



GOVT SHOULD DRAW  
FRESH PROPOSAL ON LT  
ASSEMBLY SEATS: LTVG  
pg02

FIRST WIN FOR SAI  
NAMCHI IN S-LEAGUE  
pg02

HSP TEAM CALLS  
ON DK BHANDARI  
pg02



# SummitTIMES

Vol 03 | Issue 198 | Gangtok | Saturday | 28 July 2018

O N T O P O F T H E N E W S

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

## CCCT Chisopani staff go on pen-down strike

*Demand clarity  
on status of CCCT  
as a government  
institution*

**BIKASH CHETTRI  
NAMCHI, 27 JUL:**

The faculty members and staff of Centre for Computers and Communication Technology (CCCT), Chisopani began an indefinite pen down strike from today. The strike is against the HRD department for not bringing CCCT Chisopani fully under the State Government even though the same had been announced in 2017.

According to the faculty members, the State Government had declared that the first government engineering college will be set up at CCCT under the name Sikkim Institute of Science and Technology (SIST). Subsequently, a separate administration section has been set up at the campus with SIST becoming functional from Saturday, they informed.

However, they said that there is no clarity on whether the existing faculty and staff will also



come under SIST and become officially employed by the state government.

"SIST is going to run under CCCT campus and all the classes will be in CCCT infrastructure but we, 84 staff and faculties members, don't know if we are state government employees or not," they stated.

They contended that the HRDD has not given clear directions about

CCCT Chisopani functioning under the state government or as an empanelled technical college although all funds for the institute is being provided by the state government since 2017.

"We will continue our protest till the HRDD gives us a clarification. They also said that the protest will be peaceful but no faculty member will take any classes till

the HRDD resolves the problem," they said.

They further informed that establishment of CCCT is one of the major initiatives taken by the Government of Sikkim for the development of technical education in the state and the polytechnic was set up under the World Bank assisted "Third Technician Education Project" of MHRD, Government of

India in the year 1999.

The state Government intends the polytechnic to be a model institute with the latest technologies and facilities as a centre of excellence and was designed to address the need for employable skills to be imbibed among the youth of the state and thus CCCT Chisopani was established as an autonomous technical institute

under the Board of Technical Education of Sikkim Government.

## SKM to mark 10 Aug as Jan Unmukti Diwas

**REBYNA RANA  
GANGTOK, 27 JUL:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha will be marking the release of its president PS Tamang [Golay] from the State Prison on 10 Aug by celebrating the day as Jan Unmukti Diwas or People's Liberation Day.

Speaking to SummitTimes, SKM general secretary [press & publicity], Bikash Basnet informed that Mr Tamang will address his supporters at Singtam Bazaar on the day of his release.

"Jan Unmukti Diwas" has been arranged by the party at Singtam where Mr Golay will address a massive gathering to announce his freedom from the chains of conspiracy

of SDF led Government," he stated.

After this, he will visit his parents in his village Singling in West Sikkim where he will stay for two days before taking over the reins of the party, informed Mr Basnet.

"Undoubtedly he is the brand of our party, he will lead the party on the day of his release," he added.

On what Mr Tamang's release would mean for the party and politics in general, Mr Basnet said that it was only after the formation of SKM in 2013 that Sikkim finally found a strong opposition to instil the spirit of democracy.

"His release will have a great impact on the political landscape of Sikkim and it will be for the good," he stated.

**HAVE A STORY  
TO SHARE?**

email:  
news@summittimes.com



## SKM mocking RP Act by claiming Golay can contest in 2019:SDF

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 27 JULY:**

Sikkim Democratic Front has stressed that to make statements beyond the Representation of People's Act has proved the intellectual paucity and political indigence of the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha.

This was in reference to the claim of SKM leaders that their president, PS Tamang [Golay], will be able to contest the next elections despite

having been convicted and having served jail-time following his conviction under the Prevention of Corruption Act. SDF insists that this conviction and imprisonment debars Mr Tamang from contesting elections for six years.

The ruling party has strongly criticised and condemned what it sees as SKM's "mockery" of the Representation of People's Act through such claims.

SDF has reiterated that under the Representation of People's Act, a person convicted in a corruption case sentenced for more than one year of imprisonment cannot participate in any election for a period of six years from the date of release.

An SDF press release issued by its publicity secretary, Krishna Khar-el, states that the SDF has only delivered its on responsibility by taking

this truth to the people otherwise SDF has not any concern regarding whether Mr Tamang can contest the election or not.

The release mentions that Mr Tamang was presently serving the imprisonment sentence on the order of the High Court of Sikkim on the PIL no 03/1999 filed by Nuk Tshering Bhutia.

The release contends that the statement of

turn to pg03

## Namchi college hosts w'shop on Tourism for Entrepreneurship Development

**YOUGAN TAMANG  
NAMCHI, 27 JUL:**

Tourism for Entrepreneurship Development workshop cum interaction for tourism entrepreneurs, aspiring entrepreneurs and students was organised today at Namchi Government College by Entrepreneurs Hub and Consultation Centre, Samman Bhawan.

The event was addressed by resource persons Rewaj Chettri [Founder NE Taxi], Robin Basnet [Entrepreneur], Ritez Chettri [TAAS Member], Bikash Gadaily [TAAS Member] and Smita Rai [Founder Namchi Designer Candles].

Rewaj Chettri spoke on his journey as an entrepreneur sharing the



various challenges and scope of entrepreneurship in the state of Sikkim. He also highlighted the need for creating an entrepreneurship ecosystem in the state by

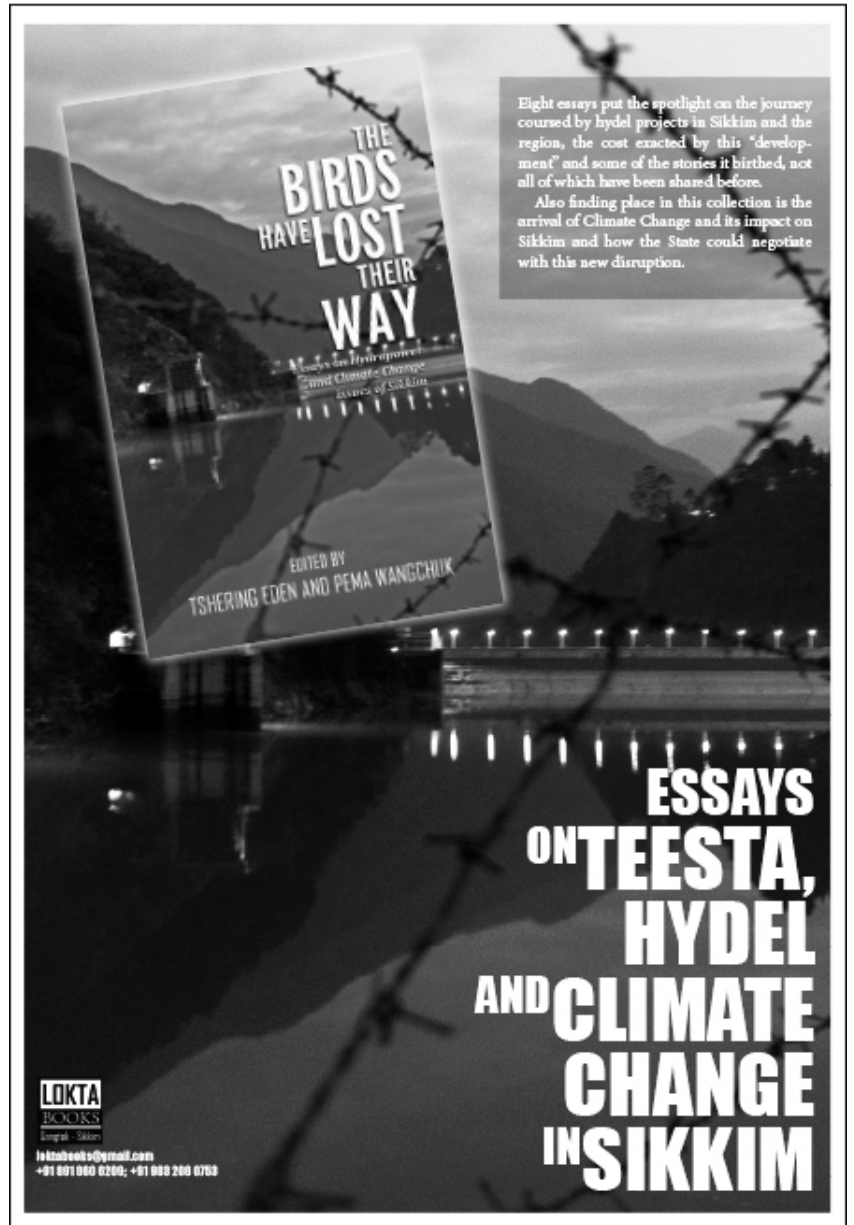
young aspiring entrepreneurs of Sikkim.

He further added on how Government of Sikkim is serious about helping young aspiring entrepreneurs of Sikkim

and supporting them through various schemes and policies.

Robin Basnet, an entrepreneur from Yangang spoke on the 'dignity of

turn to pg03



**ESSAYS  
ON TEESTA,  
HYDEL  
AND CLIMATE  
CHANGE  
IN SIKKIM**



## Phalidara JHS conducts Science Quiz and Math Olympiad



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:**

Science Club of Phalidara Junior High School in South Sikkim organized a daylong Science Quiz and Math Olympiad today in the school auditorium hall, informs a press release. The programme was attended by panchayat member of Upper Phalidara, Deo Kumar Manger as chief guest and Assistant Directors, HRDD Namchi BAC, Radhika Rai and K B Gurung as guests of honour.

The students of classes VI to VIII participated in science quiz in the first session conducted by Science graduate teacher, L D Sherpa and the second session of Math

Olympiad was conducted by Mathematics teacher, Colin Gensarpa.

Headmaster Suresh K Subba highlighted the programme and its objectives. The prime aim of this programme is to enhance the science and mathematical knowledge of students. The release mentions.

Assistant Director Radhika Rai appreciated the activities in her address and also stressed on conducting such activities in the classroom regularly.

The chief guest in his short address applauded the initiative taken by the school and assured to extend support to the school.

## Training on value addition of fruits and vegetables at Malbasey



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:**

One day Training programme cum Demonstration on Value Addition of locally available fruits and vegetables was organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra in collaboration with ATMA, West Sikkim under Krishi Kalyan Abhiyan in Malbasey, West Sikkim, as per a press release.

SMS, Horticulture, Sangay Palmu Bhutia highlighted post-harvest and value addition of locally available fruits and vegetable. She also demonstrated the pack-

aging procedure of RTS, fruits and vegetables, juice preparation, chips making from banana, jack fruit and ginger candy, etc.

While SMS, Agriculture Extension, Bishon Pradhan explained the different methods of bio-composting and its importance in organic farming system.

Fifty farmers and rural youth participated in the programme which concluded with vote of thanks and distribution of bio-waste decomposer, the release mentions.

## Gor School gears up for I-Day celebration



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA**  
**DIKCHU, 27 JULY:**

A coordination meeting was convened at Gor Secondary School in Lower Dzongu, North Sikkim on Thursday in preparation for the Sub Divisional level Independence Day celebration.

