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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## "Illegal" appointments under OFOJ to be "rectified" not "removed": Govt

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 08 JUN:**

The recent notification of the State Government directing that all appointments and joining by candidates employed under the One Family, One Job scheme be cancelled has led to much worry and confusion among the beneficiaries. Recently, the ruling Sikkim Krantikari Morcha had explained that the government was not planning to end the scheme but only acting on illegal appointments which is how it sees joining of OFOJ employees while the model code of conduct was in force.

Today, the State Government also weighed in and stated that its "aim is not to cancel the orders of the One Family One Job Scheme but it is to give justice to true beneficiaries."

A press communiqué forwarded by the IPR Department contends that no appointments or joining can take place after the enforcement of Model Code of Conduct.

"On our deliberate part

we will uphold the sanctity of the Election Commission of India and not violate the MCC norms," the release states.

The release also goes on to inform that the State Government has also learned that there have been more than one appointment in the same family under OFOJ "which defeats the purpose of the scheme which was envisioned to give employment to a member of every family which does not have a government job in the state." The release adds, "These genuine beneficiaries have been left out and thus our aim is to review and verify so that poor people are not deprived of this chance."

While calling on the people not to listen to rumours, the release states: "It stands on its stance that all the illegal appointments would be rectified and 'not removed' and the state government is verifying the appointments based on their nature, joining dates etc so that genuine people are benefitted."

## Four teams advance to B Div this time C Div final match between Sanju FA and Sikkim Boys FC

**SAGAR CHETTRI**

**GANGTOK, 08 JUN:** Sanju Football Academy, Sombaria, Sikkim Boys FC, Red Panda FC, Namchi and Brotherhood FC have qualified for the Sikkim Football Association [SFA] B Division Sikkim League 2020.

Sanju FA has emerged as the topper of Group A followed by Red Panda FC in second position in the points tally, while Sikkim Boys finished the league round of C division as topper of Group B and Brotherhood FC finished in second position in Group B.

Group toppers, Sanju FA and Sikkim Boys FC will take each other on in the final match here on 11 June for the champion's title of SFA C Division Sikkim League 2019.

North District Football Association, Mangan and Red Panda Football Club, Namchi registered victories in their last



league matches in the ongoing Sikkim Football Association [SFA] C Division Sikkim League 2019 here at Paljor Stadium on Saturday.

North District FA outplayed JVC Football Club, Singtam 3-1. Simon Chettri, Zaned Alam and Rayes scored a goal each for the winning team, while the lone goal of JVC

FC was scored by Binod Tamang.

In the last league, Red Panda FC thrashed Sumin Football Club 6-2 to get full three points. Abhishek Rai and Yakub Biswa contributed a brace each in Red Panda FC's win, while their teammates, Kunjaman Thapa and Nim Tshering Bhutia added one goal

each. Ganesh Chettri scored a brace for Sumin FC.

A total of twelve teams participated in the SFA C Division Sikkim League 2019, which were divided into two groups for the league round. Each team had played five matches in its respective group in the league round.

In Group A, Sanju FA

secured 13 points from 4 wins and 1 draw to come out on the top, while Red Panda FC came second with 12 points. In Group A, Manik FC, Dzongu finished the league round in third position with 6 points, Sumin FC in fourth position with 6 points, Queen Valley FC, Penlong in fifth position with 4 points and

Namthang FC in sixth position with 2 points.

In Group B, Sikkim Boys emerged as the group topper with 13 points from 4 victories and 1 draw and Brotherhood FC finished the league in second position with 11 points. Likewise, North District FA finished the league round in third position with 7 points, JVC FC, Singtam in fourth with 4 points, Ranipool FC in fifth with 4 points and Mustang FC, Sang in sixth with 2 points.

It has to be mentioned here that an emergency meeting of the League Organising Committee of SFA held this evening has approved a few proposals. Considering the standard of football teams in C division league, instead of promoting two teams to the second division league, top two teams from each group will be promoted to the second division league.

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**IN A GANGTOK JAM:** Traffic jam on the road from Sichey to Paljor Stadium Road saw cars taking about an hour to reach Hospital Dara from DC Office on Friday. The jam also spilt on to DPH road where cars going towards DPH came to a standstill for nearly an hour.

## Tikpur School thanks all for supporting 'Save Naveen' initiative

### Trust set up to help medical treatment of students in future

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 08 JUN:**

The "Save Naveen" initiative launched by the Tikpur Secondary School family to help with the treatment of its class V student, Naveen, for a congenital heart defect, has snowballed into a mission which has received statewide support. Thanks to this outpouring of support, Naveen is now headed for Durgapur Hospital in West Bengal where will be operated upon for the 8mm hole in his heart. The procedure is scheduled for 09 June, Sunday.

On 07 June, a meeting was held at Tikpur School attended by the school staff,



managing committee members, Naveen's parents and students.

Addressing the gathering, Headmaster DM Pradhan and the school family expressed gratitude towards all who came forward to help Naveen.

"The Tikpur Secondary School family is overwhelmed and thank-



ful for the support," the Headmaster said and thanked NGOs from Tashiding, Fambong Is-sai Samaj, Gram Sudhar Sangh, Sikkim Nawa Guthi, Forest Range Of-

fice Gyalshing, Jorethang Daragoan, etc.

The meeting also unanimously decided to start "Naveen Trust" which will have the Headmaster as Chairperson, six members from the school staff/ School Managing Committee and Naveen's father: w

Whatever money is leftover from Naveen's treatment will be kept in the Trust's account and utilized in future to assist medical treatment of Tikpur Secondary School students.

The members also agreed to chip in with regular donations to the trust so that the trust's treasury is never empty.

## Monsoon hits Kerala coast, heatwave persists in several parts of India

**NEW DELHI, JUN 8 (PTI):**

There was no let up in heatwave conditions in several parts of India even as monsoon hit the Kerala coast Saturday marking the official commencement of the four-month rainy season in the country. The IMD has warned of heatwave conditions in north and western parts of the country and "severe heatwave" in several places Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra during the next three days. The national capital reeled under scorching heat, with high humidity adding to the discomfort of the residents.

The weatherman said no relief is expected from the scorching heat for two days. The Saffarjung Ob-

servatory recorded the maximum temperature at 42.7 degrees Celsius, three notches above normal, and the minimum temperature at 28 degrees Celsius. Humidity levels oscillated between 22 and 74 per cent, a MeT official said.

On Sunday, the city is expected to record a high of 44 and a low of 29 degrees Celsius.

Temperatures in several parts of Rajasthan crossed the 47-degree mark with Churu recording 47.4 degrees Celsius, Bikaner 47.1 and Barmer, Ganganagar, Kota and Jodhpur 47, 46.7, 46.5 and 46.3 degrees Celsius, respectively.

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## High Court takes suo-moto action on suspension of flights from Pakyong

**Issues notices to State Govt, Civil Aviation Ministry, AAI, SpiceJet**

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 08 JUN:**

The High Court of Sikkim has issued notices to Ministry of Civil Aviation, Airports Authority of India, the service provider, SpiceJet Airlines and State Government regarding suspension of flights from Pakyong Airport. The notices were issued on 06 June 2019 and the court has given four weeks' time for filing of response.

It may be mentioned that SpiceJet Airlines, the only airlines flying to and fro Pakyong Airport, has suspended all flight operations from 01 June till 30

September 2019. A Times of India report had said that low visibility due to the weather conditions in Pakyong had led to the suspension of flights. Frequent cancellation of flights due to low visibility was causing huge losses to the airlines, it was reported.

Taking suo-moto action, the Division Bench of the High Court of Sikkim headed by Chief Justice Vijai Kumar Bist and Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai directed the Airports Authority of India to file all relevant documents pertaining to the airport from inception with detailed reasons as to why

the flight operations have been suspended for four months since unpredictable weather is a given in this area. The court has further asked for proposals for better flight operations.

The court has directed the Central government, especially Ministry of Civil Aviation to clear its stand pertaining to financial liabilities adding that the State government shall also furnish its stand as to whether they are ready to acquire or give the required land to the Airports Authority of India for installations of the IFR mode.

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## 17 Darjeeling councillors join BJP

**NEW DELHI, JUN 8 (PTI):**

Seventeen councillors of the Darjeeling municipality joined the BJP Saturday, giving the saffron party a majority in the local body, party leader Mukul Roy told reporters.

Addressing a press conference when the councillors were formally inducted in the party, Roy accused West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of using police to harass the elected members and their supporters.

"Our battle to save democracy in the state continues. People's mandate went against the

chief minister in the Lok Sabha polls, but she is now using 'police raj' to harass BJP workers and supporters," he said.

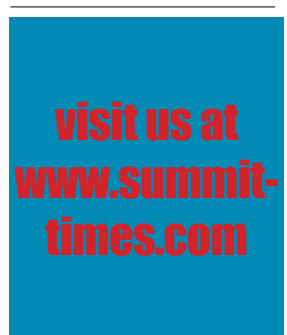
In the 32-member Darjeeling municipality, the Bharatiya Janata Party now enjoys a majority, he said, noting that two seats are vacant in the body.

The BJP will organise a big demonstration in the hill state in the coming days, Roy added.

BJP general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, who is the party's in-charge for the state, also targeted Banerjee for her alleged attack on various institutions.

Darjeeling MP Raju Bista said police have been harassing BJP members in the region for the loss the Trinamool Congress suffered in the state, especially in north Bengal.

The BJP has won 18 of the state's 42 seats, its best ever show, while the TMC won 22.





## IPR Minister visits Siliguri Branch

**SILIGURI, 08 JUN (IPR):** IPR Minister, Lok Nath Sharma, visited the IPR Branch Office, Siliguri today. He inspected the Office and had a brief meeting with the staff.

In the meeting, the Minister interacted with the staff and discussed the functioning of the Branch Office and enquired about grievances, if any. The Minister suggested that the staff work enthusiastically and requested everyone



for their support and coordination. He further hoped that everyone would work together as a team for the development of the State.

## Manav Utthan Sewa Samiti celebrates World Environment Day



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 06 JUN:**

Manav Utthan Sewa Samiti, South Sikkim, members from Namchi, Sumbuk and Ravangla celebrated World Environment Day with a plantation and cleanliness drive on 05 June.

## VK Singh's former advisor arrested for embezzling party donation: Police

**GHAZIABAD, JUNE 8 (PTI):** The former political advisor of Union minister VK Singh has been arrested for allegedly swindling the money received as donation to the BJP, police said Saturday.

Shambhu Prasad Singh was arrested on Friday night at Old Bus Stand area of the city by officers of the Sihani Gate Police Station.

Singh was arrested after a complaint was lodged by a person named Ajay Tyagi, alleging that he was duped of Rs 3 lakh, said Upendra Agarwal, Deputy Inspector General of Ghaziabad.

