



'DABANGG 4' HAS FALLEN IN PLACE: SALMAN KHAN
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NEEDED - RURAL PRAGMATISM, NOT URBAN VAINGLORY

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YOU CAN'T BE HONEST ABOUT SOMEONE'S WORK IN INDUSTRY. THEY DON'T TAKE IT WELL: KAREENA

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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Have faith in Centre and Amit Shah, Jacob Khaling recommends to assuage CAB fears



SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 15 DEC:

Jacob Khaling, Political Secretary to the Chief Minister, has stressed that until Article 371F was in place, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act will not be implemented in Sikkim.

He pointed out that the Bharatiya Janata Party Government at the Centre has assured to protect Article 371F, a statement to this effect having been made by the Union Home Minister in Parliament, and stressed there was no need to disbelieve the BJP and the Union Minister on this count.

Reiterating that there was no fear of the new Citizenship law extending to Sikkim or having any impact here, Mr Khaling alleged that some political parties and vested interests have been trying to create an environment of fear, unrest and suspicion in the State with irresponsible statements.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Khaling mentioned that Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has never adopted double-standards and has always been working in the interest of Sikkim and its people.

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Bhaichung meets Amit Shah, reiterates Sikkim's Citizenship Act misgivings

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 DEC:

Hamro Sikkim Party working president, Bhaichung Bhutia, requested Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, to name Pakyong Airport after Chogyal Palden Thondup Namgyal who "gave Article 371F to Sikkim and its people."

He placed this issue along with other issues of the State with the Home Minister during a meeting in Delhi on Saturday.

An HSP press release informs that the Union Home Minister gave a patient hearing to all the issues of Sikkim, including the implications of Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The release adds that Mr Bhutia sought exemption for Sikkim from the new Citizenship law, an

exemption which has not been written into the Act at present.

He also informed the Minister that during Sikkim's Merger, the population ratio of the BL community was 45% and if CAB is implemented, the BL community could go down to 5% or below.

"There is serious danger of losing our identity, culture and language and to safeguard all the Sikkimese origin people [Lepcha, Bhutia, Nepali and old business community] re-verification of Sikkim Subjects and COI needs to be implemented in place of NRC," he said.

The release informs that the Home Minister was very positive and said he would consider and look into the demands.

The Home Minister stated that the Article



371F was not included since it was already a powerful Act and that he had consulted legal experts on Article 371F

who confirmed this hence it was not necessary to include any more exemption for Sikkim in the Bill.

"We also agreed that I would put down in writing all our concerns and demands and form a small com-

mittee that could suggest the safeguards of Sikkimese interest and get back to the Minister," Mr Bhutia adds.

Cong raises influx fears in the wake of Citizenship Amendment Act

SPCC WANTS PARTIES TO RISE ABOVE 'POLITICS' AND PROTECT SIKKIMESE IDENTITY

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 DEC:

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee [SPCC] president, Bharat Basnet, has appealed to all political parties of the State to rise above party politics and "save the existence and identity of Sikkim."

He asserted that Sikkim's 32 MLAs have a huge responsibility to save Sikkimese and its future.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Basnet reiterated that Sikkim has not been

exempted from the Citizenship Act and asserted that the Gazette of India on the Act makes no mention of Sikkim.

He added that although the Gazette notification on the Act issued on 12 Dec has mentioned areas of some States exempted from the Act but makes no mention of Sikkim.

He also questioned the bus service launched recently from Dhaka to Gangtok and wondered why this was done even though Sikkim has no traditional



links with Bangladesh.

"If the Centre is really concerned, then it should start a bus service from Sikkim to countries likes Nepal, Bhutan and China with whom it

shares borders," he said.

Mr Basnet fears that the Citizenship Act will make Sikkim a "dumping ground for immigrants."

He claimed that since Sikkim was a Northeast-

ern state with the largest Hindu and Buddhist population, it would be easy to "dump immigrants" here.

Responding to media queries, the SPCC president alleged that regional

parties of the State have been responsible for the dilution of Article 371F all along and alleged that political leaders have not been serious in their commitment to protect the rights and privileges of the people of Sikkim.

He added that the people of Sikkim have been suffering due to the inability of their representatives to resist dilution of Article 371F. He stated that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act would further affect Article 371F and further increase influx.

Hong Kong violence breaks out again in shopping centres

HONG KONG, 15 DEC [AFP]: Hong Kong police used pepper spray and made arrests on Sunday as small groups of black-clad pro-democracy protesters targeted some of the city's shopping centres, ending a rare lull in violence.

Flashmob protests and vandalism broke out in several locations. Riot police responded with pepper spray in at least two shopping centres as members of the public heckled them.

A secondary school girl and a 16-year-old boy were arrested in a Sha Tin mall, the pair shouting out their details as officers led them away.

Earlier in the afternoon an elderly woman was knocked over in the same shopping centre after a fight broke out when a shopper tried to stop protesters spraying graffiti.

Masked activists had also trashed restaurants

run by Maxim's, a catering firm that has become a frequent target because its owner's daughter has criticised the pro-democracy movement.

The skirmishes were the first in three weeks. Hong Kong has been upended by six months of pro-democracy protests, violent battles between police and hardcore demonstrators, as well as regular transport disruption.

Pro-democracy parties won a landslide victory in local council elections last month. Last Sunday an estimated 800,000 people marched peacefully through the streets.

But public anger remains, with no sign of further concessions from Beijing or Hong Kong's chief executive, Carrie Lam, despite the election success.

Lam is in Beijing for an annual visit and is due to meet President Xi Jinping on Monday.

Delhi court to pronounce verdict in Unnao rape case against Kuldeep Sengar on Monday

NEW DELHI, DEC 15 (PTI): A Delhi court is scheduled to pronounce on Monday its judgement in the case of alleged kidnapping and rape of a woman by expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in Unnao in 2017.

During in-camera proceedings, District Judge Dharmesh Sharma had said he was likely to pronounce the verdict on December 16 after conclusion of hearing of final arguments by the

CBI and the accused in the case.

The judge heard the case on a day-to-day basis from August 5 after it was transferred to Delhi from a court in Lucknow on the Supreme Court's direction.

The woman was allegedly kidnapped and raped by Sengar in 2017 when she was a minor. The court has also framed charges against co-accused Shashi Singh in the case.

Sengar, a four-time BJP MLA from UP's Bangermau, was expelled from the party in August, 2019.

The court had on August 9 framed charges against the MLA and Singh under Sections 120 b (criminal conspiracy), 363 (kidnapping), 366 (kidnapping or inducing a woman to compel for marriage), 376 (rape) and other relevant sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Of-

fences (POCSO) Act.

On July 28 this year, the woman who had accused Sengar was severely injured after the car in which she was travelling was hit by a truck. Two of her aunts were killed in the accident and her family had alleged foul play.

The woman's father was allegedly framed in an illegal arms case and arrested on April 3, 2018. He died while in judicial custody a few days later, on April 9.

The local court here has framed murder and other charges against the MLA, his brother Atul and nine others in the case.

The apex court, taking cognisance of the rape survivor's letter written to then Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, had on August 1 transferred all five cases registered in connection with the Unnao rape incident from a Lucknow court in Uttar Pradesh

to the court in Delhi with directions to hold trial on a daily basis and completing it within 45 days.

The trial in the other four cases -- framing of the rape survivor's father in illegal firearms case and his death in judicial custody, conspiracy of Sengar with others in the accident case and a separate case of gang rape of the rape survivor by three others -- are ongoing in the court.

Anti-Citizenship Act stir hits oil, gas output in Assam

GUWAHATI, DEC 15 (PTI): Crude oil and gas production in Assam have witnessed a drastic fall due to the ongoing state-wide protest against the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act, affecting supply of petrol, diesel and LPG in many districts.

The two major PSU fuel producers Oil India Ltd (OIL) and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on Sunday said their gas output have totally stopped, while oil production is down by over 75 per cent after

protests erupted in the state.

"Our gas production has completely stopped. In the crude oil segment, we were producing 9,000 tonnes per day, which came down to just 1,000 tonnes," a senior official from the OIL told PTI from its field headquarters at Dulaijan in upper Assam.

The company is operating only around 50 wells out of its about 400 oil and gas producing wells, he added.

The crude supply to Digboi refinery has gone

down to 800 tonnes instead of 1,800 tonnes of daily plan, while the same to Numaligarh refinery has totally stopped, he said.

"Besides, drilling of our wells has fully stopped for the last six days. Our oil collection stations have also been shut by people protesting against the amended Citizenship Act.

"We have not been able to send gas to our clients like NEEPCO, Namrup Thermal, BCPL and Assam Gas Company," the official said.

He also added that filled LPG cylinders and tankers are lying in OIL terminals as vehicle transport has come to a halt, thereby adding a risk factor to the terminals.

"Keeping LPG inventory is always dangerous because of its highly flammable character," he said.

On Saturday, the OIL appealed to people of the state in local papers to allow it to carry out day-to-day operations, which the firm said, have been "severely impacted".

An official of the ONGC said that its daily oil output has fallen to 1,650 tonnes from 2,200 tonnes.

"Our gas production has completely stopped. Drilling facilities have also come to a halt after the protests started. The situation is grim as our central tank can stock fuel only for 3-4 days," he added.

The PSU major Indian Oil Corporation said vehicle fuel and LPG supply in Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Golaghat and Jorhat districts in upper

Assam have been severely affected.

"As per our information, petrol depots in these five districts have dried up.

LPG distribution is also affected as transporters are not able to send their trucks," IOC Chief General Manager (IndianOil-AOD) Uttiya Bhattacharyya told PTI.

However, he said that fuel supply in other districts of Assam and neighbouring states are not affected as the company is sending tankers with police escorts.

"The Guwahati and Bongaigaon refineries are functioning normally. All our tankers and trucks are moving under heavy police protection and we are not taking chances," Bhattacharyya said.

A Numaligarh Refinery spokesperson said that their employees could not go to the plant from the township as their vehicles were torched a few days ago.

An official of the state-run power major NTPC's Bongaigaon plant said that coal from Mar-

gherita mines in Tinsukia district is not reaching the plant.

"However, our production is not affected as we also get coal from Raniganj in West Bengal," she added.

Violent protests had erupted in the city and other parts of the state earlier this week after the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was passed in Parliament, with agitators engaging in pitched battles with the police, forcing the administration to impose curfew.

Sneha Kinetic holds free eye camp in Dikchu

SUMMIT REPORT
MANGAN, 15 DEC:

Sneha Kinetic Power Project Ltd, in association with Drishyam Foundation, held a free eye check-up camp at Dikchu, East Sikkim, under its Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Patients were evaluated for vision (refractive error) eye problems and those requiring surgery, especially cataract, were advised accordingly.

Around 200 individuals was screened for eye diseases out of whom 15 were advised cataract surgery which will be provided free of cost.

Patients with minor problems were given re-



quired medical support and free medicines. Dr Arathi Dayali,

founder of Drishum Eye Care, Sikkim, suggested that people try and limit

their screen time to avoid possible future complications to their eyes.

BJP sees deception and appropriation in anti-CAB rally of Saturday

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 DEC:

Bharatiya Janata Party's Sikkim president, DB Chauhan, has asserted that despite repeated assurances from the Central and State governments that the Citizen (Amendment) Act will not be extended to Sikkim because of the special provision of Article 371F, some political parties

and organizations have been conspiring to create unrest in the State by "deceiving and misleading" the people.

A BJP press release states that the party strongly condemns the act of using students by political parties and organizations to protest the Act on Saturday.

The release alleges that that rally had ma-

jority participation of students from outside the State who raised "objectionable slogans" and adds that the rally was not "appropriate" in the context of Sikkim.

The aggressive protest and sloganeering against the Centre will besmirch Sikkim's image and could weaken the unity and integrity of the country.