The meeting was chaired by Sub Divisional Magistrate, Dzongu, Tshering Dorjee Bhutia in the presence of Zilla Member, Lum/Gor/Sangtok GPU, Tshering Gyatso Lepcha, Headmistress, Tseten Lhamu Lepcha, panchayat members of the GPU, officials from

the various line departments, SMC members and the school staff.

The meeting formed a celebration committee and delegated various responsibilities in matters of publicity, refreshments, sanitation, etc to various departments and also to the members of the newly formed committee.

The meeting was followed by inspection of school complex and opening of small two storeyed wooden school complex after its renovation by the school authority and SMC.

# Govt should draw fresh proposal on LT Assembly seats: LTVC

**SAGAR CHETTRI**  
**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:**

Limboo Tamang Voluntary Committee [LTVC] has said today that the State Government should forward a fresh proposal to the Centre by involving all stakeholders regarding Limboo-Tamang Assembly seat reservation. The organisation believes that Assembly seat reservation for Limboo and Tamang is possible before the 2019 election if the government works with all stakeholders.

LTVC held a press conference here today, which was addressed by president Yehang Tshong, general secretary Prazol Tshong, joint secretary Suncha Kurungbang and active members Sushant Limboo and Bishnu Limboo.

Mr Tshong stated that the State Government has never taken delegations comprising of all Limboo-Tamang organisations and stakeholders to the Centre. The gov-



ernment has always sent SILTAC which does not represent all LT communities, he added.

"The State Government took pains to facilitate them by forwarding their memorandum to the PM which itself is a copy paste of the State Government's memorandum and also took extra care by fixing their

appointment with Union Ministers and officials at the Centre," he alleged.

LTVC has questioned the State Government and SILTAC seeking LT seats under Article 332 even after knowing that it is in violation of Article 371F. According the organization, by doing this the government is deliberately trying to maintain

status-quo till the delimitation exercise which is due in 2026. They also alleged that SILTAC has been misguiding the people of Sikkim.

They reiterated the stand of LTVC that Assembly seats should be provided to Limboo and Tamang from the existing 32 seats. This, the organisation feels is an easier

and possible solution as it can be done under under 371F (f) and Sikkim Subject Act 1974.

"Remedy of LT seat solution must be sought within the framework of Article 371F which is a constitutional provision for Sikkim and Sikkimese people," they added.

They also asserted that LTVC will oppose any move to merge LT with new Scheduled Tribes in the future.

LTVC members informed that the organization's president received a reply to an RTI application from the PMO on 12 July which consisted of the state government memorandum on socio-political issues submitted to the PM by the CM, Members of the State Cabinet, MLAs and MPs on 18 June 2016. The memorandum signed by 28 elected members and 2 MPs of SDF government was the same as that proposed by the CM in his earlier letter

dated 05 April 2016 to the Union Home Minister which had suggested a fresh proposal regarding LT seat reservation in the State Assembly.

Mr Tshong mentioned that in the letter the State government submitted two options, Burman Commission or the alternative formulation [Interim/temporary solution]. He added that after going through the memorandum of the State Government it is evident that the government is not sincere towards the LT communities.

He added that the government cannot seek delimitation under Article 371F and seat reservation under Article 332 simultaneously.

As a mark of protest LTVC members also burnt the State Government memorandum submitted to the PM by the jumbo delegation led by the CM on 15 June regarding the seat reservation for LT.

## Regional Workshop on Aspirational districts of NE inaugurated

**GUWAHATI, 27 JUL [PIB]:**

A one-day Regional Workshop on Aspirational Districts of North East India was inaugurated here today by Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Assam, VB Pyarelal.

The Workshop was organized by the NITI Aayog and the Ministry for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER). There are 14 Aspirational Districts in eight North Eastern States. Out of 14 Aspirational districts, 7 are in Assam and the remaining 7 districts are one each in other 7 States. The District Administration heads from these 14 districts, officials from NITI Aayog, Ministry of DoNER, Transformation and Development Department, Government

of Assam attended the workshop.

Progress under extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyaan is being reviewed in the workshop, in addition to discussion on aspirational districts programme and best practices. The technical staff from the 14 Aspirational Districts are also being briefed in the technical session on data, dashboard and ranking of the Aspirational Districts.

The 14 Aspirational Districts are (i) Dhubri, Goalpara, Barpeta, Darrang, Baksa, Udalguri and Hailakandi in Assam; (ii) Namsai in Arunachal Pradesh; (iii) Chandel in Manipur; (iv) Ribhoi in Meghalaya; (v) Mamit in Mizoram; (vi) Kiphire in Nagaland; (vii) West Sikkim and (viii) Dhalai in Tripura.



## HSP team meets DK Bhandari

**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:** A team of Hamro Sikkim Party led by Bhaichung Bhutia met Sikkim Sangram Parishad president, DK Bhandari today. "I thanked her for a message she wrote for Hamro Sikkim Party and we agreed to work together in future as well," said Mr Bhutia. [from REBYNA RANA]

## Soreng college hosts seminar on Teacher Education

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:**

Government B.Ed. College, Soreng organised a two-day National Seminar on the theme "Teacher Education: Prospect & Challenges", informs a press release.

The keynote speaker of the seminar was Prof. Anita Rampal, from Delhi University. She highlighted the norms laid by

NCF 2005 regarding the education system, the release mentions.

The first technical session was chaired by Associate Prof. Sikkim University, Dr. Yodida Bhutia. Rapporteur of the session was DSL, the presenters were K.I. Singh [Asst. Prof. Sikkim B.Ed College, Soreng], Dr. Nanda Lal Sharma [DIET, Nanchi, South Sikkim], Fr.

Dr. Francis A.B [S] Loyola College of Education Namchi] and Aysha Mohd [Research Scholar].

The afternoon session was followed by panel discussion. The moderator was Dr. Rabin Chhetri and the panelists were Pro. Anita Rampal, Dr. Sandhya Rai and Dr. Yodida Bhutia.



## Coordination meet for I-Day celebration held at Jorethang

**JORETHANG, 27 JUL (IPR):**

Minister for Healthcare, Human Services and Family Welfare and IPR Department cum-MLA Salghari Zoom, Arjun Kumar Ghatani chaired a coordination meeting at Green Park, Jorethang for the preparation of the Independence Day Celebration 2018, today.

During the meeting, the Independence Day Celebration Committee 2018 was formed under the Chief Patronship of Area MLA, Arjun Kumar Ghatani. The Sub-Div-



sional Magistrate Jorethang, Tshering Bhutia and Commandant 2nd IRBn Pipalee (W), Prawin Gurung were nominated as the president and chief programme coordinator of the organising committee.

Mr. Ghatani, in his address, assured to deliver his assigned responsibility and commitment with much vigour and further urged concerned executive members to accelerate the process of preparations in their

respective fields. He also urged the participants to give quality output with sense of belongingness. He also suggested that Independence Day inter-departmental football tournament should be organised, which was earlier passed by the Committee.

He also applauded the role of the organising committee for making Akkar Summer Cup Football Tournament 2018 a grand success and extended his gratitude to the Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling and every in-

dividual for their invaluable contributions.

SDM Jorethang, Tshering Bhutia called for active coordination of various departments and suggested to expedite the preparation process with new spirit.

Prawin Gurung advised that government and private organizations along with the public should be invited to the celebration. He urged all students and teachers to conceptualise creative presentations and performances.

During the meeting,

subjects like March Past, Drills, Cultural performances, Football Tournament were discussed in detail. Jorethang based Truck Driver Association was honoured and felicitated for their notable contributions in Bhanu Jayanti celebration by the Area MLA and also dissolved the Bhanu Jayanti Celebration Committee 2018. He also advised that a literary organization should be registered for certain grants from the state government in the future.



**Gangtok on Saturday, 28 July**  
**Temp:** 25°C/18°C  
**Forecast:** A couple of morning thundershowers, then a thundershower in parts of the area.  
**Sunrise:** 04:56 AM  
**Sunset:** 6:28 PM

**One booked under POCSO Act**  
**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:** A 28-year-old man has been accused of sexually assaulting a minor girl on 26 July in East Sikkim. The accused had given a lift to the girl in his car but instead of dropping her off had taken her to an isolated place and sexually assaulted her.

Hearing the victim's cries, villagers of the area gathered and informed the parents. However, the accused managed to escape from the spot but was later nabbed and put under arrest. After medical examination, the victim was handed over to her mother. Childline and other concerned authorities have also been informed.

**Miscreants damage BSNL property**  
**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:** Some miscreants allegedly damaged property belonging to telecom service provider BSNL at Bhanjyang Road, Namchi in South Sikkim hampering services in the main town of Namchi. According to a BSNL official, who reported the matter to the police, miscreants damaged BSNL property on two occasions on 22 and 24 July. Police are investigating the case.

**Road mishap claims one**  
**GANGTOK, 27 JUL:** A road mishap in West Sikkim has claimed the life of 32-year-old Ongyal Lepcha on 26 July. The deceased was driving a Bolero towards Tathang from Jorethang. At around 10 p.m. on reaching Boom in Lower Melli Aching, the vehicle fell down approximately 59 ft below the road. He was the lone occupant in the vehicle and succumbed to his injuries.

Contact SummitTIMES at 9832556698, 9832369520 news@summittimes.com advertse@summittimes.com summittimes16@gmail.com



Sensitization prog on RTI Act at ICFAI University

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 27 JUL:** Sikkim Information Commission organised a sensitization programme on Right to Information at ICFAI University today. The program was attended by Vice Chancellor, Dr. Jagannath Patnaik, who started the program with a welcome speech. The team from Sikkim Information Commission was led by Deputy Secretary SIC, Abinash Rai. He gave detailed insight on RTI Act, 2005.

Pediatric health camp held at Mangan



**MANGAN, 27 JUL (IPR):** Bhavishya Bharat, a development organization in collaboration with HANS Foundation conducted a day long Pediatric health camp at Mangan District Hospital. Child Specialist from Gangtok, Dr. H.K Chettri conducted the camp. Around 76 children received free consultations and medicines during the camp. Bhavishya Bharat is a non-profit organization with its headquarters in Hyderabad. The organization has been providing primary health care services, quality education, livelihood, Infra works development and social development services in remote locations of Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Telengana. Its vision is to improve the quality of life of communities through holistic and integrated social development thereby enabling communities to become self-reliant. The organisation has a mobile medical unit named 'Sanjeevani - Clinic on Wheels' with screening facilities and provides primary health services on a regular basis to 20 villages in North District and 40 villages in the West District of Sikkim. Bhavishya Bharat had also undertaken the Rehabilitation and Resetlement (R&R) activities of The Teesta Urja Hydel Power Project which is a Government of Sikkim owned enterprise.

Final meeting held for I-Day celebration at Singtam

**YOGEN THATAL SINGTAM, 27 JUL:** The final meeting for Independence Day celebration at Singtam was held today in the community hall of Singtam Nagar Panchayat. Addressing the meeting, Chairperson Film Board, Government of Sikkim, Uttam Pradhan, said that this year a flex will be designed containing photographs of freedom fighters so that the public can remember and pay tribute to forgotten heroes of the Country who laid down their lives for freedom. Area MLA cum Agriculture Minister, Somnath Poudyal was present as the chief guest for the meeting. He was accompanied by president and councillors of Singtam Nagar Panchayat, PI Singtam PS, Roshan Rai and the organising committee.