He used to collect



money from people as party donation using the minister's letter head, the officer said.

Several other complaints were also lodged against him at Kavi Nagar Police Station for defrauding people of lakhs of rupees, Agarwal added.

VK Singh, who is currently the Minister of

State for Road Transport and Highways, dismissed the advisor after the allegations came to fore. "There is no representative of mine in my constituency at present," the minister had recently said. He was reelected from the Ghaziabad constituency in the recent Lok Sabha elections for a second term.

## J'khand minister orders exhumation of 65-year-old's body to probe starvation charge

**Latehar, Jun 8 (PTI):** Jharkhand Food Minister Saryu Rai Saturday directed the Latehar administration to exhume the body of a 65-year-old man for post-mortem in the wake of allegations that he died of starvation three days ago.

Reports published in a section of the local media have claimed that Ramcharan Munda, a resident of Lurgumi Kala village in the district, died of starvation on Wednesday after being denied ration over the past two months, a charge denied by the administration.

Talking to reporters here, Rai said he has taken a serious note of the allegation and directed the administration to follow

## Air travel to become costlier as govt announces hike in aviation security fee from July 1

**New Delhi, Jun 8 (PTI):** Air travel will become a bit costlier as the Ministry of Civil Aviation has decided to increase the aviation security fee (ASF) from Rs 130 to Rs 150 for each Indian passenger from July 1 onwards, according to an official document.

For international passengers, the ASF will be increased from 3.25 USD to 4.85 USD from next month, the document stated.

"The ASF for domestic passengers will be levied at the rate of Rs 150 per embarking passenger," said an Ministry of Civil Aviation order dated June 7.

"The ASF for international passengers will be

levied at the rate of USD 4.85 or equivalent Indian rupees per embarking passenger," the order added.

The ASF will be replacing the PSF (SC), which stands of passenger service fee (security component).

"The above rates of the ASF will be applicable with effect from 00.01 Hrs of 01.07.2019 and will replace the PSF (SC) which was being charged so far at the rate of Rs 130 per embarking passenger for tickets issued against Indian Rupees and USD 3.25 per embarking passenger for tickets issued against foreign currency," the order stated.

## Delhiites reel under scorching heat

**NEW DELHI, JUN 8 (PTI):** The national capital reeled under scorching heat Saturday, with high humidity adding to the discomfort of the residents.

The weatherman said no relief is expected from the scorching heat for two days.

The Safdarjung Observatory recorded the maximum temperature at 42.7 degrees Celsius, three notches above normal, and the minimum temperature at 28 degrees Celsius. Humidity levels oscillated between 22 and 74 per cent, a MeT official said.

The weather stations at Palam, Ayanagar and Jafarpur recorded the maximum temperature

at 45.2, 44.6 and 44.4 degrees Celsius respectively.

On Sunday, the city is expected to record a high of 44 and a low of 29 degrees Celsius, the official said.

In large areas, a heatwave is declared when the mercury touches the 45-degrees mark for two consecutive days and a severe heatwave is when the temperature soars to 47 degrees Celsius for two days on the trot, according to the India Meteorological Department.

In small areas, like the national capital, a heatwave is declared if the maximum temperature is recorded at 45 degrees Celsius even for a day, it said.

## Indian Railways to provide massage service on board running trains

**NEW DELHI, JUN 8 (PTI):** For the first time in the history of Indian Railways, massage services will be made available for passengers on board running trains.

This facility will be made available in 39 trains departing from Indore, a railway official said Saturday.

This was a proposal from the Ratlam division of Western Railway zone, the official said.

"This is the first time in history of railways that we will provide massaging service for passenger comfort on running trains. It will not only increase revenue but also add passengers. Railways to earn an additional revenue of Rs 20 lakh annually and an estimated increase of Rs 90 lakh per year through additional sale of tickets from about 20,000 passenger who will be the

service providers.

"This is the first time that such a contract has been signed," said Rajesh Bajpai, director, media and communication, railway board.

The service will be available for Rs 100 each for foot massage and head massage.

## Monsoon hits Kerala coast,...

Heatwave swept large parts of Uttar Pradesh where on late Thursday night a severe dust storm and lightning claimed at least 26 lives and left 57 injured.

There was no respite from scorching heat in Haryana, Punjab with Narnaul being the hottest place in the two states at 45.8 degrees Celsius.

The north Indian plains, central India and parts of south India have been recording temperatures over 45 degrees Celsius.

There was no respite from the heatwave in Jammu with the city recording a maximum temperature of 40.8 degrees Celsius, the meteorological (MeT) department said.

However, Himachal Pradesh may get some relief from scorching heat next week as weatherman has predicted rain on June 11 and 12.

In a chilling reminder of how rising temperatures can play havoc with an ecosystem, 15 monkeys died of heat stroke in a Madhya Pradesh forest after another group apparently denied them access to river.

Nine Rhesus monkeys were found dead in Joshi Baba area of Punjabpura forest range in Dewas district Thursday and another six emaciated bodies were found the next day.

Heatwave conditions prevailing over parts of north Gujarat and Saurashtra is likely to continue for the next two days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Ahmedabad recorded a maximum temperature of 44.1 degrees Celsius, which was a positive departure of 3.4 degrees Celsius from the normal, while Surendranagar remained the hottest district in the state Saturday at 45.5 degrees Celsius, it said.

For northeastern states, the weatherman has forecast heavy rainfall in parts of Assam, Meghalaya Sikkim, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

Heavy rainfall is also expected in Tamil Nadu and coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh, the IMD said.

Monsoon hit the Kerala coast after a delay of a week and several parts of the state have started receiving a good amount of rainfall, it said.

The news will augur well for the country as large parts have been witnessing agriculture distress and water levels in reservoirs in west and south India have dipped to low levels.

Temperatures in eastern states of Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Bihar rose by 1 to 4 degrees Celsius, the IMD said.

## Cleanliness drive at Singtam



**YOGEN THATAL**

**SINGTAM, 08 JUN:**

A team of Singtam Police Station personnel led by SHO, Sanjay Rai in collaboration with the drivers association of Singtam carried out a massive cleanliness drive on the National Highway near District Hospital Singtam today. A team of Health Department staff led by DMS, Dr Tempo Bhutia cleaned the area behind the hospital.

## High Court CJ visits West Sikkim



**GYALSHING, 08 JUN [IPR]:** Mr Justice Vijai Kumar Bist, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim, is on a West Sikkim tour.

He was accompanied by NG Sherpa, Registrar General, High Court of Sikkim; Jyoti Kharka, Principal Secretary to the Chief Justice, and Subarna Rai, Officer

on Special Duty, High Court of Sikkim.

The Chief Justice visited the Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Jorethang Sub Division, Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Soreng Sub-division, and the District and Sessions Court, Gyalshing where

he also met with the District Collector, West, SDPO West and interacted with the Staff and Bar Members.

The Chief Justice is scheduled to visit places of interests in West Sikkim on Sunday after which he will return to Gangtok via Rabongla, South Sikkim.

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### URGENTLY REQUIRED:

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

### PLOT FOR SALE:

**Vacant plot measuring 0.38 Acres for sale at Amdo Golai, Deorali. Contact: 09717191985/097474651223**

### INTERESTED TO BECOME A YOGA TEACHER?

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Complete yoga syllabus will be provided by SYVC Gangtok absolutely free of cost. After one year of basic training and service (karma yoga)/ volunteering in the Centre, the candidate would be sent for Yoga Teacher Training Course at Shivananda Yoga Ashram. After TTC, the candidate would be appointed on part time basis at the Yoga Centre in Gangtok. College students can also apply. If required, food and accommodation would be provided.

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**: Deepa Yoga Centre at**

**Mob: +91 7432043719/ +91 8170953919.**

### LAND FOR SALE

A vacant plot measuring 0.38 Ha. (16552.80 sq – ft) is for sale at Amdo Golai (above the main road), Gangtok. For more information please contact – 9717191985/9474651223.

### WANTED

**HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER.**

**Contact: 9933443442/9800500696.**

### KUTSE SHEGU

The 49th day Kutse Shegu of Late Doma Bhutia w/o Lakpa Thendup Bhutia who left for her heavenly abode on 01.05.2019 falls on 18.6.2019 (Tuesday). All relatives, friends & well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Below Law College, Helipad, Lower Burtuk, Gangtok, East Sikkim.

**Lakpa Thendup Bhutia(Husband), Kesseng Norbu Bhutia(son) & all family members.**

**Mob: 9800655921/ 6294186876.**

### High Court takes...

In a local newspaper, it was reported that Pakyong Airport is totally based on Visual Flight Rules (VFR) and requires five kilometers visibility to land. It is also stated therein that should the State-Government desire to install Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) mode, more land will be required. For this purpose MoUs are required to be entered into with the Airports Authority of India and the Central Government.

The Greenfield airport is situated at a distance of 30 km from the state capital and was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 24 September last year.

The first commercial flight operations from the Airport began on 04 October, 2018 between Pakyong and Kolkata and continued till 31 May, last month.

### C Div final match...

Following the same, Sanju Football Academy, Sombaria, Sikkim Boys FC, Red Panda FC, Namchi and Brotherhood FC have been promoted to SFA second division league 2020.

The meeting also passed the proposal that any two players from any club in ascending manner can play either second division or premier division on loan system as already mentioned in the regulation of S-division leagues. The meeting was chaired by president, Menla Ethenpa and attended by other executive members of SFA.



## Anju Tamang - A rising star in Indian women's football

**REBYNA RANA  
GANGTOK, 08 JUN:**

Anju Tamang has managed to make a mark in Indian women's football, both at club and country level. She got selected in the Indian women's football team in 2016 after a lot of struggle and was part of the Indian women's team which played in the recent SAFF Women's Championship 2019. The championship was held at Biratnagar, Nepal in March which India lost in the final against Nepal.

The 23-year-old has scored four goals for the country so far. She hails from Rangali Bazna, Murnai in Kalimpong district but has mostly trained in Sikkim and is a product of Mangalbaria Girls Football Academy located in Mangalbaria, West Sikkim. Anju joined the academy in 2015 and trained under the acad-



emy's founding coach, Palden Bhutia. Speaking to SummitTIMES, Anju shared her passion for football which began since she was a child. Even at an age of 10 years, she used to play football barefoot with her friends in a small

ground. When she was in class 6, she got her first football boot which was a gift from her uncle.

"It was my happiest day and the first time I played football wearing a proper football boot," she shares.

As she grew up, Miss Tamang became aware of the opportunities for women football in the country and that she could also play in the Indian women's football team in future. She put her mind and soul to reach the target of play-

ing for the country. After much hard work, she got selected for the national team in 2016.