The release further alleges that some political parties and individuals have been trying to create confusion and fear among people by whipping up a non-issue.

On the same, the party has urged the people and students of Sikkim not to get deceived by such "irresponsible elements" and stay calm and have faith in the Centre and the State.

Take those 'negligible people' to Gujarat: Samujjal Bhattacharya's dig at Sonowal

GUWAHATI, DEC 15 (PTI): AASU chief advisor Samujjal Bhattacharya said on Sunday that the Assam government should consult with the Centre to make arrangements for taking people who will be benefited from the new citizenship law to Gujarat, in a dig at Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal.

In a video message, the chief minister had said on Saturday that the number of people to be benefited by the amended Citizenship Act is "very negligible".

Addressing a protest meet, 'Concert for Peace and Harmony', Bhattacharya said, "If they know there are only negligible foreigners in Assam, then go today itself and talk to Narendra Modi and Amit Shah to make arrangements for keeping them in Gujarat."

"It would not take much time to take the negligible number of foreign-

ers from here...they can be taken in one train only," he added.

Sonowal had alleged that misinformation like more than a crore people would enter Assam under the Act was spread to create confusion among the people.

Bhattacharya said All Assam Students' Union (AASU) would not accept the amended Citizenship Act. "We want to remind Sonowal, Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, other ministers, MPs and MLAs that as per the historic Assam Accord, the people of the state took the burden of illegal migrants from 1951 to 1971. We will not take the burden of even one foreigner after 1971. We warn the government not to instigate the people," he asserted.

Democratic protests by AASU across the state has been going on peacefully and a three-

day 'Satyagraha' will be observed from Monday, he said, adding that even students' organisations in Nagaland and Meghalaya have informed him that they have been protesting against the new citizenship law and called bandhs.

He said a team of the North East Students' Organisation will be going to Delhi to file a petition in the Supreme Court against the amended Citizenship Act.

Claiming that five students have so far been killed in police firing, the All Assam Students' Union chief advisor accused the Sarbananda Sonowal-led government of using the state machinery to dominate the protesters.

Singer-actor Zubeen Garg, who has been in the forefront of the ongoing agitation, alleged that "the state government has killed five young peo-

ple. We have not killed anyone, why this violence on us".

He appealed to the people not to indulge in violence.

"General people should not be harassed. Some bad elements are being used, maybe with moneydo not sell your state for money," he said.

Assam is witnessing one of the worst violent protests by the public in its history with three rail stations, a post office, a bank, a bus terminus, shops, dozens of vehicles and other public properties being set ablaze or ransacked.

After the Rajya Sabha passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill on Wednesday night, the state erupted in protests, in which agitators fought pitched battles with the police in almost every major city or town, forcing the administration to impose curfew.

Have faith in Centre and Amit...

On this regard, he pointed out that SKM protested the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill before the election and has consistently done so ever since with even its MP voting against it in the Lok Sabha.

He mentioned that the party does not have any objection if Citizenship (Amendment) Act was required at the national level as it has been passed by both houses of the Parliament. "But being a regional party, we are very concerned about the interests of Sikkim and its people. So, our MP had protested and voted against the bill for Sikkim," he said.

Mr Khaling urged political parties and the people to have faith in the Centre.

He mentioned that the NDA Government has always worked in the interest of Sikkim and its people and urged the people not to get misguided and misled and try and study the issue for themselves first.

On the protest rally against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act here on Saturday, he mentioned that while protesting was the democratic right of every citizen, the rally yesterday was primarily led by students from Assam.

He questioned whether such action was to make another Assam in Sikkim.

"We are living peacefully in Sikkim and even our political situation is different from Assam. Is such a rally and slogans against the Union Home Minister Amit Shah an attempt to make another Assam in Sikkim?" he questioned.

Mr Khaling mentioned even political leaders and individuals should confer legal and constitutional experts on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act before making any statements.

He reiterated that the BJP at the Centre and the Home Minister should be trusted for their assurances.

He alleged that some leaders have been trying to misguide the people that the Article 371F would be abolished like Article 370. "Abrogation of the Article 370 has been in the election manifesto of BJP for a long time," he said, suggesting that there was no surprise in what the BJP Government did, but BJP and its Government have no such misgivings vis a vis Art371F, he added.

Mr Khaling stated that some vested interests have been trying to fan fears for their personal political benefits and were best left ignored.

He also expressed gratitude towards the Union Home Minister for making Article 371F stronger by raising it in Parliament.

Responding to media queries, Mr Khaling said SKM has been discussing the Inner Line Permit idea for Sikkim seriously. "We have already taken a strong stand on the ILP for Sikkim and we will prepare strong future strategies to implement ILP in the entire State," he said.

On the Dhaka-Gangtok bus service, he explained that the State Government received the correspondence from the Centre only on 13 December regarding diplomats from Bangladesh arriving here for route observation for the proposed bus service.

Gram Sabha preps Assam Lingzey's GPDP 2020-25



SUMMIT REPORT
RANGPO, 15 DEC:

The Gram Sabha of Assam Lingzey Gram Panchayat Unit was held today at the Gram Prashasanik Kendra. The Gram Sabha was well attended by the general public and line department officials, a press release informs. The Sabha essentially deliberated on Gram Panchayat Development Plan 2020-25 and passed several proposals.

The house saw immediate demand for re-

pairs and maintenance of the 14th Mile to Setipool Assam Lingzey PWD Road and installation of electricity poles and sub-stations. There was also the demand seeking augmentation of water supply lines at Saureni, Lingzey and Daragaon and RWSS to be supplied to Sourini Lingzey and the house also passed directions to ensure strict checking of mechanized saw machines in the Gram Panchayat.

Chairperson of the Gram Sabha, Ganesh

Chettri, informs that the use of plastic plates and glasses have been banned in Sikkim and hence all should discourage its use at social and official functions.

He further informed that burning of plastics has also been banned.

Further, a circular on waste collection was also released fixing user charges of Rs 30 and Rs 50 per month for collection of waste from households and shops respectively.

He also presented the

OSR budget of Rs 6 lakh that is at the disposal of Gram Panchayat.

The house passed the resolution to provide a Police Outpost at Assam Lingzey Zero Mile and it was also informed that Sports and Youth Affairs Department will provide Rs 50,000 towards various sports activity under Fit India Scheme.

The recent hike in the procurement rates of milk by Sikkim Milk Union was also discussed and the producers thanked the Union.

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Delhi court to pronounce...

During the trial in the rape case which was held in-camera, thirteen prosecution witnesses and nine defence witnesses were examined. The mother and uncle of the rape survivor were the main witnesses in the case.

A special court was also held at AIIMS hospital here to record the statement of the rape survivor, who was admitted there after she was air-lifted from a hospital in Lucknow following the car crash.

The woman and her family has been provided CRPF security as per the apex court's orders. They have now been shifted to a rented accommodation in the national capital with the assistance of the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW).

ANTHESTHI KRIYA



The Anthesthi Kriya of Late D. B. Chettri of 5th Mile, Tadong, who left for heavenly abode on 5th of December, 2019, falls on the 17th of December, 2019, Tuesday.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our relatives, friends, well wishers, who supported us during the hour of bereavement. We would also wish to invite all of you to join us in the last rites to offer prayer for the eternal peace of our father at our residence at 5th Mile, Tadong, below Saraswati Mandir, Gangtok.

Kirti & Binata Kumari & Agni Pavitra & Beeru Raju & Doma Sita & Sonam

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GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

Roadside plots for sale at Adampool, Ranipool-Rumtek highway.

For details contact: 9083826462

FLAT FOR RENT/LEASE

Fully furnished 3BHK flat available for rent/lease at Church Road near DPH. Roadside and five minutes walking distance from MG Marg.

For more details: 9083826462 /9832556698

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College.

Flat Land no cutting required. Price 30 Lakhs (negotiable).

Contact: 9800201335

LAND FOR SALE

A land measuring an area for 50x32 1/2 at Roadside just below housing colony is for sale. It is just a one minute walking distance from Namchi bazaar taxi stand. Interested party may contact 9593373387 and 9434406761

Uneasy calm in Assam, Bengal boils as PM blames 'Cong & friends' for violence over citizenship law

GUWAHATI/DUMKA/KOLKATA, DEC 15 (PTI): Uneasy calm prevailed in Assam but West Bengal plunged deeper into chaos on Sunday over the new citizenship law with incidents of arson and loot reported from several parts of the country, acts Prime Minister Narendra Modi blamed on the "Congress and its friends".

Curfew was relaxed in Guwahati and Dibrugarh for several hours following improvement in the situation but peaceful protests were held amid calls by the AGP for resignation of its ministers.

AGP is part of the BJP-led government in Assam.

An under-pressure AGP took a U-turn and decided to join efforts to get the controversial law struck down by the Supreme Court.

"The Congress and its allies are stoking fire over the Citizenship Act, but people of Northeast have rejected violence. Actions of the Congress prove

that all decisions taken in Parliament are correct," Modi said while addressing an election rally in Jharkhand's Dumka.

Without mentioning any community, he said those "fanning the fire" could be identified by their clothes.

"People who are setting fire (to property) can be seen on TV... They can be identified by the clothes they are wearing," Modi added.

Internet services were shut in six districts -- Malda, Uttar Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Howrah, North 24 Parganas and parts of South 24 Parganas -- of West Bengal as the state convulsed with violence for the third successive day despite Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's appeal for calm.

Hitting out at the TMC dispensation over advertisements against NRTC and citizenship law, Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar said it is unconstitutional and a head of government can't use public money for such campaigns.

On Saturday, protesters had set ablaze three railway stations, several trains and at least 25 buses.

Incidents of violence, loot and arson were reported from Nadia, Birbhum, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas and Howrah districts, police said.

In Amdanga area of North 24 Parganas and Nadia's Kalyani, agitators blocked thoroughfares, setting logs on fire.

Shops were also ransacked and people burned tyres in Deganga in North 24 Parganas.

Train services were hit in South 24 Parganas district as protesters blocked tracks near Nungi and Akra stations, which was also ransacked. The mob also looted money from the ticket counter of the station.

Similar protests were reported from Domjur of Howrah district, and parts of Burdwan and Birbhum, with agitators taking out rallies and raising slogans against the Modi government.

Barahimizong and Sakewa greetings from CM

GANGTOK, 13 DEC [IPR]: Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] has extended warm greetings on the occasion of Barahimizong to the people of Sikkim particularly to the Mangar community.

In his message the CM hopes that the festival will bring together the people of Sikkim and rekindle the glorious legacy of a life of equality, prosperity and oneness, filling every mind and

home with celestial joy.

Similarly, on the occasion of Sakewa, which also falls on Monday, the Chief Minister extended his heartiest greetings and best wishes to the people of Sikkim, particularly to the Rai community.

The Chief Minister in his greeting said that the festival of Sakewa holds special significance for the State of Sikkim.

"It is a symbol of

brotherhood and unity amongst the Sikkimese people as all the communities come together to make the festival a collaborative celebration.

The festival of Sakewa also signifies the wisdom that our ancestors intended to pass on to subsequent generations as a tradition in the quest to protect our environment, thereby providing the way of living in

perfect harmony with nature.

On this auspicious occasion, let us all pray to Mother Nature for the well being of our people. The worship of Mother Nature has become all the more relevant at a time when the world is coping with the repercussions of overall degradation in the environment and quality of ecosystem," he conveys.

Governor greets Sikkim on Barahimizong

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 DEC:**

Governor Ganga Prasad has extended warm greetings and best wishes to the people on the occasion of Barahimizong.

"The festival of Barahimizong associated with our Mangar brethren reflects our faith in the supreme being as the bestower and protector of mankind. This festival is an annual occasion

to express gratitude to almighty for continued blessings throughout the year by offering fresh harvest and at the same time seek good fortune for the coming days.

