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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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India, Bhutan resolve to take ties to new heights

NEW DELHI, JUL 6 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bhutanese counterpart Tshering Tobgay today resolved to enhance Indo-Bhutan ties in all areas of mutual interest and take the "exemplary" bilateral partnership to "new heights".

The two prime ministers held wide-ranging talks here covering a range of bilateral and regional issues of "mutual interest" and expressed satisfaction at the "excellent" state of bilateral relations, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

It said Modi reaffirmed that, as a friend and close neighbour, India will continue to partner with Bhutan in pursuit of its development goals.

It is understood that the two sides deliberated on various strategic issues, including ways to deepen defence and security cooperation, as well as situation on the Doklam plateau.

"Happy to have met my friend, PM @tsheringtobgay in New Delhi. We had extensive discussions on further increasing India-Bhutan cooperation," Modi tweeted.

Modi hosted a lunch in honour of the visiting dignitary.

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DSA condemns Land Transfer Bill, demands inclusion of Sherpas under Revenue Order No. 1

BIKASH CHETTRI

NAMCHI, 06 JUL:

Condemning the State Government's Regulation of Transfer of Land [Second Amendment] Bill 2018 passed by the Cabinet on 05 Jul, Denzong Sherpa Association [DSA] has demanded that land rights of Sherpas be included in Revenue Order No. 1.

The DSA placed this demand today during its State level coordination cum awareness meeting held at Perbing in South



Sikkim. The meeting was attended by DSA chief patron, Sangay Sherpa, president, Lha Tshring Sherpa, spokesperson, Passang Gelley Sherpa, and members of Sherpa community from different parts of the State.

Addressing the function, DSA spokesperson, Passang Gelley Sherpa, asserted that the Sherpa community will not accept the new Land Regulation Transfer Bill placed by the State Government as it does not come under Revenue Order No. 1. The association further alleged that the State Government is trying to sideline their demand for protection of their lands.

"As per the State turn to pg02



Department of IPR launches official website

GANGTOK, 06 JUL [IPR]:

The official website of the Department of Information & Public Relations, Government of Sikkim was launched today by Minister of IPR, AK Ghatani, who attended the event as chief guest, in the presence of Principal Secretary, Bhagwan Shanker, Director, Tashi Choppel, and Joint Director, Parineeta Lama, at the conference hall of the Department at Soochna Bhawan in Tadong.

Also present at the launch ceremony were representatives of the Press Club of Sikkim and the officials and staff of the Department of IPR.

The welcome address was presented by IPR Director, Mr Choppel, wherein he maintained that the department has always been IT friendly and that the launch of the website furthers the commitment of the department towards a digitized Sikkim.

Minister of IPR, Mr

Ghatani, in his address, congratulated the efforts of the department towards marking a digital milestone and stated that this is a historic day for the department and the State Government as well.

He extended gratitude to the members of the Press Club of Sikkim for supporting the endeavors of the department by being present for the launch function and solicited suggestions for better delivery of information services to the people. He mentioned that all information related to the growth and progress of the State will be featured on the website and requested the press fraternity to take forward these positive stories to the general masses.

He also shared excerpts of his interactions with the officials from the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting for

turn to pg02

Swelling Teesta a worry for Adarsh Gaon residents

YOGEN THATAL

SINGTAM, 06 JUL:

Swelling of River Teesta due to incessant rainfall in the past few days has raised serious concern among the public of Adarsh Gaon in Singtam, East Sikkim residing along the river bank.

"It's already been 15 years since we submitted a demand letter to the NHPC Ltd Teesta V Power Station Office in Singtam for the construction of protection wall. Till date, not an inch of work has been started," says one resident and social activist of Adarsh Gaon, Milan Khatiwara, while speaking to SummitTimes.

Mr Khatiwara informs that there are 35 houses including both concrete and kuchha houses that are in danger.



"Every time the alarm rings, people rush to a safe area or gather on the road evacuating their residences. We have placed the demand letter again recently but have received no answer from the concerned authority," added Mr Khatiwara.

The aggrieved residents of Adarsh Gaon have urged the

concerned authority to take immediate measure against the rising level of River Teesta for the safety of the public of the area.

London mayor gives nod to fly Trump's 'angry baby' balloon during US Prez's visit

ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, JUL 6 (PTI):

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has given the go-ahead for a giant helium-filled "angry baby" balloon of Donald Trump to fly over the British capital during the US President's first official visit to the UK next week.

Campaign groups and trade unions are organising a full schedule of protests to greet Trump when he lands on July 13 and the six-metre balloon to fly over Parliament Square here is expected to be the centrepiece.

Protesters are also planning a "Stop Trump" march through central London on the same day.

"He is a deeply insecure man, and that is the only leverage we have over him. If we want his attention, we have to do something that humiliates him," said Leo Murray, an environmental campaigner behind the crowd-funded balloon stunt.

He described the inflatable "blimp" as an "obscene mutant clone of the President" and says it will "hold up a huge mirror of truth" to the world.

"We want to make sure he knows that all of Britain is looking down on him and laughing at him," Murray said.

More than 10,000 people had signed a petition calling for the



inflatable to be given permission to fly and campaigners raised over 16,000 pounds to pay for the giant balloon, which they said reflects the US President's character as an "angry baby with a fragile ego and tiny hands".

"Frankly it's embarrassing. It's embarrassing for the people flying it, for the British residents of London and for people in the UK. I don't think it will bother him," said a spokesperson for Republicans Overseas, a representative group for US' Republican party supporting Americans based overseas.

Under the plans, the balloon will be allowed to fly for two hours on the morning of July 13 as Trump heads for his meeting with British Prime Minister Theresa May at Downing Street, using nearby Parliament Square Garden as a grounding point.

A spokesperson for the Mayor of London said: "The Mayor supports the right to peaceful protest and understands that this can take many different forms."

"His city operations team have met with the organisers and given them permission to use Parliament Square Garden as a grounding point for the blimp."

Pakistani-origin Khan and Trump have repeatedly clashed on Twitter, over terrorism and crime, including in the aftermath of the London Bridge attack.

However, before the balloon can take off on the day, campaigners also need permission from the National Air Traffic Service and Scotland Yard. The group behind the stunt, branding themselves as anti-fascist "Art Activists", are now liaising with the Metropolitan Police

and Civil Aviation Authority to ensure airspace over London is managed safely on the day.

Activists also hope to take "Trump Baby" on a world tour following the presidential visit.

A counter-protest, which aims to fund a "Sadiq Khan baby balloon", has also reportedly received around 10,000 pounds of support.

Other protests, being promoted on social media, are being organised by a coalition called "Together Against Trump", which brings together a series of trade union and environment groups.

During his short visit to the UK, Trump is also due to meet Queen Elizabeth II, most likely at Windsor Castle which is miles outside London. He is then expected to head to Scotland, the birthplace of his mother and where he owns two golf courses. London-style demonstrations are also being planned in the Scottish cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

"We regard it as a victory that Donald Trump does not appear to have any official engagements in London or anywhere with a large population. Instead he will stay hidden away in country estates and castles," said a spokesperson for Together Against Trump.

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India, Bhutan resolve to take ties to new heights

contd from pg01

The MEA said the two prime ministers reaffirmed their resolve to enhance co-operation in all areas of mutual interest, and to take the “exemplary bilateral partnership to new heights for the benefit of the two peoples”.

Bhutan is a strategically important country for India due to its location, and both sides have been ramping up overall cooperation, including in areas of defence and security, over the past a few years.

This year, both countries are celebrating the golden jubilee of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations.

During the Doklam standoff between troops of India and China last year, Bhutan had extended support to New Delhi.

The MEA said the two prime ministers also reviewed the bilateral economic and hydro-power co-operation, including the progress in implementation of the India assisted-hydro-electric projects in Bhutan.

“They reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen collaboration in the hy-

dro-power sector in the spirit of close friendship and co-operation that characterize relations between India and Bhutan,” it said.

In a tweet, Tobgay, who arrived here yesterday on a three-day visit, said “hydropower is not just the cornerstone of the economic cooperation between India and Bhutan; it is the very foundation of our strong bonds of friendship.”

The MEA said Modi complimented Bhutan government on its imminent graduation to a middle-income country, and for achieving economic progress while preserving its traditions and values, and combining sustainable development with enhanced happiness quotient of its people.

“PM Tobgay thanked the Government of India for its invaluable support and partnership for Bhutan’s socio-economic development. PM Modi conveyed that India deeply values its development partnership with Bhutan,” the MEA said.

It said India was looking forward to the state visit of the King of Bhutan to India.

SDF lashes out against HSP, says Bhaichung Bhutia is intellectually weak

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUL:

Sikkim Democratic Front has said that Bhaichung Bhutia’s statement alleging that Sikkim’s agriculture production has gone down is fabricated. The ruling party has strongly condemned the statement made by Bhaichung Bhutia during a meeting of Hamro Sikkim Party held in South Sikkim.

An SDF press release issued by its pub-

licity secretary, Chudamani Mishra, states that Bhaichung has exposed his intellectual weakness by giving imaginary details.

“Sikkim has become almost self-reliant in fruits and vegetables, dairy and animal husbandry and other sectors during SDF government in Sikkim. Instead of doing research on the same and on the production of organic produce, Bhaichung has shown his negative style of politics with his fabricated

statement,” alleges SDF in the release.

Bhaichung Bhutia has also given baseless statement on stipend and allowances without any research and details just to mislead and confuse the young generation, the party has said.

SDF has further stressed that Bhaichung has remained silent on numerous opportunities created by the SDF Government for local youth in employment and self-employment through

Chief Minister’s Self Employment Scheme, Start Up and other schemes and through trainings and skill development programme in various areas.

