchi 3-nil to secure its berth in the finals of the U-17 league. Lakpa Sherpa scored a brace and his teammate, John Tshering Lepcha contributed a goal in the victory of the State Sports Academy

The second semi-final match between Sikkim Boys and Dzongu Football Club ended in a goalless draw. In the tie breaker, Sikkim Boys managed to score just two goals, while Dzongu FC players netted four goals to enter the finals of the league.

Mr and Miss Teen Sikkim grand finale on Sunday



**SHRAVAN CHETTRI**  
**GANGTOK, 19 JUL:**  
Positude, an event management company, which has been organizing Miss Sikkim for the past few years are now organizing Mr and Miss Teen Sikkim, 2019. The grand finale of the pageant is scheduled to be held at Manan Kendra on 21 Jul. Auditions and other rounds have already been completed.  
Forty-eight contestants [21 boys and 27 girls] aged between 13-19 years from various

schools and districts of the state are in the final round of the competition.  
At a recent press conference held at Limbu Bhawan today, Managing Director Positude, Bijay Subba highlighted some key factors that play a role in shaping the career of youth in the fashion industry.  
He also added that the current season of Mr and Miss Teen Sikkim has not been sponsored by any organization or person.  
“It’s completely be-

ing organized by us and I hope this effort won’t go unnoticed because we are working towards shaping the fashion industry in the state,” he said.  
Fashion photographer, Lavanya Rabha also addressed the conference wherein he congratulated the finalists  
The grand finale will be chaired by famous choreographer from Nagaland, Edward Coli and Tshering Dolma, as informed by the organizers.

Bill to check ponzi schemes in LS

**NEW DELHI, JUL 19 (PTI):** A Bill which seeks to tackle the menace of illicit deposit-taking activities in the country was introduced in Lok Sabha Friday.  
The Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2019 will replace the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance, 2019.  
The bill seeks to help tackle the menace of illicit deposit taking activities in the country, which at present are exploiting regulatory gaps and lack of strict administrative measures to dupe poor and gullible people of their hard earned money, according to the government.  
The bill was intro-

duced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman amid noisy protests by Congress members over the ongoing political crisis in Karnataka.  
The proposed legislation will have adequate provisions for punishment and disbursement/repayment of deposits in cases where such schemes nonetheless manage to raise deposits illegally.  
The banning of Unregulated Deposit Scheme Bill, 2018 was considered by the Lok Sabha in February and after discussion, the same was passed.  
However, before the same could be considered and passed in the Rajya Sabha, the House was adjourned sine die on the same day.

SummitTIMES IN NEPALI

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**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**  
**RURAL MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT**  
**DEPARTMENT GANGTOK**  
NO. 27/RM&DD/E-TEN Dated: 15/7/19

**INVITATION FOR BIDS**

1. The Rural Management & Development Department, Government of Sikkim on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, invites percentage rate tender under single cover system from the eligible class of contractors enlisted with the SPWD for execution of work as detailed below:

Sl.No.	Name of work	Cost of Bidding documents	Bid security 2.5% of the bid value	Bid value
1.	2	3	4	5
1.	Construction of Office of Gram Vikash Kendra at Chumbung under Soreng-Chakung Constituency, West Sikkim.	Rs. 30,000/-	Rs. 5,69,993.00	Rs. 2,27,99,702.00

The date and time of tender and submission of completed document are as under:  
i) Uploading of bidding documents in e-procurement portal by the Department : 22/07/2019  
ii) Last date for submission of bids online by the Bidders : 26/08/2019 14:00 hours.  
iii) Date of opening of bids : 27/08/2019 10:30 AM onwards.

2. Eligible Contractors having experience in the construction of building works and consider themselves capable to undertake execution of the project may download the details and bidding documents from the e-procurement portal i.e. [www.sikkimtender.gov.in](http://www.sikkimtender.gov.in) w.e.f. 22.07.2019.

3. The completed tender documents must be uploaded in the e-procurement portal on or before 23/08/2017, 1400 hours. All the relevant papers as per the bidding documents along with the cost of tender document and Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in the form of challan/ demand draft and TDR respectively drawn in favour of Sr. Account Officer. Rural Management & Development Department, Government of Sikkim should be uploaded in the portal.

4. The department reserves the right to accept or reject any bid without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-  
Additional Chief Engineer (S/W)  
Rural Management & Development Department

R.O. No. 98/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20 Date 19.07.19

**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**  
**SOCIAL JUSTICE, EMPOWERMENT AND WELFARE DEPARTMENT**  
**INTEGRATED CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME**  
**GANGTOK**  
No: 668/SJE&WD/ICPS/2019 Dated: 18/07/2019

**NOTICE**

Reference Employment Notice No. 449/SJE&WD/ICPS/2019 dated 14/2/2019, the following candidates have been selected for the posts indicated against their name(s) on contractual basis for the period of 03(three) years under the integrated Child Protection Scheme (CSS), Social Justice Empowerment and Welfare Department, Government of Sikkim.

Sl.NO.	Name of Candidate(s)	Name of post
1	Dipa Rai	Data Analyst
2.	Sonam Choden Sherpa	Counsellor
3.	Rabina Chettri	Counsellor
4.	Maha Deo Sharma	Counsellor
5.	Dependra Rai	Counsellor
6.	Roshan Subba	Social Worker
7.	Christina Rai	House Mother
8.	Laxmi Sharma	House Mother
9.	Priyanka Pradhan	Data Entry Operator
10.	Sikha Pradhan	Data Entry Operator
11.	Susanjeeta Tamang	Data Entry Operator
12.	Tshering Keepa Lachenpa	Outreach Worker
13.	Palmula Bhutia	Outreach Worker
14.	Saroj Rai	Outreach Worker
15.	Sunita Pradhan	Outreach Worker
16.	Suren Gurung	Craft Instructor.

The candidates are directed to report to the Office of the undersigned within 15 days from the date of issue of this Notice. If they fail to report to the undersigned within 15 days, their selection shall be cancelled and the offer of appointment will be given to the candidate in the panel list (in order of merit). The terms of the appointment shall be as per Employment Notice No. 449/SJE&WD/ICPS/2019 dated 14/2/2019.

Sd/-  
Additional Secretary-cum-Director, ICPS  
Social Justice Empowerment & Welfare Department  
Government of Sikkim

R.O. No. 96/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20  
Date: 18.7.2019



## Language Barrier

*Language needs contemporary and relevant literature to flourish*

Speaking to a young Nepali-speaker a few days after Bhasa Manyata Diwas was eye-opening. The youngster could rattle off a Nepali proverb to suit just about any situation or irony that abounds around us nowadays. When asked what she would recommend to someone beginning an exploration into Nepali literature, and she listed out only what would qualify to be classics. When it comes to the region, she says that while there are some interesting contemporary works in Nepali, there were not enough invested with the endurance or even lasting relevance that the past greats have nuanced their works with. Make no mistake, she was not being dismissive about the language itself, in fact, she, like perhaps her entire generation, is rather passionate about language and what it means for a people. Their conviction on the importance of language is encouraging even as it is uncomfortable to stare into the mirror they hold up to reflect the legacy that the present generation passes down to them by way of language.

Speak to students of Nepali language at the school level and they will complain that the Nepali taught in schools is too outdated and out of step with their realities. The stories in the textbooks speak of issues which none of the students can identify with and in a language that is almost alien to them. Of course there are still gems hidden in the syllabus, but the overall content is less than inspiring, they insist. They have a point there. Nepali writing is moving in two extremes at present. They are either too archaic, or too esoteric. There is not much that is contemporary and this is also reflected in the less than handsome circulation figures of Nepali publications which have not even touched a small fraction of what is possible. Nepali writers, the young speakers contend, are not only out of sync with the times, but also distant from their readers. As a result, few students end up developing any serious interest in the language which is already compromised by the fact that it is of little use beyond the region. Take vibrant literature out of the mix, and the language stares at a very real danger of becoming a dialect.

Not everything the young say can be dismissed as an emotional outburst of rebellious and easily bored minds. They will after all be carrying the language further and going by what they have to say, they are not confident about delivering on this responsibility.

