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SummitTIMES

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STATE LEVEL TEACHERS' DAY

CM recommends board exams for Classes V and VIII

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

On the occasion of Teachers' Day, Chief Minister, PS Tamang [Golay], suggested the introduction of board exams in Classes V and VIII in the State to prepare students to face the competitive challenges of the 21st Century, as per an IPR press release.

The CM further said, "...in the Education sector of the state, to make sure that no teacher is stagnant in their career creating three slabs Higher Education, Secondary Education, Elementary Education which is headed by the Secretary, HRDD should be created," according to the release.

The CM said this while addressing the State Level Teacher's Day programme held at Chintan Bhawan today which had the presence of the Governor, Ganga Prasad, Political Secretary to CM, Advisors, Cabinet Ministers, Chief Secretary, other dignitaries,



teachers and students of various schools.

Mr Tamang also said that there should be a Retired Teachers Bank in each district from where services of retired teachers could be used when teachers go on medical leave, etc.

While mentioning that the state government is working on ma-

jor issues to make sure that teachers' grievances are resolved, he said that young teachers should serve in remote locations of the State for at least 3 years while older teachers should be posted in their hometown so that they can retire gracefully.

He announced that MPLAD and BADP funds will be especially used

for development in education sector.

Stressing on cleanliness, Mr Tamang suggested that Ministers and MLAs should adopt schools to address problems of sanitation and cleanliness so as to intensify Swachh Abhiyan in the state.

Regarding students, the CM encouraged the

drugs, suicide and cancer. He said that teachers have to give lessons to students across the state about the harmful aspects of drug use and every section of society needs to be made aware and addressed. High suicide rate in the state is also a matter of concern for which the state government is trying to come up with solutions, he said.

HRDD Minister, Kunga Nima Lepcha said that the state government has given topmost priority to education sector and will leave no stone unturned to give quality education for securing the future of the state.

Chief Secretary, A.K. Shrivastava in his address underlined the deep implication of environment conservation in order to maintain ecological equilibrium and also spelt out the need to impart moral education in schools across the state.

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AWARDS CONFERRED ON TEACHERS' DAY 2019

National Awardees of 2018

1. Mr. Motilal Koirala, Principal Kewzing SSS, South
2. Mrs. Karma Chomu Bhutia, Paksep JHS, North
3. Mrs. Mamta Awasthy, HM, Dongeythang PS, East

State Commendation Award for Primary Schools

1. Ms. Rajni Khatri, Lower Nandok JHS
2. Mr. Bhim Prasad Khanal, Luing SSS
3. Ms. Moti Maya Subba, Topung PS
4. Mr. K.B.Rai, Laythang PS
5. Mr. Tashi Dorjee Bhutia, Gaikhana PS
6. Ms. Karma Pansy Nanpa, Mangan SSS
7. Mr. Aita Singh Gurung, Chittray PS
8. Mr. Prem Bdr. Biswakarma, Aifatara PS

Commendation Award for Secondary Schools

1. Mr. Manoj Kr. Pradhan, Damlakha JHS
2. Ms. Chabbi Pradhan, Rongyek SS
3. Mr. Mandeep Subba, Singling JHS
4. Mr. Durga Pd. Pradhan, Nandugaon SSS
5. Mr. Mani Kumar Chettri, Rateypani SSS

State Award for Primary Schools

1. Ms. Muna Sharma, Adampool JHS
2. Mr. Birkha Bdr. Gurung, Kongri JHS
3. Ms. Gonam Bhutia, Tingda PS
4. Ms. Lila Kumari Rai, Kitchudumra PS

State Award for Secondary Schools

1. Mr. Debabrata Biswas, Deorali SSS
2. Ms. Sudha Moktan, Soreng SSS
3. Mr. Tulshi Ram Adhikari, Lingi Karjee JHS

List of CBSE toppers 2019

- Class X
1. Dewakar Bhattarai, Lingee SSS
 2. Urmila Chettri, Karongthang SS
- Class XII
- Humanities
1. Roselyn Darjee, Legshep SSS
 2. Neekita Sharma Kafley, Khamdong SSS
- Commerce
1. Anushka Kharel, Namchi SSS
 2. Sonam Wangkee Lepcha, Lingee SSS
- Science

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SKM COMPLETES 100 DAYS IN OFFICE

Not all of SDF Govt's lapses can be undone so fast, but State Govt still has much to be proud of: Khaling

**SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha spokesperson, Jacob Khaling, marking 100 Days since his party formed the government in Sikkim, today stressed that the SKM government has been working to establish a strong foundation to make a better Sikkim. The first 100 days, he said, were spent preparing a road-map to prepare future generations for the next 100 years.

He also stated today that the SKM government was struggling to pull Sikkim out of the fiscal stress that the SDF



government's mismanagement and lapses have sucked the State into.

He reiterated that the SKM government was committed to rescuing Sikkim from the present fiscal crises.

Addressing a press conference here this

afternoon, Mr Khaling claimed that Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] has not taken a single day's break since taking office and has been working overtime for the people of Sikkim.

He said that the State government has taken

some immediate and some long term decisions in the interest of Sikkim which will be seen in the days to come.

He further contended that everyone has been working in a free environment for these 100 days and that Sikkim was now enjoying true democracy.

Mr Khaling singled out the State Government's austerity measures as the main achievement of the government and added that the government has been working hard to root out corruption from the State and punish the corrupt.

He further claimed

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SDF thumbs down SKM's 100 days in office as wasted days

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Sikkim Democratic Front today thumbed down Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's first 100 days in office as a period in which the SKM Government has not initiated even a single people-friendly programme.

An SDF press release issues today stresses that the SKM government should fulfill all promises it had promised to fulfill within 100 days of forming the government in Sikkim.

The release, issued by SDF spokesperson, JB Darnal, contends that the SKM government has not taken up any new road

projects or school or drinking water projects or health centres since forming the government.

He added that the people of Sikkim have also noticed that the SKM has not even begun working on announcements and promises made during the election campaign.

The release goes on to laugh off the claim of Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] that the SKM government has done in 100 days what SDF could not in 25 years in office.

The release points out that SDF ran the government with utmost sincerity throughout the last 25 years. In compar-

ison, the SKM government remains obsessed with conspiracies and misinformation, the release adds.

It adds that the CM, instead of working in Sikkim, has spent nearly half his term in office thus far travelling to Delhi and back.

The party has also "thanked" the Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department for opening the doors of government infrastructure for political programmes. The reference is to the SKM event held at Manan Kendra on Wednesday. Now, all political parties can take the benefit of this facility, the release wonders aloud.

Sikkim, come join the Gangtok leg of Cycle Around the Globe and Pedal some Suicide Prevention!

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Sikkim's chance to join the 'Cycle Around the Globe' initiative of the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) to raise awareness on the risks of suicide.

MG Marg, Gangtok Sikkim

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Indo-Nepal DIG level meeting to be held in Gangtok

GANGTOK, 05 SEPT (PIB): A Deputy Inspector General Level coordination meeting to consider security and other matters along the Indo-Nepal Border will be held between Sashastra Seema Bal (India) and Armed Police Force (Nepal) at Sector Hqrs SSB Gangtok on 06 Sept.

The meeting between the senior police officers of India & Nepal will be held to strengthen the security system on the Indo-Nepal border, to prevent the illegal encroachments at “No-Man’s Land”, to maintain and repair the border pillars between the two countries, discussions on prevention of human and drug trafficking, and to strengthen the mutual cooperation, understanding between Officers & personnel at all level of SSB & APF.

Eight-member delegation from Nepal under the leadership of Deputy Inspector General, Nagendra Bahadur Thapa, Susari Brigade, Armed Police Force Nepal, is coming to Gangtok on 06 Sept, 2019 to attend the said meeting.

The Indian team will be led by Deputy Inspector General of Sector HQ SSB Ranidanga, Amit Kumar, Siliguri.

The Deputy Inspector Generals and other Officers of Sector HQ SSB, Gangtok (Sikkim) and Sector HQ SSB, Purnea (Bihar) will also participate in the meeting.

SKM receives new converts from SDF at Yangang

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

SDF’s CLC president for Rangang-Yangang, Kumari Mangar, who is also a former chairperson, along with six ward panchayats and a hundred families today joined the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha here at Yangang, an SKM press release informs.

The joining was formalized at a coordination meeting also attended by the Rangang-Yangang party in-charge, RK Basnet, Confidential Secretary to the CM, Bikash Basnet, and SKM’s CLC president, Tengayla Namka.

The release informs that the defecting panchayat members explained that their decision to join SKM was to register their dissatisfaction with 10 SDF MLAs recently joining the BJP.

The SKM release adds that the inductees from SDF were also impressed with SKM’s programmes, ideology and work ethic.

Workshop on Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme

GANGTOK, 05 SEPT (PIB): A state-level workshop on financing under DEDS and other GoI-sponsored subsidy schemes being implemented by NABARD, Sikkim Regional Office, was organized at Gangtok today. The workshop was attended by representatives from banks, government departments, NGOs and KVKs.

Additional Director, Dr SD Bhutia, Department of Animal Husbandry & Vet. Services, Chief Manager, Mahendra Kumar Azad, SBI, Gangtok, GM/OIC, Rosie Tshering, NABARD, representatives from all major Commercial Banks, NEDFI, SISCO Bank, Directors of Dept. of Animal Husbandry: Dr BM Chettri, Dr DP Pradhan, Dr TP Lama, Livestock, Fisheries and Veterinary Services, Additional Director, MK Subba, Horticulture, DGM, Sikkim Milk Union, Director, SBIRSETI, Project Man-



ager, SRLM participated in the workshop. There was also good representation from NGOs and KVKs working in rural areas of the State.

GM/OIC, Ms Tshering in her inaugural address indicated that Dairy, Poultry and Agri Marketing Infrastructure sectors have very good potential to create employment opportunities and entrepreneurship in the State and urged upon banks to finance these activities in a big way. She highlighted the low level of disbursements under Agriculture Credit and stressed on the need

to increase financing under Agri and allied sectors.

AGM, SR Jaggi, NABARD made presentations on operational guidelines of DEDS and NLM schemes, various eligible activities/components for financing under these schemes. He explained the process of financing under these schemes and online submission of subsidy claims by banks.

DGM, G Ramesh Kumar, NABARD made a presentation on Agriculture Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) scheme and highlighted the potential available for

various investment opportunities under dairy, horticulture for creation of marketing and value addition Infrastructure in the State. He urged the banks to finance under these activities in order to diversify their agriculture investment credit portfolio and increase the credit flow under agriculture sector in the State.

Chief Manager, Mahendra Kumar Azad, SBI urged all stakeholders to make coordinated efforts for successful implementation of schemes and grounding of units with bank credit. Addl Direc-

tor, Dr SD Bhutia, Dept of AH & VS indicated that there is huge potential for Dairy and other Animal Husbandry activities in the State and soon the milk production of Sikkim may reach 1 lakh litres which in turn will help in doubling of farmers income by 2022.

Directors of Animal Husbandry Department, Senior Scientists from KVKs & NGOs raised various operational issues related to credit linkage under DEDS and other schemes under JLG mode. Various issues on capacity building, credit linkage and financing were thoroughly deliberated in the meeting.

The Workshop on DEDS and GoI schemes has created awareness on various opportunities for farmers and entrepreneurs of Sikkim and sensitized banks and line departments paving the way for successful implementation of the scheme.