“His silence on ample opportunities created by the ruling government in tourism, agriculture and industry sectors in the State has clearly shown HSP’s intension to mislead and deceive youth just for political benefits,” the release adds.

20 workers killed in Nepal road accident

KATHMANDU, JUL 6

(PTI): At least 20 people, including six women, were killed and a dozen others injured when a truck ferrying construction workers skidded off a road in Western Nepal’s mountainous Mustang district.

The truck transporting workers to a road construction site veered off near Mustang Korala road and plunged 50 metres down the road, police said.

The vehicle fell 50 metres down the road at Syanboche, Damodar Kunda Rural Municipality-3, killing 14 males and six females on the spot, police said.

There were 32 workers in the truck. They were returning to

turn to pg03



SKM holds CLC meet for Soreng Chakhung

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUL:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha conducted its constituency level coordination [CLC] meeting for Soreng Chakhung Constituency in West Sikkim today at the residence of its CLC president, Binod Basnet, at Malbaisey in the presence of PT Luksom as chief guest and CLC ex-

ecutives.

An SKM press release informs that various decisions were passed by the meeting favouring strengthening the organization within the constituency level.

The CLC team will be conducting series of interaction programmes with common voters in order to hear their problems and

raise issues with the concerned authorities.

Expressing happiness over the addition of new members in the recent days in the release, the party has informed that more new members will be joining SKM including some known political and social figures in the coming days.

Department of IPR launches official...

contd from pg01

increased co-ordination between the Central and State media organizations and suggested that the department should feature contact details of representatives of the Press fraternity of the State on its website.

In conclusion, he asserted that the launch of the website and the YouTube channel is a push of towards furthering the vision of a digitized Sikkim of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling.

Principal Secretary, Mr Shanker, while addressing the function, remarked that the department has absolutely progressed towards being a digitized department with the launch of the website and the YouTube Channel which heralds a new chapter of the department.

He lauded the efforts of the officials and professionals of the de-

partment involved in the realization of the website and added that this launch brings newer challenges and responsibilities for the entire department. The department must be prepared to maintain the vibrancy and timeliness factor of the website, he added.

Earlier, Software Developer, IPR, Anil Chettri, gave a presentation on the functioning of the website and informed that the website ipr.sikkim.gov.in will be in convergence with the already existing Sikkim Herald mobile app, the department’s Facebook page, Twitter handle and the freshly launched YouTube Channel.

It was informed that the official IPR website will feature various sections pertaining to news and events of the State Government, Sikkim Herald newsletter issues, Sikkim Today magazine is-

sues, Classifieds and Tender news, Photo Gallery and links to the various social networking platforms of the department.

Mr Chettri further added that the developmental initiatives and success stories of the State Government will now be available for all on a digital platform. He further informed that all news and updates on the website will be notified automatically on any device by simply subscribing to the notification update /daily feed feature of the website. It was also informed that aspiring filmmakers can download and access all information related to the Film Making policy of the State through the website.

The launch function concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by District Information Officer, East, Deeki Euthenpa.

DSA condemns Land Transfer Bill...

contd from pg01

Government gazettes, the first census in Sikkim had been conducted in 1891 and the Sherpa community had been listed in Bhutia [sub caste] community of Sikkim. Similar listing had been done in 1911 census of Sikkim. Considering the history of Sherpa community in Sikkim added with documentary facts of Scheduled Tribes Order 1978 and the Representation of People’s [Amendment] Act 1980, the Union of India had placed the Sherpa community within the constellation of Bhutia-Lepcha. However, it was the fault of selfish politicians who did not make any stand for our community’s land protection in the State by not bringing it under Revenue Order No. 1,” Mr Sherpa added.

He further said that the State

Government had no right to decide the future of Sherpas without proper knowledge of history and facts.

“If the State Government tries to impose such law and continue hurting our sentiments then we, the Sherpas, will decide the social, economical and political future on our own,” he stated.

He also informed that DAS had approached Union Minister of Tribal Affairs seeking protection of land rights under Revenue Order No. 1 and separate census of Sherpa community in the State following which the Ministry had directed the State Government to send a report on the same.

“Although the State Government did not send any report to the Ministry, we never complained against anyone and af-

ter a decade of suppression and injustice done, we have realized our rights. We will no longer remain suppressed. We will fight for our rights for our better future of our community,” added Mr Sherpa.

President of DSA, Lha Tshring Sherpa, in his address said, “Political parties may accuse us of having a political agenda against the government but this is not political propaganda. We are fighting for our rights. If the State Government cannot safeguard our rights and cannot make a strong stand for our community, we will fight our own battle. We will not accept any bill that can destroy our future. We had been very clear about our rights and the government is aware of it but has not taken any initiative to work for our community.”

He appealed to all the Sherpas to be united and have a clear understanding of the situation for the future of the Sherpa community of Sikkim.

Condemning the Regulation of Transfer of Land [Second Amendment] Bill, DSA chief patron, Sangay Sherpa, accused the State Government of taking advantage of the Sherpa community of the State by not listing the Sherpa community under Revenue Order No. 1.

The association further informed that DAS will be organizing its annual general meeting soon in Gangtok and urged the Sherpa community of Sikkim to participate in the meet.

After the annual general meet, the DSA will approach the Union Minister for Tribal Affairs and other Ministries, it is informed.

The tragedy of not knowing and pathetic cries of foul

PD RAI

From the time Bhaichung Bhutia announced his party in New Delhi, which predictably raised many an eyebrow, he has been lashing out at the SDF Party Government for all the ills that he sees. From saying Sikkim is under a dictatorship to now making innuendos like saying a son has to take over. But normally fathers only give the reigns to the sons who are capable. On that he scores very poorly. Furthermore, Bhutia not knowing how a State functions and what are the options open due to the budgets it is easy for him to promise the moon. The poor understanding of State functioning as well as how budgets are made and what constraints are there is all too clear from his statements.

In another article that I had written I spoke of the need for Bhutia to do his homework. That is just to understand the lay of the land politically. I am sure his knowledge

of the history of Sikkim is also suspect and will, in all probability, end up talking of general stuff like saying that Sikkim has not progressed. He has made a mention of how Sikkim is faring poorly. The best part is that none of his so called colleagues are able to fathom what he means and so he is receiving absolutely no support.

To score goals one has to make the right moves. You have to size up your opposition. I am sure he has been doing that nightly in the world cup that is taking place in Russia right now.

Hence, in politics let me point out that one has to be able to connect with people and the right kind of people. And for that you have to have a set of plans and programs. No point in pointing fingers at the present dispensation. We do not have to say how well we are doing. We know it and it is certified from several quarters including all the statistics that are made by the



Government of India.

Recently, the Secretary of North East Council (NEC), Ram Muivah, was in town with his team of officials. They were taking a review of all the projects that are funded by the NEC. They held meetings with the Chief Secretary and all the line departments. He has mentioned that Sikkim is the most progressive State. He congratulated the Govern-

ment for the peace and safeguards to life and property of the people. He says that is what Governments should be doing. He said that Sikkim was a model state for the rest of the country and indeed for the North East. Ram Muivah ought to know. He has seen all the other states comprising the NEC. He can judge and judge he has and thus has no hesitation in giving the kind

of certificate he has done that too, in a meeting with the officials of the Government of Sikkim. He also called on the Hon’ble Governor and the Hon’ble Chief Minister.

So, Bhaichung and the party that he has founded can introspect and find out what better they can do. And with that they can go to the people instead of starting a smear campaign.

This smear campaign will not gain any traction on people who need to progress; whether they are new age farmers, hoteliers, entrepreneurs who are just about getting their act together, industrialists and other investors. People have to pay back loans that they have taken from Banks and other lending institutions. Hence they need the kind of peaceful atmosphere that they have been operating in. Their business mainly comes from the demand generated due to the growth in all sectors of the economy.

The fact of the matter is that a

smear campaign can only lead to asking a set of serious questions of these elements like Bhutia. Youth, which Bhaichung thinks is his ‘given’ constituency, cannot be taken for granted. Young people are now fully aware of what is good for them and for the society at large. Sikkim is an oasis of peace. They will demand the ‘how’ part of it.

There are many unfulfilled promises and issues but by and by all of them will be tackled in a mature manner and politically and through dialogue. Much of these issues are to be sorted out by the Central Government. It will take time to convince those who matter. The question immediately is on whose side is Bhutia on?

The tragedy of not knowing will bedevil him over the course of the next six months. That is for sure.

(The writer is a sitting Member of Parliament and also spokesperson of the Sikkim Democratic Front Party)

Gangtok on Saturday, 07 July

Temp: 26°C/18°C
Forecast: Mostly cloudy, a soaking shower around; not as warm; watch for flooding.
Sunrise: 04:46 AM
Sunset: 6:34 PM

Burari deaths could be combined effect of spiritual belief and psychotic disorder: IHBAS Director

NEW DELHI, JUL 6 (PTI): The Director of the Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences (IHBAS), Nimesh Desai, said today that two theories floating surrounding the deaths of 11 members of a family in Burari -- one of mass suicide due to spiritual belief and another of shared psychotic disorder -- should be seen in conjunction and in their combined effect rather than in isolation.

With Delhi Police deciding to conduct psychological autopsy of 11 members of a family in Burari who were found dead under mysterious circumstances on July 1, Desai said it would be a difficult exercise as no family member living in that house was alive.

In psychological autopsy, there is a reconstruction of the psychological state of the deceased just before or in the final moments of death based on interviews of the victims' kin, narratives of the social and occupational contacts and other records. It may extend backward to a few weeks or months.