*Why?*

Because the present generation has not equipped them well enough. Students who speak Nepali at home have to take tuitions to pass in the subject. They could not possibly be weak in the language, it is obviously because the material does not excite enough interest in most of them; an interest which those responsible for developing and promoting the language have failed to kindle in them. The students want a more contemporary syllabus which they can identify with; they want greater respect shown to the language by their elders; and they want a genuine interest in the promotion of Nepali as a language to be learnt by those who control the language cartels. Tokenism will just not do, they stress. Justified points, but are we equipped to deliver on them? And this is not just about Nepali or even language for that matter.

### 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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# Cigarette butts are the forgotten plastic pollution – and they could be killing our plants



**DANNIELLE GREEN**  
**theconversation.com**

It's amazing how quickly people have ditched plastic straws thanks to campaigns to discourage us from using such "pointless plastic". Yet rarely do we hear about a much more common source of plastic pollution.

Cigarette butts or filters are the most littered item on the planet. An estimated 5.6 trillion cigarettes are smoked each year, out of which two thirds are improperly disposed of. That's [4.5 trillion butts] each year. Since the 1980s, cigarette butts have accounted for 30% to 40% of all litter found in coastal and urban litter clean-ups.

They are a common eyesore on our streets, our parks, our beaches and in our waterways. Many smokers admit to littering cigarette butts, possibly because they believe them to be benign or biodegradable and somehow do not consider them as litter. But as well as taking much longer to break down than most people think, discarded cigarette butts may significantly damage surrounding plant growth, as our new research suggests.

Cigarette butts are composed of thousands of cellulose acetate fibres and, although biodegradable, take years to disappear from the environment. Cellulose acetate fi-

bres, like other microplastics, are also a common contaminant found throughout the world's ecosystems, even accumulating at the bottom of the deep sea.

Used filters also contain thousands of chemicals that can kill plants, insects, rodents, fungus and other lifeforms, and some of which are known carcinogens. There are many reports of young children and pet dogs accidentally swallowing cigarette butts, and they've even been found in wild animals such as seabirds and turtles. Ingestion can cause vomiting and, in some cases, convulsions. The leachates from cigarette butts can be toxic to aquatic organisms such as bacteria, crustaceans, worms and fish.

#### UNKNOWN RISKS

Yet despite the prevalence of cigarette butts as litter in our parks and green spaces, our understanding of their effects on life on land is very limited. There are reports that some birds use them to line their nests. The pesticide nicotine is thought to reduce the number of nest ectoparasites, which is beneficial for the birds' offspring. But this may also reduce their health in the longer term.

Urban habitats are particularly at risk from this type of litter. In surveys of the three largest parks in Cambridge, my colleagues and

I found an average of 2.6 butts per square metre, with a maximum of 126 butts per square metre found near park benches (despite having ashtrays nearby). The burning question for us was, given that cigarette butts are often tossed onto the ground, what effect do they have on the plants in the park?

To answer this question, we conducted an experiment, adding cigarette butts to pots with either grass (perennial ryegrass) or clover (white clover) seeds to see how their development was affected. We tested butts from smoked and unsmoked regular and menthol cigarettes, as well as butt-sized wooden dowels to compare the effect of simply having an inert object on top of the soil.

We found that cigarette butts reduced the germination and shoot length reached by grass and clover by up to 25% and reduced the amount of root biomass of clover by almost 60%.

Although this was the first study showing how smoked and unsmoked cigarette butts may affect plant development, others have found that smoke can cause similar depressive effects on germination and growth. In fact, in the early 1900s, Mabel Elizabeth Dibbel completed a master's thesis entitled "The effects of ciga-

rette smoke on the seedlings of *Vicia sativa*". Dibbel found that blowing puffs of smoke on seedlings retarded their growth and distorted cell structure.

#### MORE RESEARCH NEEDED

Despite scientific awareness of the issue of cigarettes and plants for over 100 years, this remains an under-researched topic. But given the importance of plants as our primary producers of food, not to mention their role in making our environment more pleasant, there is clearly a need to reduce cigarette butt litter.

Some have suggested banning the filters outright, claiming that the health benefits are only minimal and not enough to justify their existence. Perhaps less drastic would be a cigarette butt deposit scheme, in which manufacturers were forced to offer money in exchange for returned butts.

Regardless of the solutions, it is clear that cigarettes' 39-year reign as the world's number one litter item needs to come to an end. The first step will be raising awareness that cigarette butts are an environmentally harmful litter item that needs to be properly disposed of.

*[the writer is Senior Lecturer in Ecology, Anglia Ruskin University]*

# Salt: China's deadly food habit

**MONIQUE TAN**  
**theconversation.com**

People in China have used salt to prepare and preserve food for thousands of years. But consuming lots of salt raises blood pressure, increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease, which includes heart attack and stroke, now accounts for 40% of deaths in China.

It is well known that salt consumption in China is high, but accurate assessments are scarce. Public health experts need robust estimates of salt intake to help them develop strategies to reduce this intake. An example of a promising strategy is replacing regular salt with potassium salt, which contains less sodium (which raises blood pressure) and more potassium (which lowers blood pressure).

The most accurate way to measure salt intake is to measure the sodium excreted in urine over a 24-hour period. Although this data was collected in China, it has never been comprehensively reviewed. Our latest review, published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, aimed to plug this knowledge gap.

Searching both English and Chinese-language databases for all studies ever published that reported 24-hour urinary excretion of either sodium or potassium in China, we found 70 with sodium data (drawn from 26,767 participants), of which 59 also reported potassium data (drawn from 24,738 participants). The data covered four decades and most provinces of China.

Of all the reviews of salt intake in China, our review is the first to be systematic and is by far the largest.

#### HIGH SALT AND LOW POTASSIUM INTAKES

Our meta-analysis of the combined data revealed important patterns in salt and potassium consumption in China. We found, for example, that on average children and adolescents exceed the salt-intake limit set for adults.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends adults consume less than 5g of salt per day, and this upper limit should be reduced for children and adolescents according to their energy requirements. In China, however, children aged three to six, on average, consume 5g of salt per day. The WHO recommendation was far exceeded by chil-



dren and adolescents aged six to 16 years. Their intake averaged a worrying 8.7g per day.

In adults, the average salt intake was 10.9g per day, which is more than twice the maximum recommendation set by the WHO and one of the highest salt intakes in the world.

Our review also showed geographical differences between northern and southern China. Salt intake in northern China has declined over the past four decades, which may be the result of the government's efforts to increase salt awareness and of improvements in the year-round availability of fresh produce. Yet, despite this decline, the average salt intake in northern Chinese adults remains high, at 11.2g per day.

In contrast, salt intake in southern China has increased during that same period, which could be due to increased consumption of processed, restaurant and takeaway foods, which are typically high in salt.

Finally, we also found that potassium intake was less than half the recommendation. Potassium intake has been consistently low throughout China for the past 40 years, with people in all age groups consuming less than half the recommended minimum intakes.

#### IMPROVING MATTERS

With a fifth of the world's population living in China, reducing salt and increasing potassium intakes across the country would be of enormous benefit for global health. Here is how to achieve this:

- Replace regular salt with potassium salt. Unlike in Western countries, where most of the salt comes from processed foods, most salt consumed in China comes from the salt added while cooking. Potassium salt can be used the same way as regular salt and would have the added benefit of increasing people's potassium intake.

- Start early in life. Childhood and adolescence are when dietary habits and taste preferences are formed. If a child eats more salt, they will develop the taste for salt and are more likely to eat more salt as an adult. Also, high blood pressure in childhood tracks into adulthood.

- Anticipate new sources of salt intake. There is a rapid increase in the consumption of processed foods and of food from street markets, restaurants and fast-food chains in China. Setting maximum targets for their salt content would create a level playing field where salt is reduced across the board, which would help guide the population in getting used to a less salty taste.

*[the writer is PhD Researcher, Queen Mary University of London]*



## Registration for IIT KGP's Young Innovators Programme begins

**KOLKATA, JUL 19 (PTI):** Registration for the third edition of the Young Innovators Programme of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur, began on July 18.

The programme aims at bringing out the innovative capabilities of students from classes 8 to 10, a statement said Friday.