Krishi Mela under Jal Shakti Abhiyan in South Sikkim



NAMCHI, 05 SEPT (IPR): Krishi Vigyan Kendra, South Sikkim, organized a two-day Krishi Mela under Jal Shakti Abhiyan on 03 and 04 September with Lok Sabha MP, Indra Hang Subba, as chief guest accompanied area MLA [Namthang], Sanjit Kharel, as special guest. The programme was attended by BDO Namthang, officials from line departments and farmers from various blocks of South District.

The MP visited the stalls as well as the KVK farm.

Senior Scientist and Head, Indra Prasad Shivakoti, KVK South Sikkim briefed the gathering about Jal Shakti Abhiyan while resource persons, Principal Scientist (Agronomy), Dr Raghavendra Singh, ICAR-NOFRI presented a detailed power-point presentation on the various technologies suit-

able for Sikkim for water management and in situ moisture conservation.

Dr BC Kusre, Professor, CAU, in turn, highlighted the water resources of South Sikkim, constraints and prospects while Deputy Director (Research) ICRI, Bharat Gudade, explained organic package and practices of large cardamom.

In his closing remarks, the MP appreciated the initiative taken by KVK for awareness on Jal Shakti Abhiyan and Water Conservation strategies.

He called on the youth and drop out students to look at farming as an enterprise and urged farmers to take up farming on commercial basis and meet the production demand.

Mr Subba also emphasised the need to uplift the economic status of the people.

Nagaland Agriculture Officials on exposure visit to Sikkim

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 AUG:**

In order to understand the Integrated Organic Farming System adopted by Sikkim, a group of 12 Officials from Nagaland visited the State from 02-06 Sept.

The team of officials from Nagaland was led by Sub Divisional Agriculture Officer, Temjemtoshi (SDAO) from Agriculture Department, Perren District, Government of Nagaland, a press release informs.

The team visited SAMETI office where Director SAMETI, Nawang C Tonyot welcoming the visitors provided information on Sikkim Organic on 03 Sept, 2019.

Deputy Director IPM, RK Sharma highlighted some of the major pests and diseases and their control in organic way. She also highlighted on

organic way of preparing some herbal bio pesticides and herbal insect repellent.

In the afternoon, the team visited ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute, (ICAR-NOFRI) Farm. Senior Scientist ICAR-NOFRI, Dr Ashish Yadav highlighted the ongoing research and trials in their institute.

The team had a field visit at Assam Linzey on 04 Sept, 2019, East Sikkim where former ATMA Farm School Teacher and progressive farmer, Amber Bahadur Chettri shared his experience on organic nursery raising of cole crops, cherry pepper and other seasonal vegetables.

The team leader, Mr Temjemtoshi thanked ICAR-NOFRI and SAME-TI Sikkim for all support and coordination during their visit to Sikkim.

Training on Vermicompost and Azolla production

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

A day long training program on Vermicompost and Azolla production was organized by ATMA West Sikkim at Lower Lingchom Village under Gyalshing Block. The training was attended by 30 progressive farmers, a press release informs.

Field Assistant Agriculture, Suren Gurung, Field Assistant Horticulture, LB Chettri, Block Technology Manager (BTM), Safal Pandey, Assistant Technology Manager (ATM), Pabitra Subba from ATMA West Sikkim and Jaya Prakash



Dulal SMS Agronomy as a resource person from KVK West Sikkim attended the program.

BTM, Safal Pandey welcomed the participants and motivated the farmers for production of organic manure and Bio-fertilizer.

The resource person highlighted the package

and practices of Azolla and Vermicompost production. He also demonstrated the procedure of making Vermicompost and Azolla cultivation through locally available resources.

The program concluded with distribution of other plants nutrients among the farmers.

Training on Off-Farm Inputs at Chingthang

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Training cum demonstration program on off-farm inputs was held at Panchayat Bhawan of Chingthang GPU, West Sikkim under MOVCD (Mission Organic Value Chain Development). The training was organized by FPO and Service Provider Agency Mevedir.

Progressive farmers and several Farmer Interest Groups were invited as participants to this

training program to learn about off-farm inputs and how to use these organic certified inputs in their major cash crops.

The key participants of this training were Babita Khati and Sunita Rai (Panchayat member), Tobzer Dorji Bhutia (Executive Officer Indian Gramin Service), Purna Singh Rai (FPO President), Yogendra Rai (RDO), Soma Rai (FPO-CEO) and the key resource person of this

training was Jason Nim Sherpa and Diwas Chettri from Mevedir.

Diwas Chettri informed about the Organic input outlet at Gyalshing and Jorethang where farmers can get above mentioned inputs, seeds and other agricultural equipments and tools.

About 25 members from the Grower Groups attended the training which concluded with distribution of above inputs to farmers.

India lose to Oman after taking lead in opening World Cup Qualifier

GUWAHATI, SEP 5 (PTI): Captain Sunil Chhetri’s splendid first-half strike went in vain as India surrendered a one-goal advantage to lose 1-2 to Oman in their opening fixture of the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers, here on Thursday.

The 87-ranked Oman turned it around in the last eight minutes of regulation time by scoring twice through Rabia Alawi Al Mandhar, leaving the hosts distraught. India will be left to rue the missed chances in the first half after a spirited second half performance from the visitors saw them secure full three points.

“It just happened. We were punished twice for mistakes. So late in the game to lose the point which would have left us in a good position to fight for the second place until the end,” India coach Igor Stimac said after the match, which also served

as 2023 Asian Cup Qualifications. The 35-year-old Chhetri, international football’s second highest scorer among active players, pushed India ahead in the 24th minute with his 72nd strike.

However, Alawi Al broke Indian hearts when he flicked the ball past Gurpreet Singh Sandhu to restore parity in the 90th minute. More disappointment was in store for the 103-ranked India as striker Alawi Al completed his brace in the 89th minute.

India dominated the first half with more shots at opposition goal and also enjoyed possession.

Ashique Kuruniyan, who returned to the team after missing the Kings Cup and Intercontinental Cup due to injury, created problems for the Oman defence with his pace and trickery in the left channel. Following one such run down the left flank in the 24th

minute, he was fouled by Abdulaziz Al Ghailani and India got a free kick on the left edge of the box. Brandon Fernandes took the set piece, sent a grounder in the middle of the box and Chhetri fooled his marker to drill a left-footer into the Oman net, much to the celebration of a vociferous crowd.

Before that, India were denied lead in the 15th minute when Udanta Singh’s shot off a Chhetri pass beat the Omani goalkeeper but it struck the crossbar, to the dismay of the home side. Udanta was also denied a goal in a similar fashion against the UAE in the Asian Cup earlier in the year.

There were periods of incessant Indian attack in the first half and central defender Sandesh Jhingan sent the ball over the bar in a free header off a corner taken by Anirudh Thapa in the 20th minute.

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AWARDS CONFERRED...

1. Indra Bahadur Chettri, Dikling SSS
2. Ujjal Chettri, TNSS Vocational

1. Yoel Giri, Lingdok SSS
2. Karma Wongay Bhutia, West Point SSS List of School/Principal to be awarded

1. Lingmo SSS, Class X, South
2. Ranka SSS, Class XII Humanities, East
3. Bermiok Tokal SSS, Class XII Commerce, South
4. TNSSS, Class XII Science, East
5. Khechuperi SSS, Class XII Vocational, West

The winners of the overall Best Performing School are:

1. Government Primary School: Tanzi, South Sikkim
2. Government Junior High School: Namok, North Sikkim
3. Government Secondary School: Sang Chamthang, East Sikkim
4. Government Sr Secondary School: Dentam, West Sikkim

CM recommends...

Earlier the programme saw a welcome song by students of Bojoghari School, group song by students of Brihaspati Parsai School, Ranipool, teachers of Midde Camp School and DIET trainees.

On the day, various awards were presented to teachers, students and schools.

State Awardee, Munna Sharma [Primary teacher, Adampool Junior High School] and National Awardee, Mamta Awasthy [HM, Dongraythang Primary School] shared their experience on life as a teacher.

Earlier the welcome address was given by Secretary, Education, N.T. Sherpa and the vote of thanks was delivered by Director, School Education, Hondala Gyaltsen.

Not all of SDF...

that the amendment to the Lokayukta Act was a step in this direction and announced today that even though action could get delayed, action will definitely be taken against the corrupt.

About the “On One, Family One Job” scheme, he informed that the verification process was underway and that all genuine appointees will be regularised after which the government would work towards providing jobs to the left out unemployed.

Mr Khaling further mentioned that the CM has been repeatedly placing the political demands of the State with the Centre.

He informed that the government has allocated Rs 451 crore to make Sikkim a kutcha house free State. He informed that a house of Rs 15 lakh will be provided to beneficiaries along with furniture and television. What is more, beneficiaries can choose from three design options.

He added that the health insurance scheme which will provide health insurance of upto Rs 20 lakh to all govt employees was also in the final phase of implementation.

Likewise, SKM spokesperson, CP Sharma, mentioned that all the lapses and damages caused by the earlier government cannot be expected to be repaired in the mere 100 days that SKM has been in government and added that substantial strides have still been made.

SKM spokesperson, Sonam Venchungpa, added that the SKM government has been working in the interest of government employees. He added that the government was also working proactively to revive stalled hydel projects in the State and will consult all stakeholders on the same.

Likewise, SKM senior vice-president, TN Dhakal mentioned that the people of Sikkim gave their mandate to SKM for five years and that the SKM government has been working in a phased manner to lift Sikkim out of the present situation.

ANTHYESTI KRIYA

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



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

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Green Teachers oriented on Earthian School prog



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:

The Sikkim ENVIS Hub at Forest Department, in collaboration with WIPRO, conducted a green teachers' orientation programme on Earthian School programme focussing on sustainability of water, biodiversity and waste for about 140 schools across of the State at Forest Conference Hall on 02 and 03 Sept, a press re-

lease informs. The orientation programme was inaugurated by Principal Secretary-cum-PCCE, ML Srivastava, and was also attended by the Director (Environment & Soil Conservation), BB Gurung, Joint Director (ENVIS), Kusum Gurung. The programme was coordinated by the Senior Programme Officer, Rajen Pradhan. Highlighting the global concerns of mit-

igating climate change, the Principal Secretary shared technical insights on national and international climate action plans and mentioned the significant role of teachers as green ambassadors through active engagement of school eco clubs. The Director [Environment], in his address, mentioned that the protection and conservation of the environment was ev-

erybody's concern and teachers and students through the eco-club programme should act as primary agents in reaching awareness to schools, homes and the neighbourhood level. WIPRO associate, Ashish Shah, the resource person for the orientation programme explained the Earthian Schools Programme focusing on sustainability of water, biodiversity and waste

at the school level as an ongoing effort to bring the younger generation closer to nature and build knowledge and skills through action oriented projects. Sponsored by the Bengaluru-based IT giant, WIPRO, as part of sustainable environment initiative, the Earthian Schools orientation programme was organised as a part of National Green Corps School Eco-Club programme.