"But here the difficulty is that it is not just about one individual, there are 11 members and no family member living in that house is alive so the reconstruction will be limited. However, there are plenty of written records, an analysis of which will confirm the impressions the police already seem to have made," Desai said.

"On the background of a very strong collective bond in the entire family about spiritual belief and rituals for many years, the mental illness of one predominant member found an easy conduit in it," he said.

20 workers killed in Nepal road accident

contd from pg02

the work site after having their meals, they said.

Most of the injured are said to be in critical condition. Three of the injured have been flown to Pokhara based Manipal Teaching Hospital in Nepal Army's chopper while 9 are undergoing treatment at Jomsom Hospital in Mustang.

The rescue work is underway, police said.

Nepal has many mountainous areas roads mostly are narrow. Most accidents in Nepal occur due to poorly maintained vehicles and road conditions.



IPS Trainee Officers from Hyderabad call on Governor

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JUL:

Governor Shrinivas Patil granted audience to a group of 15 Trainee Officers from 70 Regular Recruit [RR] of Indian Police Service, Sardar Patel National Police Academy, Hyderabad at Raj Bhavan today. The

group was led by Deputy Commandant, National Police Academy, Hyderabad, Sunil Kumar Payal.

A press communiqué received from Raj Bhavana informs that it was a courtesy call by the group which arrived in Sikkim on a five-day tour 'Bharat Darshan', a mandatory cul-

tural-cum-study tour as a part of their training activity. They will be touring different parts of the State for the next two days.

During a brief interaction with the officers, the Governor enquired about their native places and their respective cadre. He also talked about

the need of practical policing in the wake of various complexities evolving in the society. He extended best wishes for their future assignments and wished them a memorable stay in Sikkim.

In another engagement, newly appointed founding Vice Chancellor

of Sikkim State University, Dr Gopal K Niroula [Chhetry] called on the Governor at Raj Bhavan. It was a courtesy call by Dr Niroula following his appointment.

The Governor extended best wishes for his memorable term of office at newly established Sikkim State University.



Community Resource Centre for differently abled to come up at Samdong Kambal

GANGTOK, 06 JUL [IPR]: A meeting was organized today at the conference hall of Paryatan Bhawan in Gangtok with regard to the establishment of a Community Resource Centre for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Children and Adults with disabilities. The centre will be established at Samdong Kambal Gram Panchayat Unit, East Sikkim under the banner of a local Non Governmental Organization, Kalpataru Prathisthan.

Minister for Tourism & Civil Aviation Department, Ugen T Gyatso Bhutia, who is also the MLA of Tumin Lingee Constituency, expressed gratitude for the initiative and assured to extend all possible support and cooperation from different levels for the project. He also showed keen interest to work for the noble cause to help people with disabilities.

Minister for Health Care, Human Services & Family Welfare Department, Arjun Kumar Ghatani, applauded the

initiative and stressed upon collection of data of disabled persons from the entire State of Sikkim. He suggested Kalpataru Prathisthan to coordinate with the nodal Departments of Health Services and Social Justice, Empowerment & Welfare and to involve ASHAs, Panchayats and stakeholders in future course of action.

Member of Parliament [Lok Sabha], PD Rai, coordinated the participants and underlined assignments to be taken up further under the supervision of Consultant, Dr Man B Chettri. He advised submission of a DPR of the project to the concerned authority.

Dr Chettri and participants from Health Department including Mission Director, National Health Mission, Dr Bimal K Rai, Head of Department of Psychiatry, STNM Hospital, Dr CS Sharma, and other officials from Social Justice Department also placed their invaluable inputs.

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Meghalaya CM releases policy document on jackfruit mission



SHILLONG, JUL 6 (PTI): Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma today released the policy document of the five year jackfruit mission.

The chief minister launched the draft policy for the mission at the jackfruit festival here and the mission is likely to be launched before Independence Day this year.

The mission aims to generate employment opportunities for over 80,000 farmers.

Meghalaya additional chief secretary K N Kumar said the Rs 80 crore jackfruit mission has set a target of reaching out and impacting over 82,000 farmers, 50 small and medium enterprises and about 200 nano enterprises the state in the next five year.

Of the Rs 80 crore, Rs 42.6 crore will be sourced from the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and Rs 6.3 crore from the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries and Rs 30.2 crore from the state government as support funds.

According to the policy document, the jackfruit mission will demonstrate the feasibility of turning a long ignored low input, low cost natural resource of the state

into a high value product capable of sustaining a long line of enterprises in the community

Kumar said that roughly 75 per cent of the jackfruit produced in the state is wasted resulting in a vast economic waste and hoped that through the mission mode intervention, value addition of the fruit will result in generation of negligible wastes.

Kumar, under whose supervision the mission is launched, estimated that there are at least one million jackfruit trees in the state.

He estimated that each tree can generate an average income of Rs 5000 considering that each fruit tree can bear 200 fruits on an average.

Stating that the vegan market will be especially attracted to jackfruit as it is truly organic and natural, Kumar said the market is increasing by about 600 per cent in the US, 350 per cent in the UK in the past decade and about 17 per cent annually in China.

At the jackfruit festival, on display are various value added jackfruit products which include jackfruit pickles, chips, juice, wines, biscuits, cakes and curry besides other culinary items.

Pangolin rescued in Assam's Maligaon area

GUWAHATI, JUL 6 (PTI): A pangolin was rescued by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau here today and three persons were arrested in connection with it, sources in the body said.

The anteater was rescued from Maligaon area of the city during a joint operation of the police and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, the source said.

The three persons, who hail from Dalgaoon in Darang district, had purchased the animal for Rs 1.5 lakh and were planning to sell the scaly mammal for Rs 40 lakh.

Pangolin, a scaly anteater, is a highly endangered animal in the country and is among the most hunted and trafficked one in the world. Their scales are used in traditional medicine, while their meat which is considered a delicacy in certain countries.



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The date for conducting the written examinations for the post of Live Stock Assistant as published vide Advertisement No: 08/SPSC/EXAM/2018 DATED:14/05/2018 in the Sikkim State Sub-ordinate Para Veterinary Service AH,LF & VS Department, Government of Sikkim through Direct Recruitment is hereby fixed as per details given below:-

Papers	Mode of Examination	Date	Time	Venue
Paper – I	MCQ	05.08.2018	10:00 am to 12:00 noon	Will be intimated in the ADMIT CARD
Paper – II	MCQ	06.08.2018	10:00 pm to 1:00 pm	

The eligible candidates may download their admit cards **from 24.07.2018(after noon) to 02.08.2018(midnight)** from the official website of Sikkim Public Service Commission i.e. www.spscksm.gov.in.

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

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SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

What After Cashing In?

There is still need for better fiscal management tips for rural Sikkim

It might already be too late to talk about the following concerns because too much has already been allowed to drain away. But then again, even if some sense is allowed to prevail despite the late waking up, it would be an effort well undertaken.

Sikkim has been blustering ahead on a fast clip of infrastructure and industrial construction ranging from wider roads to more roads to hydel projects to an airport to grand public facilities and industries. Projects invariably attract protests ranging from individual reservations to mass discomfort. Much has been written about protests and responses, however now it is time to deliberate on the post project-clearance scenario and the management practices that should be introduced. Land comes at a premium in a hill state like Sikkim and even though agricultural productivity is falling and cash crop/ horticulture options still in their infancy, the Organic Sikkim experiment notwithstanding, land provides a sense of security to rural families. Most of the projects and investments require large transfers of land falling in the rural belt and this is where some initiatives, beyond the ones prescribed by laws and rules, need to be initiated.

The required processes of public hearings, rate negotiations and enumeration of affected families are easy to deliver because these form part of the guidelines by which projects need to be undertaken and come in clearly prescribed check-lists. Given the sheer number of projects on the anvil and the crores that will be handed over to private land holders across rural Sikkim to complete the acquisition process, it becomes necessary to ensure that the sudden liquidity in hands not used to manage finances does not drain away in momentary lapses of indulgence. One has to recognise the fact that Sikkim is not very organized when it comes to handling cash; there have been ample cases where even loans taken out for specific projects have been wasted on other non-productive pursuits and now one is looking at huge infusions of cash without any worries of repayment or interest servicing. A lot of these crores have already passed from the hands of project “developers” to affected land owners and then evaporated leaving behind deep resentments. It is important that enough is done to generate genuine fiscal prudence among the affected families. Money covers for the property relinquished, but only wise investments can fill in for the security that land has traditionally provided.

This is where the State machinery needs to step up beyond the brief prescribed by Delhi, by staying with the people after the lands have been acquired, compensation handed over and projects completed. The State should have (and can still explore the possibility) put in place a system which empowers ‘compensated’ land owners with sound knowledge of investment options. The need for such an initiative is only amplified by the scams of private finance companies which did prolific business in rural Sikkim selling dubious schemes. Unless ‘informed’ otherwise, the suddenly cash-rich landowners will continue to become easy prey to the persuasive skills of such operators. And then there is always the possibility that the money will follow the personal loan inspired acquisition of luxuries and wasted opportunities.

How can such a situation be averted? To begin with, the government can look into the possibility of the investors for whom land is being acquired to also organise a series of workshops and sensitisation programmes on fiscal management for the affected people. Simultaneously, the real concept of rural banking should be aggressively promoted and a group of NGOs, selected after a thorough screening process, could be provided with specialised training on formulating rural investment options with which they could then approach the affected areas. What the government could also incorporate is a special cell of handpicked officers to organise, monitor, improvise and advise such initiatives. It is the people’s money at the end of the day and the government can do no more than inform them of possible options on what to do with their money, but should this information be intelligent and practical, it could turn around the rural economy and stand it more firmly on its feet. Like with all other initiatives witnessed in the State in the recent past, this too will have to be one that is directed right from the top and if pursued in the earnest, could trigger an economic revival that delivers not only economic security, but catalyses rural prosperity as well.