Specially abled people demonstrate before Assam secretariat

**GUWAHATI, JUL 27 (PTI):** Several organisations of specially abled people today demonstrated in front of the state secretariat here accusing the Assam Government of failing to fulfill its commitments to them, police said. Members of organisations of physically, visually and hearing impaired persons attempted to enter the secretariat 'Janata Bhavan' by breaking the police barricade to meet the social welfare minister and officials concerned. The agitators were arrested and many of them were seen being physically lifted by policemen and put inside buses for taking them to temporary jails. They were later released, police said. The demonstrators alleged before the journalists that the government had failed to fulfill its repeated assurances given to them at various meetings during the past two years. They are demanding establishment of an exclusive college and university for specially abled people and reservation of government jobs for them. They also demanded raising of their special allowance of Rs 5000 to Rs 10000 per month. The protest blocked the busy G S Road and held up traffic for nearly two hours, police said.

Rights, privileges of none to be curtailed post NRC: Himanta

**GUWAHATI, JUL 27 (PTI):** Senior Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma today said nobody's rights and privileges will be curtailed if his or her name is not included in the final NRC draft, to be published on July 30. "A Draft is a draft. Nobody's rights and privileges will be taken away on the basis of the draft NRC. No one will be sent to any detention camp," Sarma told a press conference. After the final publication, there will be claims, objection and correction procedure and people will be able to avail these services, said Sarma, the finance minister of the state. Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal yesterday said no one will be treated as foreigner if his or her name does not feature in the final draft. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is being updated with March 24, 1971 as the cut-off date for legitimate claim to Indian citizenship in Assam. The first draft of the NRC was published during the intervening nights of December 31 and January 1 this year, containing 1.9 crore names out of a total applications of 3.29 crore people in Assam. Assam is the only state in the country having an NRC which was first prepared in 1951.

SKM mocking RP Act by claiming Golay can contest in 2019:SDF

**contd from pg01** "confused" SKM that Mr Tamang can become the Chief Minister even if he cannot contest the election was "unconstitutional" and "open mockery" of the Representation of People's Act of the Country. The SDF party reiterated that PS Golay who is serving one year imprisonment cannot contest upcoming two elections in 2019 and 2024 as per the law. The release expressed that after a serious study of the section 8 of the Representation of People's Act 1951 the SDF party has taken the correct information and facts to the people.

to book advertisements in SummitTimes, call 03592-208698 9734152541

First win for SAI Namchi in S-League



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 27 JUL:** SAI Namchi registered its first win in the ongoing Sikkim Football Association Premier Division Sikkim-League 2018 here at Paljor Stadium on Friday. In its second league match, SAI Namchi defeated Boys Club Gangtok 2-1 to secure full three points. Both teams kept constant pressure on each other from the start. Tshetij Manger scored the lead for SAI in the 19th minute. Boys Club got some good opportunities to equalise the score but failed to net any goal in the first half. In the second half, Karma Thendup Bhutia doubled the lead of SAI in the 61st minute. Boys Club players tried hard to bounce back into the match but could not score any goal until Padam Tamang scored a goal for the team in the injury time but it was too late for Boys Club. The defending champion, United Sikkim Football Club will now take on Pakyong United Football Club in its second match in the league on Saturday.

Namchi college hosts w'shop on Tourism for Entrepreneurship Development

**contd from pg01** labour' which is very important for the young people in the State to understand. Ritez Chettri, an entrepreneur from Turuk, South Sikkim and a TAAS member stressed on the potential of Sikkim in tourism. He highlighted the importance of sustainable tourism and the need for more youngsters to explore this sector. Bikash Gadaily, an entrepreneur and also a TAAS member delivered a motivational talk and encouraged the students to follow their heart and passion. Smita Rai, Founder, Namchi Designer Candles talked about women and entrepreneurship. She also shared her entrepreneurship journey to inspire and motivate the students. The event was also attended by Akshay Sachdeva, ADGP, Law and Order as the chief guest. During his address he highlighted various aspects of public and private jobs. He spoke on various aspects of life to encourage and motivate the students of the college. A workshop was also held where the students directly interacted with the resource persons on issues and concerns related to tourism in Sikkim and entrepreneurship. More than 600 students along with teachers attended the event. The event was also attended by Dr. PR Poudyal [Principal], Royal Rai [Vice Principal, Namchi Government College], Sammi Rai [SP], Linda Palmu Bhutia [ASP], Arun Kumar Thatal [SDPO Namchi] and Bikash Rai [Founder, GBT Entertainment] and various other guests.

DAUGHTER IS PRECIOUS, PROTECT HER FUTURE WITH H.P.V VACCINE

Age Group : 9 to 14 Years

Date : 30<sup>th</sup> July To 14th August 2018

Venue : All Government and Public Schools, STNM Hospital (UPHC), District Hospitals, Primary Health Centre

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE, HUMAN SERVICES & FAMILY WELFARE, GOVT. OF SIKKIM



# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

## Have We Failed the Young?

*Of course we have. Now, to make amends*

Youth evolve from the societies they grow in. They are after all, products of what they are exposed to, groomed from influences they are surrounded by. Juvenile delinquency, like teen rebellion, is expected; but when the lines delineating youthful experimentation from criminal malefaction get blurred and digressions into darker aberrations surface, it is time to worry.

At around this time last year, there was a rash of bag snatching and assault with intent to rob incidents around Gangtok. Those incidents have stopped now, but from what the victims recalled, the assailants were all “young” boys, fresh out of their teens. Not that long ago, a “gang” attacked a motorist in Gangtok and left him severely battered. Across the state borders, although the cases of arson and overnight attacks have gone down, it would not surprise if these were commissioned to “young” people, youth who should ideally be more moved by ideas of sacrifice and idealism than assault and mindless arson. Agreed, these isolated incidents are not representative of the entire generation, but they are still worrying signals.

Worry, in fact, might be too mild a reaction, it's probably time to panic. Panic, not against the young who crossed over into near morbid criminality, but a society that has so disassociated itself from the grooming of its young that it did not even notice the spiral it has pushed innocence into. And there have been other incidents in between, some got reported, others were covered-up. So, yes it is time to panic.

It is inexcusable that such incidents should transpire. Harrowing as it is for the victims, Sikkim's collective failure in addressing the issue - not as individual cases or in terms of victims and perpetrators, but in terms of figuring out how the young can be counseled better and kept safe - is shameful. The young are obviously growing in a vacuum, untouched by proper nurture despite all the talk of moral education. The schools perhaps concentrate too much on regimented teaching to have time for grooming, and parents too obsessed with other priorities to notice how an entire generation is coming unhinged. Teenagers are committing suicide in Sikkim, some are falling to fatal over-doses of substances of abuse, still more are buying substances of abuse on the streets and as they grow more asocial, some have lost the faculties to differentiate between right and obvious criminality.

Slightly older, and these juveniles would have been dismissed by the society at large as ‘no-good, anti-social elements’. But in many cases, the perpetrators are still “young” enough to have the need for their parents/ guardians to be informed of their actions. What we hence end up staring at is a reflection of our failings. For this situation, there are no prescribed solutions or government-funded interventions to bring NGOs crawling out of the woodwork to implement. The young, the victims and the perpetrators, need to be saved from our failings. A good place to begin would be to accept that we have failed collectively. Then can begin the process of figuring out how the right counseling and right inspirations can be dispensed to ensure that innocence grows into maturity in Sikkim, and does not derail into antisocial excesses as is obviously happening at present...

**WRITE US:** Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/ indecorous language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence.

Mail us at: [letters@summittimes.com](mailto:letters@summittimes.com)

FUYUKI KURASAWA  
*theconversation.com*

In the minutes and hours that followed of the recent mass shooting in Toronto, an all-too-familiar pattern kicked into high gear on social media platforms.

As the events were still unfolding on the streets of the city's Danforth neighbourhood, the initial sparse facts about the attack were immediately drowned out by a torrent of unverified rumours, unsubstantiated claims and wild speculation about both the identity and the motive of the attacker.

The response on social media abruptly confirmed two tendencies of the digital age: Speed eclipses accuracy and social media abhors an informational vacuum. These tendencies have become unfortunate truisms, played out in the aftermath of similar acts of mass violence.

The instantaneous nature of social media platforms — combined with the attention economy fuelling Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat — incentivizes attention-grabbing misinformation and inaccurate “scoops.” The inaccuracies virally spread by expanding their reach and influence at a dizzying rate. One can easily witness this attention-driven virality by watching a social media post's “like” and “retweet” counts exponentially increase in real-time.

Public officials and law enforcement displayed a justified restraint in making definitive pronouncements about the shooting. But this “gap” in information left the proverbial door open for self-styled pseudo-experts, social media influencers and random agitators to fill the vacuum with conjecture, opinions and false claims masquerading as facts.

### INFORMATION POLLUTION

It may be easy to dismiss this social media “noise” as the province of fools and naifs and as a small gullible minority taken in by the usual rogue gallery of conspiracy peddlers and Islamophobic hate merchants. But the noise they make is significant as they spread bad information, making it difficult to determine fact from falsehood causing public confusion.

Even more disconcerting is that professional journalists and columnists, employed by reputable media organizations, participated in this avalanche of misinformation on the shooting. For example, one journalist made a quick assumption public when he posted a speculative tweet about the

shooter and one columnist claimed that the Canadian media was covering up the fact that the attack was a “Muslim hate crime.”

Social media corporations continue to wash their hands of the problem, prioritizing user engagement and market share over the accuracy of information on their platforms.

Facebook's recent half-hearted and belated acknowledgement of the scourge of fake news has more to do with assuaging government regulators and public relations spin than with genuinely tack-



ling the problem.

What is clear is that we live in a social environment characterized by severe information pollution, in which the well is poisoned for everyone.

In a setting in which — to paraphrase Gresham's monetary law — bad information drives out good, what are we to do?

### CAUTION IS GOLDEN

Our initial and overriding response must be to exercise a healthy dose of skepticism even while witnessing an incident of mass violence unfolding live on our social media feeds.

Caution is golden. More often than not, the first unconfirmed bits of information circulating about an incident like the tragic shooting on Toronto's Danforth Avenue are usually found to have been erroneous or only partially accurate.

We should not treat on-the-spot, gratuitously formulated conjecture unburdened by the need to respect facts as serious analysis. Rather we should look at these missives as irresponsible fan fiction at best, or bigoted and ideologically driven agitprop at worst.

Without a shred of evidence and fuelled by pre-existing agendas and biased assumptions, many social media insta-pundits and click-starved members of the media are more than willing to jump to conclusions.

They do so by establishing tenuous or non-existent causal links between an attack such as that

in Toronto and specific ethno-racial or religious communities, or yet, again, an alarmist narrative about the supposed crisis or decline of Western civilization.

We can achieve factual advocacy in three ways.

The stakes are high. This sort of social media content is not only promoting misinformation, but is often designed to foster and incite fear and mistrust of others, further stigmatizing already marginalized and racialized groups. These groups often bear the brunt of the comment and real-world backlash following a violent tragedy.