Sikkim Police outplays USFC 2-0



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:

Sikkim Police today outplayed United Sikkim Football Club to secure three crucial points in the ongoing Sikkim Football Association Premier Division Sikkim League 2019 here at Paljor Stadium. Sikkim Police won the match by 2-0 and the defending champion, United Sikkim FC, is yet to register a victory in this season of the pre-

mier division league. Being a very crucial match, both teams played an attacking game right from the start but failed to capitalise many good opportunities. The first half was appeared headed for a goalless draw until Sangay Chopel Bhutia snatched the lead for Sikkim Police in the 44th minute and in the very next minute, his teammate, Bir Bahadur Pradhan, netted the second goal for the team to end

the first half 2-0 ahead. In the second half, United Sikkim FC players played their hearts out to bounce back into the match but to no avail. Sikkim Police also missed a few golden opportunities and the match ended 2-0 its favour. After playing four matches each, Sikkim Police has 7 points from two wins, one loss and one draw, while USFC is at the bottom with no points thus far.

Shah steers Afghanistan with historic ton

CHITTAGONG, SEP 5 (AFP): Batsman Rahmat Shah Thursday became the first Afghanistan cricketer to score a Test century, helping the minnows start strongly against Bangladesh on the opening day of the one-off match. Shah made 102 and put on a crucial 120-run fourth-wicket stand with Asghar Afghan, batting on 88, to counter the Bangladesh spin attack at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

Afghanistan were 271 for five at stumps with Afghan and Afsar Zazai, on 35, putting together a 74-run partnership in the final session of play. But it was Shah and Afghan who ensured that Afghanistan fought their way back in to the contest after being in trouble at 77 for three at lunch. Taijul Islam and Nayeem Hasan took two wickets each to hurt Afghanistan after the tourists elected to bat first in just their third five-day game. The war-torn nation had a bruising introduction to Test cricket after India outplayed them inside two days in 2018. Afghanistan registered their first Test victory against Ireland early this year with Shah scoring two fifties in the



game including a 98 in the first innings. The top-order batsman extended his prolific run of form as he reached his hundred with a boundary off Hasan, raising his bat to a standing ovation from the crowd and the dressing room. His celebration though was shortlived as Hasan got the batsman, who hit 10 fours and two sixes in his 187-ball knock, out on the next ball. Hasan struck again with his off spin three balls later in the same over, rattling the stumps of Mohammad Nabi for nought as Afghanistan slipped to 197 for five. Afghan, who survived a reprieve on 42 by TV umpire after being given leg before out off Mehdi Hasan, struck three fours and two sixes so far in his second Test fifty. In the first session Taijul bowled opener Ihsanullah Janat for nine with his left-arm spin

and became the fastest Bangladeshi bowler to reach 100 Test wickets. Taijul, who finished the day with 2-73, also became the third Bangladeshi bowler after Shakib Al Hasan and Mohammad Rafique to achieve such a feat in the longer format in his 25th match. Off-spinner Mahmudullah chipped in when he forced Hashmatullah Shahidi to give a catch to Soumya Sarkar at slip for 14 in his first over. Bangladesh fielded an all-spin attack without picking a single pace bowler while Afghanistan handed a Test debut to Ibrahim, Qais Ahmed and Zahir Khan. Afghanistan skipper Rashid became the youngest ever Test captain at the age of 20 years 350 days with the toss, overtaking the record of Zimbabwe's Tatenda Taibu, who made his debut as Test captain just eight days older than Rashid in 2004.

Efforts on to change history, heritage; be on guard: Mamata to teachers

KOLKATA, SEP 5 (PTI): Calling upon the teaching community to be on guard against any attempt to change the Constitution and history of the country, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said they will be the main force in the battle to save our heritage. She recalled vandalism of a bust of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, a 19th century Bengali social and educational reformer, at a college here in May and said any bid to erase the history of Bengal renaissance will not succeed. Supporters of the BJP and the TMC had on May 14 fought pitched battles on the streets of Kolkata and the bust was vandalised during a massive road show by the saffron party president Amit Shah. Banerjee, however, did not name any polit-

ical party or organisation while addressing a Teachers' Day function here. "Members of the teaching community have always thwarted any bid to change our history, our heritage, our culture. There is a long battle ahead and I need your wholehearted support in the battle," she said. Banerjee said despite its tight fiscal situation, the state government has allocated Rs 20 crore for PhD scholars as the University Grants Commission has suddenly stopped the fund for research. The chief minister said the Centre has also stopped funding the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' and, as a result, the state government is forced to bear the entire economic burden of Rs 17,000 crore to run the project.

SICA elects new executive body



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:

Sikkim Cricket Association (SICA) held its first election today after the Justice Lodha recommended constitution was adopted by SICA, a press release informs. SICA is perhaps one of the first Cricket Associations in India to hold election before the deadline of 14 Sept 2019 given by the Supreme Court-appointed Committee of Administrators (COA) guidelines, the release states. The Annual General Meeting of SICA was held on 31 Aug, 2019 and it was resolved to hold the election on 05 Sept,

2019. The election was conducted by Electoral Officer, Tse Ten Dorjee Retired Chief Secretary (approved by the COA). CEO Sikkim, Prabhakar Verma was present as the observer for the election. The body unanimously elected Lobzang G Tenzing as president, Karma Gelek Bhutia as vice president, Tshewang Lama as general secretary, Karma Sonam as joint secretary and Naresh Kumar Agarwal as treasurer. This body is a mixture of senior administrators, ex-players and young qualified individuals, the release mentions. As per the new constitution, the term of the

new office bearers will be three years. The Apex council will also have a representative of the Accountant General office. Kikam Bhutia and Bivash Lamichaney who are representatives of Players body are directly inducted in the apex council. "SICA needs the full support and blessings of the Government led by Chief Minister of Sikkim, PS Golay, BCCI and cricket lovers for developing cricket in Sikkim. Many interesting and game-changing events are scheduled to begin soon," said newly elected president of SICA, Lobzang G Tenzing.

Collegium's recommendation to elevate four judges to SC reaches PMO

NEW DELHI, SEP 5 (PTI): The Law Ministry is learnt to have forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office the recommendation of the Supreme Court Collegium to elevate four high court chief justices as judges of the top court, sources in the government said on Thursday. The ministry has also forwarded a note stating "factual position" on the four candidates, which includes views of "consultee judges". Some of the consultee judges are learnt to have questioned the proposed elevation of some of the candidates who are lower in the order in the all-India seniority list.

Consultee judges are those who have earlier served in courts where the candidate judges are currently posted. The views of consultee judges are not binding on the collegium, but when the government takes a view, it keeps in mind the issue. The sources indicated that in the coming days, the government could flag to the collegium the issue of seniority and regional representation. But no decision has been taken as yet. Any decision would be taken after detailed deliberations, they added. While recommending the names of chief justices of high courts

of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana, Rajasthan and Kerala, the collegium had said that the candidates are "more deserving and suitable in all respects than other chief justices and senior puisne judges of high courts, for being appointed as judges of the Supreme Court of India". Justice V Ramasubramanian is the chief justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court, while Justice Krishna Murari is the chief justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court. Justice S Ravindra Bhat is the current chief justice of Rajasthan High Court and Justice Hrishikesh Roy is the chief justice of Kerala High Court.

STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD- SIKKIM
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS & ENVIRONMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
DEORALI, GANGTOK – 737102

APPEAL

All the stakeholders are aware that Biswakarma Puja, Durga Puja, Deepawali celebration are performed in the month of September – October every year and after performing pujas traditionally idols are immersed in water bodies leading to deterioration of water quality especially during the aforesaid period. "Sikkim Idol immersion Rules 2019" has also been notified vide no 167 dated 16/04/2019 by the State Pollution Control Board.

Therefore the State Pollution Control Board – Sikkim hereby appeals all the concerned authorities/citizens to follow the guidelines given below for the safeguard of Environment.

- a) Use of eco-friendly idols with herbal colours or biodegradable chemical dyes:
- b) Immersion of idols only at designated idol immersion spots:
- c) Prohibition of burning of solid wastes at the idol immersion areas:
- d) Arrangements for construction of temporary confined ponds with necessary provisions and
- e) Organizing mass awareness campaigns among the stakeholders etc.

The State Pollution Control Board – Sikkim further appeals and solicits kind cooperation of all the people of Sikkim for strict compliance of the above guidelines.

STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD- SIKKIM
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS, Env. & W/L Management.
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
DEORALI, GANGTOK – 737102

R.O. No. 175/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20
Dated: 05.09.2019

MISSING

Name : Ritika Sahani
Age : 13 years
D/O : Raju Sahani
Height : 4'apprx
Complexion : Fair
Wearing apparels : Jacket, Blue jeans, red-T shirt, Black sport shoe.

CID PS FIR No. 0007 dated 25/07/2019
U/S 363 IPC missing since 28/12/2018 from MG Marg near Life Line Medical store, Gangtok, East Sikkim. **Contact: 9734964031**

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
STATE MEDICINAL PLANTS BOARDS
FOREST & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Ref No. 241/SMPB/FED

Dated: 02.09.2019

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited from the eligible local candidates for filling up of following posts in the State Medicinal Plant Board under Forest and Environment Department through viva voce, purely on contractual basis for a period of 01 (one) year.

Sl. No.	Name of Post	Minimum Educational Qualification	No. of posts	Consolidated Pay per month
1	Consultant Specialist in Botany	M. Sc. Botany with specialization in Taxonomy	01	R.30,000/-per month.
2	Data Entry Operator	Class XII pass	01	Rs.12,000/- per month.

Candidates must submit the application in the format given along with the following documents:

- 1. Copy of Certificate of Identification /Sikkim Subject.
- 2. Attested copies of educational qualification from Class X onwards.
- 3. Work experience certificate, if any.
- 4. Copy of valid employment card.
- 5. All other relevant supporting documents.

Received applications will be scrutinized, and short listed candidates will be called to appear before the selection committee. No A/DA will be paid for attending the interview.

The application along with attested photocopies of all requisite documents should reach the office of the Joint Director-cum-Nodal Officer, State Medicinal Plants Boards, Forest & Environment Department, Block B, Room no. B-305, Forest Secretariat Building, Deorali, Gangtok – 737102 on or before 18th September 2019.

Detailed advertisement and application form can be downloaded from the website: sikenvis.nic.in, sikkimforest.gov.in

For further details, please contact:- 9609980931, 7076336042.

R.O. No. 172/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20
Dated: 03.9.2019

Sd/-
Director-cum-CEO,
State Medicinal Plants Boards,
Forest and Environment Department
Government of Sikkim.

Noninvolvement Feeds Arrogance

...a prescription which poisons democracy

The dictionary defines “noninvolvement” as a lack of emotional engagement and failure or refusal to become involved.

In most contexts, this term takes a more policy/ political term in that it applies to nations in the line of “non-alignment”. When so practiced, it is mostly a good thing so long as it is about distancing from “politics” and not humanitarian situations because had it been followed, USA would not have been fighting so many wars instigating the creation of monsters like ISIS and then so overtly undermining the significance of the UN... or even ignoring the science of climate change for that matter, or not even opting for a fig leaf excuse in ignoring the brazen murder of a journalist by an offensive regime on foreign soil.

The same principle, however, does not apply to the citizenry with the same merits. In fact, noninvolvement among a people has the opposite effect of what it does on nations. When a people refuse to engage, democracy gets reduced to election cycles, accountability is replaced by bombast and the sense of service among representatives is subsumed by the arrogance of “leaders”. When things come to such a pass, policy decisions become diktats, the noxious fringe crawls out from under the rocks and dances madness in the public domain. And no, social media activity does not really qualify as involvement; if anything, it is a false equivalent for public participation because what it seeks to do is abuse/ shout discourse into meek acceptance or vent into an echo chamber and think humanity has been served. And as the troll army wins more and more battles, it helps create a mob of bots programmed not to analyse or challenge but applaud the demagoguery of flag-waving chauvinists and end up subverting democracy so much that the idea of supreme and all-powerful leaders does not offend anymore and no one even blinks when the term in office of an elected government is referred to as “rule”.