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Mail us at: letters@summittimes.com

Football and Religion: Two competing domains with a lot to offer Africa

MOHAMMED GIRMA
theconversation.com

In this age of globalisation few events draw more attention than sport as the World Cup in Russia illustrates with billions of people across the globe glued to their screens. At this time in football crazy Africa, specialists and ordinary fans are watching, discussing and analysing the World Cup.

But the excitement and euphoria come with a unique challenge to the continent’s religions. Africa remains firmly devout across different faiths.

The Pew Research Center believes Christianity’s future lies in Africa. By 2060, more than four-in-10 Christians will call sub-Saharan Africa home, up from 26% in 2015, according to a new analysis of demographic data. The Centre also projects that sub-Saharan Africa will be home to a growing share of the world’s Muslims: that between 2015 and 2060, the share of all Muslims living in the region is projected to increase from 16% to 27%.

Religion, as a result, colours the way Africans see the world. Generally they don’t listen to politicians, because politicians are aloof and distant. They however listen to religious and traditional leaders because Africans believe that they are human representations of the divine horizon - the realm of truth.

But football challenges this and poses a religious dilemma in Africa. Citing its ability of uniting people of all backgrounds around a common cause, football has been described as “an African religion”. The sport demands attention. It requires devotion. It provides ecstasy. And this makes religious leaders nervous.

Religion and sports serve different purposes. Religion is meant to provide people with spiritual well-being, while sport serves aesthetic needs and entertainment. Nevertheless, they share common audience and cultural values, such as the value of fairness, discipline and commitment, which can be used to address African challenges.

A RELIGIOUS DILEMMA

There are many in the religious community who view football with contempt and disdain.

One issue of concern is that African football has the habit of attracting witchcraft. Individual players as well as national teams often subscribe to a religious technique known as “juju”, to imbue players with spiritual power before games, protect them from the rival spirit of their opponents, and

more importantly, to influence the result. It’s not surprising that religious leaders have issue with this, seeing that players rely on the supernatural as a shortcut instead of hard work and discipline as constituted in their Holy Scriptures.

Secondly, for some believers football is threatening to become a religion in its own right. According to this block of believers, football demands allegiance and excessive emotional devotion.

The media use of hyperbolic religious imagery to portray sports stars adds to this negative perception of sports. This includes calling Lionel Messi “The Messiah” and dubbing Cristiano Ronaldo “a god”.

This sentiment is not entirely unfounded, when one considers the general background of the invention of sport. For example, Olympic games started in the temple of Olympia. On this occasion, ancient Greeks would offer sacrifices and took oaths with Zeus – the Greek high god. Given this, combined with the eager idolisation of modern stars, it’s not surprising that religious leaders are so opposed to the impact of the game.

A POLITICAL SPACE

For millions of people sport is an important dimension of their lives. Beyond entertaining them, it gives them identity and a sense of belonging. It offers them happiness and a rare sensation of ecstasy (depending on the result, of course). It’s also a source of catharsis in Africa. It creates an important distraction from the problems that ordinary people feel they can’t change.

And football is one of the rare places where an African child can find African heroes of international standing. Samuel Eto’o of Cameroon, Di-



Ghana’s goalkeepers, Stephen Adams (L) and Fatawu Dauda, pray before a 2014 World Cup match.

dier Drogba of Ivory Coast, Nwankwo Kanu of Nigeria, to mention a few, are individuals who gave African youth a reason to aspire.

Lastly, in many countries football is the only place in which Africans practice free speech without fear of retribution. They can criticise Arsene Wenger, chastise José Mourinho and thoroughly scrutinise Pep Guardiola, and they can go to bed without worrying about security forces raiding their houses in the middle of the night for being critical of those football managers.

SHARED TERRITORY

Africa is a deeply divided continent along ideological, ethnic and territorial lines. Religion and football can produce consensus and conflict depending on the way they are applied.

They also have a unique ability of crossing borders and gluing people of diverse cultural, political and ideological commitments. While football can bring together people from different religious groups, religion can bring people together from different political and cultural backgrounds.

There are other ways in which the two can complement each other. In African culture an individual (and individuality) is hardly recognised. In order to be recognised and find their standing in the society individuals have to take on family or ethnic identity. For its part, football is about a balance between teamwork and individual creativity while religion is about serving fellow humans with a sense of individual accountability to their God. Both approaches can help people on the continent create a space for individuals to discover their talents.

Religion can also help football and other social spheres to transcend the momentary sensation and translate material success into something that offers sustaining satisfaction.

All this suggests that religious leaders and ordinary believers don’t need to feel threatened by the beautiful game. Instead of insularity and criticising sports from afar, they need to find a space in which they can weave together overlapping values for the service of society. There are a number of virtues they can apply from football to the way they live their lives. Africans need to re-imagine success not with the lens of “juju”, which promotes shortcut and trickery, but with the values of discipline, hard work and endurance that sports offer.

[the writer is Visiting Lecturer at London School of Theology and Research associate, University of Pretoria]

Bees get stressed at work too (and it might be causing colony collapse)

AMÉLIE CABIROL & ANDREW BARRON
theconversation.com

Ever been overworked, tired and felt muddle-headed? Research now shows honey bees suffer from the same thing – and we understand why.

A honey bee’s life is hardly relaxing. Every day forager bees make many trips, travelling long distances, to gather vital resources of pollen and nectar from flowers. They have to deal with predators, challenging weather conditions and the very real risk of getting lost.

Just as chronic stress affects mental abilities in humans, our recent study suggests these stressful foraging activities reduce bees’ ability to solve problems, by changing the connectivity between specific neurons in the brain.

INTENSE FORAGING AFFECTS BEES’ MENTAL HEALTH

We studied the impact of foraging activity on bees’ problem-solving skills by using radio tags to track individual bees. We tested foragers’ ability to distinguish between different floral smells, which is essential to identify the flower species producing nectar or pollen in the environment.

We then tested bees’ ability to switch their preference between floral scents when the smell changed to indicate the presence or absence of food. This is important for efficient foraging because different flower species produce pollen and nectar at different times of the year.

Honey bees also need to be working at their mental best to navigate between the flowers and the hive, otherwise they cannot collect enough food for the colony.



Our study found bees that had been foraging for a long time or at high intensities were less able to learn new smells. We believe this might be due to stress. Stress in mammals causes similar learning difficulties, and another recent study described stressed bees as poor foragers.

Foraging was particularly stressful for young bees, which seemed to be less resilient to environmental conditions. It was surprising that foraging had such a negative impact on bees, though, as it has previously been seen as a time for valuable mental training in a rich and complex environment.

We also identified stress-induced changes in brain structure that affected learning ability. Intense foragers

had more connections between the brain regions used for processing smells and a region involved in learning and memory. This raises the exciting possibility that future research may be able to predict problem-solving abilities simply by looking at a brain’s structure.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT BEES?

Honey bee decline – known as colony collapse disorder – is a global problem. We don’t know exactly what’s happening to Australia’s bee population, but losses in New Zealand and the United States are well above sustainable levels.

The contribution of bees to the Australian economy has been valued

at A\$100 million a year. Identifying the factors that cause stress to bees could help us manage and reduce their decline.

We would do well to learn from the European Union, which has recently banned neonicotinoid pesticides that directly affect bees’ brains. Looking forward, we could also develop simple tests for beekeepers to check the problem-solving abilities of their hives. This would help them identify weak colonies before they collapse, by spotting issues early and preserving the health of the colony.

[Amélie Cabirol is Postdoctoral fellow, University of Trento; Andrew Barron, Associate Professor, Macquarie University]

Arunachal govt hands over Ojing Taying murder case to CBI

ITANAGAR, JUL 6 (PTI): The Arunachal Pradesh government has handed over the Ojing Taying murder case to the Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI), a government release said here today.

In a letter to the CBI yesterday, Arunachal Pradesh Home commissioner while transferring the case submitted the gist of the case along with the detail report of investigations made so far by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the state police, the release from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said.

Ojing Tayeng, former finance secretary of All East Siang District Students Union (AESDSU) and two of his friends were brutally attacked by unidentified youths in Itanagar on the night of June 10 last year and succumbed to his injuries in Guwahati on June 19.

The case was first investigated by Itanagar Police and then transferred to the SIT on April 27 this year.

However, the state government took cognizance that despite the case being registered more than a year ago, no substantive progress was visible and there were still no clues about the culprits, it said.

"It viewed that investigations were not progressing satisfactorily compared to the seriousness and sensitivity of the case," the release said.

Further, specialised and technical investigation is required by an expert police force to expedite the investigations, the government observed.

After the matter was examined by the competent authority based on recommendation made by the state Director General of Police, it was decided that the state Home Department would transfer the case to the CBI for speedy delivery of justice to the victim and bereaved family members, the release added.

Over 1,200 stranded Indian Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims evacuated from Nepal's Simikot

KATHMANDU, JUL 6 (PTI): Over 1,200 Indian pilgrims were moved to safety from Nepal's mountainous Simikot region today, the Indian embassy here said, as efforts continued to evacuate those stranded in Hilsa while returning from the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage in Tibet amidst inclement weather.

Those rescued from Simikot have been moved to Nepalgunj and Surkhet, the two towns close to the Indian border and having better health care and infrastructure facilities.