May God bestow all

Sikkimese eternal prosperity with bountiful harvest year after year. May the divinity permeate all sentient beings," he conveys in a press statement received from Raj Bhawan.

Sikkim Milk MD visits Lingi Payong School

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 DEC:**

Managing Director, Sikkim Milk, Dr AB Karki, visited Lingi Payong Secondary School on Friday.

He was on an official tour to different gram sabhas being organised under Yangang Block.

During his visit, he interacted with students and teachers and delivered a motivational talk on career, innovation and studying strategies.

He expressed his satisfaction with the work being achieved by the school and lauded the ef-



forts of the teachers and students to bring change in the present educational scenario.

He also conducted a quiz during morning

assembly and awarded cash prizes to students answering correctly.

He also handed over Rs 10,000 to the school Headmaster to be used

for the school.

Dr Karki was accompanied by Yogesh Bhandari, Panchayat President, Lingmoo Payong GPU.

Open Men's Football tourney at Gor School



**SUMMIT REPORT
DIKCHU, 15 DEC:**

DFA Boys Passingdang beat Allen Boys 5-0 during the Open Men's Football tournament at Gor Secondary School, Dzongu, today.

In the second match of the day, Samdong Boys defeated Meegan Gor 3-0.

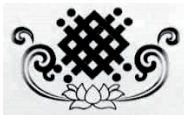
Rural Development Assistant, RB Rai, was present as chief guest for the first match while the

second match had Sonam Lepcha, AD Fisheries Department, as chief guest.

A total of 24 teams from across the state have registered for the tournament, the final match for which is scheduled for 23 December.

The winner's will be awarded a cash prize of Rs 30,000 along with the trophy and a Rs 20,000 cash prize awaits the runners-up team.

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Mangan Nagar Panchayat Mangan, North Sikkim

It is notified for the information that the Mangan Nagar Panchayat has declared all wards under its jurisdiction of Open Defection Free Plus (ODF+) as per the protocol laid down by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, Government of India as a part of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban.

Feedbacks/objections in this matter are invited from the General Public within fifteen (15) days from issued of this notice.

Sd/-
Municipal Executive Officer
Mangan Nagar Panchayat

Sakewa greetings from Governor

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 DEC:**

Governor Ganga Prasad has extended heartiest greetings and best wishes to the people of Sikkim on the occasion of Sakewa.

In his message, the Governor conveys, "Since time immemorial, Mother Nature is worshipped as the supreme deity and source of life and wellbeing to all. The wisdom ingrained in our ancient texts also emphasizes how important for us as humans to maintain the balance between our basic and developmental needs and nature in

order to sustain and preserve all kinds of life forms on this planet.

Sikkim, since ages, is known for its nature friendly people and our true identity remains 'Living In Harmony With Nature'. Our tradition, festivals and celebrations are centered around preserving our rich natural heritage. 'Sakewa' is one such occasion where we worship mother nature and celebrate its endowments. This is the lesson that we as Sikkimese, should endeavor to propagate on to entire world for striking a perfect balance between our rising economic needs and our concern



for environment.

I join the people of Sikkim and my Rai brethren in particular, to worship mother nature on this pious occasion. The wisdom that our ancestors intended to pass on to the new generation through the fes-

tival of Sakewa should be assimilated by nature lovers with its core philosophy.

May mother nature continue to bless us with sustainable resources, eternal peace, happiness and bountiful harvest year after year."

CEE 24 NOV 2019

(a) English

The result of Common Entrance Exam (CEE) for recruitment into Indian Army for Soldier General Duty, Soldier Technical, and Soldier Tradesman held at Army Recruiting Office, Siliguri, on 24 November 2019 has been declared and uploaded on Indian Army website www.joinindianarmy.nic.in on 14 December 2019. In case of any query, candidates are advised to contact Army Recruiting Office, Siliguri. The result is also available on **IVRS No 03322236897**.

(b) Hindi

आर्मी रिक्रूटिंग ऑफिस, सिलीगुड़ी, में दिनांक 24 नवंबर 2019 को सोल्जर (जनरल ड्यूटी), सोल्जर (टेक्निकल), तथा सोल्जर ट्रेड्समैन पदों के लिए आयोजित सामान्य प्रवेश परीक्षा का परिणाम भारतीय सेना की वेबसाइट www.joinindianarmy.nic.in पर दिनांक 14 दिसम्बर 2019 से उपलब्ध है। यदि उम्मीदवार को किसी भी प्रकार की जानकारी प्राप्त करनी हो तो वे आर्मी रिक्रूटिंग ऑफिस, सिलीगुड़ी से संपर्क करें। परीक्षा का परिणाम आ बी आर एस नम्बर **03322236897** पर भी उपलब्ध है।



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
HEALTH CARE HUMAN SERVICE & FAMILY
WELFARE DEPARTMENT
NAMCHI, SOUTH SIKKIM

No. 683/ACC/H&FW

DATED 11.12.2019

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

1. Sealed tender in two Bid System i.e. Technical and Financial Bid are invited from reputed and authorized dealers of Generic Medicines, Allopathic Medicines, Medical consumables, Toiletry items and miscellaneous items for running the medicine shop/ pharmacy measuring a floor area of 123.5 sq.ft or rent located at Namchi Hospital District Hospital for a period of 2 (two) years (w.e.f 1st Feb 2020 to 31st Jan 2022).
2. The tenderers should hold valid trade license issued by the authorized Government agencies and should have qualified Pharmacists possessing necessary Certificate in Pharmacy from reputed and recognized Institute to run the shop.
3. The tender forms, tender envelopes and other details like eligibility criteria, Terms & Conditions of Lease etc., can be obtained from the Office of Accounts Officer-cum-D&DO, HC,HS & FW Dept., Namchi, South District on any working days w.e.f 17.12.2019 to 24.12.2019 on production of Challan for Rs.2000/-only duly credited to Revenue Head- 0210-800-Other Receipts (Sale of tender form for Pharmacy).
4. Duly filled up Sealed Tender forms accompanied by TDR (refundable) for Rs.1.0 Lakhs(Rupees One lakh) only drawn in favour of AO-cum-D&DO, HC,HS & FW Department from any branch of State Bank of Sikkim should reach the Office of the Chief Medical Officer, Namchi within 12.00 pm of 06.01.2020(Friday) and the same will be opened at 12.30 pm sharp in the O/o Chief Medical Officer in the presence of Interested tenderers/ authorized representatives.
5. Minimum Offset rate for the above premises as described above is Rs.50000/-(Fifty thousand) per month.
6. Tender in which any of the prescribed conditions are not fulfilled or incomplete in any way will be rejected.
7. The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Chief Medical Officer
Health Care, Human Service & Family Welfare Department
Namchi, South District.

R.O. No. 300/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20

Date 13.12.2019



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
TASHILING, GANGTOK

No.Exam/2019-20/44

Dated 12th December, 2019

NOTIFICATION

It is hereby notified for general information of all concerned that the Government has decided to **postpone** the State Teacher's Eligibility Test, 2019 (STET) scheduled to be held on **14th December 2019(Saturday)** till further order.

Director-Examination
Education Department

CONTACT

SUMMIT TIMES
REPORTERS

SINGTAM
8170070813

MANGAN/
DIKCHU

9832612485/
9434011213

GANGTOK
8116388176

9832424750

8016270440

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Needed - Rural Pragmatism, Not Urban Vainglory

Empower, for real, panchayats to shoot down superficial projects

The panchayats might be on the last leg of their current terms, and still, rather frequently, one reads of Panchayats undergoing awareness and orientation or being told what to do. They are still taken through the processes on which amendments to which Acts made their election possible, given the drill on the usual stuff about working for the people in collaboration with line departments etc etc. These are the basics that one expected the elected Panchayats to already know when they filed their nomination papers. One still hopes that such sessions, beyond making Panchayats “aware” about how and why they are more empowered today and whether earnest plans are afoot to divest even more powers to them, also get reassured that they can call the shots and need not kowtow to babus or other politicians when it comes to the affairs of the villages they represent.

The next progression should see them flex their muscles and shoot down scatter-brained projects and proposals that only somnolent bureaucrats can dream up. For instance, if a “file” was moved to invest 55% of an Innovation Fund to purchase plastic chairs and a PA system, they should be able to laugh it out of the Panchayat Bhawan. For those scoffing that such “projects” are not mooted, a quick read of the Annual Technical Inspection Report on PRIs and ULBs for the year ended 31 March 2014 by the office of the Principal Accountant General (Audit), Sikim, is recommended. Apparently, in 2013-14, the East Zilla Panchayat blew up Rs 55 lakh (out of Rs 1 crore) towards purchase of plastic chairs and sound system on the plea that the assets would help in “dissemination of information about welfare schemes” and would also “generate revenue” for the Gram Panchayats through rentals. The Panchayats might need plastic chairs and even sound systems, but such purchases can hardly be called “innovative”. Apparently, the Thirteenth Finance Commission had recommended formulation of District Innovation Fund “with a view to support and promote innovation for better alternatives, reducing costs, increasing the efficiency of capital assets, improving service delivery and governance”. This Fund was expected to fill “vital gaps in public infrastructure already available in the district, which is not being fully utilised for want of a relatively small investment”. So, how did they propose this one – they already had the floor space and needed chairs to fill it up for “full utilization” or that they had speeches ready, but needed a sound system to broadcast them? The guidelines suggested drawing up of an Annual Plan for utilisation of funds after carrying out Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis to “trigger innovative measures” with a view to make Government accountable and accessible to all section of the society. And they came up with this! The dodge must have been originally drafted and processed by babus not panchayats and the latter must have just fallen in line. Real empowerment will see them advise and demand better and be able to reject and amend.

There is another glaring evidence of civil works and expense-driven problem-solving superficiality. Apparently, the Rural Management & Development Department (RMDD) (through ZP, South) developed a water harvesting structure at Tamley lake in 1998-99 to provide potable water to the three villages of Mungram, Guptigaon, Sirubari and Rajarukgaon. It should come as no surprise that this project did not age too well, and in 2008, the villagers complained that water supply was poor. By Feb 2008, RMDD-Jorethang had a DPR for Rs 79.51 lakh ready to repair the water harvesting experiment. The funds were expended and work completed two years later. So, did the people go with potable water for two years? Thankfully, no. They repaired the existing pipes carrying water from a distant source. It cost them Rs 2.08 lakh to do this! Meanwhile, the Rs 79.51 lakh spent by the RMDD delivered repairs to a water harvesting structure that does not serve as a source of water to the nearby villages! The obvious need for more rural pragmatism to direct the development and investment priorities cannot be stressed more tellingly than this example.

One needs to understand that the reason the nation has empowered the rural voters is because all other attempts at fixing accountability have failed. When Panchayats decide, and if they decide from their own wits and not departmental chits, more projects will achieve fruition. When decisions are taken through informed and involved gram sabhas, then the whole village knows; when the whole village knows, the whole village watches and because it is about them and about facilities they and their children will use, they are also expected to monitor. When projects fail, the blame ends at the village boundaries and the buck can actually stop at the right door. When such accountability becomes real, the bastis will begin noticing real improvements. Urban naiveté and vainglory need to be played out of the villages and rural pragmatism allowed back in and supported to express itself more forcefully.

The dangers of depicting Greta Thunberg as a prophet

ELLEN BOUCHER
THECONVERSATION.COM

She came from obscurity and ignited a global movement. Beginning with a small but persistent act of protest outside the Swedish parliament, she inspired millions to join her. Her fiery speech to the United Nations in September 2019 warned of the end of the world. Her unfailing determination and passion makes her appear otherworldly, even uncanny, an affect largely attributed to her diagnosis of Asperger’s syndrome.

So it’s no surprise that many people – along with media outlets like The Irish Times, The Telegraph and The Washington Times – have cast Greta Thunberg as a prophet.