The competition would empower green-horns to solve real-life challenges through innovations, the statement said.

The theme areas for the programme this year are energy and environment, health and cleanliness, hardware modelling, product designing, disaster management and financial inclusion.

The first two rounds will be online, while the penultimate and the final rounds will be held at the IIT campus in Kharagpur.

In the first round beginning July 20, students will conceptualise their innovations. Those getting selected for the second round will fine-tune their proposals and demonstrate its viability through videos.

In the penultimate and final rounds, which are scheduled to be held on November 8 and 9, the selected students will demonstrate working models of the products and processes and make feasibility presentation of their projects.

The students will receive the guidance of faculty members, researchers and students of the institute at mentoring sessions during different phases of the competition, the statement said.

"Through this programme, we aim at igniting the spirit of innovation in the young minds and enable them to think beyond barriers," said Anandaroop Bhattacharya, Associate Dean (International Relations) and a faculty member of Mechanical Engineering Department at the institute.

The Young Innovator Programme started in 2017 and reached out to over 2,000 schools last year.

### Speaker to TMC MP: Don't do marketing of West Bengal

**NEW DELHI, JUL 19 (PTI):** Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday asked a leader of the Trinamool Congress not to do "marketing" of West Bengal after he spoke about a health scheme of the state government in the House.

During the Question Hour, Trinamool Congress leader in Lok Sabha Sudip Bandyopadhyay highlighted a health scheme being implemented by the Mamata Banerjee government, which he claimed was better than the Ayushman Bharat scheme of the Modi government.

At this, the Speaker remarked: "Don't do marketing of West Bengal".

However, Bandyopadhyay kept talking about the West Bengal scheme.

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan countered Bandyopadhyay, saying schemes individually implemented by a few states like West Bengal have several limitations, including lack of portability.

## Centre, Assam seek extension of SC's NRC deadline; say India can't be world's "refugee capital"

**NEW DELHI, JUL 19 (PTI):** "India cannot be the refugee capital of the world", the Centre and the Assam government said in the Supreme Court Friday while seeking the extension its July 31 deadline to finalise the National Register of Citizens so as to verify wrongful inclusions and exclusions in the NRC.

The top court agreed to hear the pleas of both the governments for deliberation on July 23 to conduct a sample re-verification process to quell a growing perception that many illegal immigrants may have infiltrated the NRC especially in districts bordering Bangladesh.

A special bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice R F Nariman had fixed July 31 as the deadline for publication of final list of the NRC and had reiterated that it will not be extended.

Both the governments said that they be allowed to undertake verification of 20 per cent random samples of citizens for wrongful inclusions or exclusions in the NRC.

The bench took note of the submissions of Solicitor General Tushar



Mehta, appearing for the Centre and the state government, that several lakhs people have been wrongfully included in the NRC, specially in districts bordering Bangladesh due to the involvement of local officers in the massive exercise.

"Please extend the deadline for publication of final Assam NRC from July 31 to a future date. There is a growing perception that many exclusions and many more inclusions have been made wrongly," the solicitor general said.

"India cannot be the refugee capital of the world," he said, adding there was a need to re-look the draft NRC list through sample verification.

At the outset, the law

officer said that although Assam NRC coordinator Prateek Hajela has done "excellent work", it has been seen on the ground that wrongful exclusions and many inclusions have been reported in the some districts.

"Hajela's report says while disposing of claims (of those who were excluded in draft NRC), 80 lakh names have been re-verified. So there is no need for a sample re-verification. If we are satisfied that verification has been done properly, then there is no need for a sample re-verification, is it," the bench asked.

Both the governments moved the apex court on July 17 seeking a direction for 20 per cent sample re-verification of names included in the

final NRC draft in the districts of Assam bordering Bangladesh and 10 per cent sample re-verification of names included in the final draft in the remaining districts.

The Centre's plea has also sought to suitably modify the time-line fixed for publication of the final list of NRC from July 31 to a future date.

It has also sought direction that such re-verification exercise to be conducted by Class I officers of the state government from other districts who have knowledge and experience of handling the process of enquiry/investigation.

The pleas have also sought a direction to fix the venue of the sample re-verification at a place which was not in the vi-

cinity of the initial NRC verification to rule out possibility of local influences, bias and threat.

It claimed that names of Indian citizens were excluded and illegal Bangladeshi migrants were included in the draft.

It also referred to the apex court's 2018 order by which it had said it could consider a re-verification of 10 per cent of the people who were included in the draft NRC.

The top court had termed the issue as "human problem with great magnitude" and asked the state NRC coordinator to submit a report in a sealed cover on the ramification of allowing the claimants to file new sets of legacy documents.

The first draft of the NRC for Assam was published on the intervening night of December 31, 2017 and January 1, 2018 in accordance with the top court's direction. Names of 1.9 crore people out of the 3.29 crore applicants were incorporated then.

Assam, which had faced influx of people from Bangladesh since the early 20th century, is the only state having an NRC which was first prepared in 1951.

## Lightning kills eight in Bihar; seven of them children

**NAWADA (BIHAR), JULY 19 (PTI):** Eight persons, seven of them children aged 15 years or below, were killed while as many were injured when lightning struck them in this central Bihar district Friday afternoon, an official said.

According to Sub Divisional Officer, Sadar, Nawada, Anu Kumar, the children were residents of Dhanpur Musahari village falling under Kalichak police station area and had taken shelter under a tree while it was raining.

The deceased have been identified as Ramesh Manjhi (26), Chhotu Manjhi, Ganesh Manjhi and Monu Manjhi (all 15 years old), Nitish Manjhi (12), Pravesh Kumar (10), Chhotu Manjhi (08) and Muni Lal Manjhi (05), Kumar said.

In addition, eight others were injured and seven of them were being treated at the Sadar hospital while the condition of another was stated to be critical and

he has been admitted to Pavapuri in the adjoining Nalanda district, the official said.

Meanwhile, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar issued a statement expressing grief over the tragedy and announcing an ex-gratia of Rs four lakh to the next of the kin of each deceased.

He also issued instructions for proper medical assistance to those who have sustained injuries, a release issued by the Chief Ministers office said.

Former Chief Minister and Hindustani Awam Morcha president Jitan Ram Manjhi issued a statement expressing grief and demanding that the ex-gratia amount be raised to Rs 20 lakh each.

## Eastern states' should contribute to GDP growth target: Debroy

**KOLKATA, JUL 19 (PTI):** Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister Bibek Debroy Friday said the eastern states should contribute by raising their growth rates to meet the nominal growth target of 11.5 per cent to 12 per cent.

He said if the target of USD 5 trillion dollar economy, as set in the Union budget, was to be met by 2024, the aggregate growth rates of the states would have to rise.

"The aggregate growth rates of the states should be sustained in the range of eight to nine per cent," Debroy said at a seminar organised by the Swadeshi Research Institute and the Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation here.

If the participation by the women workforce is increased along with other factors, the growth rates of eastern states would easily raise from the present six to 6.5 per cent to 8.5 per cent, the economist said.

He said the nominal growth target of 11.5 to 12 per cent was based on the premise that the current account deficit (CAD) to GDP ratio was two per cent, inflation rate four per cent, combined deficit of the states and the Centre six per cent and the real rate of growth eight per cent.

With the rising tide of protectionism across the globe, it does not appear

that net exports would be a major contributor in the growth process, Debroy said.

"It is also important the savings and investments need to increase," he said adding that the government should not crowd out private investments.

He said the primary call on the utilisation of scarce government resources must be on the disadvantaged people, and certain areas of physical and social infrastructure.

Terming that the GST was work in progress, Debroy said there was a need to streamline and reduction in rates as well as bringing in more items under the new tax regime.

He said there was a need for reforms in the direct taxes as well.

"There is need for reduction in compliance costs of paying taxes and also the human interface to eliminate corruption," he said.

Debroy said recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission under the chairmanship of N K Singh was expected to be submitted by the end of the year.

In future, he said, budgets would increasingly become irrelevant and would only be an annual statement of government receipts and expenditure and Part A and Part B of the finance minister speech would have no place in it.