"Hard work pays off and one should not give up their dreams. We must move forward while facing difficulties," says Anju.

Regarding the recent SAFF tournament, Anju informed that she had taken part in the SAFF Championship for the first time.

"I had a small injury and could not perform in the first match. However, I played the remaining matches and in the final, I even managed to score one goal which boosted my confidence to play against Nepal in their home ground. It was a good experience for me," she adds.

Anju has also been playing professional women football, having joined the Indian Women's League which started in 2016. That year,

she played for Rising Students Club which won the league. She played for the same club next year and won the league again.

In the third edition of the Indian Women's League, Anju played for Gokulam Kerala FC. "Playing competitive football in Indian Women's League has helped me to grow as a footballer and given me confidence. It helped me in many ways both on and off the field," she mentions.

Those experiences will help me perform better in coming days, says Anju.

"I miss my training days in Mangalbaria Girls Football Academy where everyone was supportive especially our coach Palden Bhutia," she shares.

Anju plays as a striker and is presently a player with Gokulam Kerala FC.

## CM calls on Governor



**GANGTOK, 08 JUN (IPR):** Chief Minister of Sikkim, Prem Singh Tamang (Goday) gave a courtesy call to the Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad at Raj Bhawan on Friday. This was his first courtesy call after assuming office as the Chief Minister.

The discussion was about the many developmental issues concerning the State and the Governor assured full cooperation in resolving pending public issues of the state with the Union Government.

### Hit-Man's finishing act: If I don't do it after 200 games then when?

**LONDON, JUNE 8 (PTI):** It's not the big hundreds but pulling off chases for his team gives more joy to Rohit Sharma, who says he is now experienced enough to do it consistently for India.

The same batting approach was on display in India's tricky yet successful chase against South Africa and skipper Virat Kohli had rated his unbeaten 122-run knock as his best "ODI innings".

So is it the vice-captaincy that has brought about this change?

"I think I have played more than 200-odd games now. If I don't do it now, then when," the Indian vice-captain gave a cheeky reply.

The experience of 207 matches is now paying off, he feels.

"Experience teaches you a lot of things. That is something that has come into my game of late. Because you start the innings for your team, you want to make sure that you finish off the innings, as well. That gives you immense pleasure.

"And when I did that in the first game, the satisfaction you get finishing the job is something else, rather than scoring a hundred and not finishing off the game," said the man, who now has 23 ODI hundreds to his name.

Talk about being in that 'elite list' which reads Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma as the top three century makers in ODIs and Rohit says he will

happily accept milestones but contributing in team's win will always be his main mission.

"Personally, I don't look into all of that. The journey will continue, and those milestones (will come). I just want to make sure that as many games as I play, I make my team win in as many games as possible. That's the sole and whole job of me as a batsman. Yeah, along the way, you get rewards. I will take it any day.

When he started opening consistently from the 2013 Champions Trophy (having opened against England in an ODI in Ranchi earlier that year), it was a challenge but clear understanding of his own game helped him achieve what he has got today.

"I have come a long way since then and it's through the hard work and understanding that I can deliver as a batsman and that is what I have focused on."

Playing as per the demands of conditions in a particular country is something that the 2013 Champions Trophy taught him.

"How you can play and how you can't play, in India, in Australia, in England, South Africa, New Zealand, whichever place you go to, that is something that I've understood. How you need to bat on certain given conditions and realizing the fact that also how important it is for one of your top orders to bat all the way through, the stylish Mumbaier said.

## Chief Engineer Swastik calls on CM



**GANGTOK, 08 JUN (IPR):** Chief Engineer Swastik, Harendra Kumar accompanied by Director, Works, Saroj Kumar Pradhan called on Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Goday) at his office at Tashiling Secretariat today.

The Chief Engineer

informed the Chief Minister about the works being undertaken in East and North districts of Sikkim. Mr Kumar also apprised him about the plans and projects in the pipeline and briefed him about the monsoon preparedness from their

end. Strategic roads around the border areas were also discussed.

The Chief Minister thanked Mr Kumar for his visit and said that they should work with mutual cooperation for the overall benefit of the state.

## MUSS Sadhbhawna Satsang at Thakurbari



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 08 JUN:**

Manav Utthan Sewa Samiti, Gangtok, organised a Sadhbhawna Satsang here at Thakurbari on Saturday to commemorate the golden jubilee of the preaching of manav dharma in Sikkim.

The Satsang was held in the presence of former Secretary and senior architect, Kiran Rasaily, along with MUSS North East Region in-charge, Sadhvi Mahatma Akhilesh Baiji MUSS from Siliguri and devotees from neighbouring hills, Terai and Dooars.

The Sadhbhawna Satsang also included bhajans by young artists of the Samiti.

## Aligarh murder accused was arrested earlier for sexually assaulting minor; 2 more held

**ALIGARH (UP), JUN 8 (PTI):** Police on Saturday arrested two more people for the murder of a toddler here and confirmed that one of the men held earlier for the crime is an alleged sex offender who targeted children in recent years.

Shagufta (32) and Mehndi Hasan, the wife and the brother of Zahid who was arrested Tuesday, were picked up this morning by the special investigation team formed to probe the killing of the two-and-a-half-year-old girl in Tappal township.

"They were later arrested," a senior police official said.

With this, the total number of arrests has gone up to four in the case.

Other than 27-year-old Zahid, police had arrested Aslam, 43, on Tuesday after the girl's decomposed body was found in a garbage dump around 200 metres from her home. The body was discovered on June 2, three days after she was reported missing. The girl's father had alleged she was killed because he failed to repay Rs 10,000 taken as loan from the accused.

Aslam was charged under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO)



in 2014 and 2017, police said. He also faced charges under Uttar Pradesh's Goonda Act.

The second POCSO case, in Delhi's Gokulpuri, also involved abduction of a minor.

Two separate cases of POCSO are pending against him and he had gone to jail in connection with an abduction case in Delhi, Aligarh Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Akash Kulhari said.

Meanwhile, Aligarh Bar Association announced that no lawyer would appear in court on behalf of any of the accused charged with the toddler's murder.

"We have decided that no lawyer will appear in the court for accused," Bar Association secretary Anup Kaushik said.

Kulhari said officials probing the Aligarh case are looking into

the phone records of all suspects.

"The police are in the process of building a water-tight case against the accused so that it stands all legal scrutiny and speedy justice is delivered through a fast-track court. We are checking phone records of all suspects to trace the crime trail," he said.

Kulhari, who camped in the area till late Friday, warned of strong action against anyone trying to spread rumours through social media.

Tension had prevailed in the area after the victim's family alleged that police officials delayed the registration of their complaint and the investigation. Five policemen have been suspended for negligence and Kulhari Friday assured locals that justice would

be done in the case.

The SSP reiterated that the postmortem examination by a panel of three doctors found "no evidence of sexual assault", but police were taking no chances and forensic experts were examining vaginal swabs for any further evidence.

The incident has triggered massive outrage. Political leaders and celebrities have also tweeted their anger and disgust over the crime.

Candlelight protests over the murder were held in Aligarh city. Teachers and students at Aligarh Muslim University have demanded "exemplary and prompt" punishment for the perpetrators.

At a special meeting of its executive, the AMU Teachers Association demanded that a fast-track court be immediately set up to try the case.

AMUTA secretary Nazmul Hasan said in a press release that the teachers stood by the victim's family.

Former president of AMU students union Faizul Hasan said the law should be amended so that convicts of such crime face "punishment as stringent as that in Saudi Arabia".

## Jaggery festival in Muzaffarnagar

**MUZAFFARNAGAR (UP), JUN 8 (PTI):** Union minister Sanjeev Kumar Balyan inaugurated a three-day 'Gur Mahotsav' (jaggery festival) here Saturday.

The first-of-its-kind festival will continue till June 10, Muzaffarnagar District Magistrate Ajay Pandey said.

Jaggery manufacturers from various places will display their products at the festival, he told reporters here.

After inaugurating the festival, Balyan, the Union Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, said more than a hundred modern jaggery units will be established in Muzaffarnagar district where chocolate and other sweets will be manufactured from 'gur'.

He said the government would look into the demands of jaggery manufacturers, including providing GST exemption and electricity subsidy for manufacturing units and bringing jaggery under agricultural produce.

According to district officials, the jaggery mandi in Muzaffarnagar in western Uttar Pradesh is the largest in the country.

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## Empowerment for Equality is a No Brainer

### *So why should only women fight for women's issues?*

The same Supreme Court which ordered that the sanctum sanctorum of Sabarimala temple be opened to women of all ages has also slapped down serious allegations of sexual harassment against the Chief Justice. It was a detailed and disturbing narrative of a sequence of events which chill even the more patriarchal coots, of which there are many. In the recently concluded elections in Sikkim, a party which claimed to be the flag-bearer for genuine women's empowerment explained away the frugality with which it passed out party tickets to women to the need to back the winnability of candidates. And that is the complexity which confronts women across the country and it is in the incongruity of their realities that despite a Supreme Court verdict, most of the women are still denied entry to Sabarimala temple. When the judgment arrived, it was welcomed by "women activists". Every woman of menstruating age who has made failed attempts to offer prayers at Sabarimala and verify whether the State and the society will allow a Court verdict to be obeyed is introduced as an "activist." Even in the Supreme Court controversy, the voices speaking on the issue are again tagged as those of "women activists" or, occasionally, "well-meaning" men-folk.

And therein lies one of the root causes of a variety of problems plaguing the country – this acceptance that women's empowerment is the look-out of only these two segments.

It is unfortunate that gender equality battles are led almost exclusively by women, leading to this weird situation where even when women speak of equality, we, by and large, see them as being feminist. Even those who don't see feminism as the handiwork of over-ambitious women, and may even support it, slot efforts towards equality as "feminist" moves. To see how embarrassingly offensive such responses, even if subconscious, are, compare it against the male equivalent for feminism – chauvinism. The dictionary definition of a Male Chauvinist reads: "A man whose behavior and attitude toward women indicate a belief that they are innately inferior to men". By contrast, women, even when pursuing the basic right of equality (and not superiority), are seen as feminist. We have even co-opted grammar to perpetuate male superiority. The problem lies in this whole mentality in which even the language has been hamstrung in chauvinistic lexicon where the only female equivalent for a male "stud" is a "slut". It is this subliminal conditioning of our minds that has injured us to the many depressing realities of our country. It is in this zombie-like acceptance that things have always been like this that the many woes of our society, and not only the ones regarding women, are born. It all starts at home with how we grow up getting used to the almost continuous reinforcement of gender biases. Before we know it, we have been brainwashed. So, when guests arrive, the son will tell the jokes and the daughter will serve water.