"As on today, with concerted efforts, a total of 1,225 stranded pilgrims were airlifted from Simikot to Nepalgunj and Surkhet. For pilgrims airlifted to Surkhet, the embassy also put in bus service to ferry pilgrims to Nepalgunj," the Indian mission here said in a statement.

"The embassy also worked with tour operators to airlift around 675 stranded pilgrims at Hilsa to Simikot for onward evacuation to Nepalgunj and Surkhet," it said.

During the evacuation process, 74 commercial flights were operated and the embassy



additionally pressed in private Choppers MI-16 along with Nepal Army helicopters that made more than 142 sorties in the difficult terrains of Hilsa-Simikot-Nepalgunj sectors, according to the statement.

Earlier today, an Indian embassy official at Simikot told PTI that the number of stranded pilgrims in Hilsa, near the Tibet border, was "almost nil" now.

The official said several of the pilgrims who were moved to Surkhet and Nepalgunj have already begun their on-

ward journey to India.

The Uttar Pradesh government has assisted in the process by deploying its state transport buses, the official said.

Yesterday, 275 pilgrims were evacuated from Hilsa, taking the number of people who have been moved to safety in the last three days to 675, the Indian Embassy had said.

The mission had yesterday said its camp offices were fully functional in Simikot and Surkhet.

Yesterday, the Indian embassy also issued a revised advisory for the

prospective pilgrims today, suggesting medical examination before taking up the yatra.

The embassy had launched the rescue operation after more than 1,500 Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims were stranded in Hilsa and Simikot on Monday due to inclement weather.

"As part of the rescue operations, the embassy deployed and dispatched its officials and representatives, with medicines, in all the affected areas i.e., Hilsa, Simikot, Nepalgunj and Surkhet to facilitate possible assistance,

including medical check-ups of elderly and ailing pilgrims," it said.

It had also set up a hotline for pilgrims and their family members, which also comprises other language speaking staff for Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam speakers.

The pilgrimage to Kailash Mansarovar in Tibetan region of China is considered holy by Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. Every year, hundreds of Indians undertake the 'yatra' which involves trekking under inhospitable conditions.

Retired commandant of IRB, 3 others abducted in Manipur

IMPHAL, JULY 6 (PTI): Four persons, including a retired commanding officer (CO) of the 4th Indian Reserved Battalion (IRB) have been abducted by armed gunmen from Sekmai in Manipur's Imphal West district, a top police officer said today.

The abduction of the four senior citizens took place on Thursday evening when they were on their evening walk from Sekmai to Khurkul village, Manipur Director General of Police L M Khaute told PTI.

The four were the retired CO of 4th IRB, Angom Kunjo (70), Khwairakpam Yaiskul (70), Khwairakpam Abalo (65) and Khwairakpam Rotonmani (70), he said adding they were whisked away in a vehicle by unidentified armed men. The police have registered a case at Sekmai police station and search operations are on at several places in the state since yesterday to nab the culprits, he added.



Meghalaya CM rubbishes reports of PDF pulling out of alliance

SHILLONG, JUL 6 (PTI): Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma today said the four-month-old Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government is "stable" and rubbished media reports of coalition partner People's Democratic Front (PDF) pulling out of the alliance.

The MDA comprises the National People's Party (NPP) with 19 MLAs, the United Democratic Party (UDP) with 7 MLAs, the PDF with 4 MLAs, the Hill State People's Democratic Party (HSPDP) and the BJP with 2 MLAs each, the NCP with 1 MLA and two Independents MLAs in the House of 60.

"The government is stable. I had a talk with them (PDF MLAs) and there is no question of their withdrawal," the chief minister said on the sideline of a programme here.

He said all MDA partners were "committed" to completing the five-year term.

Sangma's statement came in the wake of media reports of PDF chief P N Syiem, who is also the chief executive member of the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC), reportedly threatening to pull out of the MDA.

The chief minister said the PDF might have some issues within the party with regard to the coalition politics in the KHADC.

He, however, added that the issues of the district council might not necessarily affect the alliance government, and cited the example of how the coalition partner UDP is supporting the Congress in the Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council.

PDF MLA and Meghalaya Sports Minister Ban-teidur Lyngdoh told PTI, "We are moving ahead with the policies and programmes of the government and we are not withdrawing support."

He said it was childish on the part of Syiem to make such alleged statements without first consulting the MLAs concerned. Currently, the strength of the Meghalaya Assembly stands at 58 after Congress MLA Martin M Danggo and NPP MLA Agatha K Sangma resigned.

Danggo resigned as he will join the ruling NPP while Agatha resigned to make way for Conrad Sangma to get elected to the state Assembly.

Conrad Sangma is currently the Lok Sabha MP from Tura.

46 NDRF teams stationed in flood-prone areas of 14 states: MHA

NEW DELHI, JUL 6 (PTI): As part of proactive measures, 46 fully equipped rescue teams of the NDRF have been stationed in flood-prone areas in 14 states, the Union home ministry said today.

The National Disaster Response Force teams, comprising 1,384 personnel, have been deployed in vulnerable areas in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Delhi, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal, a home ministry spokesperson said.

He said the NDRF rescued 20 stranded people, including five pilgrims undertaking the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.

The teams will assist state administrations in



rescue and relief work, the spokesman said.

A 24X7 NDRF control room in the national capital is closely monitoring the situation and is in touch with other agencies for additional deployment, he said.

In Assam, the Brahmaputra river was in spate today at Neamatighat in Jorhat district and at Tezpur in Sonitpur district, according to the ministry.

The Jiaharali, a tributary of the Brahmapu-

tra, was flowing above the danger mark at North Trunk road in Sonitpur district.

In Bihar, the Mahananda river was posing a threat at Jhawa in Katihar district and at Dhengrahat in Purnia district.

While the Bagmati river was in spate at Benibad in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar, the Kamalabalan river was flowing above the danger mark at Jhanjharpur in Madhubani district in the state.

Collegium will have to make recommendations for Meghalaya HC: Centre to SC

NEW DELHI, JUL 6 (PTI): The Centre today made it clear to the Supreme Court that its Collegium will have to take decision and make recommendations to the government for filling vacant posts of judges at the Meghalaya High Court, which presently has only two judges.

Attorney General K K Venugopal told a bench comprising justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta that no collegium recommendations regarding filling up of vacancies in the high courts of Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura were "pending" as of now with the government.

"The vacancies were filled up within a month of collegium recommendations in these matters," he told the bench.

He referred to an affidavit filed by the government and said that as

on date, there were three judges each in the high courts of Manipur and Tripura.

"The problem is in the Meghalaya High Court where there are only two judges," Venugopal said, adding, "so far as Meghalaya is concerned, the Supreme Court Collegium should see if somebody has to be transferred there".

"The collegium will have to take a decision," he said.

To this, Justice Lokur observed, "That is for the Collegium to see, not for us".

The apex court had earlier noted that the Manipur High Court had only two judges against a sanctioned strength of seven, the Meghalaya High Court had one judge (at that time) against the sanctioned strength of four, while the Tripura High Court had only two judges against sanctioned

strength of four.

Earlier, Venugopal had told the top court that its Collegium had been recommending only few names to fill up huge vacancies in the high courts across the country, while the apex court had hit out at the government for keeping the names recommended by the Collegium pending.

The apex court is dealing with a matter in which the issue relating to vacancy of judges in these three high courts had emerged.

On April 17, while hearing a plea filed by a man seeking transfer of his case from Manipur High Court to Gauhati High Court, the apex court had noted that the situation in the high courts in Northeast states like Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura was "critical" due to the vacancy of judges there.

SummitTIMES ON TOP OF THE NEWS

informed, inquisitive, relevant

Meghalaya woman referee to officiate in SA U-15 girls football tournament

SHILLONG, JUL 6 (PTI): Meghalaya woman football referee, Ri-ohlang Dhar, will be officiating at the South Asian U-15 girls football tournament in Bhutan next month, a Meghalaya Football Association (MFA) official said here today.

Dhar, one of the three FIFA women referees in India, successfully completed the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) course for 'elite' referees last month, the official said.

The official said Dhar was selected to officiate at the prestigious South Asian U-15 girls tournament in Bhutan next month after she completed the AFC elite referees course.

When contacted, Dhar said she attended the elite referee coaching in Malaysia from June 25-28.

Dhar had officiated in this year's Indian Womens League football match held here.

By beating Russia, Croatia can finally shake 20-year shadow

SOCHI, JUL 6 (AP): Twenty years ago, Croatia made its World Cup debut with a result that happened only once previously in the tournament's history and has never been topped.

Finishing in third place the first time it participated in soccer's biggest showcase set a lofty standard.

The Croats' memorable run to the semifinals in 1998 remains a moment of pride for the country. It also created a shadow every successive Croatia team has been forced to deal with and has not come close to matching. Until now.

Croatia can equal what that 1998 team did if it beats Russia on Saturday in the quarterfinals and perhaps finally rid itself of that 20-year shadow.

The current squad of stars such as Luka Modric, Ivan Perisic, Mario Mandzukic and Ivan Rakitic will be held in the same esteem as the stars of '98 such as Davor Suker, Zvonimir Boban and Slaven Bilic with one more victory.

Or if they can't get past the home team, they will be the latest Croatia team to fall short.

"It has been talked a lot about the two teams and their similarities," Perisic said.

"They achieved a historic result in France. Now we've come close and hopefully we can even do it a little bit better than them. We know our quality and we believe in ourselves and we are on the right track at the moment."

The current group of Croats has become tired of hearing about what happened in 1998. It's not a matter of respect - there is great admiration for what the '98 team accomplished - but matching or exceeding what that team did has been a



burden in every major tournament for the past 20 years.