The kind of caution and skepticism I call for goes beyond digital literacy. I believe we need to go further.

Citizens are not mere passive readers or consumers of social media. We must see ourselves as factual advocates. We can achieve factual advocacy in three ways.

Most easily, we can starve those who seek to exploit or game the attention economy by refusing to spread their posts and thereby throttling the number of clicks, hits and

views their content registers on metricized platforms.

Secondly, we can hold social media personalities and ordinary users accountable to norms of truthfulness and credible evidence. We must treat their unverified tweets and posts as what they are: information pollution.

Finally, factual advocacy demands that those in positions of authority — whether as professional journalists, academic experts or public officials — intervene in the public sphere to denounce rumours and speculation to discredit groups and rebuff individuals fomenting them.

As citizens, we are called upon to become participants in, and contributors to, public debate on social media platforms. We need to ensure that accuracy tempers speed and that the momentary void created in the aftermath of the mass shooting in Toronto and other incidents of mass violence not be polluted by those playing fast and loose with the facts.

While immersed in social media platforms, we cannot stand on the sidelines of informational struggles. Equipped with our apps and a commitment to truth, we must plunge into the social media trenches.

*[the writer is York Research Chair in Global Digital Citizenship, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, York University, Canada]*

## Einstein's theory of gravity tested by a star speeding past a supermassive black hole

TANYA HILL & GERAINT LEWIS  
*theconversation.com*

Astronomers have found evidence that the supermassive black hole thought to lurk at the heart of our galaxy displays the gravitational properties dictated by the general theory of relativity.

The news was announced overnight at the European Southern Observatory (ESO), with the work published in the scientific journal *Astronomy and Astrophysics*.

By accurately tracing the position and speed of a single star (known as S2), astronomers have detected the telltale signature of Einstein's gravity in action.

### NEWTON VS EINSTEIN: WEAK VS STRONG

Newton's mathematical description of gravity reigned for 250 years, but a century ago Einstein's insights into the nature of space and time rewrote our gravitational understanding.

For most places in the universe, where gravitational fields are weak, the mathematics of Newton and Einstein give identical results for the motion of galaxies, stars and planets.

But as the strength of gravity increases, subtle differences between the two theories emerge.

In fact, Einstein was guided by small but significant discrepancies in the orbit of Mercury about the Sun while reworking his vision of gravity.

For more than two decades astronomers have charted the orbits of stars around an apparent nothingness lurking at the heart of our Milky Way. An immense amount of mass, more than four million times the mass of the Sun, must be present to keep the stars on course.

That mass is concentrated into a tiny volume. Astronomers have only one can-

didate for such a monster: a black hole. This is a region of completely collapsed mass, known to exist as a consequence of Einstein's vision of gravity.

### THE STAR TO FOLLOW

While the motions of stars at the galaxy's centre revealed the presence of the black hole, astronomers wondered if they could search for particular signatures of Einstein's gravity by tracking their orbits.

For most stars this isn't possible as they are far enough away from the black hole, where the gravitational pull weakens. Their orbits should therefore agree with both Newton and Einstein.

But one star, S2, possessed a tantalising, highly elliptical orbit. It passes close to the black hole every 16 years, at a distance of less than 20 billion km (only three times the orbit of Pluto within our Solar System). That's a tiny distance on galactic scales.

The star travels at a blistering 7,600km per second, roughly 3% of the speed of light.

If astronomers could accurately trace S2 through the closest approach of its orbit - where the effects of general relativity should be strongest - the differences between the gravitational theories of Newton and Einstein

should become apparent.

### PUSHING TELESCOPES TO THE LIMIT

Observing stars at the centre of the Milky Way is not easy. It's a dusty and crowded field of view and the blurring of the Earth's atmosphere introduces too much distortion. Could measurements be made that were precise enough to test the nature of gravity?

Astronomers are not easily daunted and they had time to prepare. They called on the Very Large Telescope (VLT), consisting of four 8-metre telescopes in the mountains of Chile.

The light from the individual telescopes is combined to act as one immense mirror, a technique known as interferometry. This sharpens the resolution of the images and provides much needed fine-detail.

To improve accuracy even further, the telescopes were fitted with adaptive optics to counter the effect of atmospheric blurring. They are also fitted with sensitive detectors to collect the light from individual stars.

With names such as GRAVITY, SINFONI and NACO, each represents an immensely complex instrument, built through the efforts of large teams of astronomers and engineers over many years.



### LET THE OBSERVATIONS BEGIN

In May 2018, when S2 was passing closest to the black hole, the team of astronomers were prepared.

The speed of S2 was monitored using Doppler shift, which tracks changes in the speed of the star by detecting small shifts in the wavelength of light emitted by the star.

The Doppler shift increased as the star approached the black hole and its motion initially agreed with the predictions of Newtonian gravity.

But as it drew closer still, the star seemed to increase in speed, peaking at more than 200km/s faster than expected.

This extra speed was not due to an actual increase in motion. Another effect was in play, as the light from the star had to fight against the increased pull of gravity.

Called gravitational redshift, this effect was predicted by Einstein more than a century ago. The star's light was being stretched to longer (or redder) wavelengths, and the detected distortion matched expectations of a high-speed star zooming past a black hole.

These new observations are exciting and show that we are entering a new era of black hole research. With ever increasing accuracy, the general theory of relativity can be tested with more precision.

Some astronomers hope that these measurements will become so precise as to eventually show discrepancies that go against the general theory of relativity, ushering in a revolution in our understanding of gravity. Until that day, Einstein's vision of space and time reigns supreme.

*[Tanya Hill is Honorary Fellow of the University of Melbourne and Senior Curator (Astronomy), Museums Victoria; Geraint Lewis is Professor of Astrophysics, University of Sydney]*



Four new varsities to come up in West Bengal

**KOLKATA, JUL 27 (PTI):** The West Bengal cabinet today gave its nod for setting up four new universities in the state, Education Minister Partha Chatterjee said.

The four new universities would be run by the government and come up in Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, South Dinajpur and Murshidabad districts, Chatterjee told reporters after the meeting.

At the meeting the cabinet also decided that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee would lay the foundation stone of the proposed Mahatma Gandhi University in East Midnapore district on Gandhi Jayanti this year, he said.

With the setting up of the five universities, their number in the state would reach 28, he said.

Identification of land for the four new universities which got the nod today are being done by the respective district magistrates and the education department, the minister added.

**HC declares Arunachal Pradesh Parliamentary Secretaries Act as ‘unconstitutional’**

**ITANAGAR, JUL 27 (PTI):** The Itanagar Bench of Gauhati High Court has declared the Arunachal Pradesh Parliamentary Secretaries (Appointment, Salaries, Allowances and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007 as “unconstitutional”.

The division bench, comprising Justice Monojit Bhuyan and Justice Rumi Kumari Phukon, on Wednesday, while hearing a public interest litigation filed by Kyoda Ram, pronounced the act as “unconstitutional” in line with the Supreme Court judgement of July 27 last year on the matter of appointing parliamentary secretaries.

“Parties are agreed that in view of the decision of the Supreme Court, the PIL does not survive for further consideration,” the judges stated while delivering the judgement.

The Pema Khandu-led BJP government in Arunachal Pradesh has at present 23 parliamentary secretaries.

Modi-Xi agree to maintain ‘momentum’ in ties; Chinese defence minister to visit to India next month

**JOHANNESBURG, JUL 27 (PTI):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping have agreed that the Chinese defence minister will visit India next month as part of the efforts to maintain the “momentum” generated by their recent meetings.

Modi, who is here to attend the BRICS Summit, met Xi for the third time in nearly three months last evening after their two-day informal summit in the Chinese city of Wuhan in late April and a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Qingdao, China in June.

“It is important to maintain this momentum and for this we should, at our level, regularly review our relationship and give proper instructions whenever required,” Modi told Xi in his opening remarks.

He told the Chinese leader that their recent meetings have given a new strength to bilateral ties and also provided new opportunities for cooperation.

President Xi said that the Chinese side is ready



to work with the Indian side to carry forward the fresh impetus of bilateral relations since their informal meeting in Wuhan, China’s state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

He called on the two sides to strengthen strategic communication, increase mutual trust, promote practical cooperation, as well as cultural and people-to-people exchanges, strengthen dialogue and properly manage differences, it said.

At Wuhan, Modi and Xi had decided to issue “strategic guidance” to their militaries to strengthen communications to build trust and understanding, a move aimed at avoiding a Doklam-like situation in the future.

Modi said the Johannesburg meeting has provided one more opportunity to them to strengthen their closer developmental partnership.

Briefing the reporters about the meeting, Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale said the two leaders reaffirmed their readiness to give the necessary direction to their militaries to enhance communication between them and to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas.

“They were satisfied with the efforts being made by the officials of the two sides to strengthen bilateral engagements and to implement some of the understandings and decisions that the two leaders had reached at Wuhan,” he said.

Prime Minister Modi also expressed his willingness to send National Security Adviser Ajit Doval to China this year for the Special Representative-level boundary talks, he said.

Gokhale said the two sides had agreed at Qin-

gdao that the Chinese ministers for defence and public security would travel to India this year.

“It was decided that these two visits would take place in August and October, respectively,” the foreign secretary added.

In Beijing, Chinese Defence Ministry spokesman Senior Colonel Ren Guoqiang confirmed that State Councilor and Defence Minister General Wei Fenghe “plans to pay a friendly official visit to India” at the invitation of his Indian counterpart Nirmala Sitharaman.

“We have provided a top-level design for bilateral ties in a macroscopic perspective and a timely fashion, which is conducive to mobilising the positive elements of all sectors in both countries and uniting the wills of the 2.6 billion people of the two countries, so as to form a force that would push bilateral ties into the future,” Xi told Modi.

Gokhale said both the leaders also remarked that in the last few months mutual trust has increased between the two sides.

President Xi once again conveyed to Prime Minister Modi that he is very happy to accept his invitation to visit India for an informal summit, the second one, next year and both sides also agreed to follow up on a number of issues, the foreign secretary added.

They also agreed that the high-level people-to-people mechanism which would be established between the two sides will also meet this year, he said.

One of the important issues which Prime Minister Modi raised with President Xi at his previous meetings is of how the two sides can enhance Indian exports to China particularly agricultural exports.

“It has been decided that an Indian trade delegation will be travelling to China on August 1 and 2. Among the issues they will discuss are exports of soya, sugar and non-basmati rice and they will also look at the possible import of urea from China,” he said.

Prime Minister Modi also mentioned about the pharma sector and cited a Chinese movie titled ‘Dying to Survive’ which is based loosely on the role that the Indian cancer drugs play in saving the life of the main character of the movie, Gokhale said, adding that it was decided that an Indian pharmaceutical delegation will visit Shanghai, China on August 21 and 22 for talks.

Xi said that as major emerging market economies, as well as vindicators and contributors of the current international order, China and India should strengthen bilateral cooperation, while exploring a new model for regional cooperation, upholding multilateralism, championing economic globalization and striving for a more just and rational international order, Xinhua reported.

President Xi and Prime Minister Modi will meet again at the margins of the G20 summit in Argentina at the end of this year.