Any practice which discriminates people on the basis of gender, caste, community, color or faith should immediately repulse people. Revulsion can be the only response to news that women are being refused access because of their gender. But such news does not revile us anymore. Even when most of us do not agree with such practices, we do not feel offended enough because we have been conditioned at home, in school and in the work places to see women as somehow not equal. Worri-ingly, very few people are embarrassed for holding on to such attitudes. Of course, one could argue that most women are comfortable with such hierarchies, but those comfort levels are akin to the Stockholm Syndrome where a kidnapped person starts being grateful towards the kidnapper. What choice do they have? Give women economic and decision-making powers and see if they slip back to being submissive, all-suffering daughters, wives and daughter-in-laws. We need to change our vocabulary. Equality issues cannot be painted as empowerment because that is an already existing right that is being reinforced. Empowerment needs to be about much, much more. Attitudinally, we need to at least reach a level where we do not fight for just a quota in jobs or elected posts for women, but reach a place where we see ambition in women as normal. And the process, because the brainwashing started at home, needs to begin at home. Parents need to consciously repair the damage. Then we will have to move to schools, because it is there that the stereotypes, instead of getting demolished, are reinforced. We do this much, and we will not have to worry about the workplaces because "empowerment" would have happened by then. We could then reach a situation where, when a journalist needs to get feedback on the HC verdict on Haji Ali, does not call up only women groups, and can just step out and ask random people, all of whom will welcome it with headline-making phrases. We could reach a situation where, even when regressive mindsets try to deny women, they are forced to capitulate because the men, instead of waiting for women groups to file a case, instinctively boycott such places themselves. With patronage, by way of donations and presence, taken away, the offensive mindsets which look down on women will quickly become genuine liberals. And all of this is not about "empowering" women, it is about making the society more compassionate and responsive, because that is what we will achieve with such a turnaround in attitudes.

# Disappearing sea ice is changing the whole ecosystem of the Arctic Ocean



**GRAHAM J. C. UNDEROOD**  
**theconversation.com**

I drafted this while looking north over the frozen Lincoln Sea, at the northernmost tip of Ellesmere Island in Canada. I was at Alert, a Canadian Forces Station which, at 82°N, is the most northerly permanently inhabited place on Earth. Just 815km away, across the Arctic Ocean, lay the North Pole.

It was May, and the sea should have still been frozen, but this year the bridge of sea ice between Ellesmere and Greenland broke up early, and Arctic ice began flowing down the narrow Nares Channel and south into Baffin Bay. All across the Arctic Ocean, the amount and persistence of sea ice is declining – September ice cover has fallen around 30% since 1980.

The Arctic is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the planet, and images of polar bears on small ice floes capture the imagination. But those images represent (excusing the pun) only the tip of the iceberg – the consequences of ice loss are profound and start from the very bottom of the food chain, in the microbial processes that drive the biology of the ocean.

### **ARCTIC FOOD CHAINS SOMETIMES START IN SEA ICE**

Sea ice forms when seawater temperature falls below -1.8°C. As the ice crystals form, salt is forced out and ice brines and other dissolved constituents become trapped in a honeycomb of small channels in the ice. Cold salty water draining from the ice also sinks deep to the bottom of the oceans and drives water circulation across the globe.

As the air grows colder, the ice thickens down-

wards and, in the brine channels and across the ice bottom, specialised algae and bacteria grow. When sunlight returns to the Arctic in the spring and penetrates through the ice (which is rarely more than a few metres thick) these ice-algal communities start to photosynthesise, producing algal biomass and abundant dissolved organic matter.

This feeds a wide range of microscopic creatures known as zooplankton, which graze across the bottom of the ice. These zooplankton in turn feed larger animals and drive the food chain throughout spring.

When the ice melts more of this material flows out into the seas, providing more food resources at the bottom of food chains. In a recent study published in Nature Climate Change, colleagues and I showed how the different components of this organic matter derived from ice-algae are used by different species of bacteria and at different rates in underlying seawater, so that more melting ice will change the patterns of organic matter turnover in surface waters during spring.

### **DIFFERENT FOOD CHAINS MAY DEVELOP**

Not all sea ice melts each summer – or at least it didn't. Multi-year ice can go through a number of years of melting and growing, getting thicker and more structurally complex. But, over time, this multi-year ice has become rarer. In the 1980s, around one-third of the Arctic's ice cover was more than four years old – today, such ice is almost nonexistent. Instead, more first-year ice will form and completely melt each year, providing new food inputs into areas of ocean that were previously permanently covered in ice.

This has significant consequences. Less ice cover in summer means more open ocean water,

which – as it is darker – absorbs more sunlight and heat, making it harder to freeze in the autumn. Open water also means the wind can stir up the sea and slow the process of refreezing. More open water in summer will change the plankton communities, and then the animals that feed on them.

Some species are moving north. Already the Barents Sea between Norway and Svalbard is now rarely covered in ice in winter – and North Atlantic species such as cod and top predators such as orca are moving in. Specialist species that rely on ice such as polar bears, ringed seals, walrus and Arctic cod are losing their habitats, while non-indigenous species are expanding their range.

For some, a warmer Arctic brings opportunities. Reduced ice cover means ships can use the north-east and north-west passages, significantly shortening journey times between the Atlantic and the Pacific. New fisheries may develop, and less ice means access to oil and gas resources becomes possible.

But these benefits to some, come at potentially huge costs. In addition to the changes in the ocean, a warmer Arctic could disrupt ocean circulation and global weather systems, while permafrost will continue to thaw, potentially releasing greenhouse gases currently locked up in frozen soils.

A whole ecosystem, rich in specialist species – many barely studied – is changing before our eyes. The Arctic is a beautiful and harsh place, posing serious logistical challenges for scientific investigation. But even there, on the top of the world, far from centres of human population, our impact is evident.

*[the writer is Professor of Marine and Freshwater Biology, University of Essex]*

# Women's World Cup: why career options need to improve for these sporting superstars

**JACKIE DAY-GARNER**  
**THECONVERSATION.COM**

As the Women's World Cup gets underway, football fans around the world are looking forward to getting the chance to see the likes of Danielle van de Donk (Arsenal and Holland), Megan Rapinoe (Reign FC and USA ) and Lina Magull (Bayern Munich and Germany) in action on the biggest stage the "beautiful game" can offer.

While the US are favourites, England have had a successful build up to the tournament with a win in the SheBelieves Cup in the US in February as well as a recent 2-0 win against Denmark. The team is currently ranked third in the world behind the US and Germany.

Over the past two decades there have been major developments in women's football. These include the creation of the UEFA Women's Champions League in 2001 and the inclusion of women's football in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. In 2011 Sepp Blatter, the general secretary of FIFA, declared that: "The future [of football] is feminine".

But football also has a feminine past, having been around in the UK since the early 1900s. During World War I the Dick, Kerr ladies, formed at a munitions factory in Preston, attracted crowds of more than 50,000 people at Goodison park playing St Helen's ladies. But the glory was shortlived – the FA banned the women's game in 1921, calling on clubs to "to refuse the use of their grounds for such matches". The ban wasn't lifted until 1971.

### **MODERN ERA**

Since women's football was reinstated, many famous teams have dominated the female game in England. The Doncaster Rovers Belles, Arsenal Women, Everton Ladies, Liverpool F.C. Women and – more recently – Manchester City and Chel-



sea have set new standards within the women's game. Professional contracts were introduced by the England women's team in 2009 the Women's Super League was formed in 2011 and became a fully professional league in 2017/2018 season. Participation in women and girls football was estimated at 1.7 million in 2018.

But when it comes to salaries women are not in the same ballpark as men – the average salary in the FA Women's Super League is about £35,000 (with top sponsorship deals at about £70,000). As a result, many players can't support football solely as a career and will need to supplement this with part-time jobs.

### **LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**

Knowing that they have to combine football with another career has helped many women players with transitions away from football, because they have to plan for retirement and accept that their football earning cannot sustain them for life – unlike their vastly better-paid male counterparts. Research I completed in 2017 addressed the careers of women footballers across Europe (Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, The Netherlands and Norway). The study included players from England's national team and highlight-

ed challenges faced by women players. Among these were the immature football structures at club level compared to the male game and the fact that many players have to migrate to other countries to play in professional and semi-professional leagues.

Women also have less access to top-class facilities and have to overcome societal attitudes, which have tended to pigeonhole the women's game as inferior to men's football.

The report made several recommendations, such as the implementation of a new junior age structure at club level for the under-18, 21 and 23 age groups are needed to help with the transition into senior teams. We've already seen how successful that can be with the introduction of age groups at the international level.

Establishing full-time women's professional leagues around the world will help football associations to retain players in their own country. There are presently full-time professional leagues in England, Norway, Germany, USA and Sweden and semi-professional leagues in The Netherlands and France. My research highlighted the challenges that players face when migrating to another country to play professional football – similar to the men, women players moving countries face learn-

ing a new language, settling into a new culture and moving away from family and friends. Unlike the men, they aren't supported by fame and huge salaries.

Regardless of where they are, football associations and clubs need to provide specific career advice for players to help them plan a career after football and provide sufficient time and resources to allow players to gain qualifications as well as training to prepare them to transition out of their playing career. This is something the EU has promoted with its directive to protect the access that athletes have to educational opportunities and vocational training.

### **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

My research also highlighted the fact that many female football players are under pressure to postpone having children because of the fear that it will affect their playing career. I believe it's vital for football associations to include in their welfare policies measures to ensure a supportive environment for players to have children while continuing to play football. Clubs must be required to put in place support mechanisms to allow for this to happen. For example, if players are away at major tournaments for several weeks, they must be offered support to allow their children to accompany them.

Over the next few weeks we'll be treated to some truly stellar football skills from the finest women players in the world. These women have dreamed of this moment for years and trained as hard as any men to make that dream come true. As you thrill to the sight of Van de Donk, Rapinoe and Magull in full flow on the game's biggest stage, ask yourself: shouldn't women be given the same chance to shine as men?

*[the writer is Faculty Director, University of Central Lancashire]*



## FIELDWORK REFLECTIONS

## From Currency to Ornaments to Heirlooms.

RONGNYOO LEPCHA

As I was wandering, looking for materials to be documented during my fieldwork, I came across some materials that both fascinated me and kept me wondering of how these materials have taken multiple forms and deeply integrated in our society. As I started interviewing a family about the traditional materials that they use in their daily lives, with the rapport building on they started showing me different materials one after the other. It was like a buffet where dishes came to the table one after the other and for the final course they presented their most valued family treasure in a small white handkerchief pouch they drew out of a wooden box they pulled out these different antique coins. Red with the engravings of Hanuman in one, a Radha Khrishna coin, one even with Kali, and one was a small round coin with a hole in the center, some had even lost their engravings and most from the British era.