A people self-assured in their ignorance make for easy pickings when it comes to seeding fears because when one refuse to get involved and hence get informed, they cannot handle complexities anymore and gravitate towards the black & whites of the alt-Right. We know we are in trouble when hate can be peddled as righteousness and not even get called out. You know democracy is being compromised when dictation replaces consultation and no one has a problem with it.

Democracy is supposed to ease people’s minds, allowing them their disagreements and differences and still providing the space where they can be themselves without having to constantly look over their shoulders. Fail to remain involved, and every expression of democracy becomes conditional and violence punctuates the lives of lay people more often than should ever be allowed. We have seen this trend gather pace in the recent past when suspicions, bans, deregulation, demonization (okay, also demonetization), forced nationalism, increased supervision bordering on surveillance and pulpit-mongering have come to define governance and gain meek acceptance. Arrogance is an undesirable quality in anyone, but when it comes to leaders, it is dangerous. And we continue feeding it with our noninvolvement.



Bamboo Architecture: Bali’s Green School inspires a global renaissance

DAVINA JACKSON
theconversation.com

Bali’s Green School recently celebrated its first decade of educating toddlers through teenagers (and their digital nomad parents) about eco-ethical design and cooperative living. Set in a village near Ubud, this tropical jungle campus of quirky bamboo pavilions has become a globally influential exhibition of one of this century’s significant architectural trends.

There is a major renaissance in correctly growing, cutting, treating, drying and laminating bamboo so it can be used with confidence for substantial and near-permanent structures. Much of the inspiration for this has come from Green School founders John and Cynthia Hardy and their daughter Elora. Their TED talks and YouTube videos have been widely watched.

Bamboo always has been a basic construction material in tropical latitudes. But generally it has been used for inexpensive shacks, stalls, fences, scaffolding and sunscreens. If not treated, bamboo is highly susceptible to fire and naturally degrades within two or three years, because insects and fungi rapidly devour the sugar-and-starch-rich sap inside the canes.

In Bali during the 1990s, Irish-Australian designer Linda Garland pioneered contemporary uses of bamboo. She worked with University of Hamburg scientist Walter Liese to treat bamboo against the ravages of powderpost beetles and turn it into a commercially viable building material.

One essential preparation technique is to drill through the centres of the canes with long steel rods, then apply repellent and fire-resistant chemicals. Often this involves a soaking solution that includes borax salt powder. The bamboo is then dried out for several days to weeks.

TECHNOLOGY HELPS TRANSFORM PRACTICES

Ancient practices in China and Japan remain the gold standard for durable bamboo buildings.

Traditional Japanese rectilinear designs had gable roofs and rooms matching the dimensions of tatami mats.

Some Chinese bridges date back as far as the 10th century AD. Floating villages (bamboo platforms with clusters of huts) supported dozens of

families as recently as the 17th century.

In Ecuador, archaeologists found a bamboo funeral chamber carbon-dated to 7500 BC. Ecuadorian bamboo, known as caña de Guayaquil (or Guaya), is exported to Peru, Colombia and other Latin American countries. Here bamboo buildings tend to be weatherproofed by thick coatings of mud. (David Witte has written a thesis on historical and contemporary bamboo buildings in South America.)

Today, Bali’s Green School and several associated enterprises, are prominent in a third millennium movement to build geometrically irregular, often sinuous, structures.

These outré styles obviously have been influenced by the trans-millennial technology revolution in digital modelling and manufacturing. Extremely asymmetrical architecture can now be fabricated precisely with metal, glass and masonry components.

However, the Hardys and their international team of bamboo building experts craft small-scale physical models of their designs. The artisans then copy these models on site at full scale. This manual system need not stop designers from sketching initial concepts on their screens.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE SCHOOL?

The Green School educates more than 500 students from pre-kindergarten to Year 12. It complements standard curriculum subjects with various practical tasks and projects that build healthy and ecological skills and habits. Teachers, and parents co-opted as project leaders and mentors, encourage pupils to design and build specific structures that provide useful amenities for the campus.

One recent middle-school project produced a series of tiny shelters as quiet retreats. Each one is to be occupied by only one child at a time. A campus guide notes that Sir Richard Branson recently climbed into one of these cubby houses, a tiny netted bamboo platform hanging from a tree branch, without upsetting the apparently fragile enclosure.

Elora Hardy’s team at architecture, interior and landscape design company Ibuku designed and made most of the school’s buildings. They also have created yoga and cooking school pavilions, hotels, houses, restaurant interiors and permaculture gardens around Bali and in some Asian cities.

An affiliated venture also operates Green Camp

residential courses for children and their parents visiting for one to 11 days. Their meals are cooked with vegetables grown at the Hardys’ Kul Kul permaculture farm.

Another family venture, Bamboo U, led by Orin Hardy, provides hands-on training for potential builders. The courses cover bamboo selection (different uses of seven preferred Balinese species), treatment, building design, modelling and on-site fabrication, including professionals from Ibuku as teachers.

A GLOBAL EMBRACING OF BAMBOO

During the Green School’s first decade, a new generation of studios led by young Asian architects gained prominence and international awards for their creativity with bamboo. They include: Vo Trong Nghia (VTNA) and H&P Architects in Vietnam; Nat-tapon Klinzuwan (NKWD), Chiangmai Life Architects and Bambooroo in Thailand; Abin Design Studio and Mansaram Architects in India; Bambu Art in Bali; Atelier Sacha Cotture in the Philippines; HWCD, Penda (Chris Precht) and Li Xiaodong in China; and William Lim (CL3) in Hong Kong.

And some long-established, internationally renowned architecture firms have completed projects with significant uses of bamboo. They include Japanese architects Kengo Kuma, Arata Isozaki and Shigeru Ban, London-based Foster + Partners and Italy’s Renzo Piano.

Many bamboo buildings today include timber or concrete slab floors because these can be laid consistently flat. But researchers at Empa, the Swiss materials research academy, have developed highly durable and temperature-inert floor and deck boards made with a composite of bamboo fibres and resin. These prototype boards are being tested in one of the Vision Wood student apartment modules slotted into Empa’s NEST testing facility at Dübendorf.

Meanwhile, the Green School is expanding from Bali. An associate campus opens next year on the west coast of New Zealand’s North Island – where bamboo is not naturally grown or legally used as an architectural material. Instead the Taranaki school will build aerial classrooms – pods on poles – using various local species of pine.

[the writer is Honorary Academic, School of Architecture, University of Kent]

How a sense of purpose can link creativity to happiness

GARETH LOUDON
theconversation.com

There are plenty of famous artists who have produced highly creative work while they were deeply unhappy or suffering from poor mental health. In 1931, the poet T.S. Eliot wrote a letter to a friend describing his “considerable mental agony” and how he felt “on the verge of insanity”. Vincent Van Gogh eventually took his own life, having written of “horrible fits of anxiety” and “feelings of emptiness and fatigue”.

So how are creativity and happiness linked? Does happiness make us more creative or does creativity make us happy?

Most of the research so far seems to indicate that a positive mood enhances creativity. But others have challenged this argument, suggesting a more complex relationship.

For example, a large study in Sweden found that authors were more likely to suffer from psychiatric disorders compared to people from non-creative professions. Even in the corporate world, it has been suggested that negative emotions can spark creativity and that “anxiety can focus the mind”, resulting in improved creative output.

Meanwhile, the psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi conducted extensive research on creative individuals across many disciplines, which found a common sense among all the people he interviewed: that they loved what they did, and that “design-

ing or discovering something new” was one of their most enjoyable experiences.

It seems, then, that research to date supports a variety of different views, and I believe one of the reasons for this relates to time scale.

A key factor that affects creativity is

of commercial organisations in Wales (and my own career in the public and private sectors) is that creativity is often not sustained within an organisation, even when it is encouraged (or demanded) by senior management.



attention. In the short term, you can get people to pay attention using external rewards (such as money) or by creating pressure to meet urgent deadlines.

But it is much harder to sustain creativity over longer periods using these approaches – so the role of happiness becomes increasingly important. My experience of working with a large number

Typical reasons for this lack of sustained creativity are pressures and stresses at work, the fear of judgement, the fear of failure, or employee apathy. One way to tackle this might be to aspire to psychologist Paul Dolan’s definition of happiness as the “experiences of pleasure and purpose over time”.

He describes purpose as relating to

“fulfilment, meaning and worthwhileness” and believes we are at our happiest with a “balance between pleasure and purpose”.

Therefore, if your work is meaningful, fulfilling and worthwhile it helps in supporting your happiness. It also has

term, the key questions to ask yourself are whether you are doing work that is interesting and enjoyable for you, and is that work of value to you? Or, as the American academic Teresa Amabile puts it, do you “perceive your work as contributing value to something or someone who matters”.

PERFORMANCE ANXIETY

Another question to ask yourself is: are you helping others gain that “energy for action”, whether you are a manager in a company or a teacher in a school.

In situations where creative work has not been associated with happiness, such as the example of some prominent artists and authors, it might well be that their creative work was still driven by a sense of purpose and that other factors made them unhappy.

Another common element affecting the happiness of many creative people is the pressure they put on themselves to be creative, something I have often seen with my own students. This kind of pressure and stress can result in creative blocks and consequently perpetuate the problem.

So maybe the solution in these situations is to seek pleasure rather than purpose, as a positive mood does seem to enhance creativity, or to encourage people to be more playful. For those creative people who suffer from mental health problems, it is a much more complicated picture. But perhaps the act of undertaking creative activity can at least help in the healing process.

[the writer is Professor of Creativity, Cardiff Metropolitan University]

BJP to oppose resolution against NRC in WB assembly

KOLKATA, SEP 5 (PTI): BJP will oppose tooth and nail the resolution against NRC to be brought by ruling Trinamool Congress and opposition Congress and Left Front jointly in the West Bengal Assembly, a saffron party leader said on Thursday.

The joint resolution will be brought in the Assembly on Friday in a bid to corner BJP.

The BJP leader hit out at TMC, the saffron party's most caustic opponent, for behaving "like anti-nationals" by opposing the National Register of Citizens in Assam.

"The entire exercise on NRC in Assam was done as per orders of the Supreme Court. BJP had nothing to do with it except that it supported the exercise which was executed to drive out infiltrators from Assam. It was in the national interest, but TMC is opposing it just to appease its minority vote bank," BJP state vice-president Jay Prakash Majumdar said.

The intention in bringing the resolution is to malign BJP. "We will oppose the resolution tooth and nail in the floor



of the assembly. We don't have the numbers but we will register our protest. Both Mamata Banerjee and the Congress has forgotten their past - that they had opposed illegal Bangladeshi infiltration," he said. BJP has only six MLAs in the 294-member House, far behind 211 held by TMC. The rest of the seats are held by the Left parties and the Congress.

Majumdar referred to an incident in the Lok Sabha in 2005 when Banerjee as TMC MP had

tried to raise the issue of illegal infiltration in West Bengal. On being denied permission she had thrown papers at the then Lok Sabha deputy speaker Charanjit Singh Atwal. "Banerjee had then opposed illegal intrusion from Bangladesh as the infiltrators were used as vote bank then by the CPI(M)-led Left Front and now TMC is using infiltrators as its vote bank.