## Students' body urges Mizo govt to settle border row with Assam

**AIZAWL, JUL 19 (PTI):** A students association in Mizoram took out a rally here on Friday demanding that the state government take necessary steps to solve the border dispute with neighbouring Assam.

Members of the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZIP), the apex students body of the state, insisted that the Inner Line Reserve Forest, spanning 509 square miles, should be "taken back by the state from Assam".

The border dispute has been a long-standing issue between Mizoram and Assam. Many civil societies, students bodies

and NGOs claimed that areas, which once belonged to Mizoram, have been grabbed by Assam over the years. "The students want the state government to take immediate steps to take back the reserve forest, in line with the notification issued by the British in 1875 under Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations, 1873, a resolution adopted the MZIP at the conclusion of the rally said. The MZIP members also said that the present map of Mizoram does not label the boundaries correctly and the state government should take steps to rectify the error.

## Experts begin study for facelift of Chandannagar

**KOLKATA, JUL 19 (PTI):** Chandannagar, which was an official French trading colony till 1950, is set to get the much-awaited facelift soon, as a team of experts commences study of the Strand promenade on the banks of Hooghly to give shape to the MoU signed between France and the West Bengal government.

The expenditure for the joint initiative which is set to restore the neighbourhood town in Hooghly district to its former glory will be sanctioned once the experts submit their report, Atri Bhattacharya, the tourism secretary of the state, said.

We have signed an agreement to restore and renovate parts of Chandannagar (around 50 km from Kolkata) which have historic relevance. We will start with the Strand and then move on to the other heritage buildings. A team of experts is on the job, studying the promenade.

The government can spell out the cost of the project only after the experts submit their report to us, Bhattacharya told PTI on the sidelines of French National Day celebrations at a city hotel.

In February this year, the West Bengal govern-

ment and France signed the memorandum of understanding, with an active engagement of the French Consulate in Kolkata, to restore heritage structures in the erstwhile French colony most of which are growing fern and moss from their near-dilapidated and cracked remains.

The French Consul General in Kolkata, who has visited the town on three occasions since coming to the city last year, said the project was very close to her heart.

The first time I had visited the place was 20 years ago, when I was posted in Dhaka. I am looking forward to make this project happen. It will boost ties between the two countries. We are thankful to the West Bengal government for its initiative, Virginie Corteval said.

Chandannagar aka Chandernagore, as it was then called, had become a European colony in 1673 when France wanted to set up a trading post in Bengal. It grew into a prosperous trading town under the governance of Joseph Francois Dupleix with several iconic architectural structures constructed to serve as hotels and rest houses

for the colonial traders.

The French lost the town to the British in the 1757 Battle of Chandernagore only to regain control in 1816. It remained a French territory in India till 1950.

Architect Aishwarya Tipnis, who has been closely associated with the project for a long time, said a total of 99 buildings were identified with a French connection in 2010.

Over the years, several initiatives centred on the restoration of these buildings have been taken. Some of these were being demolished for lack of upkeep and legal protection.

In 2015, we launched a website to put up all information and research that has been done on this riverside town, she said.

Much work has been done on Pondicherry, another French colony in the country, but not many know about this quaint town in Bengal.

With the help of students and local volunteers, we have organised workshops, heritage walks to generate awareness on the relevance of the town, while also drawing attention of the government. I am glad that the project has taken off, she added.

## JU teachers protest 'non implementation' of new UGC pay scale

**KOLKATA, JUL 18 (PTI):** Over 200 teachers Jadavpur University took out a rally on Thursday in the varsity premises to press for implementation of the revised UGC pay scale.

The teachers, affiliated to the Jadavpur University Teachers' Association (JUTA), first took part in a sit-in for around two hours in front of the main administrative building, and

then marched around the campus with placards.

Besides JUTA, members of the All Bengal University Teachers' Association (ABUTA-JU) and representatives of the West Bengal College and University Teachers' Association (WBCUTA) also participated in the demonstrations.

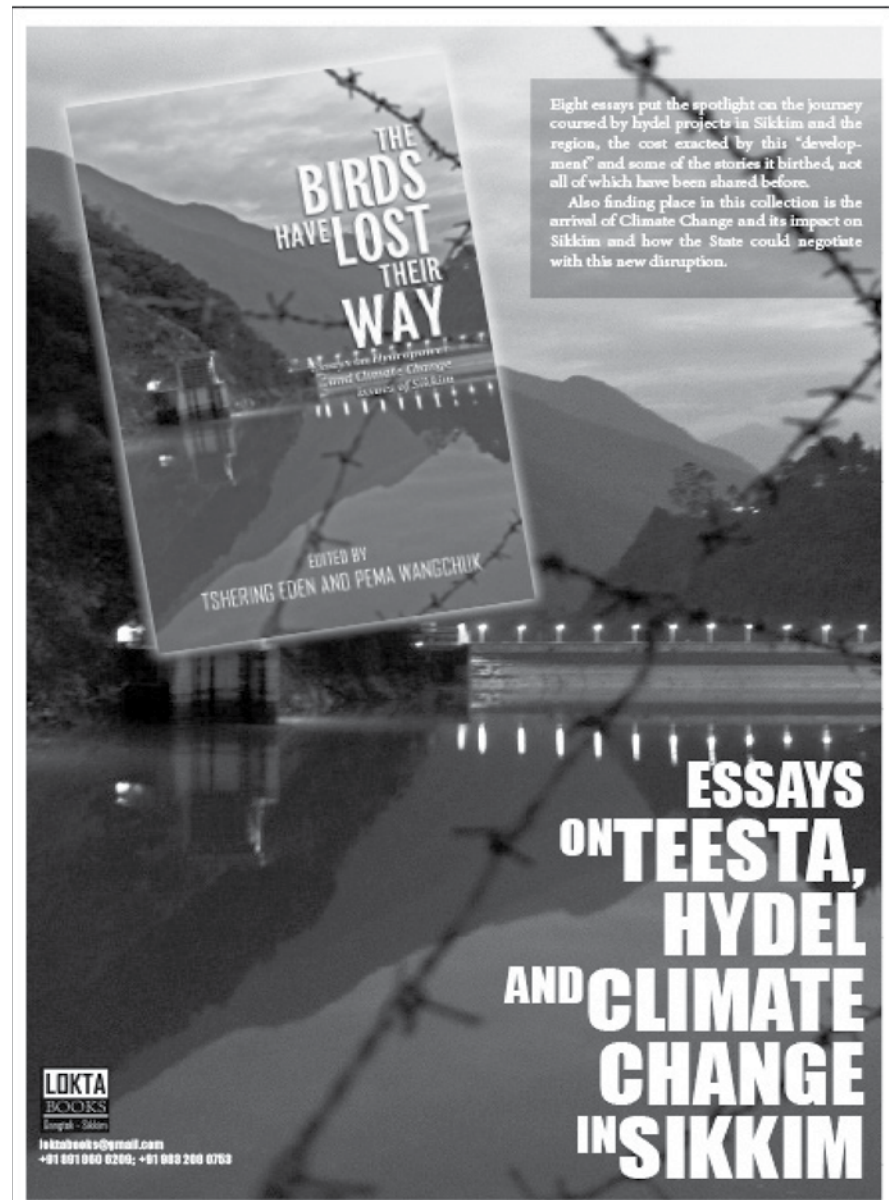
A JUTA spokesman claimed that the West Bengal government is dilly-dallying over the

implementation of the revised UGC pay scale, at a time when most of the other states have done it.

The rally and sit-in affected classes during afternoon hours, a university source said.

JUTA member Partha Pratim Roy said the agitating teachers also demanded immediate election of representatives to statutory bodies in the university, including students' council.

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# Pacquiao battling age, hungry Thurman in title showdown

**LAS VEGAS, JUL 19 (AFP):** Twenty-four years after first climbing into a professional boxing ring, Manny Pacquiao will attempt to defy the march of time here Saturday when he battles undefeated American Keith Thurman for the WBA welterweight crown.

The 40-year-old Filipino icon clashes with Thurman at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas in what is arguably his most challenging assignment since losing to Floyd Mayweather in 2015's money-spinning "Fight of the Century".

Pacquiao, who has managed to successfully juggle a political career in the Philippines while continuing to box at a high level, looked sharp in his last outing in January, a unanimous decision against Adrien Broner.