They talked of how their parents had received these heirlooms from their parents. They also mentioned about how only a few pieces remain with them as most were taken away from them by commen who presented themselves as merchants and promised to return with their belongings after they examine it properly, but never to be seen again. Most of the families in the village had been robbed this way and only a handful of families, those who were clever enough to see through the web of sweet lies the commen were weaving, still have their heirlooms till date.

Antique coins have been of high value for coin collectors and as these coins infiltrated societies which knew only of systems like barter prior to the introduction of money in their societies created dependency as money became a commodity which could buy everything else. And they were greatly valued some even have collection of old coins hidden in safe and sacred places as family heirlooms and ter or a sign of the family's prosperity/ good fortune. Often people are not willing to show these to anyone as they believe the good fortune can be taken away.



I was fortunate as some families willingly showed me all the antique coin collections, an advantage of auto-ethnography I guess also adding to it was the point that I had taken a guide who knew the area and the people really well.

These coins have more significance than meets the eye. Since in the beginning they came in metals like silver their value was superior. People started turning them into jewelries. Making it a part of the statement pieces incorporated into their traditional fashion. If we explore the internet the evidences of the earliest versions of fashion pieces created out of these coins is said to be found in France where women started integrating coins into their jewelry, specially the elite section as statement of their class and positions. It was the same psychology working in other parts of the world, these coins were used as statements of an individual's class representations.

Many communities here also adopted the fashion of molding the coins into fashion pieces to go with their traditional attires. The Gurungs call it Reji, Limboos call it Yangitchi, Lepchas call it Com Lyak, Rais, Newars, and other communities know it as Athani or Charani Har depending on the val-



ue of coins used in the jewelry, the Tamangs call it Hari etc. One similarity that can be found in the coin jewelries used by all these communities is that the coins they use are all from the British era in India. Both the diffusion and evolution of these jewelries can be seen in many parts of India as well. In the North east many tribes like the Digaru Mishmi, Adi, Galo, Wancho, etc. also were coin jewelries in North India we have the Kinnaura, of Himachal Pradesh also adapting jewelries made of coins. There are numerous other tribes and communities all over India who use coin jewelries.

It is interesting to see the transformation of an object from its original state to the position people give them through the implementation of different meanings to it. The coins acquire the status of a wearable piece of jewelry, becoming a part of the community's traditional attire and a part of their culture through the means of people employing the symbolism of their class. Then ultimately it is given the status of a family heirloom since it has been passed down from generation to generation surviving and reviving with the tolls of time. It brings a piece of the previous wearer giving the present owners the sense of link with their ancestors.

## Tripura forms panel to examine all political violence cases

**AGARTALA, JUN 8 (PTI):** Tripura's BJP-IPFT government has decided to examine all cases of political violence in which family members of those killed are seeking proper investigation so that culprits are punished.

The government has formed a three-member probe committee headed by Law Minister Ratan Lal Nath which will provide its recommendations after completion of the investigations, a government notification said.

Besides Nath, the panel has Law Department Principal Secretary DM Jamatia as a member and Home department Additional Secretary Devananda Reang as the convener.

However, the CPI(M), which was at the helm in the state for 25 years before the BJP-led government came to power in March 2018, is apprehending that the panel was formed to harass

the party members and will not look into the incidents of violence that took place in the past one year.

"The state government has decided to examine all cases in which the victims died due to political violence long before and the family members of the victims are claiming for proper investigation of these cases so that the actual culprits are punished as per provision of law," said the notification issued by Reang on Thursday.

Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb had appealed to all parties in the state to stop violence and said his government would take stern action against the perpetrators irrespective of their political identity.

He had said 186 cases of violence was registered in the state after the Election Commission announced the Lok Sabha election

schedule in March.

During the 2013 and 2018 Assembly elections, when the CPI(M) was in power, a total of 245 and 439 cases of poll-related violence were registered respectively, he had said.

Deb's statement came after CPI(M) leader and former chief minister Manik Sarkar met him on May 28 and urged him to stop violence allegedly unleashed by BJP supporters since the BJP-IPFT government came to power.

CPI(M) state committee member Pabitra Kar Saturday claimed that this committee was formed to harass its workers.

"We also do not think that the recent cases of violence will come under the ambit of the committee. Unchecked terror by BJP supporters are continuing in the state," said Kar, also secretary of CPI(M) West Tripura district committee.

## War veteran released from detention centre in Assam

**GUWAHATI, JUN 8 (PTI):** Kargil war veteran Md Sanaullah, who was last month declared a 'foreigner' by a tribunal in Assam, walked out of A detention centre on Saturday, a day after the Gauhati High Court granted him bail.

Shortly after his release, Sanaullah was taken to the office of the Kamrup Superintendent of Police at Amingaon to complete formalities, as per the directions of the court, a senior official said.

Later in the day, his family members and well-wishers escorted him to his home in the Boko area of the district, the official added.

A division bench of

the high court Friday heard a writ petition along with the Interlocutory Application filed by Sanaullah's lawyers and granted him bail on two local sureties of Rs 20,000 each.

The bench ruled that Sanaullah cannot leave Kamrup district, of which he is a resident, without the permission of its superintendent of police.

The court also issued notices on respondents, including the Central government, the Assam government, the Foreigners' Tribunal at Boko, the NRC authorities, the election department and the then

inquiry officer Chandramal Das (now retired), who verified his documents.

The tribunal at Boko had declared 52-year-old Sanaullah a 'foreigner' on May 23 and sent him to the detention centre at Goalpara.

The war veteran, who retired from the Army in 2017, was awarded the President's Medal in 2014.

A resident of Kolo-hikash village in Boko of Kamrup district, Sanaullah was serving as a sub-inspector in the Assam Border Police before being declared a 'foreigner' and dismissed from the service.

## Scribe booked for 'objectionable' post on social media against UP CM Adityanath



**LUCKNOW, JUN 8 (PTI):** A journalist has been booked for allegedly sharing an objectionable post against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on social media, police said.

An FIR was registered against Prashant Kanojia by a sub-inspector at Hazratganj police station on Friday night in which it was alleged that the accused made "objectionable comments against the CM and tried to malign his image".

When contacted by PTI, a senior police official initially said that the journalist has been ar-

rested. But he later clarified that no arrest has yet taken place.

The official said police were trying to question the scribe.

Kanojia had shared a video on Twitter and Facebook where a woman is seen speaking to reporters of various media organisations outside the CM office claiming that she had sent a marriage proposal to the CM.

The verified Twitter handle of Kanojia @PJkanojia said that he is alumnus of IIMC and Mumbai university and is associated with some media organisations.

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## BJP workers, police personnel clash in Bengal, many injured



**GANGARAMPUR (WB), JUN 8 (PTI):** Several BJP workers and police personnel were injured on Saturday, after clashes broke out between the two sides over a victory rally being taken out by the saffron party at Gangarampur area of North Dinajpur district.

BJP workers "forcibly took out" the procession 'Abhinandan Yatra' without taking any permission from the authorities concerned, a police officer said.

When police personnel tried to stop the rally, irate BJP workers clashed with them, following which a number of people from both sides suffered injuries, he said.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had on

Thursday said victory rallies will not be allowed by any party in West Bengal, including the ruling Trinamool Congress.

BJP state president and MP Dilip Ghosh, who was a part of the rally, alleged that the TMC government is disallowing such processions, as it is afraid of the saffron party's rise in the state.

"We have won 18 seats in West Bengal and our vote share has also increased 40.5 per cent.. We wanted to thank the people by organising these rallies.

"But, the state government is so afraid of the rise of the BJP that it is denying us permission to conduct rallies.

We will go ahead with

the marches even if we don't get a clearance for them," Ghosh asserted.

Reacting to the reports of clashes, TMC secretary general and state minister Partha Chatterjee said the BJP is trying to "vitiate the peaceful atmosphere" in West Bengal.

"We also won 22 seats but we didn't organise any victory rally. The TMC does not want to disturb the law and order situation in the state," Chatterjee said.

On Friday, police registered suo motu cases against the BJP's North Dinajpur district leadership for taking out victory rallies in violation of the state government order banning them.

## Mamata responsible for rise of BJP-RSS in Bengal: Somen Mitra

**KOLKATA, JUN 8 (PTI):**

West Bengal Congress president Somen Mitra Saturday blamed Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for the rise of BJP and RSS in the state, saying had she not pursued policy of "blatant minority appeasement", the saffron party would not have gained footing here.

WBPC chief further said that Banerjee who had been poaching leaders of the opposition parties was now facing difficulty to protect own existence, hinting at exodus of Trinamool Congress leaders to the BJP.

Talking to reporters here Mitra lambasted Banerjee for "weakening" the opposition unity which helped the BJP in the general election.

In the non-BJP camp, the TMC, CPI-M and Congress fought separately in Bengal.

The BJP bagged 18 Lok Sabha seats in Bengal out of a total of 42, only four less than TMC. Congress managed to win two seats, down



from four in 2014. CPI-M which ruled Bengal for 34 years, drew a blank.

Buoyed by the massive victory, the saffron party's leaders have been asserting that they will overthrow the Trinamool Congress government in the 2021 assembly polls.

"Mamata Banerjee is solely responsible for the rise of BJP and RSS in Bengal. Had she not pursued the policy of blatant minority appeasement, BJP wouldn't have found a footing in Bengal.

"Her policy of removing all opposition, poaching on opposition leaders and representatives has only led to the rise of BJP. Now she has no right to complain about it," Mitra told reporters.