When Time announced her as “Person of the Year,” it continued the trope, using an evocative photograph of Thunberg standing on a rocky shoreline, staring at the heavens, for the cover.

As a researcher on the history of childhood, I’ve been disturbed to see Thunberg described and depicted as a prophet. To me, it risks distorting her message. And it can easily be exploited by climate deniers seeking to counter the appeal of her activism.

IS A CLIMATE MESSIAH EVEN NECESSARY?

To some, Thunberg resembles Joan of Arc, the teenage visionary who led the French army into battle in the 15th century and was later canonized as a saint.

To others, Thunberg exemplifies the Judeo-Christian tradition of prophets who speak truth to power; according to one Christian blogger, she offers “a prophetic voice to shake us out of our complacency.”

Yet presenting Thunberg as a prophet is deeply misleading. Classically, prophets are messengers who communicate the voice of God. They convey divine revelation that was previously unknown or misunderstood. Ezekiel predicted the destruction and restoration of Jerusalem. Moses received the Ten Commandments. Muhammad revealed the Quran. Prophets, in other words, see truths that others cannot. They bring us messages that often defy human



comprehension.

Thunberg, on the other hand, is simply telling us what we already know. Within the scientific community, there is an overwhelming consensus – going back decades – that humans are causing global warming.

Framing her as a prophet has opened the floodgates to all sorts of messianic theories. This recently took a bizarre turn when a 120-year-old photo with a girl resembling Thunberg surfaced. Now conspiracy theorists are calling Thunberg “a time traveler sent to save us.”

Depictions like this are fodder for her opponents who dismiss what they call her “doomsday activism.” To them, she is a false prophet, and they can portray the people inspired by her as brainwashed cult followers. David Koresh, the leader of the Branch Davidians who died alongside his followers in Waco, Texas in 1993, after all, called himself a prophet. So did Jim Jones, the founder of the Peoples Temple and orchestrator of the 1978 Jonestown Massacre.

To Thunberg’s credit, even she recoils at the idea that she should be viewed as some sort of savior.

“I don’t want you to listen to me,” she told Congress in September. “I

want you to listen to the scientists.”

BEING A KID CARRIES ENOUGH WEIGHT

I would argue that the best way to think of Thunberg is to simply think of her as a child.

This is not demeaning. Far from it. In recent years, young people have offered numerous examples of their ability to exercise independent thought, visionary thinking and leadership. Melati and Isabel Wijsen were 10 and 12 when they began a successful campaign to ban single-use plastics in their native Bali. Malala Yousafzai was 11 when she began to advocate against the Taliban for girls’ right to education. The list goes on: Jazz Jennings, Xiuhtezcatl Martinez, the Parkland activists. Like Thunberg, they challenge our culture’s view of children as powerless and dependent.

Thunberg memorably began her September 2019 UN speech with the words, “This is all wrong. I shouldn’t be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean.” As Thunberg well knows, the fact that a child needs to scold grown-ups to act on an issue that threatens all of humanity is a powerful example of a political system gone horribly wrong.

Even more critically, focusing on Thunberg’s youth highlights a central tenet of her message: fairness. As any parent can tell you, children tend to view the world in terms of moral absolutes – good and bad, right and wrong, fair and unfair. Indeed, researchers have recently shown that expectations of fairness are deeply ingrained in children, appearing in infants as young as 12 months old.

Ideas of fairness underlie many aspects of Thunberg’s message, from her emphasis on how climate change will affect the poor and marginalized, to her comments about how unjust it is to expect young people to fix a catastrophe caused by generations of political inertia. Her forceful call – “How dare you!” – is not the enraged cry of a petulant child. It is the determined statement of a girl who has not yet developed the moral flexibility that is so often the refuge of adult inaction.

Thunberg is not unraveling the mysteries of our era, or a time traveler sent to stop climate change. Rather, she is a child admonishing selfishness and pleading for fairness.

That’s not prophetic. It’s common sense.

[The writer is Associate Professor of History, Amherst College]

China’s failed gene-edited baby experiment proves we’re not ready for human embryo modification

DIMITRI PERRIN & GAETAN BURGIO
THECONVERSATION.COM

More than a year ago, the world was shocked by Chinese biophysicist He Jiankui’s attempt to use CRISPR technology to modify human embryos and make them resistant to HIV, which led to the birth of twins Lulu and Nana.

Now, crucial details have been revealed in a recent release of excerpts from the study, which have triggered a series of concerns about how Lulu and Nana’s genome was modified.

HOW CRISPR WORKS

CRISPR is a technique that allows scientists to make precise edits to any DNA by altering its sequence.

When using CRISPR, you may be trying to “knock out” a gene by rendering it inactive, or trying to achieve specific modifications, such as introducing or removing a desired piece of DNA.

Gene editing with the CRISPR system relies on an association of two molecules. One is a protein, called Cas9, that is responsible for “cutting” the DNA. The other molecule is a short RNA (ribonucleic acid) molecule which works as a “guide” that brings Cas9 to the position where it is supposed to cut.

The system also needs help from the cells being edited. DNA damage is frequent, so cells regularly have to repair the DNA lesions. The associated repair mechanisms are what introduce the deletions, insertions or modifications when performing gene editing.

HOW THE GENOMES OF LULU AND NANA WERE MODIFIED

He Jiankui and his colleagues were targeting a gene called CCR5, which is necessary for the HIV virus to enter into white blood cells (lymphocytes) and infect our body.

One variant of CCR5, called CCR5 Δ32, is missing a particular string of 32 “letters” of DNA code. This variant naturally occurs in the human population, and results in a high level of resistance to the most common type of HIV virus.

The team wanted to recreate this mutation using CRISPR on human embryos, in a bid to render them resistant to HIV infection. But this did not go as planned, and there are several ways they may

have failed.

First, despite claiming in the abstract of their unpublished article that they reproduced the human CCR5 mutation, in reality the team tried to modify CCR5 close to the Δ32 mutation.

As a result, they generated different mutations, of which the effects are unknown. It may or may not confer HIV resistance, and may or may not have other consequences.

Worryingly, they did not test any of this, and went ahead with implanting the embryos. This is unjustifiable.

THE MOSAIC EFFECT

A second source of errors could have been that the editing was not perfectly efficient. This means that not all cells in the embryos were necessarily edited.

When an organism has a mixture of edited and unedited cells, it is called a “mosaic”. While the available data are still limited, it seems that both Lulu and Nana are mosaic.

This makes it even less likely that the gene-edited babies would be resistant to HIV infection. The risk of mosaicism should have been another reason not to implant the embryos.

Moreover, editing can have unintended impacts elsewhere in the genome.

When designing a CRISPR experiment, you choose the “guide” RNA so that its sequence is unique to the gene you are targeting. However, “off-target” cuts can still happen elsewhere in the genome, at places that have a similar sequence.

He Jiankui and his team tested cells from the edited embryos, and reported only one off-target modification. However, that testing required sampling the cells, which were therefore no longer part of the embryos - which continued developing.

Thus, the remaining cells in the embryos had not been tested, and may have had different off-target modifications.

This is not the team’s fault, as there will always be limitations in detecting off-target and mosaicism, and we can only get a partial picture.

However, that partial picture should have made them pause.

A BAD IDEA TO BEGIN

Above, we have described several risks associ-

ated with the modifications made on the embryos, which could be passed on to future generations.

Embryo editing is only ethically justifiable in cases where the benefits clearly outweigh the risks.

Technical issues aside, the researchers did not even address an unmet medical need.

While the twins’ father was HIV-positive, there is already a well-established way to prevent an HIV-positive father from infecting embryos. This “sperm washing” method was actually used by the team.

The only benefit of the attempted gene modification, if proven, would have been a reduced risk of HIV infection for the twins later in life.

But there are safer existing ways to control the risk of infection, such as condoms and mandatory testing of blood donations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR GENE EDITING AS A FIELD

Gene editing has endless applications. It can be used to make plants such as the Cavendish banana more resistant to devastating diseases. It can play an important role in the adaptation to climate change.

In health, we are already seeing promising results with the editing of somatic cells (that is, non-heritable modifications of the patient’s own cells) in beta thalassemia and sickle cell disease.

However, we are just not ready for human embryo editing. Our techniques are not mature enough, and no case has been made for a widespread need that other techniques, such as preimplantation genetic testing, could not address.

There is also much work still needed on governance. There have been individual calls for a moratorium on embryo editing, and expert panels from the World Health Organisation to UNESCO.

Yet, no consensus has emerged.

It is important these discussions move in unison to a second phase, where other stakeholders, such as patient groups, are more broadly consulted (and informed). Engagement with the public is also crucial.

[Dimitri Perrin is Senior Lecturer, Queensland University of Technology; Gaetan Burgio is Geneticist and Group Leader, The John Curtin School of Medical Research, Australian National University]

Citizenship Act protest: Violence, arson in Delhi; cop injured, buses torched



NEW DELHI, DEC 15 (PTI): Protestors agitating against the amended Citizenship Act clashed with police on Sunday and set afire DTC buses and a fire tender in New Friends' Colony in south-east Delhi leaving a cop and two fire personnel injured, police said.

A Delhi Fire Services official said four fire tenders were rushed to the spot.

One fire tender was completely damaged and two personnel were injured in the violence by the protesters.

Saimon Farooqui, the national secretary of Congress-affiliated National Students' Union of India, claimed the protesters were peacefully sitting on Mathura Road

when policemen tried to "trouble" a couple of them, who resisted.

A Jamia Millia Islamia students' group said they had nothing to do with the arson and violence. They alleged that "local elements" joined the protest and "disrupted" it.

They said they returned to campus as the protest turned violent and were protesting on the campus peacefully.

Some of the protesters claimed that the police baton charged them when they were holding a peaceful agitation.

Police lathicharged the protesters and used teargas, Farooqui said.

A student claimed that after the policemen used force, some protesters torched buses and indulged in vandalism.

AASU hints at launching political party in Assam

Guwahati, Dec 15 (PTI): The All Assam Students' Union (AASU), which has been protesting the amended Citizenship Act, on Sunday hinted at launching a political party along with 'Shilpi Samaj' (artists' forum) as an alternative to the ruling BJP and AGP as well as to opposition Congress.

AASU president Dipanka Nath, addressing a protest meet 'Concert for Peace and Harmony' here, supported popular actor Zubeen Garg's proposal of launching a political party.

"We are in talks with Silpi Samaj (artists' forum) and also discussing with people of Assam to think about an alternative. With your (people's) permission, we will not hesitate one bit to go in that direction (of launching a political party).

"The AASU will remain apolitical. But, in the interest of the people, along with Silpi Samaj we are ready to go in that direction," Nath said to loud cheers from thousands of people at the event.

Nath alleged the Cen-



tre decided to implement the amended Citizenship Act to render the culture, language and heritage of the indigenous people "extinct".

"Our agitation against the Act will be long. Each one of us has to carry on our fight peacefully," he said.

Claiming that five persons have so far been killed in police firing, the AASU president accused the Sarbananda Sonowal-led government of using the state machinery to dominate the protesters.

"They have un-

leashed their oppressive machinery on people killing five minor students and injuring many others with bullets... this government will be brought down.

"No government can suppress our struggle with killings and force. We will intensify our democratic movement through non-violent means," Nath said.

The AASU president accused AGP of "betraying" the people of the state and said the Congress was also "equally bad".

AASU general secre-

tary Lurin Jyoti Gogoi said Sarbananda Sonowal has lost the moral right to say 'Jai Aai Axom' (hail mother Assam).

"The Chief Minister who was silent even after five persons were killed, is suddenly chanting 'Jai Aai Axom' instead of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai'," he said.

If agitating to demand the removal of the Act and loving mother Assam is a crime, then people of the state are ready to commit thousands of such crimes, Gogoi said.