As Rakitic said recently, "At this point we need to forget about them, with all respect to them." Croatia's third place finish in its debut has been equaled only by Portugal in 1966 when the tournament featured just 16 teams. The 1998 team finished second in its group, beat Romania in the round of 16 and knocked off Germany 3-0 in the quarterfinals. Croatia lost to eventual champion France in the semifinals, but rebounded to beat the Netherlands and finish third.

It's what Croatia has done - or hasn't - in the four World Cups since that debut which has created the shadow this team plays under.

"It was different football 20 years ago," Ante Rebic said.

"They achieved a top fantastic result. We are now on a good way and have great support in

Croatia and I believe in our team we can do something similar."

Croatia was ousted in the group stage in 2002 and 2006, didn't qualify for 2010 in South Africa and was again dumped in the group stage in 2014 - albeit from a very difficult group.

The 2002 and 2006 tournaments were particularly frustrating because a win in the final group games would have advanced Croatia to the knockout round.

Even the European Championships haven't been kind. Croatia reached the quarterfinals in its first tournament in 1996 and has advanced that far only once since. Croatia has never made the Euro semifinals.

"Our goals are higher," defender Domagoj Vida said.

"God-willing we would like to lift the World Cup trophy. That's what we are here for." Croatia is the heavy favorite in

the quarterfinal matchup with the host team, and a win over the Russians would be held in the same esteem as its quarterfinal win over Germany that happened 20 years ago this week.

Modric may be the favorite for the Golden Ball as the best player in the tournament thus far. Goalkeeper Danijel Subasic has become a national hero for saving three penalties to advance Croatia past Denmark in the round of 16. And Croatia is on the side of the bracket where playing in the final seems entirely possible if it can beat the Russians.

That would certainly eliminate the pressure that still lingers from 20 years ago.

"It was a dream to be in a similar situation one day. Now is the time and hopefully we can achieve a similar result," Perisic said. "That's why we are really looking forward to the game against Russia."

have given Vijender a shot at his third title after having claimed the WBO Asia Pacific and Oriental Super Middleweight titles. Vijender is currently in Manchester.

"Lee has pulled out citing injury. Vijender's UK promoters -- Queensberry Promotions -- tried to find an opponent for him to fill in the July 13 slot but that did not work out," an official from Vijender's India promoters, IOS Boxing, told news agency PTI.

"A new opponent is being looked for and the revised dates for the fight will be announced soon. Markham's pullout was communicated to us by his promoters but the exact nature of his injury is not known to us," he added.

Opponent injured, Vijender's Commonwealth title fight postponed

NEW DELHI, JUL 6 (PTI): Indian boxing star Vijender Singh's clash against Briton Lee Markham for the Commonwealth Super middleweight title was on Friday postponed after the latter pulled out due to injury.

The fight was scheduled for July 13 and would



Former hot-shot Kempes joins Maradona in offering to coach Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, JUL 6 (AFP): Hot on the heels of Diego Maradona, another Argentine World Cup winner has thrown his hat into the ring to become the next national team coach.

Jorge Sampaoli may still be resisting pressure to resign after Argentina's World Cup debacle and last 16 elimination against France in Russia, but now Mario Kempes has said he wants to take over.

"Of course!" he said when asked by current employers ESPN, for whom he works as a commentator, if he would be interested in the job.

"There's a lot of work to do but there's enough time to come up with a good project to tackle a very interesting challenge, and I'm sure it

would win," said Kempes, Argentina's star striker during their 1978 World Cup triumph, scoring two goals in the final.

His assertion comes just two days after legend Maradona, who lifted the World Cup in 1986, offered to coach the team for free.

Maradona spent two years at the Argentina helm from 2008 to 2010 but saw his side crash out of the South Africa World Cup in a humbling 4-0 quarter-final defeat to Germany.

The 63-year-old Kempes, though, has not coached since 2002 and his career was hardly glorious, taking in teams in Indonesia, Albania, Costa Rica and Bolivia, as well as lower league sides in Spain and Italy.

Markham had the experience of 22 fights, 17 of them wins, under his belt compared to the 10 victorious outings by the former Olympic bronze-medallist Indian.

The fight would have been Vijender's first in six months since he successfully defended his twin titles in the clash against Ghana's Ernest Amuzu in Jaipur.

The Commonwealth title is without a holder since January after reigning champion Rocky Fielding decided to vacate it in pursuit of the European belt in the same weight category.

Fielding would have been a formidable opponent for the Indian as he has lost only one fight in a total of 27 professional appearances.

World looking at us as a family that practices occult: Relative of Burari family

SALONI BHATIA

NEW DELHI, JUL 6 (PTI): As the collective death of 11 members of a family in Burari becomes a national talking point, a relative rues that the world is now looking at them as a family that practises occult and the constant media glare not allowing them to grieve.

Vishakha Chundawat, granddaughter of Narayan Devi, who was found dead along with her two sons, daughter and their families, said she has not had the time to mourn the death of her relatives with the relentless media spotlight and various theories about her "uncle being possessed by his father's spirit".

Vishakha is the daughter of Narayan Devi's oldest son Dinesh, who lives in Kota in Rajasthan. Sujata, who lives with her family in Panipat, is Narayan Devi's other surviving child.

Vishakha clarified that the family is identified by the surname Singh Chundawat. She said only two among the 11, Priyanka and her mother Pratibha, were Bhatia.

"We write our names as Singh Chundawat. My uncle's name was Lalit Singh Chundawat and not Lalit Bhatia," she told PTI.

Dismissing reports of the Burari family practising superstitious rituals, Vishakha said all the cousins were excited about Priyanka's (one of the victims) wedding and "things like registers with notes on salvation" never came up for any discussion among them.

"We have lost 11 of our family members. I was really close to Priyanka didi and all the cousins had made a WhatsApp group to discuss about her upcoming



wedding. We were really excited about the event since it was the first wedding among the cousins," she said.

"She (Priyanka) never discussed about such things (registers which had notes about salvation). Rather, we would talk about what all beauty treatments we would get done for her big day," the relative said.

Vishakha asserted that her uncle Lalit was not "suffering from any psychological disorder" and was "completely normal".

"We used to visit my grandmother's house. My brother would often visit them

and we had never seen him (Lalit) behaving as if he was possessed by my grandfather's spirit.

"If there was something like that, we would have seen it at least once. During the time we were there, he was quite happy and danced a lot on June 16, a day before my cousin's engagement," she said.

The granddaughter added that she had never seen any registers in the house mentioning about salvation.

"It was after two years that we visited my grandmother's house in Burari for Priyanka didi's engagement. We were there

from June 11 to June 19. We even went to a temple. Only Hanuman Chalisa and Bhagwad Gita were kept in the house. We did not see any such registers," she said.

On CCTV footage showing the family members carrying stools and wires inside the house, the relative said her aunt used to take tuitions and the stools might have been brought for the children to sit.

She said all talks about the family becoming "spiritual" after Lalit's 'miraculous' cure after an accident were also false.

"My uncle had an accident when he was trapped in the plywood shop follow-

ing a fire. Some pieces of plywood fell on him and he lost his speaking abilities. He was hospitalised for a month in Karkardooma and the doctors had suggested exercises which helped him recover.

"One gets cured after a miracle only in films and not in real life," she said.

Vishakha said the entire family was fighting a battle on many fronts.

"We are fighting to overcome our grief and also the perception that the entire world has developed about us indulging in 'tantra-mantra' (occult). The case has been reported in international media also. Our minds are completely blank at the moment, but I hope the truth will come out soon," she added.

Ten of the 11 members of the deceased family were found hanging from an iron-mesh in the ceiling on Sunday, while the body of 77-year-old Narayan Devi, the head of the family, was lying on the floor in another room of the house.

Her daughter Pratibha (57) and her two sons Bhavnesh (50) and Lalit (45) were among the deceased.

Bhavnesh's wife Savita (48) and their three children - Maneka (23), Neetu (25), and Dharendra (15) were also found dead.

The others who were found hanging were Lalit's wife Tina (42), their 15-year-old son Dushyant and Pratibha's daughter Priyanka, who was engaged last month and was supposed to get married by year-end.

On Wednesday, police had recovered CCTV footage that showed some members bringing stools and wires that were used for their hanging. They had also found 11 diaries which had "psychological musings" and things about attaining "road to God".

Pak court gives 10-yr jail to Sharif in 1st corruption case

SAJJAD HUSSAIN

ISLAMABAD, JUL 6 (PTI): An accountability court in Pakistan today sentenced ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to 10 years in prison in one of the three corruption cases against him in the high-profile Panama Papers scandal.

The court delivered the verdict after postponing it for four times in the Avenfield corruption case -- pertaining to the ownership of four flats in the posh Avenfield House in London.

Sharif, 68, is in London attending to his wife Kulsoom Nawaz who was diagnosed with throat cancer last year.

Accountability court judge Mohammad Bashir pro-



nounced the verdict behind closed doors.

Sharif was sentenced to 10 years in prison in the Avenfield properties case while his daughter Maryam was sentenced to seven years.

Nawaz's son-in-law Capt

(retd) Safdar was given a one year sentence.

While Sharif was fined 8 million pounds (USD 10 million), his daughter Maryam was handed down a 2 million pound (USD 2.6 million) fine.

The judgement runs in over

100 pages.

The ruling came weeks before the general elections in Pakistan on July 25.

Authorities had deployed a large number of security personnel in and around the Federal Judicial Complex, where the court is located. The roads leading to the complex have also been closed to the general traffic.