"This is why TMC has taken such an anti-national stand by opposing

NRC. Congress too should not forget it was Rajiv Gandhi who as prime minister had signed the Assam Accord in 1985, in which NRC was one of the main clauses. But now it is opposing NRC," Majumdar said.

Assam is the only state in the country to have the updated NRC, which is a validation of Indian citizenship in the north eastern state.

The NRC is a register maintained by the government of India containing names and cer-

tain relevant information for identification of all genuine Indian citizens. The register was first prepared after the 1951 Census of India.

BJP legislative party leader Manoj Tigga said his party will oppose the resolution.

"The NRC has been published keeping in mind national security to drive out infiltrators. If the TMC, Congress and Left Front are opposing it then they are working against the interests of the country," he added.

Heroin worth over Rs 4cr seized, 10 held in Meghalaya, Assam

SHILLONG, SEP 5 (PTI): Meghalaya police has seized heroin worth over Rs 4 crore and arrested 10 persons including two women from the city and Guwahati for their alleged involvement in a drug smuggling racket.

Acting on a tip-off, the anti-narcotic task force (ANTF), led by sub-divisional police officer Jagpal Singh, has arrested a person from Shillong and

conducted raids in Guwahati with the help of Assam police on Monday and Tuesday, East Khasi Hills district SP Claudia Lyngwa said. She said the arrested drug peddlers include seven from Manipur, two from Meghalaya and one from Assam.

A racket of drug suppliers has been busted and a total of 1,195 gm of heroin, worth around Rs 4-5 crore, was seized

from their possession, Lyngwa told reporters here on Wednesday.

"This is our biggest catch. We have made up our minds that we will hit on the suppliers' side," she said.

Lyngwa said the entry of drugs from Manipur has been blocked by the police and due to dearth of supply, the smugglers have now been trying to change their route.

IIT-Kharagpur, DU, BHU get Institution of Eminence tag



NEW DELHI, SEP 5 (PTI): The HRD Ministry on Thursday awarded the Institution of Eminence (IoE) status to the Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University, University of Hyderabad, IIT-Madras and IIT-Kharagpur.

The decision to grant the IoE status to the five public institutes was taken following a recommendation by the University Grants Commission (UGC) last month.

"Orders have been issued to five public institutions, including IIT-Madras, IIT-Kharagpur, DU and University of Hyderabad, declaring them as Institutions of Eminence," HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank said.

A Letter of Intent for granting the IoE status has been issued to five private universities -- Amrita Vidyapeetham and Vellore Institute of Technology in Tamil Nadu, Odisha's Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Jamia Hamdard University in Delhi and Satya Bharti Foundation's Bharti Institute in Mohali.

These institutions will be required to submit their readiness for commencing academic operations as IoEs,

Nishank said.

The selection panel had also recommended names of Shiv Nadar University in Noida and OP Jindal University in Sonapat.

"Letters have been issued to Haryana and UP government to pass a legislation in the state assembly to cease the status of these universities as private universities under the state and as to enable them to be considered as IoE deemed universities," he said.

Similarly, governments of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu have been asked to indicate their commitment towards contribution to Jadavpur University and Anna University to enable them to have the IoE tag.

"They will be considered for issue of the IoE status only after the respective state governments have issued an official communication allocating their share of the funds up to 50 per cent," the minister said.

Among the universities that failed to make a cut are Aligarh Muslim University, Ashoka University, Azim Premji University, Tezpur University, Punjab university, Andhra University and Indian Institute of Public

Health in Gandhinagar.

The move is part of a scheme of the HRD Ministry announced last year to select 20 IoEs -- 10 public and 10 private -- that will enjoy complete academic and administrative autonomy.

Last year, the government had granted the IoE status to IIT-Delhi, IIT-Bombay and the Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in the public sector, and Manipal Academy of Higher Education and BITS Pilani in the private sector, while the Jio Institute by Reliance Foundation was given the tag in Green-field category.

"Till date, we have 16 institutions as IoEs, apart from which another 4 institutions where state government's confirmation and commitment is awaited," Nishank said.

While the government will provide funding upto Rs 1,000 crore to public institutions with IoE tag, in case of the private institutions proposed as Institutions of Eminence, there will be no financial support, but they will be entitled for more autonomy as a special category Deemed University. The IoEs will also not be subjected to inspection by the UGC.

Kolkata Customs initiates special drive for IGST refunds

KOLKATA, SEP 5 (PTI): Following the directions of the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Kolkata Customs Zone has initiated a special drive to clear pending Integrated GST (IGST) refunds in relation to exports.

Exporters are asked to rectify mistakes in their EGM (export general manifest) and GST returns, said a statement issued on Thursday.

The Kolkata Customs Zone said that the refunds of IGST in few cases are "pending due to certain errors" committed by the exporters, it said.

The Central Board of

Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has considered the issue of these data integration errors by the exporters in their GST returns due to which they were not getting IGST refund automatically.

Sitharaman recently has asked the customs department to clear all pending IGST refund claims by the exporters.

The initiative began on Tuesday and about 68 cases of refunds were resolved on the opening day, the statement said.

An amount of Rs 121.64 crore of IGST refund in August, 2019 in Kolkata Customs port was granted, it added.

Mizoram govt orders strengthening of entry checkpoints

AIZAWL, SEP 5 (PTI): The Mizoram government has ordered strengthening of all entry points and border check gates manned by police to prevent any possible influx in view of the publication of the final NRC list in neighbouring Assam, an official said on Thursday.

Round the clock vigil was maintained at Vairengte, Bairabi, Saiphai and Phaisen Police outposts while additional patrolling gate was erected at a place between Vairengte and Phainuam village, the official said.

Second-line checking was also maintained at Kawnpui and Serkhan to double-check that no one enter the state without valid Inner Line Permit (ILP), he added.

ILP is required to en-

ter Mizoram for Indians living outside the state.

The updated final NRC, which validates bonafide Indian citizens of Assam, was released on Saturday, with the authority conducting the exercise shutting out the citizenship claims of over 19 lakh applicants who now face an uncertain future.

An official posted in Mizoram-Assam border Kolasib district said the verification process for issuance of ILP permit has become lengthy after the publication of the NRC in Assam.

While around average 100 ILPs were issued at the Bairabi ILP cell everyday during August, the number of ILP issues dropped to an average of six per day since Monday, the official said.

Need for an integrated approach to tackle insurgency in NE: Ravi

KOHIMA, SEP 5 (PTI): Nagaland Governor R N Ravi on Thursday stressed on the need for an integrated approach to tackle the issue of insurgency in the North-East region.

Security cannot be fragmented between the states, he said and emphasised on the need for an integrated approach by the sister states of the northeast to deal with insurgency in the region.

The governor was speaking at the inaugural function of the 26th Conference of Director and Inspector Generals of Police and Heads of Central Police Organisations of North-East region at Nagaland Police Complex, Dimapur.

Ravi said that there has been a remarkable improvement in the security situation of the region because of the good work of the police, CAPFs and security agencies.

The governor said that the policing thrust now has to shift in day-to-day professional policing which he felt was grossly neglected during the long counter-insurgency period.

The dividends of peace must reach to the common man and their security concerns should be our priority, Ravi said.

Prevention and detection of crimes, scientific investigation of the cases and successful prosecution of criminals should be accorded priority by the police, he said



"Performance evaluation of police stations and district police should be based on these parameters," he maintained.

The governor urged the police chiefs for launching sustained drives in their states against illicit firearms.

Ravi hoped that the two-day conclave of the police chiefs, chief of Central forces and intelligence agencies would further strengthen the

security cooperation amongst them and also generate good workable policy inputs to help make northeast region a paradise of peace and prosperity.

Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Y Patton said that a secure and peaceful environment is the pre-requisite for sustained development.

The role of police and security agencies towards the endeavor has become manifold, he said.

He wished that the two-day conference would be fruitful in making north east a more safer and peaceful region.

Over 3,000 distressed children rescued in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, SEPT 5 (PTI): Odisha Police along with officials of Women and Child Development (WCD) department have rescued 3,188 children, including 82 from outside the state, under an initiative to help minors in distress.

The 'Operation Pa-ree-III' drive of the state police was launched on August 15 and continued till August 30, during which 3,138 children, missing from homes, were rescued from road-

side eateries in Odisha.

The children, rescued from outside the state were found in such eateries, garages and engaged in household work in Andhra Pradesh (20), Telangana (4), Chhattisgarh (8), Jharkhand (9), West Bengal (17), Maharashtra (5), Delhi (4) and Tamil Nadu (15).

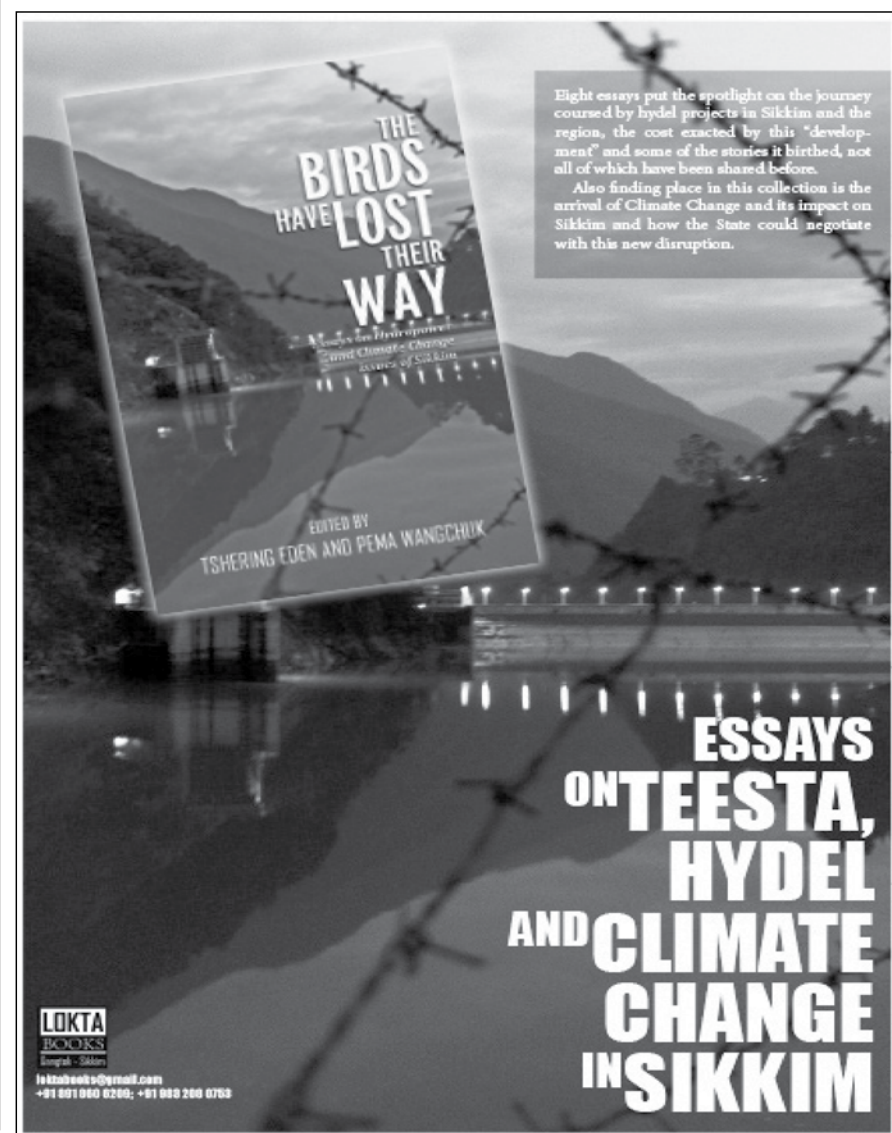
The children were handed over to the respective Child Welfare Committees after medical examination, a

member of the rescue team said.