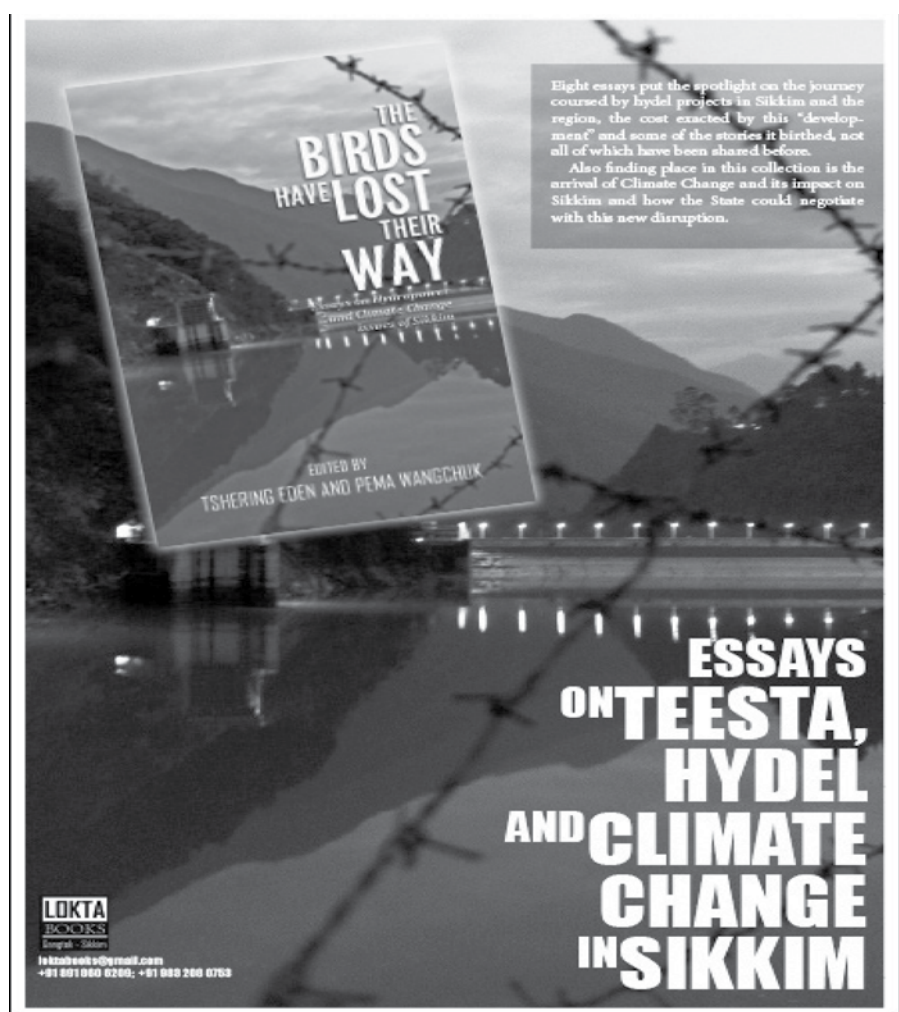
Those who once strengthened the hands of BJP to weaken Congress will now find it

difficult to protect their own existence, Mitra said apparently referring to flight of TMC leaders to BJP in Bengal.

"Even before elections, Mamata Banerjee was busy with her dreams of becoming Prime Minister. Time and again she had tried to undermine the Congress leadership," Mitra, who replaced Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury as West Bengal Congress president in September last, said.

Mitra, however, lamented that had there been a CPI (M)-Congress alliance in the state, the march of BJP could have been halted in the state.

"The CPI(M) was not serious about alliance. They tried to impose their decisions on us. That's the reason the alliance didn't work out," he said.





## Fifteen monkeys found dead in MP forest after likely water war



Bhopal, Jun 8 (PTI): In a chilling reminder of how rising temperatures can play havoc with an ecosystem, 15 monkeys have died of heat stroke in a Madhya Pradesh forest after another group apparently denied them access to river.

Nine Rhesus monkeys were found dead in Joshi Baba area of Punjapura forest range in Dewas district Thursday. Another six emaciated bodies were found the next day.

A group of larger and stronger monkeys, numbering around 60, was found to be 'guarding' the nearby Pouni, a tributary of the Kali Sindh river, divisional forest officer P N Mishra told PTI Saturday.

The river had dried up in many places, and according to locals, the group of bigger monkeys was seen chasing away others who tried to drink the water that was left, he said.

This stretch of river was only 800 me-

ters away from the spot where the dead monkeys were found, Mishra said.

It was likely that the group of bigger monkeys did not allow the deceased ones to drink from the river, he said.

The mercury had risen to 45 degrees Celsius in the area in the last few days.

Autopsy revealed that the monkeys died of multi-organ failure following hyper-thermia (extremely high body temperature), he said, adding that viscera have been sent to a hospital at Sagar for further tests.

"We have made water arrangement nearby for the group to which the deceased monkeys belonged," he said.

"It is shocking that this herbivorous species has developed the tendency of dominating a water source," Mishra added.

Usually, it is deer which fall victim to water scarcity in jungle, he said.

# Neville's excitement for women's World Cup wins over doubters

**LONDON, JUN 8 (AFP):** Phil Neville lifted six Premier League titles and the Champions League in a decorated playing career, but has described the chance to lead England's women into a World Cup as "the biggest and best thing" in his career to date.

World Cups had eluded Neville until now. An 11-year international career reaped 59 caps and he played in three European Championships, but he missed out on making a World Cup squad on three different occasions.

"England to me has always felt like unfinished business," Neville told The Times.

"The biggest disappointment of my career, with so many incredible players, was that we didn't get a trophy or even a final. I want to have success with England. I've wanted it all my life. And with these players, we've got a great chance."

Prior to Neville's arrival in the women's game to take charge of

his country last year, England had already laid the foundations for great expectations this summer by reaching the semi-finals of the 2015 World Cup and Euro 2017.

That excitement has only grown since England beat the world champions United States in their own backyard to win the She Believes Cup in March for the first time.

Rather than be covered by the pressure, Neville has been keen to embrace the opportunity to explode the interest in women's football across England in the next month.

"You want someone who is going to come in and say I believe in you because you are all the best. We are going to win because we are the best," said England forward Fran Kirby.

"The trust and confidence he puts in every single player before a game, it inspires you to push on that extra 10 percent and that's what you want as a manager." - 'A GREAT EXAMPLE' -



Neville's appointment was initially met with skepticism. The parachuting of a prominent former male player into the role with no prior experience as a manager or in women's football was questioned.

In the days that fol-

lowed his appointment, Neville had to apologise for old tweets which were criticised for their sexist nature.

However, Neville's playing career was characterised by a ferocious determination to work hard and maximise his

abilities.

That same commitment to his role as a coach has quickly won over his players and any doubters among the public.

"His standards, his professionalism. He never used to cut corners as

a player and that's why he had the career he did," England women's captain Steph Houghton told AFP.

"He's a great example of how to be successful and that comes across to the group. He always tells us if we are not doing what he expects, but at the same time he's there to say 'well done' when we are doing well."

Neville also has leaned on his sister Tracey, coach of the England netball team, to traverse the challenges he has experienced in moving from the men's to the women's game.

"All those people who said I hadn't got a clue about the women's game, that was my fuel. That was like putting unleaded in my tank. Thanks for that," Neville told the Guardian in typically bullish fashion.

As with any England manager, though, Neville will ultimately be judged on results at a major tournament and now faces the acid test in France.

## India's tactical test against formidable Australia

**KUSHAN SARKAR**

**LONDON, JUN 8 (PTI):** India's quest for glory will face a stern test in formidable Australia, forcing Virat Kohli and Ravi Shastri to put their thinking caps on and contemplate a tactical rejig, as one of World Cup's most storied rivalries resumes here Sunday.

India were clinical in their six-wicket victory against a depleted South Africa while Australia, who have raised their game in the last couple of months, were professional against Afghanistan and brilliant in their come-from-behind victory against the West Indies.

Having struggled in the past one year after suspensions of Steve Smith and David Warner, Australia finally seemed to have picked their pieces and are playing exactly like a five-time champions ought to.

This will certainly be a cause of worry for India, who lost their ODI series at home during the last bilateral encounter and are still in search of a perfect combination both in batting and bowling.

In fact, Australia's batting coach Ricky Ponting is apprehending a shift in strategy from the Indians, who have of late rattled them with quality pace bowling.

"Do they maybe go with only the one spinner and use (all-rounder) Kedar Jadhav as a second spinner and play another fast bowler?" Ponting told cricket-com.au recently.

"We'll worry about that in the next couple of days and make sure all the boys are pre-



pared," he added.

In the last series, the Australians effectively nullified India's spin twins Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal on the flat sub-continental decks, sans Warner and Smith.

Skipper Aaron Finch and Usman Khawaja also got a grip of Kedar Jadhav's side-arm off-spin and this will certainly force the captain and coach to explore options.

With the presence of the two talismans in the opposition ranks, India may have to tweak their playing XI, keeping the Oval pitch and the overcast conditions in mind. They have already served warning signals with a half-century each in their first two games.

Mohammed Shami, who was dropped from the playing XI against South Africa, is likely to make a comeback in the playing XI.

Shami was dropped purely for strategic reasons because of the Proteas' inability to counter the two wrist spinners.

But the current Australian team could be more susceptible against the pace of Jasprit Bumrah and craft of Shami.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who looked rusty during his first spell against

South Africa, was impressive in the second, with a couple of wickets to show for his effort.

In case India decide to retain both the wrist spinners and get Shami in the playing XI, then Bhuvneshwar will have to make way.

And in case one of the two spinners is dropped, then Chahal, despite his four-wicket-haul might make way for Kuldeep, who has had better success rate against the Australians.

It must be recalled that Chahal played only one game against Australia, at Mohali, in the home series, and gave away 80 runs in 10 wicketless overs.

Kuldeep is expected to be more effective because of the bounce and dip that he gets apart from his stock delivery being the one that will leave the left-handers.

The other issue could be Kedar's place as his side-arm off-breaks may just not be as effective on an Oval pitch with true bounce, where batsmen can line him up for big hits.

In that case Vijay Shankar, with his wicket-to-wicket seam-up stuff and steady batting, could come into consideration. Kedar have had problems against raw

pace and disconcerting bounce, which an in-form Mitchell Starc will dish out in abundance.

The other issue will be Shikhar Dhawan's prolonged bad patch. Dhawan, an ICC event giant, is yet to fire since coming to England, failing in both warm-up games and the first game.

The movement off the pitch from back of length has created problems for the left-hander and possibly he will get a couple of more games before Rahul is brought up the order and Shankar slotted at number four.

Teams (from):

India: Virat Kohli (captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul, Mahendra Singh Dhoni (wk), Hardik Pandya, Kedar Jadhav, Vijay Shankar, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Dinesh Karthik, Ravindra Jadeja

Australia: Aaron Finch (captain), David Warner, Usman Khawaja, Steve Smith, Marcus Stoinis, Glenn Maxwell, Alex Carey, Adam Zampa, Pat Cummins, Nathan Coulter-Nile, Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon, Shaun Marsh, Jason Behrendorff, Kane Richardson.

## Messi scores twice as Argentina routs Nicaragua 5-1

**LOS ANGELES, JUN 8 (AFP):** Lionel Messi scored a first-half double as Argentina warmed up for the Copa America with a comprehensive 5-1 win over Nicaragua on Friday in San Juan.

The Central Americans, who will participate in this month's Gold Cup tournament while Argentina battle it out in Brazil, frustrated the home side initially.

But it was left to captain Messi to spark his side into action in their only warm-up match ahead of the tournament, expertly opening the scoring on 37 minutes before grabbing another just 96 seconds later.

Lautaro Martinez, the Inter Milan forward, also scored twice, coming off the substitutes bench at half-time to give coach Lionel Scaloni food for thought ahead of the opening match with Colombia on June 15.

Scaloni, brought in after Jorge Sampaoli was sacked following a disastrous showing at

the World Cup last summer, is aiming to build a younger team and end Argentina's 26-year wait for a trophy.