Three-time prime minister Sharif resigned as Pakistan prime minister last year after the Supreme Court disqualified him from holding public office and ruled that graft cases be filed against the beleaguered leader and his children over the Panama Papers scandal.

Sharif and his daughter

Maryam have made several trips back and forth from London to attend the hearings and attend to the ailing Kulsoom.

The Avenfield case was among the three corruption cases filed against the former premier and his children by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on the Supreme Court's orders in the Panama Papers case which disqualified Sharif.

Apart from Sharif, Maryam and son-in-law Capt (retd) Safdar are accused in the case. Sharif's two sons - Hasan and Hussain - also wanted in the case, have been declared proclaimed offenders owing to their no-show.



Pope denounces 'sterile hypocrisy' of anti-migrant policies

VATICAN CITY, JUL 6 (AP): Pope Francis thanked aid groups that rescue and care for migrants today and denounced the "sterile hypocrisy" of those who turn a blind eye to the world's poor seeking security and a dignified life.

Francis celebrated a special Mass for migrants and those who care for them in St. Peter's Basilica, calling attention to their plight as Europe, the US and other countries increasingly close their doors, ports and borders to them.

The intimate service marked the fifth anniversary of Francis' landmark visit to Lampedusa, the Sicilian Island that for years was the primary destination of migrants smuggled from Libya to Europe.

During that trip, Francis' first outside Rome after

his 2013 election, the new pope denounced the "globalisation of indifference" that the world showed migrants fleeing war, poverty and climate-induced natural disasters.

In the years since, and especially in recent months, governments in Italy, the US, Hungary and elsewhere have adopted tough anti-migrant policies that fly in the face of Francis' oft-repeated call for governments to open their hearts and doors to those in need.

Italy and Malta, in particular, have closed their ports to aid groups that rescue migrants in the Mediterranean, while the Trump administration imposed a now-abandoned policy to separate children from their parents at the US-Mexico border.

Radical Indian preacher will not be deported: Malaysia PM

PUTRAJAYA, JUL 6 (AFP): Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said today a controversial Indian Islamic preacher allegedly wanted in his home country for terror-related activities and hate speech will not be sent back.

Zakir Naik, a radical television preacher, reportedly left India in 2016 and subsequently moved to largely Muslim Malaysia, where he was granted permanent residency.

According to Indian media reports, New Delhi asked for him to be extradited in January. The two countries have an extradition treaty.



The death toll from a boat accident near the Thai holiday island of Phuket surged to 21, officials said today, as divers reported seeing multiple bodies inside the sunken hull of the Phoenix tourist vessel. Phuket provincial rescue centre said "21 bodies" had been retrieved from the water, while Rear Admiral Charoenphon Khumrasee of the Thai navy said divers had seen "over 10 bodies" inside the submerged boat, which was carrying Chinese tourists when it went down yesterday.

Trump fires first volley in trade war with China

WASHINGTON/BEIJING, JUL 6 (AFP): The US imposed punishing tariffs on Chinese imports today, the first shots in what Beijing called "the largest trade war in economic history" between the world's top two economies.

At the stroke of midnight Washington time, the US implemented 25-percent duties on about 34 billion in Chinese machinery, electronics and high-tech equipment, including autos, computer hard drives and LEDs.

Beijing said retaliatory measures "took effect immediately".

China did not immediately release details of the counter-tariffs but has previously said it would match the US measures dollar-for-dollar.

Today's tariffs could just be the opening skirmishes in the trade war, as US President Donald Trump has vowed to hit as much as 450 billion in Chinese goods, the vast majority of imports.

Economists have warned that the tit-for-tat measures could throttle global growth and strike at the heart of the world trade system, causing shockwaves across the planet.

Months of dialogue between the two economic superpowers appeared to have failed, with Trump warning just hours before the tariffs came into effect that Washington was ready to impose duties on hundreds of billions of dollars more in Chinese imports.

Trump has for years slammed what he describes as Beijing's underhand economic



treatment of the United States, with the US trade deficit in goods with China ballooning to a record 375.2 billion last year.

US officials accuse China of building its emerging industrial dominance by stealing the "crown jewels" of American technological know-how through cyber-theft, forced transfers of intellectual property and state-sponsored corporate acquisitions.

And despite dire warnings about the impact on the US, Trump believes the robust American economy can outlast its rivals in the current battle.

But China also believes that its economy, with a greater focus on domestic demand and a reduced dependence on exports, can ride out the storm.

A member of China's central bank monetary policy committee, Ma Jun, said Friday that the first punches will have a "limited impact" on the Chi-

nese economy.

"The 50-billion trade war will slow down China's GDP growth by 0.2 percentage points," Ma told Xinhua, China's official news agency.

With only 130 billion in US imports to retaliate against, Beijing has said it will take "qualitative" and "quantitative" measures against the US, triggering fears it could cripple the operations of US multinationals in China.

Chinese stocks actually rose after the announcement, with the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index up nearly one percent and the broader Shenzhen index climbing more than one percent.

Stocks fell back slightly from that point, with Shanghai closing up half a percentage point.

Li Daxiao, analyst at Yingda Securities, said news of the tariffs was already priced into the

market, "therefore investors are not in as much of a panic as before." On the streets of Beijing, there were some concerns that prices would rise due to the tariffs but also a determination to support the Beijing authorities in the trade war.

"I will try my best to support domestic products. I think products made in China are the best," said one shopper in a Beijing grocery store, who gave his name as Yang.

Beijing has accused the US of "firing on the whole world" with the measures, pointing out that most of the Chinese exports under attack are largely made by companies with foreign investment -- including from America.

Under the banner of his "America First" policy, Trump has also targeted other traditional trade partners of the US, such as the European Union, Japan, Mexico and even Cana-

da.

And signs are growing that the escalating global trade dispute is already affecting the world's top economy, with punitive duties now in place for steel and aluminium and the White House threatening to levy duties on auto imports.

As the tariffs approached, the US central bank warned the impending trade battle was beginning to darken the otherwise blue skies of the robust American economy, now in its 10th year of recovery.

Businesses around the United States told the central bank that spending plans had been scaled back or postponed and they also warned of further adverse effects from the trade conflict, according to a Federal Reserve survey.

An industrial survey confirmed that companies were white-knuckling their way through Trump's intensifying, multi-front trade assault.

The start of the trade war likely confirms the widening rupture between Trump and his own Republican Party, a traditional champion of free trade and big business.

The powerful US Chamber of Commerce, a principal corporate lobby, said this week that retaliation either already in force or expected to come from China, Canada, Mexico, the European Union and others against Trump's tariffs was already affecting 75 billion in US exports.

Much of this was from states that had narrowly supported Trump in 2016's presidential election.

~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

LOST: I, Sangay Chenzom Bhutia daughter of P.T. Bhutia & P.D. Bhutia has misplaced/lost my Class X ICSE Mark Sheet in original against Uid no. 6113440 and passed out from Tashi Namgyal School, Gangtok.

JOB OPPORTUNITY: Required Sales Boys & Girls for IT store. Experience in IT knowledge both in software and hardware required. Interested candidates contact: **Ramolla Cellular: 7001204591, 9733015218.**

Memorial Service



The Memorial Service of **Late Jonathan Moktan (Jonu)**, who left for his heavenly abode on 02 July 2018, will be held on **07 July 2018 (Saturday)**. All friends, relatives and well wishers are requested to join us in the Memorial Service at our residence in **College Valley, Tadong in East Sikkim**.

We would also like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who stood by us in the time of bereavement.

Simon Moktan (father), Karma Dichen Bhutia (Mother), James Palden Moktan (brother) & entire family members. Ph. 8906512599, 9434191791

Anthyeshi Kriza



On 25th of June, 2018, **Mr. Rajen Karkidholi**, son of late Arjun Karkidholi left for heavenly abode. We the family members would like to thank everyone who was part of his story. We believe that he responsibly

concluded his role as a husband, father, brother, friend and a public servant. While we reminisce about him, we request everyone who cared and wished him well to join us in offering prayers and to bid him a final farewell. The ceremony will be held at our residence at **Maneydara, Lingding, below Indira Byepass [SDF Bhawan], Gangtok on 7th July, 2018 [Saturday]**.

Munna Karkidholi [mother], Sonam Yangchen Bhutia [wife], Ravi Karkidholi [brother], Aruna Karkidholi [sister], Anamika Karkidholi [daughter], Menka Karkidholi [sister]. Mob: 9609850052, 9609834107, 9609774878, 90345472, 7407385431

CRISTIANO RONALDO 'IN TALKS FOR NEW \$10 MILLION REALITY SHOW'!

The Real Madrid player, 33, is set to give Kim Kardashian a run for her money as he is currently in the midst of shopping a new 13 episode series to Facebook Watch - which could earn him \$10 million - according to Variety.

Ronaldo's life could make for sensational viewing pleasure, with the athlete igniting engagement rumours to girlfriend Georgina Rodriguez, as well as being a doting dad to four children amidst his glittering football career.

The show is reportedly set to be produced by Tom Brady's Religion of Sports media company, which is behind the Tom vs. Time for Facebook Watch.

As well as the reality show in the works, the sports star is also launching a superhero series Striker Force 7 and a scripted football TV drama series based on a diverse high-school girls' soccer team.



cer team.

Late last month, Ronaldo's stunning other half Georgina added weight to growing rumours of an engagement by revealing a sparking ring on her wedding finger at the World Cup in Moscow. The former Gucci store employee gave birth to her first child with Ronaldo in November of last year.

The star is also father to eight-year-old Cristiano Jr. His birth mum has never

been identified and like Cristiano's one-year-old twins Eva and Mateo, he is reported to be the result of an arrangement with a surrogate mum.

