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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Seti Jhora cleared after 40 hrs; Vehicle taking detour meets with accident at Birik

Problems slopes remain unstable

SUMMIT REPORT
KALIMPONG, 12 JUL:

After it had held up traffic for nearly 40 hours, the debris brought down by the landslide at Seti Jhora was finally cleared at around 6PM on Thursday evening to allow vehicles stuck between a litter of slides along NH10 to get through.

Although road gangs of the West Bengal PWD had begun work on clearing the slide zone early in the morning, fresh rain made progress difficult as the slide remained active. It was only later in the afternoon after the rain had paused that work picked up pace.

By 6PM, about 75% of the debris had been cleared and a path cleared for one-way traffic.



PWD EE, Anup Maity, who was in the spot said, "If the weather clears, we will try to clear all the debris tomorrow."

With the national

highway blocked, Siliguri-bound Sikkim vehicles had to take long detours, and one such vehicle met with an accident at Birik Dara injuring all eight



occupants, three of them grievously.

The vehicle was plying from the Birik area via Lat-Panchar to Siliguri when it is reported

to have lost traction and overturned. All occupants were rescued by locals in the area and rushed to Rambhi health centre. While three oc-

cupants were referred for more specialised treatment in Siliguri, transport was a problem because of the road condition.

Govt begins process to discharge slew of legal retainers

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

The State Government, it is informed, has begun the process to "dis-pense" with the services of the current set of legal retainers attached with various departments here.

This was suggested by one of the legal retainers served with a "notice for discharge from engagement" from the Department of Legal, Legislative & Parliamentary Affairs.

The letter conveys that "the competent authority has decided to dispense with your engagement as Legal Retainer for the aforementioned Department/Organisation."

The language of the letter and the fact that the typed letter carries blank spaces where the names of the advocate and the Departments are handwritten suggests that these were drafted for bulk issuance, lending credence to the whisper that a sizeable number of legal retainers are being dispensed with.

The services of legal retainers served with the communiqué [dated 10 July 2019 in the letter shared with SummitTimes] are to come to an end upon expiry of 30 days from the date of issue of the notice or on the expiry of their term of engagement, whichever comes first.

Chinese soldiers enter Demchok sector in Ladakh, return later

NEW DELHI, JUL 12 (PTI): Chinese soldiers crossed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh division of Jammu and Kashmir last week after some Tibetans hoisted Tibetan flags on the occasion of Dalai Lama's birthday, security officials said on Friday. The officials in the know said several PLA personnel drove in their SUV's into Koyul village in Demchok sector, located close to the LAC, on July 6 and lodged a protest over hoisting of the Tibetan flags by the refugees settled there.

They, however, said since the LAC was not demarcated properly for decades, this has led to differing perceptions of it by India and China.

There was another version of the incident on the LAC with South Block sources saying the Chinese personnel, who were in "civilian clothes", did not cross the LAC but showed banners that read "Ban all activities to split Tibet".

"On July 6, some 11 Chinese in civilian clothes arrived in two vehicles when the Ladakhi villagers were celebrating Dalai Lama's birth-

day. They then showed them banners and waited there for 30-40 minutes but did not cross the Line of Actual Control," the sources said. The Tibetans were celebrating the 84th birthday of the Dalai Lama. India and China share a disputed border and the armies of the two countries were engaged in a stand-off for 73 days in 2017 in Doklam.

Security officials said that the officers on both sides decided to resolve the matter amicably.

Indian army personnel were also present at the spot and did not allow the Chinese soldiers to proceed any further, the officials said. The PLA personnel entered 1.5 km into the Indian territory, they said. Earlier, the officials claimed that the Chinese soldiers had entered 5 km.

After a couple of hours, the Chinese troops returned to their side following an assurance by Indian army officials that they would look into the action by the refugees.

There have been also reports of Chinese soldiers stopping the shepherds from grazing their sheep in Demchok sector.

MP and SU VC call on UGC Chairperson



Highlight need for NET exam centre in Sikkim

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

Lok Sabha MP, Indra Hang Subba and Vice-Chancellor of Sikkim Central University, Prof Avinash Khare, called on the Chairperson of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Prof DP Singh at his office in New Delhi today, an SKM press release informs.

They apprised him regarding need of CSIR

UGC NET examination centre in Sikkim and added that establishment of CSIR UGC NET Centre would benefit not only Sikkim but neighbouring regions as well.

They also requested the Chairman to enlist Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo languages in the list of subjects for CBSE, UGC NET examination. Finally they apprised him regarding pending work of construction of permanent campus at Yangang and the need of one-time grant for construction of permanent campus.

Code prohibits doctors from taking gifts from Pharma Cos

NEW DELHI, JUL 12 (PTI): Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan Friday said the code of conduct for medical practitioners prohibits doctors from taking gifts, travel facilities, hospitality or cash from pharmaceutical and allied health sector industry.

Vardhan also said in Lok Sabha that the government has received some complaints of unethical marketing practices by pharmaceutical companies and the CEOs of such companies will be held responsible for such malpractices.

The minister said the code of conduct for doctors in their relationship

with pharmaceutical and allied sector industry of the Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulation, 2002 prohibits doctors from taking gifts, travel facilities, hospitality and cash or monetary grants from pharmaceutical and allied health sector industry.

The said regulation empowers the Medical Council of India and respective State Medical Councils to award punishment to a doctor against any act in violation of code of Ethics for doctors, he said during Question Hour.

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SC serves notice to CM on SDF petitions challenging his appointment

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

The Supreme Court of India today issued a notice to Chief Minister, PS Tamang [Golay], on the writ petitions filed by two Sikkim Democratic Front workers challenging his appointment as Chief Minister of Sikkim. The Apex court has also listed the case for hearing on admission on 30 July.