Official sources said, 1,792 children, including 1,291 girls, went missing in 2016, while 1,851 children met the same fate in 2017. The number was 1,360 in 2017.

In 2018, 2,334 children, including 1,875 girls, went missing.

In the first three months of 2019, 602 children, including 502 girls, have gone missing. Of the 502 girls, only 79 girls were rescued.



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Chess offers Nigerian slum children new move

LAGOS, SEP 5 (AFP): Crowds of children bustle around chessboards in Nigeria's Lagos, figuring out their next moves as part of a project aimed at bringing hope in one of the city's impoverished slums.

Dozens of matches are played simultaneously as participants as young as three master a game often considered out of reach for the masses in Africa's most populous country. "Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose," 24-year-old teacher Tunde Onakoya tells his young charges after getting their attention.

"But it's how you respond that makes you a champion. Don't get down when you lose, don't feel like you can't do it, just concentrate and do your best."

Seasoned player Onakoya started the Chess in Slums project last September in the sprawling neighbourhood of Ikorodu, a place where residents often feel cut off from the bustle and business of the vibrant megacity around it.

The goal of the club is to provide a space to play and learn the game for the young inhabitants of the slum, many of whom are not in school and work to support their families. Held beneath a makeshift tent in the courtyard of a local bar, in less than a year the programme has already drawn an enthusiastic following. As elderly men sip beer and watch football nearby, a dozen volunteers divide the pupils into groups.

While some turn their figures into battling action heroes, most are focused and intent on winning.

The youngest children sing



rhymes about chess to help them master the rules, as the older ones settle down into intense games.

They use mobile phone apps to time their moves and record the matches in notepads to review their mistakes and successes later.

"I want to be a Grandmaster," one of the children tells AFP, laughing.

- **'FOOD FOR YOUR BRAIN'** - Chess -- a board game famous for its reliance on strategy -- has a tiny but avid following in Nigeria.

The West African nation ranks 88th out of 186 countries, according to the FIDE World Chess Feder-

ation's rating of top players across the globe, but still does not have any Grandmasters. Other board games are more popular.

Nigeria is a superpower in Scrabble, winning multiple championships and boasting 29 of the top 100 players in the world, more than any other country.

Onakoya says that chess has lagged behind in part due to an image problem.

"There's this perception of it as being a really difficult game, not as accessible, like for people of a different class," he says.

Onakoya took chess in primary school and works with private schools as a consultant to add it to their curricula.

"I believe in the game because it helps your cognition, your creativity, your focus. It's like food for your brain," he said.

Last year, he started the club in Ikorodu specifically to reach disadvantaged children.

"Ikorodu is the kind of place where there's a lot of troubles and poverty. It is a tough place to get to, if you tell someone to come to Ikorodu they will laugh," he says.

"I felt it would be powerful to help children here because many of them are really talented.

"If they could master a game that people wouldn't expect them to even know, it could really show them their potential and give them confidence."

- **SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP** -

The club already boasts several success stories.

Ten-year-old Odunayo Olukoya joined Chess in Slums in January. Four months later, she came first in the national chess championship for her age group.

For Jamiu Ninilowo, 14, taking part has also been transformative.

The skinny boy worked as a mechanic fixing cars at a garage in Ikorodu instead of attending school.

He had to earn money for his family after his mother's leg was mangled in an accident as she picked scrap at a local refuse site to sell on for a meagre profit.

In February, Ninilowo joined the club and is now its best player.

After he won a tournament in April, an impressed donor partnered with Chess in Slums to pay for his secondary education.

"Chess is helping me to be a mechanical engineer by sending me to school," he tells AFP, proudly wearing the medal he won.

The attention that the project has generated has helped shine a spotlight on more of these marginalised children.

Videos of the budding chess masters shared on Instagram also showcase some of their other talents that have often been overlooked in the struggle to survive.

One 11-year-old boy even got a mentorship from a leading Nigerian architect after he was seen building models out of cardboard.

"At first it was about teaching the kids a game that can impact the way they think and boost their confidence, but actually it's become much more. It's become a gateway to other opportunities," says Onakoya.

"It is helping us show them that their lives can go far beyond Ikorodu.

Life after Mithali: 15-year-old Shafali comes into Indian women's T20 squad

NEW DELHI, SEP 5 (PTI):

Veteran Mithali Raj's retirement from the T20 format on Thursday paved the way for the induction of youngsters such as 15-year-old rookie Shafali Verma in the Indian women's cricket team for the upcoming home T20 Internationals against South Africa. Shafali was picked following her good performance in the Women's T20 challenge earlier and at the age-group level this year. The diminutive Haryana-girl played under Mithali for Team Velocity in the women's T20 challenge which was held during the IPL earlier this year. Mithali, though, will continue to lead the team in the three-match ODI series, which will follow the five T20 Internationals, where Harmanpreet Kaur will captain. Smriti Mandhana will be Harmanpreet's deputy in the T20s. Mithali decided to quit T20 Internationals after a career spanning 89 matches in which she scored 2364 runs and 17 half-centuries. She led India in 32 T20Is. The selection committee meeting held at the BCCI headquarters on Thursday was attended by Mithali while T20I captain Harmanpreet and coach WV Raman connected via teleconference.

The Indian team will conduct a preparatory camp at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru from September 12. The ODI series begins in Surat on September 24.

Indian Women's ODI squad: Mithali Raj (Captain), Jemimah Rodrigues, Harmanpreet Kaur (vice-captain), Punam Raut, Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma, Taniya Bhatia (wicket-keeper), Jhulan Goswami, Shikha Pandey, Mansi Joshi, Ekta Bisht, Poonam Yadav, D Hemalatha, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Priya Punia.

FA hoping for Brexit boost for England



BURTON-ON-TRENT (UK), Sep 5 (AFP): The English Football Association's (FA) new technical director Les Reed believes Brexit could give more English players opportunities to play in the Premier League.

The FA are keen to see the minimum number of 'homegrown' players in the 25-man squad Premier League clubs must register rise from eight to 12.

These do not have to be British but must have been registered to an English or Welsh club for three years before turning 21.

"My feeling is that at the moment we're running around 32-34 per cent of players playing in the Premier League (being English) so just over a third," Reed said on Wednesday. "We want to keep that and try and improve on that. What we don't want to do is have regulations which knock us back to where we were at times last season, down to 26-27 percent."

Players from the European Union (EU), including many who represent South American

and African nations at international level but hold EU passports, could have to satisfy much stricter requirements to be handed a work permit after Brexit.

The current system for non-EU players takes into account international appearances, the transfer fee, proposed wages and recent playing history to determine whether they receive a Governing Body Endorsement from the Football Association.

Were these restrictions applied across the board, marquee signings would likely not be stopped. However, in the ever more competitive transfer market British clubs could be robbed of the opportunity to find hidden gems at the lower end of the market.

"By going worldwide, it's going to be a massive market so we need to have regulations around the endorsement that mean we can protect our pool of talent that are homegrown," added Reed.

- **'BEST LEAGUE IN THE WORLD'** -

However, he is aware of the balancing act that must be struck to maintain the Premier

League's status as in his words "the best league in the world".

Last season all four finalists from the Champions and Europa League came from England.

"I think the key thing is that we respect that we need a strong league and we want the Premier League to be a strong league because that's good for football in this country -- getting four teams to European finals can only be good for football in this country," added Reed.

"We definitely want the Premier League to remain the best league in the world. We definitely want to make sure the Premier League is a very attractive league and proposition, but at the same time we want to be able to get exposure for young England players.

"It's a combination of what's happens with Brexit, can we change people's mindsets, can the players showcase themselves any way and get managers thinking in a different way? Reed believes that progress is already being made with Premier League clubs trusting more in prod-

ucts from their academy.

A 12-month transfer ban imposed on Chelsea has resulted in a huge change of culture at Stamford Bridge in Frank Lampard's first season in charge with youngsters such as Mason Mount and Tammy Abraham starring.

Mount was one four uncapped players included in Gareth Southgate's squad for Euro 2020 qualifiers this week against Bulgaria and Kosovo.

Jadon Sancho, 19, has already established himself in the England team after making the bold move to join Borussia Dortmund two years ago.

"We've got a number now kind of leading the way in actually making appearances and getting in the top-six teams and showing that they can do that, which hopefully will change a little bit of the mindset around whether young English players can do that," added Reed.

"I think the combination of interest from abroad plus one or two now making headway at the top end of the game, hopefully will then open the door for a lot more.

Gone in under 10 minutes! 48,000 Nadal v Federer tickets

JOHANNESBURG, SEP 5 (AFP): South African tennis fans bought 48,000 tickets in under 10 minutes Wednesday for a Cape Town exhibition match next February between world superstars Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer.

The game at the Cape Town Stadium, built for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, is set to break the attendance record of 35,681 for a tennis match set by Kim Clijsters and Serena Williams in 2010 in Brus-

sels. A spokeswoman for the organisers of the Cape Town match said the tickets were snapped up online and at ticket outlets.

"We are overwhelmed by the enthusiastic reaction on our ticket sales and we sincerely thank you for the overwhelming support," said Janine Handel, chief executive of the Roger Federer Foundation.

"Lines were opened up by (online ticket sellers) Computicket at 0900 and within a record time

of fewer than 10 minutes the tickets were sold."

Handel said the organisers would consider erecting additional stands to cater for some of those who could not buy tickets Wednesday.

Prices ranged from 150 to 1950 rand (10 to 130/9 to 119 euros) and buyers were restricted to a maximum of six for the February 7 exhibition.

Spaniard Nadal is ranked second in the world and Swiss Federer third with Serbian Novak Djokovic number one.

I just have to be good example for players: Chhetri

GUWAHATI, SEP 4 (PTI):

Looking to lead by example, star striker Sunil Chhetri on Wednesday said the Indian football team is "fit and hungry" going into its opening 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifying match, against Oman.

The 103-ranked India will begin their campaign on Thursday at what is expected to be a packed Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium. Chhetri, one of international football's leading scorers, said at the pre-match conference, "There is a great eagerness in the team and one really feel the pulse of excitement among the boys. We are really looking forward to the game.

"We had a great training camp and everyone in the team is fit and hungry. The players are gelling well and responding to what the coach expects from them." The talisman has so far scored 71 goals in 111 appearances for the Blue Tigers. Despite a majority of the players being young, the veteran said all are "well aware" of what is expected of them.

"It is a young team, but I don't have to talk to them once. Each player is well aware of what is



expected of him and the coach speaks whatever is needed. I just have to be a good example for the players and will keep doing so whenever I am here," he said. In 2015, it was Chhetri who scored the only goal for India in a 2-1 loss against Oman in a qualifying match for 2018 World Cup.

Asked about that outing, he said, "We weren't great in that game and conceded very early. We lost 2-1 and had a goal chalked off for offside as well. "We certainly hope we do well this time around. All the boys are optimistic, especially with a lot of fans expected at the stadium."