Speaking two months after the birth of daughter Alana Martina, Georgina admitted their baby girl had strengthened her relationship with the Real Madrid footballer.

"It has definitely brought us closer. We're happier together than ever," she told

Hello.

She added that Ronaldo had even arranged a special meal with her family after the birth - making her feel more "loved and cared for" than ever.

The brunette explained: "When we got home from hospital, he'd organised a surprise dinner, with all our nearest and dearest. I felt like the luckiest woman in the world. I have found love. We complement each other very

well. We have a beautiful relationship and when I have him beside me, I have everything. I feel loved and cared for. Love conquers all."

Just days before the World Cup, Ronaldo's mother Maria Dolores sounded wedding bells for footballer by describing Georgina as her future "daughter-in-law" in an interview with Cristina magazine.

The Madeira-born matriarch, who is said to have had a difficult relationship with some of Cristiano's ex-lovers including Russian model Irina Shayk, told the Portuguese publication that she "likes" Georgina, before branding her a "future daughter-in-law and a very calm person".

The grandmother added: "She is the mother of my grand-daughter. She is a future daughter-in-law. She's not my daughter-in-law yet [but] she's a future daughter-in-law."



Ranbir Kapoor suddenly refuses to talk about his relationship with Alia Bhatt

It was on May 31 when Ranbir Kapoor made his relationship official with Alia Bhatt. He had made the big confession in his GQ interview stating, "It's really new right now, and I don't want to over speak. It needs time to breathe and it needs space. As an actor, as a person, Alia is - what's the right word? - flowing right now. When I see her work, when I see her act, even in life, what she gives is something that I'm aspiring to for myself. It's new for us, so let it cook a bit"

And eventually, we could see how he allowed their relationship to "cook up a bit" by spending enough time with Alia. Say for that matter, Ranbir also spoke highly of Alia and how she's changed him as a person in almost every interview of his during the Sanju promotions. So it's quite surprising how the same Ranbir has now decided to take his words back.

In his recent interview

with Mid Day, Ranbir although mentioned that he's not single and will never be but diplomatically minced his words saying, "Erm... I'm not single. I'll never be single."

And when the tabloid directly asked him if he is dating Alia Bhatt, he smartly answered, "Main iss sawal ka jawab dene ke liye Raazi nahi hoon!" This is quite a first, coming from Ranbir who until last few weeks had put up this face of being truly, madly deeply in love with Alia. Wasn't he the same one who had cracked a mushy line saying, "In love, even water tastes like Sherbet?"

Nevertheless, guess Ranbir wants to take a pause before his relationship becomes a mockery, like how he had mentioned in one of his interviews. In that case, Alia has played very smart by neither admitting nor denying dating Ranbir. Perhaps, she is going to maintain this stance until she gets married.



Chris Brown ARRESTED in Florida after concert over outstanding warrant!

Chris Brown was arrested Thursday evening in West Palm Beach, Florida in connection with an outstanding warrant from a neighboring area, police told TMZ. It was not immediately clear what the warrant was issued for, according to the outlet.

Brown, 29, went directly from his concert at Coral Sky Amphitheater into police custody, according to the outlet.

The Tappahannock, Virginia native recently made headlines after he plunked down \$350,000-plus on a Rezvani Tank SUV that's bulletproof, the outlet reported.

The Grammy winner has past dealt with legal issues, most infamously his 2009 arrest in connection with his brutal beating on his then-girlfriend Rihanna in a Lamborghini in Hancock Park, California following a pre-Grammys party.

He subsequently pleaded guilty in June 2009 to assault with the intent of doing great bodily injury in connection with the incident. He was also arrested in 2013 in connection with felony assault in Washington D.C., and for assault with a deadly weapon in Los Angeles in 2016.

Currently touring for in support of his album Heartbreak On A Full Moon Tour, the Forever singer is slated to take the stage for three shows in the Southeastern U.S. over the next few days.

Fanney Khan trailer: Anil Kapoor and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan reunite after 17 years!

In 2017, one movie that moved everyone to tears was Advait Chanda's Secret Superstar. It featured an orthodox father crushing his daughter's dreams to be a singer. On the opposite end of this cinematic spectrum, lies Fanney Khan. The first trailer of the movie was dropped today and it looks like something that will draw audiences to the theatres.

Anil Kapoor plays a taxi driver who moonlights as his small dingy housing society's best singer. His daughter pines to be a popular singer and the only two things coming her way are - society's outlook towards overweight folks and lack of any funding because she is from a middle-class background. Unlike Secret Superstar, her father would go to extreme lengths to ensure that she lives her dream.

Fanney Khan trailer wraps up the emotional premise very well in the two and a half minutes footage. Along with that is also sets the more fun, vibrant and shady parallel plot into action. To fulfil his daughter's dream, Anil kidnaps Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, playing a popular singer, in hopes of

extorting money.

But anyone hoping to see the chemistry we saw in Hummaara Dil Aapke Paas Hai, will be disappointed as the two actors share no romantic connection in this one. Anil is happily married to Divya Dutta in Fanney Khan. Though, there is an undertone of a romantic track between Aishwarya and Rajkumar Rao, Anil's accomplice.

Fanney Khan is the remake of the Dutch comedy Everybody's Famous but gives a very good Indian spin to it. We have been bored to death by the plethora of songs that Bollywood has been producing over the past few years. But in Fanney Khan the usage of remade songs seems essential and to top that nicely pulled off. In the trailer alone we hear unique takes on popular songs like Jawaan Hai Mohabbat and Ye Jo Halka Halka Surroor Hai.

Fanney Khan has been directed by Atul Manjrekar. The musical comedy is bankrolled under the banners of Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra Pictures and T-Series and is scheduled to release on August 3.



AU NATURAL! 54-year-old actor, Russell Crowe, is almost unrecognizable sporting a salt and pepper bushy beard and fuller physique for his outing at Universal Studios.

ARIES: You're at a dramatic climax in your monthly emotional cycle today, Aries. It's possible that you'll erupt like a volcano. Don't be ashamed of releasing these emotions. Your feminine and masculine natures are quite connected and they're working harmoniously in order to express themselves to the fullest. Open the gates of communication and let the stampede charge through.

TAURUS: Your Florence Nightingale side might make an appearance today, Taurus. Your default defense is to take care of yourself and others. That's fine, but make sure you do it in a way that doesn't deplete your vital life force. The key is to offer advice and then leave the situation. You aren't responsible for others' actions. Offer information, but leave the final decision up to the person you're trying to help.

GEMINI: Today is a terrific day for

you, Gemini. You'll find that you can get quite a bit done using your quick mind and sharp wit. Information is flying fast and furious. Grab hold of what resonates with you and discard what doesn't. The more informed you are, the better equipped you'll be to handle the decisions of the day. Make sure you have all the facts before you proceed.

CANCER: Often we ask ourselves, "Why me?" You might feel like you ask yourself this question more than anyone else, Cancer. Your life probably seems at times like a roller-coaster ride that never ends. Deep down, you realize that you'd have it no other way. Take a break from things today if you can. Communicate your thoughts and feelings to others. By talking it out, you'll feel much better about the situation.

LEO: You may find your brain buzzing

around like a bee today, Leo. This is good. There's a great deal of information that you need to process now. Have you been thinking about buying some new electronic equipment or small appliances for your home? Now is a great time to do some research on this project before you pull out your wallet. Use this day to gather facts.

VIRGO: Don't automatically assume that you can work out all your problems by yourself, Virgo. Just the act of talking things over with others can help shed light on a situation that was baffling you earlier. Enlist the help of others in areas where you need help. Don't be ashamed to ask for assistance. We all have problems and issues to deal with. You aren't alone.

LIBRA: Get up early and get working, Libra. You have a lot of emotional and

physical energy that should help you accomplish whatever you need to do. The planetary energy is on your side. Take advantage of it to say what's on your mind and get closer to wherever you need to be. Your active and receptive sides are in agreement today. You should be able to find a healthy balance between giving and receiving.

SCORPIO: Feel free to speak up today, Scorpio. Perhaps no one has heard your point of view in a while. It's probably important for them to hear it. Just because people don't ask for your opinion, that doesn't mean it isn't valid. You have incredible intuitive insight that others fail to see. Don't assume they know what you're thinking - even though you probably know what they're thinking.

SAGITTARIUS: Someone has turned on the fan and papers are flying every-

where, Sagittarius. The pace of things is picking up and you're scrambling to pick up the pieces. Stay in close communication with others today. This will be your saving grace. You may require others' help to fetch the stack of important documents that has blown across the room. Keep a close eye on things so you don't lose your place in the game.

CAPRICORN: No one is going to be catering to your needs today, Capricorn, so get up and do things on your own. You'll find that there is little sympathy from others, and strong opinions are a dime a dozen. There's a great deal of gossip buzzing around that you may be tempted to join in on. Don't be an enabler of this sort of behavior. It's only going to alienate you from others in the long run.

AQUARIUS: Listen closely to the

wind, for the answers are blowing around right in front of you today, Aquarius. Make contact with people you haven't heard from in a while. You'll find that you can be quite productive where you least expect it. Ironically, the less you plan, the more you'll get done. Be spontaneous in your actions. Revelations will come to you like lightning.

PISCES: You might find yourself sidestepping in order to avoid a commitment today, Pisces. Don't keep giving someone the runaround. Be strong and let people know your thoughts even if you think their feelings will be hurt. Your job is to protect your emotions. Other people can handle their own. Be aggressive if you have to be. Your own sanity depends on you being true to yourself.