Indeed, in Scaloni's Copa America squad only Messi, Sergio Aguero and Angel Di Maria remain from the one that was beaten by Germany in the World Cup final in Rio five years ago.

An on-song Messi, however, is needed for the South Americans to prosper over the next few weeks.

Messi has lost three Copa finals -- 2007, 2015 and 2016 -- and the last time Argentina won an international title was in the same competition back in 1993, when the diminutive forward was just six years old.

They have reached four of the last five finals.

With Brazil missing the injured Neymar for the showpiece event, which starts on June 14, Argentina are one of the favourites.

Early on in Friday's first meeting between Argentina and Nicaragua, Scaloni's team failed to inspire in front of a sell-out crowd of 25,000 at San Juan del Bicentenario stadium in San Juan, Argentina.

Aguero looked dangerous in the opening stages and Messi really should have done better on 12 minutes when he uncharacteristically shot wide from close range.

Nicaragua, however, were defending well while regularly asserting their physicality -- Messi was twice hauled down in the opening half hour -- to frustrate Argentina and their supporters.

River Plate's Matias Suarez had a shot pushed onto the post by visiting keeper Justo Lorente on 26 minutes but the two time World Champions were being made to work hard for openings.

Nicaragua, ranked 129th in the world

and competing in their second successive Gold Cup, will prove a stern test for Costa Rica, Haiti and Bermuda despite this thrashing. They have yet to win a game in two appearances at the tournament -- lost six with just one goal scored -- but won't go down without a fight.

Messi, however, is a danger for any team and his brilliant run and finish saw the Barcelona star beat three defenders before clinically finishing past Lorente. He grabbed his second soon after when Aguero's shot was parried.

Scaloni withdrew key men Messi and Aguero at half-time, which allowed Martinez, 21, to impress with a well taken efforts on 63 and 72 minutes.

Watford's Roberto Pereyra made it five with nine minutes remaining while Nicaragua's deserved consolation came through Juan Barrera's late penalty.

## Reid wants to rope in psychologist to work with mentally fragile Indian players

**SAUMOJOYOTI S CHOUDHURY**

**BHUBANESWAR, JUN 8 (PTI):** A "stable mind" is the need of the hour in modern hockey, says new chief coach Graham Reid, hinting that a full-time psychologist may soon join the Indian team in its quest for Olympic qualification.

Very well aware of India's perennial habit of succumbing under pressure in crunch situations, Reid wants to rope in a psychologist to work on the mental side of the players.

"In modern day sport, every player needs to be mentally stable and tough to deal with different sort of pressures," he said.

"I am still trying to work out how best to do that because the last

thing you want to do is bring someone (psychologist) in who doesn't really get on with the team. Over the next month or so we will work on the best way forward on the mental side," Reid told PTI in an exclusive interview on the sidelines of the ongoing FIH Series Finals here.

"To me it's a really important part but I also understand we have cultural differences. So those things have to be balanced."

Reid replaced Harendra Singh in April this year and the Australian said his passion to give Indian hockey its glorious days back brought him to the country.

"I do have a passion to get India back up at the top and that is what I will be focusing on," the

56-year-old former Australia coach said.

"When I was coming through I always played against India and Pakistan. They were always the teams that we heard about. There is an Anglo-Indian connection between India and Australia. The Anglo-Indians formed a big part of Perth hockey. There is a deep history there and may be that's where my passion comes from."

Stability and consistency are something that the Indian hockey team as well as the national federation (HI) are not known for and Reid is fully aware of it.

Asked if he is prepared for an early exit from the country if the Indian team fails to qualify for the Olympics, he said: "At the end of the

day, I don't have a choice. For me I try and get people to understand it takes time. This team needs stability and I will try to provide that as much as I can.

"The boys need confidence to flourish and get them understand how good they can be. The biggest thing that I want to bring to the team is consistency in performance."

"If you look 10 years ago and now, Indian hockey has come a long way. We just need to be patient. We need to understand there are going to be ups and downs. We need to just make sure we are targeting towards Olympic qualification first and then try to be on the final podium," he added.



## London police arrest 5th suspect in attack on lesbian couple

**LONDON, JUN 8 (AP):**

Police in London have arrested a fifth suspect on suspicion of punching two women on a bus because they are lesbians.

Authorities didn't identify the victims in the May 30 attack. But Melania Geymonat posted an image on her Facebook page showing her bloodied face and that of her girlfriend's.

Geymonat said in the post that they were on the upper deck of the bus when a gang of "hooligans" demanded that they kiss.

The women tried to reason with them, but the incident escalated.

Detective Superintendent Andy Cox says that while attacks like this are rare on London buses, extra uniformed and plain clothes officers will be out on patrol this weekend to offer reassurance.

# Indian-American activist who yelled at Jeff Bezos arrested

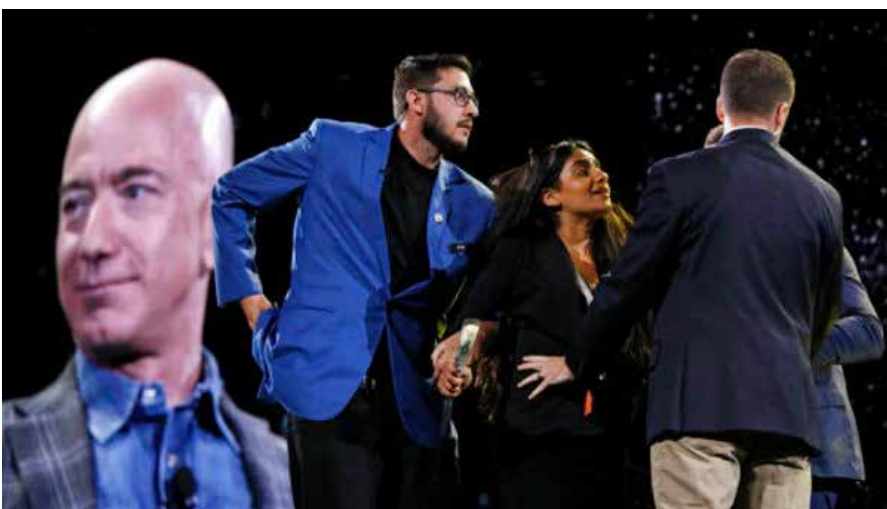
**NEW YORK, JUN 8 (PTI):**

Indian-American activist Priya Sawhney, who interrupted Amazon Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos' on-stage talk, has been arrested on trespassing and burglary charges, according to media reports.

Sawhney, 30, rushed on stage during Amazon's "re:MARS" event here on Thursday and asked Bezos to do something about "chicken farms".

Sawhney evaded event security, as well as some of Bezos' personal detail, which costs a reported USD 1.6 million per year, the BBC reported.

"You are the world's richest man. You're the President of Amazon and you can help the an-



imals," shouted Sawhney, asking Bezos to stop the abuses of animals in California farms, the report said.

The security guards quickly surrounded her and took her away.

Bezos and Jenny Freshwater, another Amazon executive on stage

at the time, sat calmly as the woman was removed.

A judge in Las Vegas says a California animal rights activist can be freed from jail without bail pending her next court date on felony charges for approaching Bezos, the world's richest man, on a conference

stage, according to a media report.

Sawhney is due again in court July 15 on false identification and burglary charges. In Nevada, burglary relates to entering a building with intent to commit a felony, the report said.

Sawhney is co-found-

er of Direct Action Everywhere (DXE), an international grassroots network of animal rights activists founded in 2013 in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Direct Action Everywhere animal rights group said it was protesting against what it claims is poor treatment of chickens at a farm in Petaluma Poultry, a California farm that supplies chicken and turkey to Amazon and others.

"Animal abuse is the crime here, not animal rescue," Ms Sawhney said in a press release published quickly after the incident.

"It's time Amazon and Jeff Bezos take a stand for transparency, rather than actively suppressing the truth.

## With Mexico deal done, US urges China to resume trade talks

**FUKUOKA, JUN 8 (AP):**

One down, still others to go. President Donald Trump claimed a victory after Washington and Mexico agreed on measures to stem the flow of Central American migrants into the United States.

Trump called off plans to impose a 5 per cent tax on Mexican exports, and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, speaking to reporters Saturday in Fukuoka on the sidelines of a meeting of financial leaders of the Group of 20 major economies, urged China to follow suit and return to stalled negotiations.

Mnuchin said he planned to have a private conversation with the head of China's central bank, Yi Gang.

In a G-20 group meeting later in the day, the two were seen exchanging friendly remarks, but there were no fresh signs Beijing is ready to compromise in the dispute over trade and technology.

"From our perspective of where we are now, it is a result of them backtracking on significant commitments," Mnuchin said.

"I don't think it's a breakdown in trust or good or bad faith. ... If they want to come back and complete the deal on the terms we were negotiating, that would be great." Mnuchin said he had no direct message to give to Yi, who has participated in the 11 rounds of talks so far on resolving the dispute between the world's two largest economies over technology and trade.

He said there were no plans for trade talks in Washington or Beijing before Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping are due to meet in Osaka for the G-20 summit on June 28-29.

"This will be a one-on-one with Gov. Yi to talk alone about the trade issues," Mnuchin said.

But he added, "I would expect the main progress will be at the G-20 meetings of the presidents."

The Trump administration began slapping tariffs on imports of Chinese goods nearly a year ago, accusing Beijing of using predatory means to lend Chinese companies an edge in advanced technologies such as arti-

ficial intelligence, robotics and electric vehicles.

Those tactics, the US contends, include hacking into US companies' computers to steal trade secrets, forcing foreign companies to hand over sensitive technology in exchange for access to the Chinese market and unfairly subsidizing Chinese tech firms.

The deal with Mexico helps alleviate uncertainty over the deal Washington recently reached on revising the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The new US-Mexico-Canada deal has been heading toward a vote in Congress and might have been stymied by new tariffs.

But the US is still negotiating new trade deals with Japan after withdrawing from a Pacific Rim arrangement, the Obama-era proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership.

America's huge trade deficit with China a record USD 379 billion last year is one factor driving Trump's frustrations with Beijing.

## Onus for Indo-Pak peace on Pakistan: White House

**LALIT K JHA**

**WASHINGTON, JUN 8**

**(PTI):** Amidst new peace overtures from the Imran Khan government after the re-election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the White House has made it clear to Pakistan that the onus for sustained peace in South Asia was on it by putting the terror groups out of business.

Khan has written a second letter to Prime Minister Modi after his re-election, saying that Pakistan wants talks with India to resolve all differences, including on the Kashmir issue.

The Pakistani premier said talks between the two nations were the only solution to help both countries' people overcome poverty and that it was important to work together for regional development.