On the eve of the Group E game against the 87-ranked side, head coach Igor Stimac stated that his team is "well pre-

pared" to meet the challenge. "The preparations for the game went really well and as a coach, I am happy.

"This will be our third campaign and I am happy with the improvement in the team in terms of the understanding levels of the players and their fitness levels. We are well concentrated and well prepared," he said.

The coach added the team will look to be "strong and organised" on the pitch. "Our aim tomorrow will be to be strong and organised. In our previous games, we have shown that we can handle good teams and play organised for the full 90 minutes.

"We may have conceded a few goals but we have shown that we can play better against better opponents," Stimac said.

UK in effective general election mode amid Brexit turmoil

BY ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, SEP 5 (PTI): The UK on Thursday went into what Downing Street has branded as the first day of a general election campaign, despite Prime Minister Boris Johnson failing to get his motion for a snap poll through the House of Commons.

Following a night of blow after blow over Brexit on Wednesday, Johnson is determined to get his October 15 election date through and has accused Opposition Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn of being a chicken for his party's abstention from the election vote in Parliament.

The Labour and other Opposition parties, refused to hand him the two-thirds majority he requires to overturn the UK's Fixed Term Parliament Act until their own motion to block a no-deal Brexit by the October 31 deadline has passed through the Lords and on course to become law.

It is clear the only action is to go back to the people and give them the opportunity to decide what they want: Boris to go to Brussels and get a deal, or leave without one on 31 October or Jeremy Corbyn arriving in Brussels with his surrender bill begging for more delay, more dither and accepting whatever terms Brussels imposes over our nation, a Downing Street spokesperson said on Thursday.

For Jeremy Corbyn to continue to avoid an election would be a cowardly insult to democracy, the spokesperson said.

The Opposition emerged buoyed from parliamentary proceedings on Wednesday, having got their proposed



legislation to prevent the UK crashing out of the European Union (EU) without an agreement in place through its various stages. The bill says Johnson has until 19 October to either pass a deal in Parliament or get MPs to approve a no-deal Brexit and after that he will have to request an extension to the UK's departure date to January 31, 2020.

Johnson, who assumed charge on July 24 after his predecessor Theresa May resigned, had branded the motion a surrender bill, which in effect handed power to the EU negotiators over the terms of the UK's exit from the 28-member economic bloc.

The UK government

ultimately had to drop its attempt to drag on the so-called surrender bill in the Lords late on Wednesday night, meaning it is set to pass and go through as law by Monday.

This could mean Johnson attempting to push through another election motion again next week because he is determined to go back to the electorate rather than back to Brussels to seek another delay to the Brexit deadline.

I think the position by the Labour Party, to be so consumed by cowardice as to resist a general election, is not politically sustainable, Johnson said at the end of a marathon Commons session on Wednesday.

The British prime minister has claimed he is serious about striking a deal with EU leaders to allow for an orderly withdrawal from the bloc at the end of next month after 46 years of membership.

But the EU side has spoken of a paralysis in the talks, with no movement or solutions to the most controversial aspect of any divorce arrangement the Irish backstop.

The British prime minister had a month's time to come up with his proposed alternative arrangements to ensure an open border between EU member-country Ireland and UK territory Northern Ireland after Brexit. However, the EU says

it has not received any credible proposals from Britain so far.

Various expert opinions and leaked assessments from within the government indicate a no-deal Brexit could lead to food and fuel shortages and disrupt vital drug supplies. However, hard Brexiteers from Johnson's camp have dismissed these as scare-mongering and insisted that taking no-deal off the table would weaken the UK's hand in the Brexit negotiations.

If the Conservative Party leader's determination to call a snap general election before the October 31 Brexit deadline passes through its parliamentary hurdles, it would be the third election since 2015 and second since the referendum in favour of Brexit in June 2016.

The last snap general election was called by Theresa May in June 2017, who returned to power only thanks to an arrangement with the Northern Irish Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) to make up for a working majority in the Commons.

Her successor's position is even more precarious, as Johnson lost his majority in the House earlier this week following a defection and has since proceeded to expel 21 Tory MPs for voting with the Opposition to block a no-deal Brexit.

The far-right anti-EU Brexit Party led by Nigel Farage has also warned the British PM that the Tories stand to lose seats in any election over the failure to leave the EU despite his "do or die" pledge to meet the October 31 deadline.

35 hurt as train, truck collide near Tokyo

TOKYO, SEPT 5 (AFP): A train and a truck collided at a crossing near Tokyo on Thursday, injuring 35 people, with at least one person seriously hurt, authorities said.

"A total of 35 people were injured... one is in a serious condition," said Ryo Nagakura, a crisis management official at Yokohama City, south of Tokyo, where the accident occurred.

The seriously injured person is "in a state of cardiorespiratory arrest", he told AFP, using a term often employed in Japan to indicate a person's death before it is officially confirmed by a doctor.

Local reports said one person -- possibly the truck driver -- was feared to be trapped under the wrecked train. Television

footage showed the first car of the train derailed and lying on its side, with windows shattered and some parts of the train apparently charred.

Black smoke, thought to be coming from the truck, could also be seen on the footage, which also showed hundreds of lemons on the side of the tracks -- apparently part of the truck's cargo.

One eyewitness told NHK: "It looked like there was fire coming out of the bottom of the big truck... the smoke was awful." Japanese trains have a well-deserved reputation for safety and punctuality and accidents are rare.

Earlier this year, 14 people suffered light injuries when a driverless train in suburban Tokyo

went the wrong way and smashed into the buffers.

In April 2005, a speeding commuter train near Osaka jumped the tracks on a tight bend during the morning rush hour and smashed into an apartment tower.

The driver and 106 passengers were killed and more than 550 people were injured.

The crash was Japan's worst rail disaster since 1963 when 161 people died in Yokohama after a freight train collided with a truck and was then hit by two passenger trains.

Japan's deadliest-ever train accident was in February 1947 when a passenger train derailed near Tokyo, killing 184 people and injuring nearly 500.

Boris Johnson's brother quits as his minister and MP

BY ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, SEP 5 (PTI): British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday suffered yet another Brexit blow, this time closer to home, as his younger brother Jo Johnson quit as a minister in his Cabinet and also resigned as a parliamentarian of the Conservative Party.

In a move reflective of just how deeply divided the UK remains over its membership of the European Union (EU), the business minister and member of parliament from Orpington said that he had been forced to take the step after being torn between family loyalty and national interest.

The anti-Brexiteer, who is seen as an India-friendly politician in

the UK having also lived there in his previous role as a journalist for The Financial Times, said he felt the tensions were unresolvable. In recent weeks I've been torn between family loyalty and the national interest - it's an unresolvable tension & time for others to take on my roles as MP & Minister, he said in a Twitter statement, which concluded with over and out.

It's been an honour to represent Orpington for 9 years & to serve as a minister under three PMs, he said.

Jo Johnson voted Remain in the 2016 Brexit referendum, in contrast to his brother who co-led the Leave campaign. He resigned as a minister last year in protest at Theresa May's Brexit

deal. But he re-entered government recently, after Conservative Party members elected his brother as leader in July.

Jo Johnson was seen as a popular Tory parliamentarian, who at the last general election won the Orpington seat by a 19,453 majority. He is believed to have not given his party colleagues any heads up on his decision to resign, which came at the end of a tumultuous 48 hours for Boris Johnson after repeated defeats in the House of Commons.

His decision also marks the first Cabinet exit for the embattled British prime minister, who has now lost 23 members of parliament to either resignation or expulsion for siding with the Opposition.

PM Modi meets Malaysian PM Mahathir in Russia



VLADIVOSTOK, SEP 5 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met his Malaysian counterpart Mahathir Mohamad and the two leaders discussed ways to diversify the bilateral ties to benefit people in both the countries.

Prime Minister Modi met the Malaysian Prime Minister on the sidelines of the fifth meeting of the Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) held here in the Russian Far East Region. "Meetings continue in Vladivostok. Prime Ministers @chedetofficial and Narendra Modi discuss ways to diversify India-Malaysia cooperation for the benefit of people in both countries. Strengthening ties with an important ASEAN partner," the Prime Minister's Office said in a tweet.

"PM Narendra Modi met with Malaysian PM @chedetofficial on the margins of EEF2019 in Vladivostok. Discussions focused on the multiple layers of India - Malay-

sian bilateral relationship," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said in a tweet. Modi arrived in Russia on Wednesday to participate in the 20th India-Russia annual summit and the EEF. On his arrival, Modi received a guard of honour at Vladivostok International Airport.

The forum focuses on development of business and investment opportunities in the Russian Far East Region, and presents enormous potential for developing close and mutually beneficial cooperation between India and Russia in the region.

The EEF is being held in Russia's Far East port city of Vladivostok on September 4-6.

Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale, briefing reporters on Prime Minister Modi's visit to Russia in New Delhi last week said that expanding cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector will be a major focus area during his trip to Vladivostok.

US, China to resume trade talks in Washington in October

BEIJING, SEPT 5 (AFP): China and the United States will resume trade talks in Washington in early October, Beijing said on Thursday, allaying fears that new punitive tariffs would lead to a breakdown in the protracted negotiations. The world's two biggest economies have been embroiled in a tense year-long tariffs row, which escalated on September 1 when both sides swapped fresh levies on goods worth hundreds of billions of dollars.

The talks were supposed to have resumed this month but China's commerce ministry said Vice Premier Liu He, Beijing's pointman on trade, agreed to October in a phone call with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Thursday.

The officials agreed to "work together and take practical actions to create favourable conditions for consultations", the ministry said in a statement.

It added both sides would "maintain close communication" ahead of the talks.

The news will be seen as a sign of optimism in a trade war that has weighed on the global economy and stock mar-

kets while also shaking diplomatic relations between the two global powers. The top officials last met in Shanghai in July for discussions that were described as "constructive" but ended with no announcements.

US President Donald Trump soon afterwards said he would increase tariffs on more than half-a-trillion dollars' worth of imports, prompting Beijing to respond with fresh tariffs on US goods worth USD 75 billion. Those were the levies that kicked in this month.

Tensions continued to mount over the summer, with Trump earlier this week accusing Chinese negotiators of holding out for a better deal in hopes he will be voted out in next year's presidential elections.

The US president has also claimed China is being forced back to the negotiating table because of the country's slowing economy. Officials in Beijing on Wednesday discussed new measures to keep the country's economy growing in the face of an "increasingly complicated and challenging external environment", according to an official statement.

Policy tools proposed at a State Council executive meeting chaired by

Premier Li Keqiang include cuts to the amount of cash banks must keep in reserve to encourage more lending, especially to smaller and medium-sized businesses.

An increase in the use of local government bonds to finance infrastructure projects was also put forward.

This week economists including Bloomberg Economics cut their forecasts for China's economic growth in 2020 to below 6.0 per cent as a result of increasing risks from the tariff war with the US. But while Trump points to China's weakening economy, observers warned that a survey Tuesday showing the US manufacturing sector had contracted for the first time in three years was a worrying sign.

At the recent Group of Seven meeting in France, Trump spoke of new communications between US and Chinese negotiators -- giving financial markets a brief boost -- though China's foreign ministry said it was unaware of such contacts. This week Beijing said it had lodged a complaint against the US with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the day after the new tariffs came into force.

Ukraine court releases MH17 'suspect' pending trial

KIEV, SEPT 5 (AFP): A court in Ukraine on Thursday released from pre-trial detention a man suspected of involvement in the downing of flight MH17, amid speculation he might be used in a prisoner swap with Russia.