But the eight-division world champion is facing an altogether higher-calibre opponent in the shape of Thurman, renowned as one of the hardest punchers in the welterweight division with 22 knockouts in 30 fights.

Thurman, who at 30 years old is a full decade younger than Pacquiao, sees Saturday as an attempt to build his legacy, and has bluntly vowed to send the Filipino into retirement.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to destroy a legend," Thurman declared, placing



Pacquiao in the boxing pantheon alongside some of the sport's greatest practitioners.

"It's as if I'm fighting Sugar Ray Robinson or Roberto Duran," Thurman said.

"This is Manny Pacquiao. It's a tremendous feeling, and it's going to feel even greater when my hand is raised at the end of the night."

- 'NOTHING PERSONAL' - Pacquiao (61-7-2, 39 knockouts) has shrugged off Thurman's blood-curdling pledges of destruction, insisting he harbours no animosity towards the brash American.

"For me nothing is personal," Pacquiao said. "Our job is to fight. He has to prove something, and I have to prove something. It's easy to say things. But it's not so easy to do it in the ring."

Pacquiao's preparations for the fight have

followed a familiar routine.

After spending the first part of his training camp in the Philippines, he relocated to Los Angeles to work under the guidance of long-time trainer Freddie Roach at his Wild Card gym in Hollywood.

Roach maintains that Pacquiao has shown no sign of decline during gruelling sparring, and is confident that his speed and mobility will cause problems for the naturally bigger Thurman.

Roach, who expects Thurman to enter the ring at around 160 pounds once he has re-hydrated after Friday's weigh-in, is bracing for an early onslaught.

"I feel he's going to try and come for Manny and try to prove that he's the bigger, stronger man," Roach told AFP.

"He will come forward. He's a pretty good

puncher but Manny's footwork should keep him out of trouble.

"I would love a collision because Manny will beat him to the punch every time. One guy is fast, one guy is slow. Thurman hits hard but he has no speed at all. I don't see him being able to get close to Manny because of his speed."

- TIME TO QUIT? -

Yet Roach acknowledges that for all Pacquiao's impressive form in training, the acid test will come under the bright lights of the MGM Grand's Garden Arena on Saturday. Boxing history is littered with veterans who needed one fight too many to realise they are shot.

"This is true," Roach said.

"Usually it doesn't show up in the gym. It only shows up in the fight. And I'm very aware of that. And if it does

show in the fight I'll be the first one to stop the fight if need be."

Roach is nervous that a verbal agreement brokered with Pacquiao several years ago -- namely that when the veteran cornerman believes it is time to retire, he will heed the advice and hang up his gloves -- may no longer be valid.

"There's too many people around him who will tell him I'm full of shit, and he may listen to them," Roach told AFP.

"At one time I'd have said our agreement was pretty solid and he'd listen to me. But today I'm not so sure."

The financial incentives may tempt Pacquiao to keep plugging away regardless of the outcome of Saturday's contest.

This weekend's fight will reportedly add another 20 million to career earnings estimated at 200 million. A lucrative offer to fight Britain's Amir Khan in Saudi Arabia in November is on the table, though Pacquiao's camp deny a contract had been signed.

Pacquiao, who retired in 2016 only to return seven months later, says he will continue fighting as long as his body allows.

"Boxing is my passion," he told AFP. "It's really hard to stop and hang up the gloves when you know that you can still fight."

Delhi's Prithu becomes India's 64th Grandmaster



**NEW DELHI, JULY 19 (PTI):** Delhi's Prithu Gupta has become India's 64th Grandmaster, crossing the Elo threshold of 2500 points after beating IM Lev Yankelevich in the fifth round of the Portuguese League 2019.

Gupta, who picked up the sport as a nine-year-old, has achieved the sensational feat at the age of 15 years, 4 months and 10 days.

His achievement came 31 years after

Viswanathan Anand had become India's first Grandmaster.

"And we are complete. 64th GM!! Welcome our newest GM Prithu Gupta!," Anand posted from his twitter handle.

In reply, Gupta thanked Anand for his wishes.

"Thank you Anand sir. You have always been the biggest inspiration," tweeted the youngster.

Gupta received his

first GM norm at the Gibraltar Masters last year, before achieving the second norm at the Biel Masters the same year. He got the final norm at the Porticcio Open early this month and finally achieved the required ELO points with win over Yankelevich.

D Gukesh is India's youngest GM at 12 years, 7 months and 17 days. He had achieved the feat in January this year.

## Sharma all praise for Koepka, says he inspires golfers like him

**PORTRUSH (UK), JUL 19 (PTI):** Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma was all praise for his playing partner Brooks Koepka, saying the World No 1 has an uncluttered mind and remains an inspiration for golfers like him.

"It just inspires guys like us to play and get there as well," said Sharma, who shot a bogey-free one-under 70 to be Tied-20th after the opening round of the Open here.

It was Sharma's first under-par round at the Open. Last year at Carnoustie, Sharma played two rounds at even par 71 and ended T-51st.

Koepka, on the other hand, shot three-under 68 to be Tied-third.

"He (Koepka) just played solid. The best

thing about him is that he isn't very cluttered in the mind. He's very calm on the course. He has good decision making and you can see that he's the world No. 1. He gets on the ball and gets on very quickly. I think that's the best part," Sharma said.

Sharma was only 16 and playing in his first professional event when he was paired with Koepka in the final round of the Gujarat Kensville Challenge in 2013.

Asked about the time they last played together, Sharma smiled and said, "We spoke about it. It was a long time ago. It was fun."

"I think a lot has happened in his life since then. I don't think he remembers that good. He remembers coming

to India. I asked him if he remembered playing over there. It was a lot of fun. He remembered making a video with him a tuk-tuk and other things."

Sharma still remembers clearly about his time with Koepka six years ago.

"Obviously his physical appearance has changed since then. He wasn't as muscular as he is right now. He was very thin and he had longer hair at that time, I remember that. And I just was coming out of the gates. I had just joined the profession. It was fun playing with him then."

"Obviously so much has changed since then. He's done so well. And you can see why he's the world No. 1."

## Stokes nominated for New Zealander of the Year



**CHRISTCHURCH, JUL 19 (PTI):** He broke the Black Caps heart with his stellar show but now England all-rounder Ben Stokes has been nominated for the prestigious 'New Zealander of the Year' award for his Kiwi roots, alongside Kane Williamson.

Stokes produced a superlative performance at the World Cup, amassing 465 runs and claiming seven wickets for England.

His 84 off 98 balls helped England tie the epic final at the Lord's last Sunday. He also scored eight in the Super Over which also ended in a tie as England were adjudged World Cup winners on boundary count.

New Zealander of the Year Awards Chief Judge Cameron Bennett said some were still trying to claim Stokes as one of New Zealand's own, given that he was born in Christchurch.

"He might not have been playing for the Black Caps but, having been born in Christchurch, where his parents now live, and with Maori ancestry, there's clearly a few Kiwis about who think we can still claim him," Bennett was quoted as saying in stuff.co.nz.

Player of the tournament, Williamson, who showed immaculate composure during New Zealand's heart-breaking loss in

the final, has also received multiple nominations.

"The way (Williamson) conducted himself, not only in the face of such devastating disappointment at Lord's but throughout the tournament, resonated powerfully with Kiwis from all walks of life," Bennett said.

"He's been the embodiment of the qualities we cherish as New Zealanders courage, fairness, humility."

A shortlist of 10 candidates to be considered for the award will be announced in December, with the 2020 winner revealed at the New Zealander of the Year Gala Awards in February.

# British Open: Bogey-free Sharma lie 20th; Holmes leads at 5-under

**PORTRUSH (UK), JUL 19 (PTI):** India's Shubhankar Sharma was one of the only four golfers to play a bogey-free round as he brought home a card of one-under 70 on the opening day of the 148th Open Championships here.

Sharma, playing with World No. 1 Brooks Koepka (68), had 17 pars and his sole birdie was courtesy a brilliant 30-foot monster putt and when play ended he was Tied-20th and four shots behind sole leader J B Holmes, who birdied the 18th to move to five-under.