"No firing or lathi-charge can break our agitation.

But, difficult times are ahead. We have to take the struggle forward in a non-violent manner as the government is conspiring to stop the people's movement," he said.

Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad General Secretary Palash Changmai said if the state government is serious about protecting indigenous people of Assam, it should implement Inner Line Permit (ILP) in the state.

AGP to file plea in Supreme Court for revocation of Citizenship Act

GUWAHATI, DEC 15 (PTI): Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), an ally of the ruling BJP, said on Sunday that it would file a petition in the Supreme Court praying for revocation of the amended Citizenship Act, party leader Kumar Deepak Das said.

He asserted that the AGP respected the sentiments of common people, who were wary that the law might threaten their identity and existence.

"We will take the legal route to seek revocation of the amended Act as the indigenous people of Assam are apprehensive that their identity, language might come under threat," Das, a former Rajya Sabha MP, told PTI.

Sources said a delegation of the AGP, led by Das, would leave for Delhi in the evening to file the plea in the apex court.

Kohli not pleased with late DRS run-out call

CHENNAI, DEC 15 (PTI): Indian captain Virat Kohli expressed his displeasure from the dressing room after the on-field umpire referred a late run-out call involving Ravindra Jadeja during the first ODI against West Indies here on Sunday.

The incident took place in the 48th over when Jadeja went for a quick single and the fielder affected a direct hit at the striker's end.

However, the on-field umpire Shaun George did not give it out though Jadeja appeared to be short of his crease and neither there was an instant appeal from the West Indies players.

The on-field umpire made a late referral to the third umpire after the dismissal was shown on the big screen. After Roston Chase hit the stumps from the mid-wicket region, he seemed to ask umpire to have a look at it, but he did not raise his finger.

West Indies skipper Kieron Pollard then took up the issue with umpire George, who subsequently signalled the third umpire to check. The third umpire ruled Jadeja out after which Kohli looked miffed and rose from his seat before having a word with the fourth umpire (Anil Choudhary).

However, he did not enter the field of play.

Curfew relaxed in parts of Shillong from 6 am to 7 pm



SHILLONG, DEC 15 (PTI): The curfew, imposed in parts of the city amid violent protests against the amended Citizenship Act, was relaxed from 6 am to 7 pm on Sunday, officials said.

The curfew was relaxed for 13 hours in areas under the jurisdictions of Sadar and Lumding police stations, the officials said.

In view of the prevailing law and order situation in the curfew-bound areas, the District Magistrate of East Khasi Hills, M W Nongbri, has relaxed the curfew till 7 pm, they said.

Curfew will be re-imposed in these areas from 7 pm on Sunday till further orders, a statement issued by the dis-

trict administration said.

SMS and mobile internet services have been withdrawn for 48 hours since 5pm on Saturday, an official said.

Banks and educational institutions have been shut since December 11 and the North Eastern Hill University has also postponed all examinations to February 2020.

Traffic was negligible on the roads during the relaxed hours of curfew and markets were shut for most parts of the days.

The assembly will be holding a special one-day session on December 19 to allow the government to pass a resolution to demand the implementation of Inner Line Permit (ILP) in the state.

Bengal's Shyamali bags silver after tumour scare

KOLKATA, DEC 15 (PTI): Long distance running is about breaking barriers and Midnapore's Shyamali Singh, who finished second among elite Indian women athletes in the TSK 25K on Sunday, is doing just that with every stride.

Hailing from a poor family of farmers, the 26-year-old was diagnosed with a tumour two years back after she returned from the Thailand Cross Country.

It however did not leave her shattered.

With the support of her husband-cum-coach Santosh, she ran the 2017 Mumbai Marathon and stood second with a time of 3:08:41 and used the Rs 4 lakh prize money for her treatment.



Two years later, after being cleared of cancer, she returned to running and again put up a spectacular show finishing behind Kiranjeet Kaur with a timing of one hour 39 minutes and two sec-

onds to win a silver in the Indian women's category at the TSK 25K here.

Recounting the journey, she said: "We are not well off. My husband Santosh is my coach also and we decided to fight it

together. I needed money for my treatment and so I participated in Mumbai Marathon. I was determined to make a podium finish to get the money for my treatment."

During Sunday's

race, she led the Indian women's contingent till the 17km mark before a cramp on her stomach slowed her down.

She also seemed to face dehydration and vomited along the way as Kiranjeet overtook her en route to win the gold.

"I need to consult a doctor. But I will continue to run in 5000m, 10,000m and 10K, 25K, Half and Full Marathon," she said.

She now plans to use the prize money of Rs 2 lakh to buy tickets for Kenya where she wants to train with the best coaches. She will be there for 30 days and will return to compete in Tata Mumbai Marathon and plans to do better than her silver finish in 2017.

Curfew relaxed in Guwahati, parts of Dibrugarh district



GUWAHATI, DEC 15 (PTI): Curfew imposed on Guwahati and parts of Dibrugarh district in the wake of the violent protests against the amended Citizenship Act was relaxed on Sunday for several hours, police said.

Special trains have been arranged by the Assam tourism department in association with the railways to ferry passengers stranded in various parts of the state.

According to an official, curfew has been relaxed from 9 am to 6 pm in Guwahati. In Dibrugarh west, Naharkatia, Tenughat areas, it has been relaxed from 7 am to 4 pm.

Six flights, however, had to be cancelled,

including one to Paro in Bhutan, in view of the law-and-order situation, an official of Airports Authority of India in Guwahati said.

Long queues were seen outside grocery shops at several places, including Dispur, Uzan Bazar, Chandmari, Silpukhuri and Zoo Road in Guwahati town. Auto-rickshaws and cycle-rickshaws were plying across the city since morning.

Petrol pumps have also opened with vehicles waiting in lines to refuel. Police were using loudspeakers to inform the public about the relaxation.

Meanwhile, members of the Guwahati unit of the Asom Gana Parishad

(AGP) held demonstrations outside party headquarters in Ambari area, demanding resignation of three ministers, including party president Atul Bora.

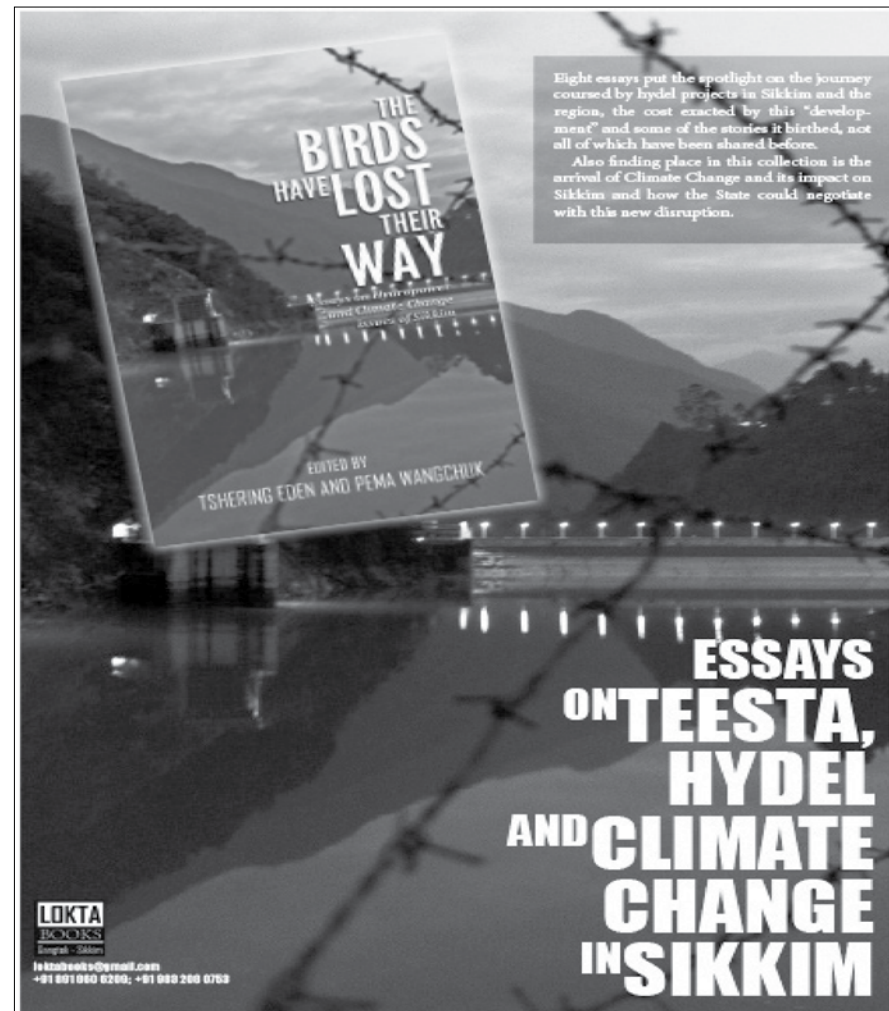
AGP members in Parliament had voted in favour of the contentious bill.

Students' organisations AASU and AJYC also took out rallies across the state, seeking revocation of the law.

Violent protests had erupted in the city and other parts of the state earlier this week after the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was passed in Parliament, with agitators engaging in pitched battles with the police, forcing the administration to impose curfew.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

email us: news@summittimes.com



Gattuso loses on Napoli debut as late Gervinho winner lifts Parma



MILAN, DEC 15 (AFP): Gennaro Gattuso's debut as Napoli coach ended in a 2-1 injury-time defeat to Parma as last season's Serie A runners-up extended their winless run to eight league games.

Gattuso took over after Carlo Ancelotti was sacked despite Napoli's 4-0 Champions League win over Genk booking their place in the last 16 in midweek.

But the former AC Milan coach's reign got off to the worst possible start as the southerners drop to eighth -- 17 points behind leaders Inter Milan who play Fiorentina on Sunday.

Gervinho struck the winner in the third minute of injury time after Dejan Kulusevski had put Parma ahead after just four minutes in Naples.

Arkadiusz Milik pulled the hosts level on 64 minutes in the game which had been delayed after high winds damaged the roofing of the San Paolo Stadium.

"This team is suffering psychologically," said Gattuso, "paying for the fact that it has not won (in the league) for 50 or more days.

"The mirror of the current situation was the first ten minutes. It's tough, as are the whistles of the fans. There's a lot of work to do."

Kulusevski struck early as defender Kalidou Koulibaly lost control of the ball minutes into the game.

The Senegalese defender went off with a thigh injury just after his blunder, with Parma also losing striker Andreas Cornelius to injury after quarter of an hour.

Napoli captain Lorenzo Insigne missed chances to break through,

inexplicably sending wide with just Parma goalkeeper Luigi Sepe to beat.

Gattuso brought on Dries Mertens after an hour with the Belgian setting up Milik to head past Sepe, the Polish striker following on from his hat-trick against Genk.

Gervinho threatened when he raced up the pitch, past the Napoli defence with Alex Meret stopping with his foot.

The Ivorian finally broke through three minutes into added time, scoring after a counter-attack with Kulusevski.

"Insigne? He's not the problem, he's not the only one who played badly," said Gattuso as Napoli sit eight points off the Champions League places with their last win against Verona on October 19.

- SAMPDORIA WIN GENOA DERBY -

Gattuso missed out on the Champions League places with AC Milan last season.

But the former World Cup winner with Italy, conceded Napoli's situation was different as it came against a backdrop of past success.

"Milan was a team in trouble, coming out of four or five problem years," said Gattuso.

"Here everything that is happening is something new.

"In the past few years 80 percent of these players have always come second or third and are not used to not winning in the league for 50 days.

"They find themselves dealing with a situation they have never experienced, and are paying for this."

Napoli travel to Sas-

uolo on December 22 for their final game before the winter break.