Khasi council draws flak for Bill on tribal women

**SHILLONG, JULY 27 (PTI):** A Bill passed recently by the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC) to “protect the lineage and indigenouness” of its tribe has come in the eye of storm, with several women’s organizations today voicing their opposition to its provisions.

On July 25, the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC) - one of the three self-governing bodies in Meghalaya - passed a legislation that aims to strip a Khasi woman of her tribal status once she marries an outsider.

The legislation - Khasi Hills Autonomous District (Khasi Social Custom of Lineage) (Second Amendment) Bill - also entails that children born out of the mixed marriage would not be able to enjoy the constitution-

al protections that come with the tribal status.

“Any Khasi woman who marries a Non-Khasi as well as her offspring(s) born out of such marriage(s) shall be deemed as Non-Khasi, who shall (then) lose the Khasi status and all privileges and benefits as a member of the Khasi Tribe who cannot claim preferential privileges under any law,” it said.

The Bill, a copy of which is with the PTI, defines non-Khasi man as “a person who does not belong to indigenous Khasi Tribe classified as Scheduled Tribe under the Constitution (Scheduled Tribe) Order, 1950 (Part III - Rules and Orders Under the Constitution) Part XI - Meghalaya”.

The hill state of Meghalaya is divided into

three autonomous councils - Khasi, Jaintia and Garo. The legislation, if approved by the governor, will be applicable in West Khasi Hills, East Khasi Hills and Ri Bhoi - the districts that come under the purview of KHADC.

Terming the Bill “insensitive”, Meghalaya State Women’s Commission chairperson Theilín Phanhuh today said the council should have arranged for a public debate on the matter before tabling the Bill.

“The Bill is gender-biased as it talks only about women. What about men who chose to marry a non-tribal wife? This is a sensitive issue,” she said.

Echoing similar sentiments, Agnes Kharshing, the president of a civil society organisation, said marriage is a fundamental

right of every person and the KHADC move is aimed at “ostracizing” women.

“Does this Bill stand the legal tests? I have a serious doubt about it,” she said.

Several women’s organisations here have also threatened to move court against the Bill.

Defending the Bill, KHADC chief executive member H S Shylla said the move is aimed at protecting their lineage.

“The Bills is targeted at providing a rule to protect the ‘Khasi Social Custom of Lineage’. It would go a long way in preserving the traditional matrilineal system of society,” Shylla also alleged that “unscrupulous persons” often claim Khasi status, “purely for its benefits and privileges”.

“Those opposing the

move hail from urban areas. In the tribal belts, organizations, including Khasi Students Union, have come out in support of the Bill,” he added.

DV Thabab, the president of Khasi Students Union, said non-indigenous residents have taken advantages over the years by settling down with a tribal woman “to escape” the provisions of Meghalaya Land Transfer Act, which prevents them from owning land here.

“We welcome the Bill. It is important to curtail the influx of outsiders, who marry tribal women for the sake of owning land and doing business here,”

According to the 2011 Census, around 1.4 million Khasis reside in Meghalaya.

NRC final draft release: Assam neighbours keeping police alert

**SHILLONG/KOIHIMA, JUL 27 (PTI):** Several north-eastern states which share borders with Assam have kept their police forces on alert to thwart possible infiltration of illegal immigrants after the final draft of NRC is published in Guwahati on July 30.

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is being updated to identify illegal immigrants in Assam bordering Bangladesh. Assam is the only state in the country having an NRC which was first prepared in 1951.

The state shares its boundaries with Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Manipur.

The Arunachal Pradesh government has asked the police department to maintain a vigil at all the check gates, while the Meghalaya Police has been kept on alert along the interstate border with Assam, officials of the two states said.

The Nagaland government is deploying additional forces along the border, while Mizoram officials said that no specific instruction has been issued to the police on this occasion.

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is being updated in Assam with March 24, 1971 as the cut-off date for legitimate claim to Indian citizenship in Assam.

The first draft of the NRC was published during the intervening nights of December 31 and January 1, containing 1.9 crore names out of a total applications of 3.29 crore people.

Meghalaya Director General of Police S B Singh said SPs of adjoining districts with Assam have been asked to keep liaisoning with each other to prevent any spillover effect.

“As was during the last NRC publication (on December 31), this time

also the state police is on alert,” Director General of Police S B Singh told PTI in Shillong.

All the check gates of Arunachal Pradesh have been put on high alert and asked to go for rigorous checking of everyone entering the state, Deputy Inspector General of Police Tusar Taba said.

“We have adequate police personnel in all the check gates of the state and wherever there is apprehension of possible infiltration, we will deploy additional manpower,” the DIG said in Itanagar.

The Nagaland government is deploying additional forces along the border with Assam as a preventive measure.

Home and police departments under the chairmanship of Nagaland Chief Secretary Temjen Toy held a meeting on Wednesday to decide on the preventive measures to be adopted, the state government said in a bulletin in Kohima.

The Mizoram government, however, is not anticipating any law and problem in the state due to publication of the final draft of the NRC.

“We have not issued any specific instructions due to the coming final publication of the NCR as there have been no specific threats in the state till date,” Additional Secretary for Home Lalbiakzama said.

The Centre has already sent over 22,000 central paramilitary troops in order to beef up security in Assam and adjoining states in view of the publication of the final draft of the NRC.

The Home Ministry has also asked the Assam government not to take any action against those whose names do not figure in the NRC.

West Bengal to Bangla: Some say good riddance, others call it exercise in futility

**KUNAL DUTT NEW DELHI, JUL 27 (PTI):** The West Bengal government’s decision to change the state’s name to Bangla drew mixed reactions from experts, with majority calling the axing of ‘west’ as a “good riddance” while some thought that the use of localised nomenclature may lead to “linguistic confusion”.

Historians, architects, authors and art aficionados, all concurred that the word ‘west’ in the state’s name had been “superfluous” and an “alphabetical liability” for the past 70 years.

“In all public meetings, and government conferences, the ‘W’ set us down in the pecking order. By the time the state’s turn came, it would be either lunch time or fog end of the event. So, it is good if we lose that ‘W’ from our name,” said Jawahar Sircar, former chief of Prasar Bharati, who was born and raised in Kolkata.

He termed the move as a “very good step”, saying Bengal and Calcutta

were “Europhile” names.

The West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution to rename the state to Bangla yesterday. The state will now have to wait for a nod from the Union Home Ministry for the resolution’s final approval.

Noted historian Irfan Habib, said, “The ‘West’ in West Bengal had really become irrelevant as there is no ‘East Bengal’ now. But I feel Bengal would have made much more sense, and have had historical relevance. But politicians try to appeal to local sentiments.”

“But, anyway, people continue to use Calcutta, Bombay, Bangalore, Mysore despite their rechristenings, so I guess, Bengal would also not fade away even though it may be inked out officially,” he told PTI.

Author, poet and musician Amit Chaudhuri, who has been fighting to save the built heritage of Kolkata, termed the decision an “exercise in futility” to “score political points”.

“It is a waste of time. Had it been accompanied

with real work in reviving of the industry and art and culture of Bengal, I would have understood, but is the real work happening. Look at the plight of heritage in our city (Kolkata),” he rued.

“Did renaming of Calcutta to Kolkata achieve anything? Did we become a better city? Did the living standards and quality of life of people improve? Did our institutions become better, on the other hand they became more politicised. And, I personally feel, old names should not be changed. Bengal is fine,” he said.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee told the West Bengal Assembly that the name Bangla was chosen as “it is the identity of Bengal”.

Artist Subhaprasanna Bhattacharjee, who is also the chairman of the West Bengal Heritage Commission (WBHC), claimed the renaming of the state to Bangla has been a “long-standing demand” of the people, and it will reflect our “Bengali pride”.

“Once approved, the WBHC will become ‘Bangla Heritage Commission’ and other government institutions would change names accordingly. Just like Kolkata, people will start using Bangla for the state name. Only a snobbish English daily and a few people use ‘Calcutta’ which was used by the British,” he said.

Chaudhuri, author of ‘Calcutta: Two Years in the City’ however, countered that “Bengali pride, does not come from merely changing names of streets, parks and cities, and erecting giant statues, but actual, concrete work”.

“Politicians would do well to focus on actual work than renaming exercise,” he said.

GM Kapur, convenor of the Kolkata Chapter of Delhi-based heritage body INTACH, said, the word Bangla would also lead to confusion, linguistic or otherwise.

“The word Bangla has many shades of meaning -- it refers to the state, the language Bengali, but

in colloquial term, it also refers to country-made liquor. And, Bangla is also a truncated reference to Bangladesh, which was East Bengal during the colonial days,” he said.

“So, one can only imagine the confusion it is going to unleash, not to mention the humour it will trigger,” Kapur said.

A Mumbai-based conservation architect, who did not wish to be named, said, “I am a Bengali, and yet I feel a sense of loss of identity when I think of losing Bengal from our state’s name.”

“The loss would also mean a loss of history, as identity and history are deeply intertwined. So, we are venturing into a very ambiguous and ambivalent space here,” she said.

“For non-Bengali speakers, Bangla also means a bungalow or a house. It will confuse non-Bengalis and Bengalis, who do not reside in the state. So, let’s play it by the ear till then and see what happens,” she said.

CONTACT  
SUMMIT  
TIMES  
REPORTERS  
SINGTAM  
7699771651  
MANGAN/  
DIKCHU  
9832612485/  
9434011213  
GANGTOK  
8116388176  
9832424750  
8016270440  
news@  
summittimes.com

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?  
email us  
news@summittimes.com



### Cricket Australia hands Langer more selection powers

**SYDNEY, JUL 27 (AFP):** Australia coach Justin Langer was handed more power today in a shake-up of the national cricket selection process following the resignation of Mark Waugh.

A streamlined selection panel will now consist of just three people -- Langer, Trevor Hohns and Greg Chappell -- with Waugh not being replaced.

Langer will chair the Twenty20 panel, with support from the other two, while Hohns will head the Test and one-day process in consultation with Langer and Chappell.

Previously, Waugh -- who leaves next month to join pay-TV company Fox Sports -- focused only on T20s.

"This sees Justin take on additional responsibility as both the head coach and lead selector in Twenty20 cricket, as we build towards the ICC World T20 in Australia in 2020," said Cricket Australia's team performance chief Pat Howard.

"Justin has performed a similar role previously while coach of the Perth Scorchers, and has a wealth of knowledge around the Big Bash League and its players."

Cricket Australia's selection panel has gone through various formats over the years. At one point, it included five people.

Langer was appointed in May after the 12-month suspensions of ex-captain Steve Smith and his deputy David Warner over a cheating scandal which also saw previous coach Darren Lehmann quit.

### Sec 144 imposed in Manipur district amid protest over new bill

**IMPHAL, JUL 27 (PTI):** The administration in Manipur's Jiribam district today imposed prohibitory order in the region under section 144 of CrPc, in the wake of protests against a bill that seeks to "protect the identity of indigenous people" of the state, an official said.

The restrictions in the district, forbidding assembly of four or more people at one place, will continue till further orders, he said.