Ireland's Shane Lowry was second at four-under, while 13 players, including Asia's top star Kiradech Aphibarnrat, who is nursing an injury, shot three-under 68 to be tied-third and the big bunch included Koepka.

Sharma was one of the four players to shoot a bogey free round and the others were Kiradech Aphibarnrat (68), Tony Finau (68) and Tommy Fleetwood (68).

As the Open returned to Portrush after 68 years, the conditions were demanding and the course required a great deal of focus with premium on placement.

However, some of the big names came to grief. None more than Rory McIlroy, a big pre-tournament favourite.

McIlroy, opened with a quadruple bogey and ended with a triple bo-



gey for an eight-over 79, which could see him miss the cut in a tournament, where he has not finished outside Top-5 since 2014, when he won the Open at Hoylake.

The 2013 Open winner, Phil Mickelson went to five-over 76 and three-time Open winner, Tiger Woods, who won the Masters for his first Major since the US Open in 2008, was struggling at seven-over 78.

Woods' seven-over 78 is his highest first-round score in The Open Championship, while McIlroy's eight-over 79 is his seventh career

score of 79 or worse on the PGA TOUR and lying at 150th he was at his worst-ever first round position in a Major.

It was Sharma's first under par round at the Open, where he made his debut and made the cut last year at Carnoustie.

Sharma, who with Brooks Koepka on his professional debut back in 2013, played with him only for the second time, but now the American is No. 1 in the world.

Koepka shot three-under 68 with four birdies and one

bogey, while the third player in the group, Louis Oosthuizen, the Africa No. 1, also shot 70.

Speaking on his bogey free first round, Sharma said, "I was very calm and I am proud of the way I handled myself on the course and anytime you play a bogey free round, especially in a Major, it is good and satisfying."

"I made a few crucial par putts coming in, especially the ones on the 14, 15, and 16th were key. And then that up-and-down birdie on 18 was nice, too. I



# US sanctions four Iraqis for rights abuses, corruption

**WASHINGTON, JUL 19 (AFP):** The United States has sanctioned two Iraqi militia leaders and two former governors for human rights abuses and corruption.

The sanctions target any property they own or have an interest in that is within the United States or under the control of “US persons,” as well as “any entities” in which they have a 50 per cent or greater stake, the Treasury Department said on Thursday.

Ahmed al-Juburi, the former governor of Iraq’s Salaheddin province, was sanctioned over corruption and has also “been known to protect his personal interests by accommodating Iran-backed proxies,” Treasury said in a statement.

The two militia leaders, Rayan al-Kildani and Waad Qado -- the former a Christian and the latter a member of the Shabak minority -- were both sanctioned over “serious human rights abuse” by them or their organizations.

Treasury cited a video circulated in May 2018 in which Kildani “cut off the ear of a handcuffed detainee,” and said



that his forces have “systematically looted homes” and “reportedly illegally seized and sold agricultural land.”

Qado’s militia has meanwhile “extracted money from the population around Bartalla, in the Nineveh Plain, through extortion, illegal arrests, and kidnappings” and has “frequently detained people without warrants, or with fraudulent warrants.”

Vice President Mike Pence said Thursday that the United States was imposing sanctions on the leaders of two Iranian-linked militia groups in Iraq, but the Treasury statement made no mention of the commanders being tied to Iran.

“Let me be clear, the United States will not stand idly while Iranian-backed militias spread terror,” Pence told a high-level meeting on religious freedom, without naming the individuals targeted.

A State Department official told AFP that Pence was referring to Kildani and Qado, saying: “The respective militias they lead are backed by Iran.” - Endemic corruption.

When asked if the two had Iran ties, the Treasury Department meanwhile responded by highlighting Juburi’s alleged links to Tehran-backed groups.

The fourth person sanctioned is Nawfel Akoub, the former governor of Iraq’s Nineveh

province.

He was sanctioned for being responsible for, complicit in or engaged in “corruption, including the misappropriation of state assets, the expropriation of private assets for personal gain, corruption related to government contracts or the extraction of natural resources, or bribery,” the Treasury Department said.

Reached by AFP, Akoub denied the allegations and slammed Treasury’s decision.

“I call on the Treasury to review its decision. They should check the information that they received more closely. This decision is invalid, politicized and based on false information,” Akoub said.

Iraq’s parliament voted to sack Akoub after an overloaded riverboat capsized in March, leaving 100 people dead, most of them women and children.

Iraq’s anti-corruption Integrity Commission said earlier this year that officials “close to Akoub” had embezzled a total of USD 64 million in public funds.

The money, which was allegedly stolen in the aftermath of the ferry sinking, included nearly USD 40 million set aside to rebuild Mosul, which was ravaged by more than two years of Islamic State group rule followed by months of fierce fighting to retake the city from the jihadists.

Graft is endemic across Iraq, which ranks among the world’s worst offenders in Transparency International’s annual Corruption Perceptions Index.

Since 2004, a year after the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein, a total of USD 228 billion has vanished into the pockets of shady politicians and businessmen, parliament said last year.

## 2020 debates: Biden-Harris rematch and progressive faceoff

**ATLANTA, JUL 19 (AP):** The second set of summer Democratic presidential debates will feature a rematch with a twist, plus the first showdown of leading progressives as the party wrestles with its philosophical identity and looks ahead to a 2020 fight against President Donald Trump.

Former Vice President Joe Biden and California Sen. Kamala Harris will take center stage in Detroit on July 31, barely a month after Harris used the first debates to propel herself into the top tier with an aggressive takedown of the 76-year-old Biden’s long record on race.

CNN, which is broadcasting the debates, assigned candidates randomly with a drawing Thursday night, with 20 candidates spread evenly over two nights, July 30-31.

This time, Harris, the lone black woman in the field, will be joined by another top black candidate, New Jersey Sen Cory Booker, who also has been an outspoken critic of Biden.

Booker had denounced Biden for his recollections of the “civility” of working in a Senate that included white supremacists and for his leadership on a 1994 crime bill that the New Jersey senator assailed as a mass incarceration agent in the black community.

Meanwhile, Sens Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts lead the July 30 lineup, allowing the two progressive

icons to compete directly for the affections of the party’s left flank.

They will be joined by several more moderate candidates who are likely to question the senators’ sweeping proposals for single-payer health insurance and tuition-free college, among other plans.

Biden vs. Harris has quickly become the defining candidate-on-candidate juxtaposition in the early months of the contest.

Although of different sexes, races and generations, the two rivals share the same broad path to the nomination, particularly the broad coalition of white and black voters necessary to win the Southern primaries that dominate the early months of the nominating calendar.

Harris’ June attacks on Biden’s 1970s opposition to federal busing orders as a way to desegregate public schools was a way for her to stand out to liberal whites and to try to cut into Biden’s strength in the black community, where he is lauded as the loyal vice president to Barack Obama, the nation’s first black president.

To be clear, Biden aides say Harris’ broadsides sparked a new aggressiveness and determination for the former vice president, and he’s gone on a policy offensive in recent weeks, most notably on health care.

A proponent of adding a public option to the Affordable Care Act insurance exchanges, Biden almost certainly will try to pin down Har-

ris on her support for Sanders’ “Medicare for All” proposal.

Harris, though, has stopped short of Sanders’ explicit call for abolishing private insurance, and she insists that the plan can be paid for without any tax hikes on the middle class.

Biden and Harris will be joined on the stage July 31 by Booker; New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio; Colorado Gov. Michael Bennet; former Obama Cabinet member Juli n Castro; New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand; Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard; Washington Gov. Jay Inslee; and entrepreneur Andrew Yang.

Flanking Sanders and Warren on the stage July 30 will be Montana Gov. Steve Bullock; Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana; former Maryland Rep. John Delaney; former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper; Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar; former Texas Rep. Beto O’Rourke; Ohio Rep. Tim Ryan; and author Marianne Williamson.

Delaney and Hickenlooper have been among the most outspoken moderates warning Democrats against a leftward lurch. Klobuchar, Bullock and Buttigieg also position themselves as more centrist than Warren and Sanders.

A generational split also will be on display: Buttigieg, 37, and O’Rourke, 46, each have called for the party to pass the torch, while Sanders, at 77, is more than twice the young mayor’s age. Warren, meanwhile, recently turned 70.