"Fourth place? More than thinking about that right now we have to work to improve ourselves and think game by game," added Gattuso.

Parma coach Roberto D'Aversa believes that both they and fourth-placed Cagliari are proving they can match the top teams.

"Coming here and conquering the three points was not easy," he said, as seventh-placed Parma target a return to Europe for the first time since 2007.

Parma qualified for the Europa League in the 2014-15 season, but lost their place amid a dispute over income tax payments.

Substitute Manolo Gabbiadini struck five minutes from time off a Karol Linetty cross to hand Sampdoria a 1-0 win in a relegation battle against city rivals Genoa.

Claudio Ranieri's side are two points above the drop zone ahead of Brescia who beat Lecce 3-0.

"Winning the derby is always important," said Ranieri who has now won all four major Italian city derbies as a coach in Rome, Milan, Turin and Genoa.

"It was a difficult game, played with a knife between the teeth. Both of us are fighting against relegation."

Sampdoria host champions Juventus next Wednesday, a team Ranieri coached for two seasons.

"We cannot get distracted," continued the former Leicester manager. "We are not out of the quicksand yet." Genoa are second last in the table, four points from safety.

teams, in incredible tennis players, there are problems or periods in the season when you struggle a little bit.

"I would say that is normal, that the people can expect it. That is going to help us, the situation we are in is going to help us in the future."

Guardiola did, though, admit that after a clean sweep of domestic silverware last season, some measure of complacency may have cost City and warned his players they must prove he can count on them for next season.

"Maybe we believe something we are not and reality of sport is to make you (prove yourself) again and again and again," he added on the spectre of complacency.

"Unfortunately now, in the position we are in, we have to overcome that situation. It is tomorrow and the next games we prove how we are as a team.

Coutinho hits hat-trick in Bayern rout as Leipzig go top

BERLIN, DEC 15 (AFP): Philippe Coutinho scored a hat-trick as Bayern Munich signalled their return to form with a 6-1 thrashing of Werder Bremen in the Bundesliga, while RB Leipzig took over first place.

The Barcelona loanee was everywhere for Munich at the Allianz Arena, chalking up two assists in addition to his three goals, but Bayern remain six points adrift of Leipzig.

Julian Nagelsmann's ambitious side replaced Borussia Moenchengladbach at the top following a comfortable 3-0 victory at Fortuna Duesseldorf.

Bayern had lost their previous two games in the Bundesliga and appeared to be in for another long afternoon when the champions fell behind to Bremen midfielder Milot Rashica's goal in the 24th minute.

Two goals in three minutes at the end of the first half however turned the game on its head, with Coutinho and Robert Lewandowski both scoring to fire Bayern into a 2-1 lead.

Bayern ran riot after the break, adding four more goals - including

two more for Coutinho, one more for Lewandowski and a goal for Thomas Mueller. Coutinho's second, a brilliant chip over keeper Jiri Pavlenka, came right out of the Brazilian trickster's top drawer.

Bayern coach Hansi Flick praised Coutinho's performance as "just great".

"It was great fun for everyone to see how he performed. What made me particularly happy was the way that the team really celebrated his efforts - it was from the heart.

"We're all incredibly pleased with the effort he put in today."

Coutinho's form has been questioned since he arrived from Barcelona in the summer, however he was given a standing ovation by the Bayern crowd when subbed off in the 82nd minute.

- SINGH MAKES HISTORY -

He was brought off for another summer arrival Sarpreet Singh, who became the first player of Indian descent -- and just the second New Zea-



lander -- to play in the Bundesliga.

Bayern defender David Alaba said after the game that his side didn't panic when they went behind, knowing they had the quality to reel in the visitors.

"You saw the character that our team has - we completely turned the match in the moments before half-time," he said.

Leipzig recorded their sixth straight win against Fortuna to move two points clear of Gladbach.

The visitors opened the scoring after just two minutes, with Patrik Schick volleying in a cross from Konrad Laim-

er.

Timo Werner then scored a penalty in the 58th minute to bring up his 16th goal of the season, before defender Nordi Mukiele put the game beyond doubt in the 75th minute with Leipzig's third.

Nagelsmann said his side's focus was not directed at securing top spot, but rather at how things can be improved ahead of Tuesday's clash with Borussia Dortmund.

"We missed a few chances in the first half. We controlled the game really well in the second," he said.

"These are three very important points. We were able to hold something back at the end with Tuesday's big game in mind." Dortmund continued their superb recent form, winning 4-0 away at Mainz to keep hold of third place.

Marco Reus scored his first away goal of the season with a stunning volley from the edge of the box, before Jadon Sancho, Thorgan Hazard and Nico Schulz all scored in the second half.

Sancho has now scored in six games in

a row for Dortmund, while Schulz's goal was his first in Dortmund colours.

In Berlin, Hertha registered their first victory under former Germany coach Jurgen Klinsmann, winning 1-0 over a disappointing Freiburg courtesy of a Vladimir Darida goal in the 53rd minute.

Struggling Cologne picked up a vital three points at home against nine-man Bayer Leverkusen to take them off the bottom of the table. Leverkusen lost Aleksandar Dragovic and Leon Bailey to red cards in a 15-minute period in the second half and were unable to hold on as Cologne won 2-0.

Union Berlin's recent run of victories came to an end following a 1-1 draw against lowly Paderborn. Union, who had won four of their last five, started well, scoring through Marcus Ingvartsen in the seventh minute, before Paderborn equalised via Kai Proger.

Gladbach have a chance to return top away to Wolfsburg on Sunday, while Schalke host Eintracht Frankfurt.

Chess: Of Karpov's critical remark and Anand's rise

NEW DELHI, DEC 15 (PTI): Anatoly Karpov once critically remarked that Viswanathan Anand "doesn't have the character" to win big games. The observation "hit a raw nerve", says the Indian, who has since become a name as big as the Russian in chess world.

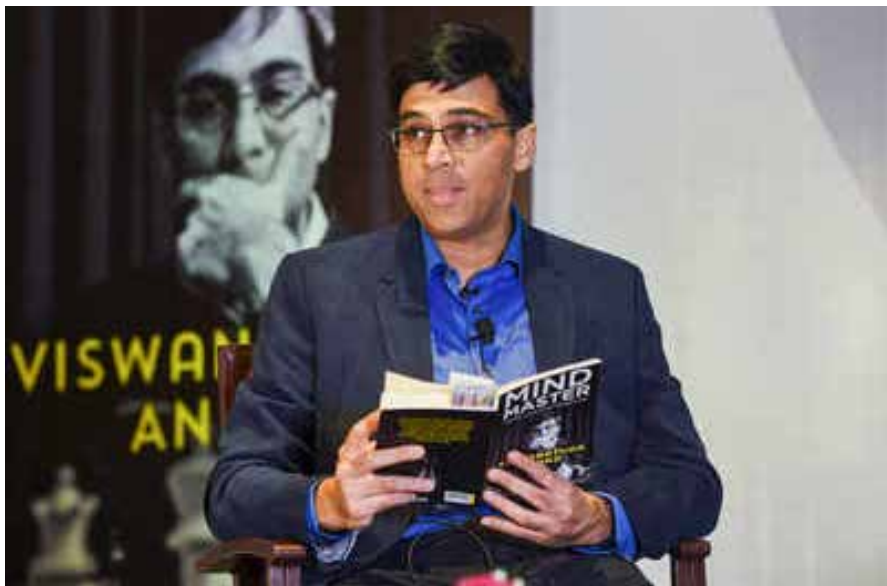
"Ah, well Vishy's a nice guy but he just doesn't have the character for a big win," was what Karpov had said about Anand after beating him in the final of the 1998 world championship.

Anand recalled the remark in his newly-released autography -- 'Mind Master - Winning Lessons from a Champion's Life'.

It was made to a journalist by Karpov, while Anand and his wife sat at the adjacent table, after the final.

"His words hit a raw nerve. It was a decidedly unpleasant feeling to be seen as a good player who lacked the conviction to win big," Anand writes in his book.

"I was working myself up to display my potential and this swipe only reinforced the conviction I already had deep within - nothing else mattered



anymore, I just had to win a title now."

In 1998, after several near misses, Anand had the chance to claim his maiden world championship title, albeit under peculiar circumstances. The Indian had qualified for the finals by winning a knock-out tournament in Groningen but had to immediately travel to Lausanne to play for the title without a break or time for preparation.

Former world champion Karpov, on the other hand, was directly seeded for the final.

Two of the biggest names in chess then, Garry Kasparov and

Vladimir Kramnik, had refused to participate in the tournament over the privileges being extended to Karpov.

To add to his woes, Anand was also burdened with the logistics of booking a flight for his entire team from Amsterdam to Lausanne, and find accommodation during the peak holiday season.

"We hadn't planned our travel to Lausanne in advance since the outcome of the Candidates tournament couldn't have been foreseen. FIDE, too, had made no arrangements for the winner to reach Lausanne

from Amsterdam."

"It was New Year's Eve and flights were overbooked. We somehow managed to reach only to find out FIDE had booked all its officials into hotel rooms but made no provisions, whatsoever, to accommodate the winner of the 21-day-long knockout tournament."

The championship match ended in a 3-3 draw, forcing a rapid playoff, which Karpov went on to win to be crowned world champion.

"It was almost as if I had been asked to run a 100-metre sprint after completing a cross coun-

try marathon," writes Anand.

"The defeat rankled like few had before... It was soon after my loss, that Karpov spoke of my inability to win a world championship title while still justifying his own credentials despite the brazenly undue advantage he had received. He had been fresh, well-rested and pottering around while I was almost 'brought in a coffin' to play him."

The incident led the Indian Grandmaster to reflect on his career's trajectory.

"I felt it was perhaps true that I had lacked the intent and the mental fortitude to win a World Championship title. For a long time in my career, I wasn't quite fired up by the ambition to become the World Champion," Anand writes.

In 2000, the first leg of the FIDE World Championship was held in New Delhi and Anand grabbed the home advantage with both hands. He cruised into the final, to be played in Tehran.

It was smooth sailing in the final as well. After a drawn first game, Anand won the next three to win the title.

Confident Punjab FC face Indian Arrows in I-League

LUDHIANA, DEC 15 (PTI): High on confidence after their impressive win over defending champions Chennai City FC in their previous match, Punjab FC will play host to All India Football Federation developmental side's Indian Arrows in an I-League game here on Monday.

The match against the Arrows will be Punjab's third successive match at home, while for the travelling youngsters, it will be their first on the road this season.

Since losing to Churchill Brothers in their



season opener in Goa, Punjab have drawn against East Bengal 1-1 before beating Chennai City 3-1 in a thoroughly impressive performance on December 10 at home.

Reflecting on his side's impressive display, Punjab FC head coach Yan Law said, "Against

Chennai, the boys showed good tactical discipline and a fantastic desire to win.

"Even after a late equaliser from Chennai, the lads showed pure class and pulled back two more goals in the dying minutes of the game. I'm very proud of each and

every one of them and I know they are capable of doing much more."

He remains wary of the threat that the Arrows possess and added, "Arrows are a good side who have tremendous quality and potential. They have given both their oppositions, Gokulam and Aizawl a tough time in their first two fixtures.

"This is a team to take very seriously and not underestimate. It is going to be a tough game as they are quite a compact and structured team."

Indian Arrows, on the

other hand, have played twice at home and despite showing grit and tenacity came up short against Gokulam Kerala and Aizawl. A positive result against Punjab in an away trip could serve as a massive boost to get their campaign.

Speaking ahead of the match, head coach Shanmugam Venkatesh said, "We know that Punjab FC won by a good margin against defending champions Chennai City in their last match and their confidence and motivation levels will be high, for sure.

UN climate talks end with limited progress on emissions targets

FIONA HARVEY
MADRID, 15 DEC [THEGUARDIAN]: Climate talks in Madrid have ended with a partial agreement to ask countries to come up with more ambitious targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions in order to meet the terms of the 2015 Paris accord.