However, India has rejected Pakistan's offer of talks, maintaining that terror and talks cannot go together and said that no bilateral meeting has been planned between the two premiers on the sidelines



of the Shanghai Cooperation Summit (SCO) in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek on June 13-14.

What the United States is really looking for in Pakistan are arrests and prosecutions and not allowing these groups to operate and move around freely, acquire weapons, cross into India, carry out attacks, a senior White House official told PTI this week.

The United States is looking for sustained and irreversible steps that shut down their operations, asserted the official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Until these groups are put out of business, it's

going to be very difficult for India and Pakistan to achieve a sustained peace. So the onus is on Pakistan to ensure that they crack down on these groups, said the White House official responding to a question on the US assessment of the Indo-Pak tension.

A senior State Department official said that in the wake of the Pulwama terrorist attack, the US has seen Pakistan taking some initial actions against designated terrorist organisations and more steps to enhance counter terrorism financing measures.

We welcome those steps, the official said.

We have always agreed that the underlying causes of the tensions between India and Pakistan needed to be addressed and the underlying tension has been the role of terrorist forces that have sanctuary on Pakistani soil. So we certainly encourage the creation of an environment that will lead to a dialogue, the official said.

Pakistan needs to take practical steps to demonstrate that it is countering terrorist financing and extremists that are located on their territory, a senior State Department Official told reporters last week.

Paris-based international terror financing watchdog FATF in June last year placed Pakistan onto its watch list in a bid to push the country to halt support for militant groups.

In February, the FATF decided to continue the 'Grey' listing of Pakistan for its failure to stop funding of terrorist groups such as the JeM, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD).

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## Lanka president hits out at committee probing Easter Sunday attacks

**COLOMBO, JUN 8 (PTI):**

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has publicly taken to task the parliamentary select committee on the Easter Sunday jihadi attacks, saying he was opposed to top officials testifying on national security matters before the media.

Sirisena's outburst is set to trigger another conflict between him the executive and parliament the legislature, analysts said.

Sirisena on Friday called for an emergency Cabinet meeting and said he stand opposed to the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) probing the attacks summoning intelligence officers and disclosing intelligence information to the media.

"I am completely opposed to senior intelligence officers being questioned openly in parliament. This exposes very sensitive national security information," Sirisena said.

Among the officials questioned so far are the Defence Secretary, in-

telligence chief, police chief and former defence secretary.

The president said that those who have appeared before the PSC so far are former officers or officials and not current officers and have revealed key information.

The then police chief Pujith Jayasundera, who was sent on compulsory leave, told the PSC that he had been overlooked by Sirisena for security council meetings. Sirisena was dealing with the head of the State Intelligence Service, overlooking Jayasundera.

Hemasiri Fernando, the defence ministry secretary sacked by Sirisena for his failure to prevent the April 21 attacks, said the intelligence on a possible jihadi attack had not been given due importance at the security council meetings.

Other unimportant matters discussed while no action plan was ever discussed on the jihadi threat.

He said that he will not allow any current of-

ficer to be summoned before the PSC and that his stand has been communicated to the Cabinet.

"This is not done anywhere in the world - key intelligence officers being openly questioned in front of the media," Sirisena said.

"They can become targets of criminals as their identities have been revealed," Sirisena's discomfiture stems from the fact that Sirisena as the Minister of Defence was responsible for the intelligence failure which led to inaction despite the availability of prior warnings on the Easter Sunday attacks.

The aim of the emergency Cabinet meeting was to discuss what he termed the damage caused to the national security by the PSC proceedings.

The cabinet meeting, however, ended without any agreement.

Sirisena on June 4 wrote to Speaker Karu Jayasuriya asking him to stop the PSC proceedings. The legislature hit back saying that execu-

tive must not interfere in its business.

This situation is similar to when Sirisena suspended parliament in October last year after he had unconstitutionally named Mahinda Rajapaksa as the prime minister.

The unprecedented clash between the executive and the legislature lasted nearly 3 months before the highest court in a landmark judgment ended the stalemate forcing Sirisena to restore the status quo.

A string of powerful blasts tore through three churches and as many luxury hotels, killing 258 people and injuring more than 500 others.

The Islamic State has claimed the attacks, but the government has blamed local Islamist extremist group National Thawheed Jamaath (NTJ) for the bombings.

A total of 106 suspects, including a Tamil medium teacher and a school principal, have been arrested in connection with the blasts.

## Post-election, US hopes Modi will have freer hand to pursue tough economic reforms

**LALIT K JHA**

**WASHINGTON, JUN 8**

**(PTI):** The White House is hopeful that Narendra Modi in his second term as prime minister with a strong mandate will have a freer hand to pursue some of the tough economic reforms that will help create a more business-friendly environment, a senior official has said.

His comments came as the US media on Friday reported that India could soon become the next target of President Donald Trump's aggressive policy, including launching the so-called Section 301 investigation against India.

"There's concern that recent restrictions adopted by the Indian government on e-commerce and data localisation have negatively impacted US companies and the overall investment climate," a senior White House official told PTI on condition of anonymity.

"The United States is hopeful that, with the election over, Prime Minister Modi will have a freer hand to pursue some of the tough economic reforms that will help create a more business-friendly environment and encourage new foreign investment," the official said.

Prime Minister Modi and the US President Donald Trump are scheduled to meet later this month in Osaka, Japan during the G-20 Summit.

While no structured bilateral meeting has been planned yet, Modi and Trump would have a tri-lateral summit with the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Trump, who looks at every bilateral relationship from the prism of economy, has for about a year now publicly expressed his displeasure over the status of India-US economic relationship in particular the alleged high tariffs by India.

In the past several months, he has called India a "tariff king" and threatened to impose reciprocal tariffs on Indian products as well.

Immediately after Modi was sworn in for second term, President Trump informed the US Congress of his decision

to terminated India's designation as a beneficiary developing nation under the key GSP trade programme after determining that it has not assured the US that it will provide "equitable and reasonable access to its markets."

The Generalised System of Preference (GSP) is the largest and oldest US trade preference programme and is designed to promote economic development by allowing duty-free entry for thousands of products from designated beneficiary countries.

The US media reported that India could soon become the next target of Trump's aggressive policy after China and Mexico.

"The next step is expected to be launching a full-blown investigation into India's practices, just as the US did with China last year," Politico reported on Friday.

Under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, the administration can take action, including tariffs, to counter another nation's policies that restrict US commerce.

Trump has invoked that previously little-used provision to impose or threaten tariffs on virtually all goods imported from China, the report said.

"What happened with China is a road map for what you could see in India," one business source close to the issue was quoted as saying by Politico.

A senior State Department official identified trade as a reason for the bilateral tension.

"India remains one of the least open major economies in the world. The Trump administration is committed to ensuring free and fair and reciprocal trade. We have prioritised working with the government of India to ensure that US companies have a level playing field, the official told a group of reporters last week.

"The persistent market access issues," the official explained.

"Now the task is how do we look ahead? How do we work under the second Modi Administration to identify a path forward?" the official said.





## John Cena joins 'Fast & Furious 9' cast

**LOS ANGELES, JUN 8 (PTI):** WWE wrestler-turned-actor John Cena is the latest addition to the cast of "Fast & Furious 9".

Cena, 42, took to Twitter to announce the news that he has joined the franchise and will star opposite veterans Vin Diesel and Michelle Rodriguez, both of whom are reprising their roles as Dom Toretto and Letty Ortiz.

"For nearly 20 years, the Fast Franchise has entertained fans and created some of the biggest cinematic moments in history. It's an incredible honour to join this franchise and this family," he wrote.

Details about Cena's role are being kept under wraps.

"Fast & Furious 9" is set for a May 2020 release.



## Never okay to bully anyone: Ananya Pandey rubbishes reports of her lying about USC admission

**MUMBAI, JUN 8 (PTI):** Ananya Pandey on Saturday dismissed the accusations that she lied about getting selected in a prestigious US university.

The "Student of the Year 2" actor had recently said in an interview that she chose not to go to college despite being accepted for a journalism program as she wanted to focus on her acting career.

A woman, who goes by the name of "anieeepeeee" on Instagram, then came forward disputing the actor's statement and said she never applied for any foreign university.

The woman claimed to be Ananya's schoolmate. Setting the record straight, the 20-year-old actor posted a photo of her with the university letters on Instagram and revealed that she had successfully applied for a major in Communication at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism but postponed her admission twice as she was shooting for her debut film.

"As I've stated earlier, I was accepted by Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at USC for a major in Communication in the Spring 2018 semester. But since I was shooting for my first film and the release date later got pushed, I had to request for a deferral (which means postponing my admission) twice - first to Fall 2018 and later to Fall 2019, both of which they gracefully agreed to do," Ananya wrote in the caption.

"In my case, I could only defer my admission two times so I will not be attending university (for now), since I've decided to pursue my career in acting," she added.

The actor also said the rumours that she lied about getting selected in a foreign university were "getting out of hand" and have been "unfair" to her and her family.

"As for the people who have been trying to pull me down with these accusations, I would like to send you all lots of love, peace and positivity. And would also like to say that even though they're claiming to be my classmates (nameless and faceless) - I'm sure they aren't because I've grown up with the people I went to school with and they would never do something like that," Ananya said.

## Michael Douglas blames Spielberg's TV bias for not winning best actor at 2013 Cannes

**LOS ANGELES,**

**JUN 8 (PTI):**

Veteran actor

Michael Douglas

believes film-

maker Steven

Spielberg's anti-

stand against

television cost

him the best ac-

tor trophy at the

2013 Cannes Film Festival.

Douglas starred in Steven Soderbergh's HBO film "Be-

hind the Candelabra", alongside actor Matt Damon.

The movie had its world premiere at the Cannes Film

Festival and was among strong contenders for the coveted

Palme d'Or trophy.

Spielberg served as the president of the Cannes competi-

tion jury that year.

Appearing on Variety's "Actor on Actor" series with Be-

neicio del Toro, the 74-year-old actor said many people told

him that he was "favourite" for the award, which was bagged

by Bruce Dern for "Nebraska".

"The word was I was the favourite for the best actor award.

(Spielberg) put the kibosh on that, because it was an HBO film.

So when I now see this argument and beef about Showtime or

Netflix, in this case, doing feature films, I think they've got to

get this resolved," he said.

Spielberg last year made headlines after the veteran film-

maker said once "you commit to a television format, you're a

TV movie" and argued that if it's good, it deserves an Emmy

and not Oscars.

His comments had sparked a debate in Hollywood about

whether movies distributed by Netflix with a limited theatrical

release deserve Oscar recognition.



**SIGNATURE SMILE!** The actress, Julia Roberts lights up the stage at the 47th AFI Life Achievement Award honoring Denzel Washington in Hollywood.



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