The Manipur People's Protection Bill 2018, passed unanimously by the Legislative Assembly on July 23, aims to grant the status of "natives" to Meitis, Pangal Muslims, scheduled tribes and others who moved to the state before 1951.

The rest, categorised as "Non-Manipuris", will have to register themselves within one month of the notification of the law.

The prohibitory orders in Jiribam, bordering Cachar in Assam, came two days after a large number of people staged a rally in the district to denounce the state's decision to fix base year at 1951.

The Bill is currently waiting for Governor Najma Heptullah's assent.

Termining the Bill as "un-constitutional", Md. Ahmed Ali, a spokesperson of 'Joint Action Committee Against Base Year 1951', said it would deprive many people of their rights.

"The committee will intensify its agitation if we do not receive the rights guaranteed to us under the Constitution," he claimed.

# Two hours given to Justice AN Ray to decide on CJI post!

Former Chief Justice of India AN Ray was given "two hours" to decide on accepting the top judicial post in the country in 1973, that had created a controversy as his appointment had led to the supersession of three senior judges of the top court, according to a latest book.

"If I didn't accept (the post), someone else would have been offered it. I did not hanker for it," Justice Ajit Nath Ray is quoted as saying in the book "Supreme Whispers", authored by Abhinav Chandrachud, the grandson of former Chief Justice Y V Chandrachud.

However, Justice Ray's statement about being given "two hours" to decide on taking over as the CJI has been challenged by some other senior judges of that period, who claimed in the book that he knew about



his upcoming appointment much in advance. Justice Ray passed away in 2010.

This and several other claims and counter-claims were made by over 66 Supreme Court judges in their interviews to American scholar George H Gadbois Junior in the 1980s, which is now out in the book.

Justice Ray's appointment by the then Indira Gandhi regime, super-

seding three senior judges of the top court - Justices Jaishanker Manilal Shelat, A N Grover and K S Hegde, was viewed as an attack on the independence of the judiciary.

The appointment was made on April 25, 1973, a day after the SC's judgement in the Kesavananda Bharati case, where a 13-judge constitution bench, by a 7-6 verdict, had outlined the 'basic structure' doctrine of the Constitution.

While Justice A N Ray was among the six dissenting judges in the case, Justices Shelat, Hegde and Grover, whom he had superseded, were on the side of the majority.

But Ray's statement that he was given two hours to decide to accept the post of CJI was challenged by Justices Hegde and P Jaganmohan Reddy, who said that Ray knew long before that

he would take over from Justice Sarv Mittra Sikri.

Justice Reddy was the Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court between 1966-69.

"In fact, at a dinner held for the Russian ambassador a week before the supersession, P Jaganmohan Reddy and his wife had heard cabinet minister of steel and mines, (Mohan) Kumaramangalam congratulate Ray on his impending appointment as CJI," claims the book.

Described as "nervous", "bitter" and "sarcastic" during the interview, Ray came down heavily on those who spoke against the supersession, and said many of those who had criticised it "didn't have the standing of a school-leaving certificate".

He even pointed out to Gadbois that though the supersession of She-

lat, Hegde and Grover was announced on 25 April, 1973, the three judges did not resign from the court immediately and labelled their criticism of the supersession as "immoral".

Justice Shelat and Hegde went on leave until April 30, while Justice Grover went on leave until May 31. All three of them resigned after that.

"He (Ray) implied that the three judges did not resign immediately in order to ensure that they would have sufficient years in service as to receive an enhanced pension upon retirement," reads the book.

However in the same essay titled "The Beleaguered Justice Ray", the author dismisses the allegation put forward by Ray.

According to Chandrachud, there was absolutely no reason for the three judges to continue

in the Supreme Court to become eligible for higher pension.

"Shelat had seven years in office, so holding on at the Supreme Court would not have helped him. Hegde and Grover did not have seven years in office, but continuing at the court until 31 May did not give them seven years in office either," the book says.

Notably, under the prevalent rules at the time, judges had to have seven years in office in order to get higher pension.

The book also mentions a part of the interview where Ray defends his controversial decisions in the SC, including the Habeas Corpus case.

"It was obvious to anyone with any sense that one cannot have the writ of habeas corpus during Emergency," he is quoted as saying in the interview.

The Habeas Corpus judgment, which said that citizens have no right to life and liberty during a national Emergency, came just ahead of the second controversial supersession in the Indian judiciary in 1977.

Judge HR Khanna, the lone dissenter in the case, was superseded by Justice MH Begh, following which the former had quit.

Later, the New York Times wrote an editorial lauding Justice Khanna, saying "if India ever find its way back to the freedom and democracy... someone will surely erect a monument to Justice H R Khanna of the Supreme Court".

Published by the Penguin Random House, the book sheds light on the secluded world of several of India's top court judges, 19 of whom held the post of the Chief Justice of India.

## Female student enrolment lowest in institutes of national importance: AISHE

**NEW DELHI, JUL 27 (PTI):** The enrolment of female students is lowest in the institutions of national importance, followed by state private open universities and government deemed universities, according to the All India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE).

The report, which was released by Union

Minister of Human Resource Development Prakash Javadekar today, said the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education in the country is 25.8 per cent, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group.

"Share of female students is lowest in Institutions of National Importance, followed by state private open universities

and deemed universities (government). The total enrolment in higher education has been estimated to be 36.6 million with 19.2 million boys and 17.4 million girls. The girls constitute 47.6 per cent of the enrolment," the survey report for 2017-18 said.

The GER for male population is 26.3 per cent and for females it is

25.4 per cent. For Scheduled Castes, it is 21.8 per cent and for Scheduled Tribes it is 15.9 per cent as compared to the national GER of 25.8 per cent, it said.

More males were awarded PhD degrees during 2017, maximum of them being in science stream.

"34000 students were awarded PhD-level

degrees during 2017, with 20,179 males and 14,221 females. At PhD-level, maximum number of students turn out is in science stream, followed by Engineering and Technology. On the other hand, at PG-level maximum students turn out is observed in social science followed by management stream," the survey report said.

Uttar Pradesh comes at number one with the highest student enrolment, followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

The total number of foreign students enrolled in higher education is 46,114 and top 10 countries constitute 63.4 per cent of the total foreign students enrolled.

The AISHE was initiated in the year 2011

to prepare a robust database on higher education.

Since then, seeing the usefulness of data collected during the first year of survey, the government decided to make this survey an annual exercise of data collection in the higher education sector.

## Rashid hits back at Vaughan, says his comments are "stupid"



**LONDON, JUL 27 (PTI):** England leg-spinner Adil Rashid has hit back at Michael Vaughan who had criticised the selectors' decision to recall him in the Test squad, saying the former captain's comments were "stupid" and "do not matter".

Rashid's inclusion to the Test squad for the home series against India has brought sharp reactions from ex-players with Vaughan terming it as "ridiculous".

Vaughan had questioned the decision of the England selectors, saying that someone who does not want to play the longer format has been rewarded with a Test spot on the basis of his recent limited overs form.

The 30-year-old Rashid was chosen for the Test series against India starting on August 1 despite signing a white-ball only contract with Yorkshire for the 2018 season.

Rashid said Vaughan's

comments about his recall to the Test squad was a kind of nonsense being spoken by ex-players.

"He (Vaughan) can say a lot and he thinks people might listen. A lot of people have got no interest in what he says. His opinions do not matter to anybody. When I mentioned at the start of the year I will not be playing red-ball cricket, he tweeted something then. He was being controversial and saying his stupid things then too," Rashid was quoted as saying by 'BBC Sport'.

"I don't think he has an agenda against me. I played under and with him but sometimes ex-players come out and start talking nonsense about current players. If he wants to carry on talking just because he is bored with nothing better to say, then that is his choice. There will be people out there who are not happy. There will be haters, like the pundits who are saying it is a disgrace. That is not

my fault."

Rashid has taken 38 wickets at an average of 42.78 in 10 Tests for England, the most recent of which came in India in December 2016.

In February, he signed a contract with Yorkshire to play only limited-overs cricket in 2018. He has not played a first-class match since September 2017.

"I don't see what the big deal is. It was not an easy decision, but when your country wants you and asks if you are available, you cannot just say no," said Rashid.

Asked if there was a lack of support from Yorkshire on his Test selection, Rashid said: "At times there can be. They might be disappointed for various reasons, but it would have been nice if the chief executive or head coach could have said, 'well done, congratulations on being selected, good on you' - as opposed to being angry and upset for not playing red-ball cricket for them,

even though I told them I would not be doing so.

"I did not do anything wrong in that sense. There is no reason for Yorkshire to react like this. It was not something I expected or wanted. It would have been nice to have got the support from your county or the people close to you, but if they do not want to give their support, that is their problem."

Yorkshire chief executive Mark Arthur had been critical of Rashid's recall to the Test team, saying the county side were "surprised that England have called Adil up after not playing red-ball cricket this season"

Asked about this, Rashid said, "I don't need anybody's support in that situation. I know what I want to do and achieve. If I give 100% and it goes well, it goes well. If it doesn't then I will still be happy. If they treat me like they have done, don't see any value in me and are disrespectful to me, I have

to think about the future in terms of which county I play for."

Rashid, however, got the backing of England seamer Stuart Broad who said the leg-spinner was a "proven international performer" and "natural wicket-taker" and that those traits could prove key in a "big series".

"I think the selectors were very keen to have someone spinning the ball away from the right-handers. He's been in form in the white-ball stuff and bowled some beautiful deliveries against Australia and India so will be coming in with lots of confidence," Broad was quoted as saying by 'Sky Sports'.

"You want natural wicket-takers in your side and Adil is a proven international performer, which I think is important when you go into really big series. You want people who have withstood pressure throughout their career - Adil is someone who's done that.

## HC asks Sports Ministry Secy to review selection process for Taekwondo in Asian Games

**NEW DELHI, JUL 26 (PTI):** The Delhi High Court today appointed the secretary of Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs as one-man panel for reviewing the selection of sports persons to represent India in Taekwondo in the upcoming 18th Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Justice Vibhu Bakhru said the decision of the secretary on the selection process shall be considered final and would not be contested.

The court also asked the secretary to consider the case of six Taekwondo players, who have moved the court,

and other sports persons who might approach him.

Two women and four men Taekwondo players have approached the high court seeking direction to the Union Ministry of Sports and other authorities to include their names in the list of players who would represent India in the Asian Games.

The petitions claimed that selection of the sports persons has not been conducted in a manner it should have been done, and the concerned National Sports Federation has been suspended and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has not held any trials.

They sought direction to the Sports Authority of India to conduct the selection trials for Taekwondo players, and to the Sports Ministry to allow the selected players to participate and represent the country in the Asian Games to be held from August 18 to September 2.

Advocate Saurabh Jain, appearing for two women players Purva Dattatray Dixit and Kashish Malik, said there was no representation from India for Taekwondo (Kyorugi) in all categories and since the two women were the top ranking players in their respective categories,

they should be sent to represent the country in the Asian Games.

The court noted it was apparent that there were several other players placed higher in the ranking in Taekwondo and have not been considered, and it appeared that it was not feasible to now conduct any trials.

Additional Solicitor General Maninder Acharya said the secretary of Sports ministry shall examine the averments in the petitions and the process adopted for selection of the Indian contingent, and take a comprehensive view.