## Trump to nominate Eugene Scalia for labour secretary

**WASHINGTON, JUL 19 (AP):** President Donald Trump announced Thursday that he will nominate lawyer Eugene Scalia, the son of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, to be his new labour secretary.

Trump tweeted the news Thursday evening, less than a week after his previous secretary, Alexander Acosta, resigned amid renewed criticism of his handling of a 2008 secret plea deal with wealthy financier Jeffrey Ep-

stein, who was indicted earlier this month for sexually abusing underage girls.

“Gene has led a life of great success in the legal and labour field and is highly respected not only as a lawyer, but as a lawyer with great experience” working “with labour and everyone else,” Trump wrote of Scalia, who is currently a partner in the Washington office of the Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher firm.

If confirmed, it will be a return to the depart-

ment, where Scalia previously served as solicitor in President George W Bush’s administration, overseeing litigation and legal advice on rulemakings and administrative law.

He has also worked for the US Department of Justice.

Trump had previously announced that Acosta would be succeeded in an acting capacity by his deputy, Patrick Pizzella.

Scalia did not respond to a request for comment Thursday.

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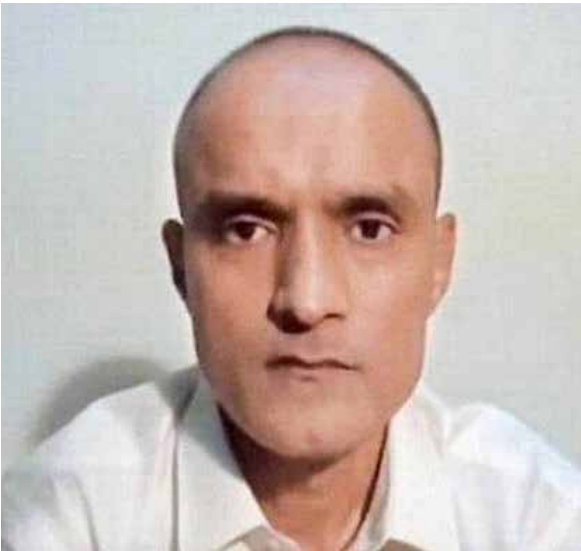
## Pak to grant consular access to Kulbushan Jadhav: Foreign Ministry

**ISLAMABAD, JUL 19 (PTI):** Pakistan will grant consular access to Indian national Kulbushan Jadhav according to the Pakistani laws, for which the modalities are being worked out, the Foreign Ministry has said.

The ministry also said that Jadhav had been informed of his rights under the Vienna Convention on consular relations. “Pursuant to the decision of the ICJ, Commander Kulbushan Jadhav has been informed of his rights under Article 36, Paragraph 1(b) of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

“As a responsible state, Pakistan will grant consular access to Commander Kulbushan Jadhav according to Pakistani laws, for which modalities are being worked out,” it said.

Jadhav, 49, a retired Indian Navy officer, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of “espionage and terrorism” in April



2017 following which India had moved the International Court of Justice, seeking a stay on his death sentence and further remedies.

A 16-member bench headed by President of the Court, Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, by 15-1 votes ordered Pakistan on Wednesday to undertake an “effective review and reconsideration” of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav and also to grant consular access to India without further delay.

In its 42-page order, the world court while rejecting Pakistan’s objection to admissibility of the Indian application in the case, held that “a continued stay of execution constitutes an indispensable condition for the effective review” of the sentence of Jadhav.

The bench, however, rejected some remedies sought by India, including annulment of the military court’s decision convicting Jadhav, his release and safe passage to India.



### GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM RURAL MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TASHILING, GANGTOK – 737101, SIKKIM

## Corrigendum

In the recently published tender BID ID No SK-PMGSY II Batch I Retender 04 Online (2019-20), the following details of Tender for online bidding may be read as

PMGSY-II (Batch-I) 2018-19

Sl	District	Pkg.No	Block	Name of Road works	Road length in kms	Tender amount (Rs in lakhs)	Tender rate (above/below/at par)	Contract value(Rs in lakhs)	Earnest Money (rs. In lakhs)	Tender form cost	Completion time
1	North & East	SK01/02 PKG1 RT4	Mangan	MRL 06-DAC road to North Sikkim Academy	1.00	79.94	All Class I-B Contractors enlisted with the Sikkim Public Works Department	Within STATE through e-tendering system	20.02	50000	1 year
			Gangtok	MRL04-Rumtek Rey Ranka Road to Falay Busty via Tyempem Busty	2.30	178.18					
			Pakyong	T08-Andheri to Gakcha	2.50	196.34					
				MRL-23-Pakyong Machong SPWD road Km2 to Pachey via Theeng dara.	2.50	193.29					
				Tender Value in Lakhs	10.30	800.94					
2	South	SK03 PKG@ RT4	Jorethang	MRL04-Link road from Mungram to Golitar Tamley Pokhari	2.00	167.47	All Class II-B Contractors enlisted with the Sikkim Public Works Department	Within the DISTRICT through e-tendering system	11.98	50000	1 year
			Namchi	MRL01-Phongla Mamring to Kanam Busty	2.00	158.22					
				T10-Phongla Mamring Road to Pamphok	2.00	153.38					
				Tender Value in Lakhs	6.00	479.07					

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding		Last date of time for seeking tender clarification	Date & time of Opening of tender.
		From	To		
Chief Engineer, RMDD	SK-PMGSY II Batch I Retender 04 Online (2019-20)	02/07/2019 from 10 AM	1/08/2019 to 10.00 AM	23/07/2019 upto 4.30 PM	01/08/2019 from 11.00 AM

**Sd/-  
Chief Engineer I cum Empowered Officer  
Rural Management & Development Department  
Government of Sikkim, Gangtok**

**R.O No. – 97/IPR/Pub/Classi./2019-20      Date. 19.7.2019**





**Best pals! The actor, Zachary Quinto takes a stroll with his dog in Los Angeles.**

## Jesse Eisenberg would be up for 'Social Network' sequel

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 19 (PTI):** Jesse Eisenberg, who played Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg in David Fincher's "Social Network", would be happy to be a part of its sequel if Aaron Sorkin ever writes a script.

The 2010 film earned Sorkin the best screenplay Oscar and earlier this year the writer-directed expressed interest in a sequel as a lot has happened in the nine years since the film released.

Eisenberg said he has not been approached for a sequel, reported IndieWire.

"I've only heard about it in interviews this week. Because I don't Google my name, this the only way I hear about my future projects," the actor, who is currently promoting "The Art of Self Defense", said during a conversation in New York.

Eisenberg, however, said he would be glad to play the character if an offer comes his way.

"Oh, yeah. To play a good role in a popular thing is very rare. This was an opportunity to play a complicated character that you'd normally play onstage or an art film, but on a big scale. For me, that was incredibly fortunate," he added.

The actor also praised Sorkin for his script but said he was not much aware about the controversies surrounding

Facebook and Zuckerberg.

"Sorkin is a genius, and if he chooses to write about something, it'll obviously be interested. But I am not aware of either the project, or even the current controversy of the company," he said.

Sorkin, in past interviews, has said that he was more aware about Facebook in 2005 than he was now.

"...but I know enough to know that there should be a sequel," Sorkin had told AP.

"The Social Network" ended with Zuckerberg settling a USD 65 million lawsuit.

The social media platform has been embroiled in other controversies ever since, most prominent being the Facebook Cambridge Analytica data scandal. Fake news on the social media platforms such as Facebook is another major concern.

Zuckerberg testified before Congress last year where he was questioned about the company's privacy regulations.

"I just watched a little bit," Eisenberg said about Zuckerberg's testimony.

"It's funny, because a lot of friends who are on Facebook, they are increasingly paranoid about their data. But because I'm not on it, I feel less invested in the controversy of them selling data or whatever," he added.

## Bengali music series with major artistes to stream on YouTube

**KOLKATA, JUL 19 (PTI):** Sixteen popular singers from across the country have come on board to dish out Bengali songs with influences from genres ranging from Baul, Bihu to new-age pop, in a new music series that will be streamed on YouTube from Friday afternoon.