Ukraine captured Vladimir Tsemakh, accused of fighting for pro-Russian separatists, in June, but he is believed to be a person of interest in the downing of MH17. European lawmakers described him as a "key suspect" and asked Kiev to make him available for testimony in the probe.

An AFP journalist saw Tsemakh being released after appellate court judge Yury Sliva in Kiev ruled to release him, cautioning him to remain available for questioning and not attempt to flee.

Tsemakh is a Ukrainian who is believed to have been in charge of an air defence unit in the forces of the separatist Donetsk People's Republic near

Snizhne in eastern Ukraine. This is where Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 came down in 2014, killing 298 people, most of them Dutch citizens.

Though his involvement in MH17 has never been confirmed by Ukraine, 40 European lawmakers on Wednesday asked President Volodymyr Zelensky to make sure he is available to be questioned by the Dutch-led Joint Investigation Team.

Russian and Ukrainian media have reported that Moscow is demanding that Tsemakh be handed over to Russia as part of an expected prisoner swap between two countries.

Several high-profile Ukrainian prisoners are to be released from Russian jails under the swap.

Dutch MEP Kati Piri said demanding the exchange of Tsemakh is a "strange request" which "suggests that the Russian government wants to prevent this suspect from appearing in court".

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BEAM IN COLORS! The “New Rules” singer, Dua Lipa shows good vibes as she celebrates her Pepe official collection launch in London.

Actor Will Poulter nabs lead role in Amazon's Lord of the Rings' series

LOS ANGELES, SEP 5 (PTI): Amazon has cast actor Will Poulter for the lead part in its highly-ambitious Lord of the Rings series.

Poulter, best known for starring in Bandersnatch episode of Black Mirror, The Revenger and Aris Aster's Midsommar, joins Australian star Marcella Kavenagh in the project. The details of his role are currently being kept under wraps, reported Variety. Amazon is also yet to make an official statement.

“Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom” helmer JA Bayona will be directing the first two episodes of the show. He will also serve as executive producer alongside partner Belen Atienza.

Bryan Cogman, who worked as a writer and co-executive producer on “Game of Thrones”, recently boarded the project as a series consultant. He is helping out the writing team of Patrick McKay and JD Payne, who

were announced as series developers last year. Amazon has made a multi-season production commitment to the TV series. It will produce the show in cooperation with the Estate of J R R Tolkien, publishing house HarperCollins, and New Line Cinema, a division of



Warner Bros.

However, the series will not be a retelling of Peter Jackson's Oscar-winning trilogy. It will explore story set before the events in the first LOTR novel, “The Fellowship of the Ring”.

Leslie Jones says goodbye to ‘Saturday Night Live’ in emotional Twitter post

LOS ANGELES, SEP 5 (PTI): Actor-comedian Leslie Jones has bid adieu to the late night sketch comedy show, “Saturday Night Live”.

In a Twitter thread, the 51-year-old actor confirmed the reports that she is leaving the show and will not be appearing in its upcoming 45th season.

In her post, Jones thanked NBC network and creator Lorne Michaels for the giving her an opportunity to be a part of the long-running show.

“Yes it’s true, I am leaving ‘Saturday Night Live’. I cannot thank NBC, the producers, writers, and amazing crew enough for making SNL my second home these last five years. Lorne Michaels, you’ve changed my life in so many ways! Thank you for being my mentor and confidant and for always having my back.

You not only have my loyalty but you have my heart too! You have shown me skills I never imagined I had. I leave a better performer because of you. To the incredible cast members: I will miss working, creating and laughing with you,” the actor wrote. The Ghostbusters actor also thanked her co-stars



for making her stay at SNL a memorable one.

I will miss holding it down with Kenan everyday, I will miss Cecily’s impression of me making me laugh at myself often, I will miss Kate’s loving hugs and talks when I needed. And of course Colin, you porcelain-skinned Ken doll.

I will miss all my cast mates!! Especially being at the table reads with them!! Everyone needs to know Leslie Jones couldn’t have done any of the things I did without these people, Jones said. The actor concluded her Twitter thread by giving a shout-out to her fans.

One last thing to the fans you are the BEST!! Thank you for all the love and support through my SNL years and I know you will be as excited as I am when you see some of the amazing projects and adventures that I have coming up very soon! Love you all!! #iamnotdeadjustgraduating Jones said.

The actor originally joined “SNL” as a writer and got noticed as a part of multiple appearances on the show’s popular “Weekend Update” segments.

She boarded the cast of the show in 2014.

Jones was one of the original comics who were considered to join “SNL” in December 2013 after it received heavy criticism for having a predominantly white cast.

It is unknown if the show will add another name to replace Jones, who was the show’s oldest castmember. She earned a supporting actress Emmy nod in 2017 and 2018.

Sunny Deol skips launch event of his son’s debut film over Gurdaspur tragedy



MUMBAI, SEP 5 (PTI): Actor-filmmaker turned politician Sunny Deol on Thursday skipped the trailer launch event of son Karan Deol’s debut film “Pal Pal Dil Ke Paas” in the wake of Gurdaspur tragedy.

At least 23 were killed and 27 were injured in a blast at a firecracker factory in Batala of Gurdaspur district on Wednesday.

Sunny, who successfully contested the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from Gurdaspur on a BJP ticket, rushed to his constituency after he heard of the news, veteran actor Dharmendra said lauding Sunny for keeping the interests of his people above his family and work.

“For Sunny, this is a big and very important day but he chose to go there to be with the families in Punjab and this is a sign of a good human being. He told me to take care of the launch event today, I said, I will,” Dharmendra told reporters here.

Dharmendra, who was a BJP MP from Rajasthan’s Bikaner constituency from 2004 to 2009, said his family is in politics for public service.

“I have not learnt the ABC of politics, we don’t know what is Rajya Sabha or Lok

Sabha, I just followed my heart and orders of almighty and started working towards the progress of Bikaner. I request and challenge media people to go to Bikaner and see my work there.

“We are not politicians. We are good human beings, then actors and then anything else. He (Sunny) will do his best for the society. There are people around you, pulling you down, and no one appreciates you. I believe we should focus on our work. I am sure he (Sunny) will do it and show it,” the 83-year-old veteran said.

The event was earlier scheduled to happen on Wednesday but Sunny decided to cancel it due to heavy rains in the city.

Talking about his father’s plunge into politics, Karan said, “My dad always does what is right and if he decides to do something he doesn’t let go of it. With this decision, he will try to make most of it.

He thinks from his heart and he will do everything from his heart to push things ahead in his constituency, he added.

The film, which also launches newcomer Sahreh Bamba, is scheduled to release on September 20.

Karan Johar casts newcomer Lakshya in ‘Dostana 2’



MUMBAI, SEP 5 (PTI): Film-maker Karan Johar is set to launch newcomer Lakshya in Bollywood with his upcoming production “Dostana 2”.

Lakshya joins Kartik Aaryan and Janhvi Kapoor in the much-awaited sequel to 2008 blockbuster “Dostana”. The actor has inked a four-film contract with Karan’s Dharma Productions, which includes movies and digital projects.

Before bagging the film, Lakshya, who has previously appeared in TV shows, went through a rigorous selection process which included auditions and photoshoots.

“We believe in introducing new talent to the film fraternity. We are proud to have introduced over 20 first-time filmmakers and seven actors in the recent past. We are excited to introduce Lakshya,

the newest addition to the family. “We will be introducing him in ‘Dostana 2’. He was chosen after a series of meticulous auditions and test shoots. We are thrilled to engulf him in our creative world and look forward to creating celluloid magic together,” Karan said in a statement.

“Dostana 2” also launches another face in the industry, Collin D’Cunha, who is making his directorial debut with the project.

The first film, directed by Tarun Mansukhani and featuring Abhishek Bachchan, John Abraham and Priyanka Chopra in the lead, was a major box office and critical success for the producer.

The story follows two men who pretend to be gay to share an apartment with a girl with whom they eventually fall in love.

ARIES: Pessimism, who? Joy, happiness and humour promise to be your preferred choice of drugs this afternoon. Be a ray of sunshine in a world of dark clouds. Aries, the world needs more of you. When it comes to matters of the heart, trust that things are about to take a turn for the better.

Tip: You are moving past the hurdles.

TAURUS: Reality check, Taurus: you’re too busy writing your own tragedy. There are people who are vying for your attention at this moment. But you’re too busy crying over those who don’t have space for you in their lives. Be aware of the ways in which you are sabotaging your own happiness.

Tip: Invest in those who invest in you.

GEMINI: How much is too much, Gemini? Could the weight on your shoulders be the reason you are starting to begrudge this relationship? Ex-

amine where you are at and convey your true feelings to the other. They might not be able to take the load off, but they will support you in the best way they can, if you only allow them.

Tip: Communication is the first step to resolution.

CANCER: Starting over can be daunting, Cancer. It’s okay to be unsure of your moves. Just don’t let this uncertainty turn into paranoia. A good way to add spunk into your life and your relationships: connecting with the wild child within yourself. The cards are also pointing towards travel and adventure.

Tip: Reconnect with your inner wild child.

LEO: Done with the dating and mating game? There’s good news for those who are in the mood for a long-term commitment. Don’t hold back, Leo. Let your true feelings be known. What you will discover in the process:

a love that has the potential to get better with time. Lions who have already exchanged vows, trust that the foundation you have built is getting stronger by the day.

Tip: Long-term commitment is on the cards.

VIRGO: Eternity is just a word, Virgo. All you have is right now. This moment. Can you love so fully and completely that everything around you starts to blur? They may or may not be with you tomorrow. Your life may lead you to a different juncture altogether.

Tip: This moment is a gift from the heavens.

LIBRA: Healing is not a straight line, Libra. Sometimes it’s curvilinear, and at other times it’s a spiral. Watch what’s resurfacing from your subconscious without any judgements and biases. This is the key to releasing what no longer serves you. Could taking time off help you reset on a mind, body and soul

level? Nurture yourself back to life.

Tip: Watch what is coming up without any judgements and biases.

SCORPIO: This is not the kind of stuff fairy tales are made of. Take your rose-tinted glasses off and see your reality for what it is. There’s a good chance you are letting the fear of being alone become the reason you settle for less. Coupled Scorpions, guilty of sweeping things under the carpet?

Tip: Remove your rose-tinted glasses and see your reality for what it is.

SAGITTARIUS: Don’t be so hung up on the past, Sagittarius. It doesn’t define your future and it certainly does not define the now. You are stepping into a time of emotional and spiritual fulfilment. Open yourself to what’s yet to come.

Tip: A time of emotional fulfilment awaits.

CAPRICORN: The past does not make for a pretty accessory, Capricorn.

Be aware of what you are holding onto and how it is sabotaging your present.

Tip: Letting go of the past baggage will help you make room for love.

AQUARIUS: Aquarius, you’re connecting with a certain someone who has a knack for making you feel like the most beautiful girl in the room. Bask in the attention, wild one. Allow yourself to be wooed and pursued. Coupled Aquarians, your personal life is about to take a turn for the better. Prioritise intimacy today.

Tip: Fun times ahead!

PISCES: What if we said the perfect somebody is standing right in front of you, but you’re choosing to look for love in all the wrong places? What the cards are asking you to go today: wear your brightest lipstick and allow yourself to catch their gaze.

Tip: Treat yourself like Cleopatra-reincarnated.