Few countries came to this year's talks with updated plans to reach the Paris goals, though the EU finally agreed its long-term target of reaching net zero emissions by 2050. Experts say more ambitious emissions cuts are needed globally if the Paris pledge to hold global heating to no more than 2C is to be met.

This year's round of annual UN talks focused on narrow technical issues such as the workings of the global carbon markets, a means by which countries can trade their successes in cutting emissions with other countries that have not cut their own emis-

sions fast enough.

By midday on Sunday, more than 40 hours after the talks deadline, agreement on that was still far off and the issue will have to be resolved next year.

There were fears that the more substantive issue of future emissions cuts would also be sidelined, but a "high ambition coalition" made up of the EU and many smaller developing countries pressed for a resolution to ask all governments to formulate stronger national plans on cutting carbon.

They partially succeeded, and they will now hope to put political pressure – from within the talks, in behind-the-scenes meetings in world capitals, and in the outside world from civil society – on all governments to recommit to the 2015 Paris accord in 2020 through updates to their national climate plans.

That will be a difficult task, judging by the



scenes at the two-week-long Madrid conference.

No major breakthrough had been seriously expected at this year's meeting, known as COP25, but observers had at least hoped to see a spirit of cooperation and a willingness to press ahead with the Paris agreement goal of holding temperature rises to no more than 2C.

Both were lacking as the talks moved into the early hours of Sunday. Poor countries grew angry at what they saw as intransigence on the part of some richer nations, while the EU and

a coalition of developing countries urged others to come forward with more ambitious plans to combat climate breakdown.

In the final hours, weary negotiators wrangled over the wording of provisions for "loss and damage", by which developing countries are hoping to receive financial assistance for the ravages they face from climate breakdown. The US was blamed for refusing to agree to developing countries' demands under what is known in the UN jargon as the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM).

A US state department official said: "The US government is the largest humanitarian donor in the world. The WIM should be a constructive space to catalyse action on the wide range of loss and damage issues. A divisive conversation on blame and liability helps no one."

Brazil held up agreement over a provision allowing governments to trade in carbon credits. It insisted that its carbon sinks – mainly forests, including the Amazon – should count towards its emissions-cutting goals, while also selling carbon

credits derived from preserving forests to other countries to count towards their emissions targets. Other countries said this was double counting and would undermine the carbon trading system.

Governments discussed these points for two weeks with little official attention paid to the broader and more urgent issue of how countries can accelerate their plans to cut carbon in the next decade.

Protesters outside and inside the halls pointed to increasingly stark scientific warnings and

the world's failure so far to cut greenhouse gases. Research published during the talks showed that emissions have risen by 4% since the Paris agreement was signed in 2015, and cuts of more than 7% a year will be needed in the next decade to avoid dangerous levels of heating.

Jamie Henn, the strategy director at the pressure group 350.org, said: "The level of disconnect between what this COP should have delivered and what it's on track to deliver is appalling and is a sign that the very foundations of the Paris agreement are being shaken up. A handful of loud countries has hijacked the process and is keeping the rest of the planet hostage."

Mohamed Adow, the director of Power Shift Africa, a climate and energy thinktank, said: "This is a disastrous, profoundly distressing outcome – the worst I have ever seen. At a time when scientists are queuing up

to warn about terrifying consequences if emissions keep rising, and schoolchildren taking to the streets in their millions, what we have here in Madrid is a betrayal of people across the world. It is disgraceful and governments are simply not doing their job of protecting the planet."

The most high-profile of those young protesters, Greta Thunberg, tweeted a picture of herself on the way home from the conference on Sunday.

The lack of progress leaves the UK, as a co-host of next year's talks, with a diplomatic mountain to climb in the next 10 months. In Glasgow early next November, countries will meet again with the aim of strengthening their commitments on emissions cuts under the Paris accord.

Without such reinforcements, current commitments put the world on track for at least 3C of warning, which scientists say would spell disaster.

'I own this disaster': John McDonnell tries to shield Corbyn

ROWENA MASON
LONDON, 15 DEC [THEGUARDIAN]: John McDonnell has said he takes full responsibility for Labour's disastrous election defeat, as he sought to divert blame away from Jeremy Corbyn and pave the way for Rebecca Long-Bailey to become leader.

The shadow chancellor, who ran the campaign that led to Labour losing dozens of northern English seats to the Tories, apologised and claimed that he "owns this disaster". But he went on to blame the failure to communicate the party's Brexit policy and media attacks on Jeremy Corbyn for the defeat as well.

Speaking on the BBC's Andrew Marr Show, he said: "It's on me. It's on me. Let's take it on the chin. I own this disaster. I apologise to all those wonderful Labour MPs who've lost their seats who've worked so hard ... If anyone's to blame it is me. Full stop."

Corbyn has not apologised for the election defeat although he has said he is "very sad" about the result. He released a video on Sunday with the comment "our time will come", in an apparent attempt to defend his policies and cement his legacy.

"Make no mistake, Labour is the greatest force for progressive change this country has ever known. And though this wasn't our moment, our

time will come," he said. "Over the last four years we have built a new movement which isn't going away. For those that feel disheartened and feel like giving up, I say stay and fight for a better society."

"And to those that haven't joined us, join the Labour party today. Be part of the resistance to Boris Johnson and the politics of fear. This starts now. Campaigning to protect our communities, our national health service and public services must be relentless. So that when elections come, we will be bigger and stronger. We will win."

Corbyn made no reference to his intention to step down but McDonnell confirmed they would both leave their posts within the next eight to 10 weeks and he suggested his favoured candidate for the leadership would be Rebecca Long-Bailey, a longtime ally.

He said he would like to see a woman take over, and preferably someone from outside London, listing Angela Rayner and Dawn Butler among other possibilities.

Lisa Nandy, a Labour backbencher and former shadow cabinet minister under Ed Miliband, said she was "seriously thinking" about running.

Nandy told Marr that there was a "very, very hard road" to regain the trust of Labour voters in

towns across the north of England.

"I think it's right to say that we need to be much more rooted in those parts of the country. I think that goes beyond the leader though," she said.

"There's absolutely no reason why decision-making is concentrated in central London. Our Labour headquarters, in my view, should move out of London, our regional offices should be empowered to take real decisions, we should move our party conferences back to towns as well as cities."

Jess Phillips, the outspoken backbencher and women's rights campaigner, could also run, plus Yvette Cooper, a former Labour minister who was a losing candidate against Corbyn in 2015. Other leading contenders include Keir Starmer, the shadow Brexit secretary, and Emily Thornberry, the shadow foreign secretary.

However, there is a backlash within some quarters of the party against Starmer and Thornberry, who were instrumental in pushing Labour towards a position in favour of a second referendum.

Caroline Flint, a former Labour minister who lost her Don Valley seat, said the only two candidates worth considering were Long-Bailey and Nandy, as they were not complicit in pushing the party towards a more

remain position.

She claimed on Sky's Sophy Ridge on Sunday that Thornberry had told a Labour colleague in a leave-voting seat: "I'm glad my constituents aren't as stupid as yours."

Flint said the next leader should not be "Corbyn without a beard".

Thornberry, who has not yet confirmed whether she is running, hit back saying: "This is a total and utter lie. I have never said this to anyone, nor anything like it, and I hope, needless to say, it is not something I would ever think."

Richard Burgon, the shadow justice secretary and an ally of Corbyn, had been considered a possible contender but he threw his weight behind Long-Bailey and suggested he could run as her deputy.

Speaking on Sky, he blamed the party's Brexit position of promising a second referendum without saying how it would campaign, as well as a "character assassination" of Corbyn by rightwing media.

"I think it was right to attempt to bring the country together on that basis. Did it fail? We've got to be open, it did fail," he said. "It was a disastrous election result and for that we are truly sorry ... I think the biggest mistake the Labour party made was perhaps underestimating the desire for people who had voted leave to leave the European Union."

Political party offices in Lebanon set alight after crackdown on protests

BEIRUT, 15 DEC [AP]: Attackers in northern Lebanon set fire to the offices of two main political parties on Sunday, the state-run National News Agency has said.

In the town of Khaziribet al-Jindi, an office of the party of the former prime minister Saad Hariri was torched and its windows were broken.

In a separate attack in town of Jedidat al-Juma, assailants stormed an office of the largest party in parliament, affiliated with President Michel Aoun and headed by the foreign minister, Gebran Bas-

sil. The party said the contents of the office had been smashed and burned.

Hours earlier in the capital, Beirut, security forces had carried out the most violent crackdown on protesters since nationwide demonstrations began two months ago.

The security forces fired rubber bullets, teargas and used water cannons throughout the night to disperse protesters in the city centre and around parliament.

The overnight confrontations left more than 130 people injured, according to the Red

Cross and the Lebanese civil defence.

The interior minister, Raya Haffar al-Hassan, ordered an investigation into the clashes, which she said had injured both protesters and security forces.

She blamed what she called "infiltrators" for instigating the violence and called on the demonstrators to be wary of those who sought to exploit their protests for political reasons.

Lebanon is facing one of its worst economic crises in decades, and the protesters accuse the political class that has been ruling for three decades

of mismanagement and corruption.

The nationwide protests began on 17 October, and the government headed by Hariri resigned two weeks later. Political parties have since been bickering over the shape and form of the new cabinet. Protesters want a technocratic government that is not affiliated with established political parties.

Aoun is due to hold talks with different parliamentary blocs to name a new prime minister on Monday. After weeks of back and forth, Hariri has emerged as the likely candidate for the job.

Boko Haram kill 19 Nigeria herders in clashes: sources

KANO, DEC 15 (AFP): Boko Haram jihadists gunned down 19 cattle herders Saturday in northeast Nigeria, civilian militia sources and residents told AFP on Sunday.

Ethnic Fulani herders, besieged by a spate of armed attacks targeting their cattle, pursued Boko Haram, sparking a fierce gunfight outside Fuhe village, near Ngala close to the border with Cameroon.

"The insurgents killed 19 of the herdsmen in the fight," anti-jihadist militia leader Umar Kachalla told AFP.

Bodies of the slain herders were brought to the police by militiamen, Kachalla said.

The herders had earlier repelled an attack by Boko Haram fighters who invaded the village to steal livestock, killing one of the militants, Mada said.

The herders then de-



cided to pursue the jihadists and fight them "once and for all", Mada said, but were overwhelmed.

"The herdsmen were subdued by the better armed Boko Haram gunmen," he said.

Jihadists then returned to Fuhe village and burnt homes and food supplies while herds fled, according to Ngala resident Abubakar Yusuf, who saw the dead bodies at the police station.

Boko Haram has increasingly targeted farmers, herders and loggers, accusing them of spying and passing information to the military and the lo-

cal militia fighting them.

They have also been raiding herding communities, seizing cattle -- a valuable commodity in the region -- to fund their operations.

Boko Haram and rival Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) are known to operate in areas around Ngala and the neighbouring town of Gamboru.

ISWAP has focused on targeting military installations and troops since 2018 while Boko Haram faction is notorious for indiscriminate attacks on civilians.

However, ISWAP has been blamed for a recent

increase in attacks on civilians.

In August 2014 Boko Haram seized Ngala and Gamboru, a trading hub, but Nigerian troops retook both towns in September 2015 with the help of the Chadian military.

Despite the recapture of the area, jihadist fighters continue to launch sporadic attacks, ambushing troops and vehicles, as well as attacking and abducting farmers.

In November last year Boko Haram abducted around 50 loggers at Bulakesa village outside Gamboru.

The decade-long conflict has killed 35,000 people and displaced around two million from their homes.

The violence has spread to neighbouring Niger, Chad and Cameroon, prompting the formation of a regional military coalition to fight the jihadists.