The court said, "Ac-

cordingly, the secretary, Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs is appointed by this court to act as a one-man committee for reviewing the selection of the sports persons to represent India in the sport of Taekwondo".

It said the secretary shall consider the matter expeditiously within two days and granted liberty to the players to appear before him tomorrow.

The court clarified that this order was passed in the peculiar facts and circumstances of the cases as the necessary process for selection has not been carried out, and the IOA has also failed to se-

lect the requisite number of participants.

It said the order was passed in the "larger interest of the nation to ensure that the best team represent this country in the sport of Taekwondo".

When the counsel for IOA objected to the secretary deciding the matter, the judge said the contention was "wholly unmerited" and it was clear that the IOA had failed in its function to ensure that proper selection was made and must bear the responsibility of its failure.

The court listed the matter for further hearing on July 30.

According to the pe-

tition, 24-year-old Dixit is a Kyorugi Taekwondo player for 'under 49 kg' in senior category (female) and has participated in various national and international events since 2010, and has secured several medals, including four gold medals in international events.

Eighteen-year-old Malik is a Kyorugi Taekwondo player for 'under 57 kg' in senior category (female) and has participated in various national and international events since 2015 and bagged several medals, including two gold and a silver in international events, the petition added.



# Analysts fear political uncertainty amid rigging allegations in Pak polls

**KARACHI, JUL 27 (PTI):** Political analysts in Pakistan fear choppy waters lie ahead for the politics in the country with several political heavyweights who have suffered defeat in their strongholds likely to band together amid allegations of rigging in the General elections.

The elections in Pakistan have produced some stunning upset results and many of the political parties who have suffered reversals continue to cry foul over the way the votes were counted and announced after long delays. According to the unofficial results announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) so far, Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) has won the majority seats (119) in the National Assembly to form the next government while a number of seasoned politicians suffered defeat in their traditional strongholds. "The next few days will be critical for Pakistan politics. Because if the political parties who



have come second best to PTI get together and launch a combined protest over the results, it could be a big challenge for Khan and his party, analyst Omair Alavi said. The PML-N has already rejected the election results despite securing a respectable 122 seats in the Punjab assembly and another 68 in the national assembly until Thursday evening. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) parliamentarians are also crying foul particularly after their Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto lost in one of their safest constituencies, Lyari area of Karachi to a PTI candidate.

Religious parties like the Jamiat Ulema Islam (Maulana Fazlur Rehman), the Khadim Hussain Shah led Tehreek-e-Labaik have also alleged foul play in the counting of votes and have threatened agitation. Maulana Fazlur Rehman an arch-rival of Khan and seasoned politician who also lost out in the elections has announced he will be inviting all parties for a conference soon to discuss the election results. Bilawal Bhutto who also lost on a seat from Malakand in the KPK province but managed to win in his ancestral Larkana constituency on

Thursday to enter the parliament for the first time said there was a clear conspiracy to ensure he lost on all three seats. "Our party leadership will convene on Friday to discuss the situation and announce our next step, Bilawal said after finishing behind the PTI and Pakistan Tehreek Labaik candidates in the final vote count. Lyari has always been considered one of the safest constituencies for the PPP with slain former prime minister, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and before her other party leaders always winning from Lyari so Bilawal's

defeat has shocked many. PPP workers and leaders also held a protest outside the Karachi Press Club rejecting the election results while the Mutthaida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Pakistan leaders, Dr Farooq Sattar and Khalid Maqbool travelled to Islamabad to echo their grievances with the election commission of Pakistan. Sattar a senior leader of the MQM also lost in the elections from his home constituency to PTI candidate Aamir Liaquat Hussain while the MQM Pakistan suffered a major reversal when their candidate lost in the constituency that also covers the MQM 90 headquarters in Azizabad. Sattar and Maqbool claimed that the results were engineered after polling ended and would ask for a recount of all polling stations where the MQM candidates contested. But many political analysts were not even giving MQM Pakistan a chance of winning the six NA seats after the party split into

two groups last year due to the ban on founder, Altaf Hussain who remains exiled in London. The MQM Pakistan's six NA and seven Sindh Assembly seats from Karachi are a far cry from previous elections when the MQM candidates used to sweep the NA and PA seats from the metropolitan city by big margins. Sattar who usually garnered over a 100 thousand votes from his home constituency in Karachi in previous elections on Wednesday managed to secure just 36,000 votes which he says is unthinkable and hard to accept while his rival, Aamir Liaquat got around 56,000 votes. Another splinter group of the Altaf Hussain led MQM, the PSP anchored by former Karachi Mayor, Mustafa Kamal also failed to win any seats from the city. More astounding has been the poor results produced by religious parties in Wednesday's elections namely the Tehreek Labbaik (TLP), the

Pakistan Rah-e-Haq party an electoral platform for the outlawed Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ), Hafiz Saeed's political front Milli Muslim League (MML) and the five party religious alliance, Mutthaida Majlis Amal (MMA) which comprised of the Jamaat-e-Islami, JUI F and others. The MMA has managed some nine seats in the NA in the unofficial results but their performance in the four provincial assembly elections is not encouraging while the other religious platform candidates were blown away. The TLP is the same party which last year brought Islamabad to a halt when they staged a long sit-in over the Khatam-e-Nabuwat law. Interestingly, the PML N, PTI and PPPP had all assured support to Auranzeb Farooqi, a senior leader of the Rah-i-Haq party in the constituency he was contesting from in Karachi. The Rah-i-Haq party is seen as an offshoot of the outlawed Sipah-e-Sahaba party with Farooqi still

facing number of cases. TLP founder, Khadim Hussain Shah had promised big surprises and upsets in the elections in Karachi but this didn't happen and this has left the party even threatening street protests. A political science professor, Dr Anwari Aziz, said the outcome of the elections showed that the common Pakistan voter did not have enough trust in the religious outfits and parties to vote them into power. In a way it is a very positive message sent out by Pakistan voters that they want peace and are peace loving people, she said. She noted that the international media and community had generally expressed concern over some outlawed extremist figures being allowed to contest the elections. A TLP leader, who requested not to be named, admits that they have learnt the hard way from the election that they need to properly mobilize their general work force and resources in the country.

## 5 Indian-origin persons charged over slashing incident in Singapore

**SINGAPORE, JUL 27 (PTI):** Five Singaporeans of Indian origin were charged today with rioting and assaulting an Indian-origin man with deadly weapons in the Little India precinct here. Victor Alexander Arumugam, Arjun Retnavelu, Hareesh Shanmuganathan, Dinesh Kumar Ruvy and Sharvin Raj Suraj, who are aged between 17 and 28, were charged over the slashing incident on Wednesday in Little India that left one man injured. If found guilty, they can be jailed for up to 10 years and caned, reported Channel News Asia. Two other men, also Singaporean, have yet to be charged as investigations against them are ongoing. The men are accused of assaulting Dhines Selvarajah, 26, also of Indian origin. Arjun, 23, was allegedly armed with a chopper and a baton, while Dinesh, 28, had a machete. Hareesh, 22, is said to have punched the victim, while Sharvin, the youngest at 17, allegedly attacked him with a baton. All seven suspects were arrested by the police yesterday. The incident is believed to have occurred over a personal dispute, according to the report. Singapore's Minister for Home Affairs K Shanmugam called the attack "horrific". This is the first incident in Little India since the December 2013 riot which involved some 300 migrant workers, mostly from India, in what was Singapore's worst violence in decades.

to book advertisements in SummitTimes, call 035592-208698 9734152541

# US Congressional panel passes crucial bill on Tibet

**LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, JUL 27 (PTI):** A key Congressional committee has unanimously passed a crucial bill on Tibet under which Chinese officials responsible for discriminating against Americans who try to enter Tibet would be banned from entering the US. The bill titled 'The Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act', seeking unhindered access to Tibetan areas to US officials, journalists and common citizens, something which is routinely denied by the Chinese government, now moves to the House of Representatives. The legislation seeks to ensure that Americans are given the same access to Tibet that Chinese citizens have to the US. It was passed by the House Judiciary Committee on Wednesday. "Moving this bill is the right thing to do," Congressman Bob Goodlatte, chairman of the



House Judiciary committee said. "It is time that Congress take a stand with regard to access by foreign nationals to the Tibetan regions, he said. "If Chinese officials, journalists and other citizens are able to travel freely in this country, it's only fair that their American counterparts are able to do the same, Indian American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal said. Congressman Jerrold Nadler, ranking member of the Committee, said that the bill is important

because it can help expose human rights violations taking place in Tibet. For Tibetans, restricted access to the region leaves them in virtual isolation from the rest of the world...while also precluding international witnesses to the Chinese government's continuous violations of the Tibetans' human rights which include arbitrary arrests, torture, heightened surveillance and severe restrictions on religious freedom," he said. The bill, which was introduced by Congressmen

## BRICS calls for comprehensive approach in combating terrorism

**JOHANNESBURG, JUL 26 (PTI):** The BRICS nations today called for a comprehensive approach in combating terrorism, which should include countering radicalisation, blocking channels of terrorist financing, dismantling terrorists' bases and preventing misuse of the internet by terrorist entities. The five-member nations - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - signed the BRICS Johannesburg Declaration, asserting that those responsible for committing, organising, or supporting terrorist acts must be held accountable. "We call upon all nations to adopt a comprehensive approach in combating terrorism, which should include countering radicalisation, recruitment, travel of foreign terrorist fighters, blocking sources and channels of terrorist financing including, for instance, through organised crime by means of money-laundering, supply of weapons, drug trafficking and other criminal

activities, dismantling terrorist bases, and counter-ing misuse of the internet" by them, it said. The declaration deplored the continued terrorist attacks, including in some BRICS member states, and condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations wherever committed and by whomsoever. "We urge concerted efforts to counter terrorism under the UN auspices on a firm international legal basis and express our conviction that a comprehensive approach is necessary to ensure an effective fight against terrorism. We recall the responsibility of all states to prevent financing of terrorist networks and terrorist actions from their territories," it said. It called upon the international community to establish a genuinely broad international counter-terrorism coalition and support the UN's central coordinating role on the issue. The bloc said the fight against terrorism must be

conducted in accordance with international law and reaffirmed its commitment on increasing the effectiveness of the UN counter-terrorism framework, including in the areas of cooperation and coordination among the relevant UN entities, designation of terrorists and terrorist groups and technical assistance to Members States. It called for expeditious finalisation and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) by the UN General Assembly. The declaration also emphasised the need for launching multilateral negotiations on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism, including at the Conference on Disarmament, to address the threat of chemical and biological terrorism. The grouping also reaffirmed its commitment to support international cooperation in combating illicit financial flows.