Artistes including Papon, Shaan, Sona Mohapatra, Anupam Roy, Javed Ali, Ash King, Akriti Kakar, Shalmoli Kholgade and Nikhita Gandhi will belt out the songs in the show -- 'Oriplast Originals'.

With Bengali classical and contemporary music in the foreground, the renditions will derive inspiration from folk music of Assam, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan, the producers of the show said in a statement Tuesday.

It will be the first such Bengali show recorded in a live studio format, to be streamed on YouTube, and featuring so many big names, the statement said.

Composers such as Arko Pravo Mukherjee, Subhadeep Mitra and Anupam Roy are also part of the initiative.

On the first day of the show on Friday, 'Aajo Cholechhi', a Bengali song with Himachali folk references, sung by Papon and Shalmali Kholgade will be streamed.



"It feels great to be associated with Bengal's biggest music collaboration and to share the platform with artistes from across the country," Papon said.

The renditions by other artistes will be streamed on July 23, 26, 30 and August 2, 6, 9, 11, 13, concluding on August 15, the statement said.

Shaan will belt out 'Baundule' which will be streamed on July 30, while Akriti Kakar and Assamese singer Dikshu Sarma will render 'Rongila Re Mon', a Bengali contemporary romantic song infused with Assamese folk, on August 9.

"Baundule" is such a beautiful composition and I am glad Arko (composer

Arko Pravo Mukherjee) assigned this song to me," Shaan said.

"The free-flowing folk Reggae vibe and the lyrics got stuck in my heart. Arko and I have collaborated for the first time and the experience was grand," he said.

While Ash King will sing 'Ami Sudhu Tomar' on August 11, Anupam Roy's rendition 'Agomonir Gaan', a Bengali contemporary track infused with folk, will be streamed on the last day of the project on August 15.

"We are hopeful that the second version of the show with popular singers will be streamed in 2020," a producer said.

## Ben Whishaw joins Chris Rock in ' Fargo' season 4

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 19 (PTI):** James Bond actor Ben Whishaw and "Taboo" star Jessie Buckley will join Chris Rock in the season four of "Fargo".

Jack Huston, Jason Schwartzman and Andrew Bird are also among the new cast members, reported IndieWire.

According to the official synopsis of the show, the story is set in Kansas City, Missouri where two criminal syndicates have struck an uneasy peace. One Italian, one African-American. Together they control an alternate economy that of exploitation, graft and drugs. This too is the history of America. To cement their peace, the heads of both families have traded their youngest sons.

Actors Francesco Acquaroli, Gaetano Bruno, Salvatore Esposito, E'myri Crutchfield, Jeremie Harris, and Anji White are set to play various members of these inter-



connected families.

"Fargo", created by Noah Hawley, is Whishaw's latest TV role following his Golden Globe-winning and Emmy-nominated performance in Amazon Prime Video's A Very English Scandal.

Buckley had standout roles in HBO's critically-acclaimed show "Chernobyl and Tom Harper film Wild Rose.

## Matt Damon to star in Tom McCarthy's next

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 19 (PTI):** Matt Damon is set to star in "Spotlight" helmer Tom McCarthy's new directorial venture "Stillwater".

The Participant Media feature will be Damon's next project post "Ford v Ferrari".

McCarthy has co-written the script with Thomas Bidegain and Noe Debre.

According to Variety, the movie revolves around an American oil-rig rough neck from Oklahoma, Bill (Damon), who goes to Marseille to meet his estranged daughter who is in prison for a murder she claims she did not commit. But as Bill gets confronted by language barriers, cultural differences, and a complicated legal



system, he decides to make his personal mission to exonerate his daughter.

"In the process, he develops a friendship with a local woman and her young daughter and embarks on a journey of discovery and a larger sense of belong-

ing in the world," the plot line read.

The film will be produced in association with Participant Media, alongside Anonymous Content, Liza Chasin, Jonathan King, McCarthy and the late Steve Golin.

"The opportunity to reunite with Tom after Spotlight and to partner with our friend and colleague Jonathan King for the first time in his new role makes Stillwater a very special film for everyone at Participant.

"This is a wonderful script, centred on universal themes of connection and the search for truth, and we couldn't be more excited to bring it to audiences around the world," Participant CEO David Linde said.

### Aries:

Think of this as a 'expand the mind' kind of day. How will you boost your brain to think and act differently? Experiment with a new way of learning, a new way of problem solving, and a new way of sharing your knowledge. Turn to the treasure trove on the internet or pick up a book. Oh, the avenues you will open up in the process!

### Taurus:

On the cards this week: clearly defining your goals and going after them like the boss babe you were always meant to be. Be the flagbearer of change, Taurus. Bring about a positive shift in your world and the world around you. What do you want to be remembered for? Keep that in mind as you take the next step.

Tip: Your go-getter energy is making you irresistible.

### Gemini:

If you feel like you are stuck in a rut, you probably are. How are you going to change things up? For starters, stop getting distracted by the mundane that appears in the garb of 'urgent tasks'. See how and where you can delegate.

This way, you will be able to channel your energy into what really matters.

Tip: Delegate the mundane so you can focus on what really matters.

### Cancer:

Notice the people from your past who are re-emerging. Is there a theme here? A loop that needs to be closed? An unfinished conversation that must be had? Listen to your gut, Cancer. On the other hand, some of you may feel there is potential for a fresh start. Set things right this time around. PS: If you meet a familiar stranger, you should know the stars are behind this conspiracy.

Tip: Say hello to serendipitous encounters!

### Leo:

The Universe wants you to experience of life of financial freedom. What's keeping from attracting the wealth you deserve? Observe and release the blocks that are coming in the way of free-flowing abundance. Here's a powerful affirmation to make you a magnet for the many blessings: 'I am aligned with the energy of wealth and abundance'. Repeat these powerful words to yourself in the mirror or write them

down on a piece of paper.

Tip: 'I am aligned with the energy of wealth and abundance'.

### Virgo:

The best way to describe your relationship? Soulful meets sensual. A transcendental love that takes you beyond the earthly realm. How blessed are you to be with somebody who loves all of you, and not just the parts that you perceive as palatable! Recently locked eyes with somebody special? Take things slow this time. For deeper intimacy, forge a connection with them outside the bedroom first.

Tip: Here's to love that's willing to meet you halfway.

### Libra:

The best is yet to come, Libra. Don't let the past narrative interfere with the potentially perfect future. Oh, the miracles that will transpire once you surrender to the flow. Have things been rough on the work front? A good way to navigate this situation is to raise your vibration instead of matching theirs. Let your workspace transform into a Haven of good vibes. Declut

### Scorpio:

You're this close to that 'screw you' moment. How did you get here yet again? Your need for overcompensation is something to think about, Scorpio. A tip from The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People to consider, "Don't work yourself to death. Strive for a sustainable lifestyle that affords you time to recuperate, recharge and be effective in the long-term."

Tip: Examine your need to overcompensate.

### Sagittarius:

Disclaimer: Absolutely anything can happen today. Serendipitous encounters may be on the cards for some—ones that are likely to open the door to a brilliant future. Stay on your toes and act in time. This powerful energy may even align you with power players in the industry. Be your own brand ambassador, Sagittarius. Don't shy away from being seen and heard. PS: You deserve the best and are ready to receive it now.

### Capricorn:

Is there an idea you parted ways with a while ago? Examine the reasons behind this bitter breakup. Did you not believe in yourself

enough? Or did you lack the resources required to set things up? Resurrection is on the cards, Capricorn. Grab the opportunity to breathe new life into this wonderful project.

Tip: This is a time of resurrection on the work front.

### Aquarius:

The only way out is in, Aquarius. What the Universe is asking you to focus on: yourself. Make time to nurture your vessel. Care for her in a way that makes her feel celebrated. What if pouring into your cup is the secret to opening your channels? Make sure you pay attention to the guidance that is coming to and through you. The path to enlightenment is being illuminated.

### Pisces:

If there is one thing you can be sure of, it's that big news is coming your way. Hope and healing are on the cards, Pisces, with a generous helping of joy and abundance. The secret to getting more is giving more. Share the many gifts with those who have been an active part of your journey, and have supported you to get where you are today.