VIDEO NEWS SECTION

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KOLKATA OFFICE:
Irshad Ali/ Imteyaz, Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine - 2, 2nd floor, Kolkata - 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-983100397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com

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03592-208698
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RAN WEI IS ABOUT TO BURN UP YOUR SCREENS: Ran Wei, born in China and raised in the US, is a model/actress whose stellar resume checks off every bucket list. As a model, she's walked the runways for Miu Miu and Tom Ford. She's also made a splash by being featured in Apple's commercial as well as starring alongside Post Malone and 21 Savage in their music video "Rockstar". Not to forget, she's also working on a top secret project with Adrien Brody and taken up a new role in Cyborgs Universe, which is coming out on Netflix in 2020. Blessed with a square jaw, razor-sharp cheekbones and Jolie-esque pouty lips, it's no secret that this lovely Libra's beauty has been able to make designers, rappers and casting directors swoon.

Never felt fan expectations for Poe Dameron: Oscar Isaac

LOS ANGELES, DEC 15 (PTI): Oscar Isaac believes there were never expectations from fans about he portrays his "Star Wars" character of Poe Dameron, which he said was a relief.

The actor first essayed the role in 2015's "The Force Awakens", which he followed up with 2017's "The Last Jedi".

In an interview with Variety, Isaac said that since his character was new, there was less pressure on him in terms of performance.

"I never felt that there was these big fan expectations for Poe. People felt certain things for him, but there wasn't necessarily like, I hope they better do this with Poe in the next one.' So I never really felt that so much," the actor said.

But after the success of "The Force Awakens", Isaac said he felt self-conscious while working on the second part.

"I think the first one, I was able to do the trick that I kind of always do, which is really put myself in the mentality that, well, no one might see this and it's not about that and really, it's just about what's happening right now. There's no control over what it's going to be.

"It was difficult in the second one to kind of maintain that illusion, after seeing how massive it was. So (I was) battling with self-consciousness, and already, you know, there's something about these kinds of movies that invite one to be even more self-conscious, because there's just so much looking out to, you know, looking back into it, like, what is this tone? What are you supposed to be doing?" the actor added.

Isaac reprises the character in the upcoming installment "The Rise of Skywalker", which releases worldwide on December 20.

ARIES: There's no such thing as TMI for you today, Aries. With the moon in your sign, you're in your live-out-loud element. Don't feel bad about being so...overt. Your bold authenticity will actually create a safe space in which others can open up. Own your past, Ram! Those "embarrassing" mishaps birthed golden lessons that you can pass on to others who are struggling with the same issues.

TAURUS: You're in an emo groove today, Taurus, so just go with it. This is one of those days when you'd benefit from setting aside that intense work ethic so you can bond with the people in your environment. Power down your laptop and go have lunch with a colleague. You could even have a chance to pass along some of your sage wisdom to someone who is struggling with an issue you've overcome. Reach up to mentors too, especially a powerful woman who's been in your corner in the past.

GEMINI: Lighten up about love today, Gemini. With the moon in your "the more the merrier" eleventh house, you could turn

that table for two into a table for six or eight. If your entourage has yet to meet your amour du jour, this would be the perfect day for a getting-to-know-you gathering. Single? Sparks could fly with a friend of a friend.

CANCER: Be more "purpose-driven" in your personal life today. People adore you, and there are plenty of friendships you COULD cultivate. But since each one requires an investment of time, you want to reserve your energy for folks who fill your cup—not a bunch of small-talking randos. Have you been loading up your calendar with "meh" events out of fear of being lonely?

LEO: Bigger, stronger, faster: Well, why not, Leo? Today's moon in your expansive ninth house could bring rapid expansion to one of your goals. Take your foot off the brake, but keep your hands on the wheel. You of all people know that progress CAN happen at supersonic speed. People from other parts of the globe could be involved, so get ready to fire up Skype or Zoom and brainstorm away! To accelerate the process, you might have to take a risk. Make sure it's a

calculated leap instead of an impulsive gamble. **VIRGO:** Got secrets? One of those skeletons is rattling the closet door, begging to be freed. Time for a confessional conversation, Virgo—the truth will liberate your soul. Connect with a trusted confidante tonight, over the phone or huddled in a private corner. If you just want them to listen without offering advice, make that clear up-front.

LIBRA: Forget all those parental advisories about the dangers of talking to strangers. Today, your usual people-watching could erupt into a fascinating dialogue when you see someone at a coffee shop who's reading a book that changed your life or who's wearing an indie-label designer that only a few insiders know about.

SCORPIO: You're back! On March 5, expressive Mercury turned retrograde in your passionate fifth house. You may have felt like you were missing the love boat. Or perhaps you couldn't get a clear read on a romantic interest. Get ready to shake off the confusion and insecurity today, as the communication planet powers forward and calls forth your most radiant self!

SAGITTARIUS: Put a little luxe in your life. Today's decadent fifth-house moon gives you a hall pass to be a little hedonistic. This doesn't have to be harmful to your health or the Earth. Skip the avocado toast and sip a smoothie made with young coconut milk, which requires less water to produce. Looking for a signature accessory for spring? Find a sustainable jeweler who repurposes gold and gems from antique pieces. This romantic lunation can turn up the heat with a love interest. Slip off for a lunch date, and don't be surprised if it turns into a spicy nooner. Though it's a weeknight, do what you can to lure friends out for some cultural activities—or at least happy hour!!

CAPRICORN: Bless this mess? Not today! With the Aries moon percolating in your domestic fourth house, tidying up your spaces could lead to sharper thinking. As within, so without, right? Now, here's the rub: The piles in your space might be a metaphor for situations you've been avoiding. As you're folding laundry and deleting junk mail, you may become acutely aware of emotions that you

swept under the rug.

AQUARIUS: The Aquarius social butterfly is bursting out of the cocoon thanks to today's lunar lift in your communication corner. Since you won't have much patience for desk work, rejig your schedule so you can handle the people-oriented tasks on your to-do list. A spontaneous lunch date with a coworker could turn into an amazing brainstorming session that leaves you buzzing with inspiration. With the moon in active Aries, slip out for fresh-air breaks. Who says you can't listen in on a conference call while walking the trail of an urban park?

PISCES: Would you care to upgrade, Pisces? With the moon beaming into your sensual (but sensible) second house, you're willing to splurge on quality. Review your financials: Is there room to indulge? As long as it's practical and functional, you can consider it an investment. Funds too tight for that go-with-everything Celine bag or the cold-pressed juicer? Create a special savings account and make your first deposit today. This will motivate you to keep on hustling, even if your gratification is delayed.

'Dabangg 4' has fallen in place: Salman Khan

MUMBAI, DEC 15 (PTI): Superstar Salman Khan said he is glad the fourth instalment of his "Dabangg" franchise has already fallen in place.

The superstar is back in the avatar of cop Chulbul Pandey with "Dabangg 3", directed by Prabhudeva. But Salman has already started looking at the fourth chapter in the series and is ready to work on it.

"It is very difficult (to take a franchise forward). But this one has fallen in place. Even the fourth one has fallen in place. It happens sometimes, like 'Rocky' or 'Rambo' series, which falls in place. So this one has too," Salman said in a group interview.

The actor said "Dabangg 3" is "semi-prequel" as it chronicles both past and present.

"I came up with a thought and Arbaaz and I just kept on improvising, brainstorming. We wanted to start

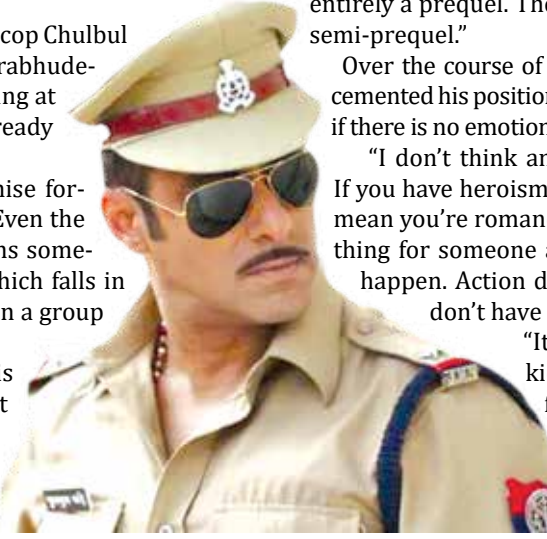
from the present and go in the past to track the journey of Chulbul Pandey and how his past comes in his present. It's not entirely a prequel. The whole film isn't set in the past. It's semi-prequel."

Over the course of his career, the 53-year-old actor has cemented his position as an action star. But he believes that if there is no emotion in a film, the action is mindless.

"I don't think anything works better than heroism. If you have heroism in a film, it works. Heroism doesn't mean you're romancing a girl or... It means doing something for someone against all odds and you make that happen. Action doesn't make sense till the time you don't have emotions backing it.

"It doesn't matter you jump, punch, kick or the numbers of fighters you fight, if it's emotions isn't set in the right place. The action is meaningless," he added.

"Dabangg 3" is scheduled to release on December 20.



You can't be honest about someone's work in industry, they don't take it well: Kareena

MUMBAI, DEC 15 (PTI): Kareena Kapoor Khan believes it's impossible to be honest about someone's work in the industry as they don't take it well but it's important for stars to have people around who tell them the truth.

The actor said she expects people who are close to her to tell her honest views about her films.

When asked can one be honest about someone's work in the industry, Kareena told PTI, "I don't think so. They don't take it well. If you want the truth, they don't take it well. I'd like someone to tell me if they didn't like a particular film, at least the people I am close to, I'd expect the honest truth."

Kareena said she has been relevant over all these years because she has never surrounded herself with "yes men". "It's important for actors and stars to have people around them to show them the reality. I'm very practical when it comes to that. I've never liked having yes men around me. Probably early on when you're young, you get excited and do that but now I'm way too practical," she added. Kareena, 39, has always been vocal about her opinions, both about people and films. She, however, believes the actors today are politically correct with "everyone praising everyone."

She agreed that she would have been more guarded about her opinions if she were to debut today. "I think so. May be I was very bold, the kind of person I was for then. Today, it's the digital age, everyone has an opinion. Everyone is talking about what films they should do, what clothes are being worn.

"I'm happy my voice is not heard and then it was. I enjoyed that time and now I'm enjoying this time of watching everyone and hearing everyone, which is great."

Kareena is currently awaiting the release of her film "Good Newwz", which bows out on December 27.

Political correctness about dwarfism can be damaging: Peter Dinklage

NEW YORK, DEC 15 (PTI): Peter Dinklage says he does not "care" about being politically correct with regard to dwarfism as he believes it can be "damaging".

The 50-year-old, who was born with a common form of dwarfism called achondroplasia, said he is not always politically correct.

"I myself am not always the most politically correct person in terms of my dwarfism. I don't care, really. I think that can be damaging as well.

"For example, if I see a kid and he's pointing at me, and the parent has him look the other way, what's that kid going to grow up into? Somebody who can't make eye contact with somebody who's four and a half feet tall? That's sad, to me," Dinklage told The New Yorker in an interview.

In everyday life, the "Game of Thrones" star, said he understands the fact the parents would not like to embarrass him but stopping children from expressing their curiosity is not the solution.

"I understand it in the moment, because they don't want to embarrass me. And, what, are we going to have an educational seminar walking down the street? There's no time for that.

"But those little things add up in our DNA in terms of how we see people who are physically unique, and that can be destructive," he said.

Dinklage said he had had the "front-row seat" as to how the



world treats people who are physically different.

He added he does not want to be the actor who changes the world "in terms of how somebody my size is presented".

"Because that would be putting me before the work. It's just bad writing to make that the dominant character trait. It's not my dominant character trait. It has to be part of a complex portrait that informs other pieces of your personality," the actor said.