# US radio hosts apologise for calling first Sikh-American Attorney "turban man"

**YOSHITA SINGH NEW YORK, JUL 27 (PTI):** Two radio hosts in New Jersey, who called America's first Sikh-American Attorney General Gurbir Grewal "turban man" on air, have apologised for their racist remarks and have been slapped with a 10-day suspension for using "demeaning and inappropriate" language. Dennis Malloy and Judi Franco, who host the "Dennis and Judi Show" on NJ 101.5FM, were talking about Grewal's decision to suspend marijuana prosecutions in New Jersey when they repeatedly called him the "turban man" yesterday. In the remarks termed as "xenophobic and racist", Malloy had said he was never going to know Grewal's name and will instead just call him "guy with a turban". As the audio of their show went viral, the



radio hosts drew widespread criticism for their remarks against the state's top law enforcement official. Malloy issued an apology on Franco's and his behalf in a video message. "On behalf of Judi and myself, I want to convey our very heartfelt apology to the state attorney general of New Jersey for the comments that came out on our show. "He certainly deserves much more respect than that and importantly to the Sikh and



South Asian community of New Jersey with which we've had a very strong and close relationship with over the past 20 years," Malloy said. The radio station announced that it had suspended the pair for 10 days, and they will not be on air until August 6. New Jersey 101.5/WKXW-FM president Ron deCastro said in a statement that the station took the comments "seriously" and echo the pair's sincere apology to Grewal and his family, as well as the Sikh and

website that their show had been unscripted and free form and they use humour and sarcasm to make a point and add colour to the broadcast. "In this instance, we were off the mark. It was a mistake we both deeply regret. We respect all cultures and beliefs and are deeply sorry for the pain caused to the Sikh community, our co-workers and our beloved listeners," Malloy said. He said they cherished the relationship they have with the Sikh and South Asian communities. "We feel very bad for any hurt that we may have caused or undue attention that they certainly didn't want or ask for," Malloy said. Hours after the radio hosts made the comments, Grewal, 44, posted on Twitter that he had faced such "indignity" before and called on peo-

ple to end small-minded intolerance. "This is not the first indignity I've faced and it probably won't be the last. Sometimes, I endure it alone. Yesterday, all of New Jersey heard it. It's time to end small-minded intolerance," Grewal tweeted yesterday. Grewal, who was previously Bergen County Prosecutor, became the nation's first Sikh state attorney general after the state Senate approved his nomination this year. Grewalis born to Indian immigrant parents in Jersey City and was raised in the state's Hudson and Bergen counties. In a sharp response, Grewal later tweeted, "My name, for the record, is Gurbir Grewal. I'm the 61st Attorney General of NJ. I'm a Sikh-American. I have 3 daughters. And yesterday, I told them to turn off the radio". Several top state gov-

ernment officials and advocacy groups rallied behind Grewal, extending their support and expressing outrage against the show's hosts for their remarks. Grewal thanked New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, Hoboken Mayor Ravi Bhalla, Senate President of New Jersey Steve Sweeney and US Senator from New Jersey Cory Booker for their support. "You've got my back and the backs of all New Jerseyans. Others have faced far worse. We rise above this. Now let's get back to business," Grewal said. Murphy, who had appointed Grewal, had strongly condemned the language of the radio hosts, demanding action by the station. Twitter users too slammed the racist remarks saying there is no place for such language.





**NICK JONAS AND PRIYANKA CHOPRA ARE ENGAGED:** Congratulations are in order for Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra! E! News has reported that the famous duo is engaged after two months of dating. And while the newly engaged couple has been hot on the scene for a short while, it seems as though Nick knew fairly early on that his leading lady was the one. Earlier this month, the singer shut down the Tiffany & Co. store in London to check out diamond engagement rings for his future wife.

## Ram Gopal Varma announces web series on Mumbai underworld

He is the man responsible for popularising underworld stories in Bollywood with cult hit "Satya" and now Ram Gopal Varma is all set to explore the subject in a web series.

The director has teamed up with producer Madhu Mantena for "D Company". It will explore the life of Dawood Ibrahim and his "D Company" from its initiation to its growth as the most dreaded organisation in the entire criminal history of India.

"My research on the subject matter of 'D Company' came from my extensive interactions over the last 20 years with gangsters to encounter cops to middlemen of the underworld and also many film people who were involved with the underworld," the filmmaker said in a statement.

"The series will showcase the rise of Dawood from be-



ing just a small time hoodlum to how he overthrew the Pathan gang and then after shifting to Dubai. How he gave it a glamorous and corporate look by mixing up with the high and mighty including film stars," he added.

The series will also include the metamorphosis of the D Company from being just an underworld mafia company to how it became a

terror company.

"Ramu has been collecting data on the underworld not from now but from mid 90s onwards, even before he made 'Satya' and 'Company' and I honestly believe that no one has his kind of grip on this particular subject matter. The script has been locked and shooting will start very soon," Mantena said.

The producer also said that the 10-episode series will run for "at least 5 seasons".

No casting details of the series have been shared by the filmmaker as yet.

Varma, who pioneered a new movement in Bollywood with his experimental films on crime, politics and horror in the '90s and early 2000, has not been successful at the box office in recent years but he is still regarded as a maverick filmmaker.

people say their peace.

**LEO:** An unexpected opportunity to take a short trip could present itself today, Leo. Hop on that boat or train and see where it goes. If you have no real reason to travel, make one up. You don't need one anyway. The point is that it's time to get away from your current surroundings and explore other ways of living. If the time isn't right for you to get out and travel, at least make a plan now for a trip later.

**VIRGO:** If you aren't paying close attention today, Virgo, you might miss what's said. Important information is being relayed quickly, so don't miss out on the action. It may not be important for you to agree with everything you hear, but at least listen to it and seriously consider incorporating elements into your point of view. Don't dismiss other opinions just because they're new and

different from your own.

**LIBRA:** Actively express your thoughts today, Libra. You'll find that a great deal of information needs to be exchanged. You have the power to deliver a strong, thoughtful message to others, so don't give up this opportunity to exercise your acute mind. You may also find people to be rather argumentative, but don't let this keep you from expressing your true thoughts on the matter at hand.

**SCORPIO:** You may be feeling a little bit lost in the dust today, Scorpio. Somehow what you're thinking and feeling isn't exactly coordinating with the current conversation. Don't think you need to agree with the group just to feel like you fit in. Maintaining your own point of view is critical. You're better off rolling with the punches rather than trying to put up a fight.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Your thinking is clear

## Don't feel like a hero, call me an actor: Rajkummar Rao

**MUMBAI, JUL 27 (PTI):** Actor Rajkummar Rao says he always feels like an actor and not a "hero", a term he prefers should be reserved for Army people fighting at the border.

Rao says he has never tried to be a hero nor does he understand what it means.

"I don't know how a hero feels, honestly. I feel like an actor, I wanted to be an actor. I always want to feel just like an actor. I don't know this 'hero' term. If someone comes to me with a script and says 'sir this hero... I'm like 'is there a name or he is just called a hero?"

"We are not heroes. Heroes are people fighting for us at the border. We are not heroes we are just doing our job," the actor told reporters last night at the trailer launch of his upcoming horror-comedy "Stree".



Rao, who has emerged as one of the most versatile actors in Bollywood in recent times, said the definition of "hero" has undergone a change today with cinema.

"The speed at which cinema is changing, the definition of hero is also changing. Even a big superstar like Aamir sir plays the role of a father.

There's action genre, where you have to show body and do stunts, so you may call that a hero (centric genre).

"But now character-driven stories are there. Content is getting its due respect. Our audience wants to see characters on screen and want to see actors play new roles, adapt different body lan-

guage," he added.

The film, which also stars Shraddha Kapoor, Pankaj Tripathi, Aparshakti Khurana and Abhishek Banerjee, is directed by Amar Kaushik and jointly produced by Dinesh Vijan and, Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK.

Nidimoru said the story of a lady ghost haunting men in a small town originated from something he experienced in college.

"We (Nidimoru and DK) experienced it in our home town in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. We were studying there. But then we heard it was happening in Bangalore, North India and even in Thailand.

"It was something people picked up. It's an urban legend, but who started it, who can prove it, that's the fun of the film," he said.

## Cardi B pulls out of Bruno Mars' tour

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 27 (PTI):** Rapper Cardi B, who recently gave birth to her daughter, has pulled out of Bruno Mars' 24K Magic tour. The rapper was announced as a special guest for the last leg of Mars tour in February.

Cardi took to Twitter and said that she thought she would be physically capable of returning to the stage but she underestimated the "whole mommy thing".

"I thought that after giving birth to my daughter that 6 weeks would be enough time for me to recover mentally and physically. I also thought that I'd be able to bring her with me on tour, but I think I underestimated this whole mommy thing," the rapper said.

"Not only am I just not ready physically, I'm not ready to leave my baby behind since the doctors explained it's not healthy for her to be on the road," she added. Cardi also thanked Mars for understand-



ing her decision.

"I hope you guys understand. This have been such a hard decision. I want to thank @brunomars for understanding," she wrote.

In return, Mars shared some kind words of support

for Cardi and said she is doing the "right thing".

"I know the fans will understand. You are absolutely doing the right thing. I also know we'll share the stage when the time is right. We love you Cardi and we will play Bo-

dak Yellow every night in your honour," the singer wrote.

Cardi was scheduled to join Bruno's tour in September. The two musicians had teamed up for their collaborative song "Finesse (Remix)" earlier this year.

## Pregnancy is 'hard as hell', says Hilary Duff



**LOS ANGELES, JUL 27 (PTI):** Actor Hilary Duff opened up about her journey as an expectant mother on social media, calling pregnancy "hard as hell".

Duff, who already has a 6-year-old son Luca with ex Mike Comrie, is currently expecting a baby girl with her boyfriend Matthew Koma.

The 30-year-old took to Instagram and shared her experience of getting second time pregnant.

"The boobs are big the belly is big the body is big. Man...pregnancy is hard. Giving love to all mamas who make it look effortless... this journey is hard as hell and also incredibly special," Duff wrote while also sharing a selfie showing off her baby

bump.

"Lovely to have a little life inside and to day dream of all the new adventures to come but almost impossible to get my own shoes on... Sick of getting up nine times a night to pee and looking at this weird body in the mirror that is not my own at the moment. Women are so bad a\*\*, this was just a note to remind myself and remind others how strong and beautiful you are! We got this!" she added.

The couple had announced that they were expecting a baby after they posted matching Instagram posts in early June.

Duff has also revealed that she and Koma have picked a name for their daughter.

**ARIES:** Unexpected information may be coming at you today from out of the blue, Aries. You'll find that this information is extremely important, so make sure to keep all lines of communication open. You're apt to learn some important lessons regarding working harmoniously with groups to fulfill not just your own needs but also those of others. Let other people's viewpoints be heard.

**TAURUS:** Don't be so nosy about others' affairs today, Taurus. If you were meant to be included in the conversation, you'd have been invited. Suspicion of other people's actions and motives will only cause them to lose their trust in you. Keep any abrasive and critical thoughts to yourself. Perfection is a hot topic in your mind. Realize that the only person you can control in that department is you.

**GEMINI:** Other people could have some seriously opposing opinions about how things should be done. Be prepared for battle, Gemini, because others are likely to have sharp tongues. Compromise is the key to finding solutions that will work for everyone. Realize that the best solution is probably one that neither party has thought of on his or her own. Work together to come up with the best situation for everyone involved.

**CANCER:** Information is apt to come in erratic bursts today, Cancer. You'll find that a great deal of nonverbal communication is revealed and you should listen not only with your ears but also with your eyes and heart. Keep an open mind. Let others finish their thoughts before you make any judgments. You're probably better off not making any judgments at all. Let