It may be recalled that Bimal Dawari, former Zilla Adhakshya and general secretary of Sikkim Democratic Front, and Prakash Kumar Rai of Rabikkola, Tangi Bikmat, South Sikkim, had filed their petitions on 17 June and these were registered on 21 and 25 June respectively.

In the writ petitions, both have alleged that the appointment of Mr Tamang as Chief Minister is "nothing less than a fraud" played on the Constitution and democratic values/ethos of



the country and have prayed that this be set right forthwith.

Both the petitioners have prayed that the apex court issue writ of quo warrantors or such other writ or directions as may be appropriate setting aside the appointment of Mr Tamang as Chief Minister of Sikkim declaring his appointment as illegal and unconstitutional.

The petitioners have

also posed three pertinent questions for adjudication while seeking relief in the writ petitions.

They have asked if appointment of a non-elected person disqualified under Article 191 (1) (e) of the Constitution read with Section 8 (1) (m) and Section 7 (b) of the RP Act, as Chief Minister by the Governor is tantamount to violation of Article 14, 19(1) (a) and 21

of the Constitution.

Whether a non-elected person disqualified for being chosen or being a member a State Assembly by operation of Article 191 (1) (e) of the Constitution read with Section 8 (1) (m) and Section 7 (b) of the RP Act can be appointed as Chief Minister under Article 164 (1) of the Constitution.

turn to pg02

Sikkimese startup teams up with Temi Tea for herbal tea blends

NITESH R PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

To boost a new "Made In Sikkim" start-up, Temi Tea Estate under Department of Commerce and Industries has agreed in-principle to support Zimba Enterprise of East Sikkim, owned by Anup Zimba in creating Herbal Floral and Fruit blends with Temi Tea as base ingredient.

It was informed that the product will be launched by the first week of October 2019. Experimental blending and tasting is now underway and will continue for the next two months where international fashion and retail expert, Pranay Baidya will also be suggesting the scales to

suit the audience.

Also collaborating with the team will be Sikkim's own branding agency Owls, the copy writer Roshni, the blending expert and master taster Nalin Modha from the Darjeeling hills. Sharmila Gurung, a trained packaging expert with diploma from the Indian Institute of Packaging will also be supporting the venture.

Joint Secretary, Jaswant N, Commerce and Industries will be the lead guide under start-up scheme and MSME.

Temi Tea has thanked BS Panth, Minister for Commerce & Industries department and Government of Sikkim for encouraging Sikkimese start-ups.



SBI waives RTGS, NEFT, IMPS charges

NEW DELHI, JUL 12 (PTI): State Bank of India has waived charges on NEFT and RTGS transactions through internet and mobile banking from July 1, after the RBI decided to do away with the charges with an aim to move the country towards less-cash economy.

The country's largest bank, which has about 25 per cent market share, has also decided to do away with the charges on fund transfer through mobile phones using the IMPS (immediate payment service) from August 1.

The real-time gross settlement (RTGS) system is meant for large-value instantaneous fund transfers, while the National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) system is used for fund transactions of up to Rs 2 lakh.

"In order to provide an impetus to digital funds movement, SBI waived-off RTGS and NEFT charges for YONO, internet banking (INB) and mobile banking (MB) customers from July 1, 2019.

"The bank will also waive-off IMPS charges for its INB, MB and YONO customers effective from August 1, 2019," the state-owned lender said in a statement.

Before July 1, SBI used to charge between Re 1 and Rs 5 for transactions through NEFT, and Rs 5-50 for RTGS route.

At March-end, 2019, the number of SBI customers using internet banking were more than six crores, while 1.41 crore persons were using mobile banking services.

The bank claims to have around 18 per cent market share in mobile banking transactions.

Registered users of YONO (You Only Need One), its integrated digital and lifestyle platform, were about one crore.

Along with customer convenience, the waiver in NEFT, IMPS and RTGS charges will attract more customers towards digital transactions, the bank said. Additionally, the bank has already reduced NEFT and RTGS charges for customers transacting through branch network by 20 per cent across all slabs.

"In sync with our strategy and Government of India's vision to create a digital economy, SBI has taken this step to promote use of YONO, internet banking and mobile banking for doing NEFT and RTGS transactions without incurring any cost," the bank's MD (Retail & Digital Banking) P K Gupta said.

SBI is the largest commercial bank in terms of assets, deposits, branches, customers and employees. It is also the largest mortgage lender in the country.

The bank has the largest network of 22,010 branches in the country and an ATM/CDM (cash deposit machine) network of over 58,000.

After announcing its decision to waive all charges on fund transfer through RTGS and NEFT systems from July 1, the RBI had also asked banks to pass on the benefits to customers from the same day.

Chief Justice visits District Court Namchi and Chaar Dham



NAMCHI, 12 JUL (IPR): Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim, Justice Vijai Kumar Bist arrived in Namchi today for a two-day visit. He was

accompanied by his spouse Renu Bist, the Registrar General, NG Sherpa, Principal Secretary to Chief Justice, Jyoti Kharka, OSD High

Court of Sikkim, Subarna Rai.

Upon his arrival the Chief Justice was given a warm welcome by District and Sessions Judge

(South), Jiwan Kharaga, Judicial Magistrate (South), Jwala Thapa, DC (South), Ragul K, SP (South), Prawin Gurung and other officials from

District Court, Namchi.

A guard of honour was also presented by IRBn led by Sonam Pintso Bhutia. The Chief Justice also inspected various divisions under District and Sessions Court, Namchi including the redesigned section, Court of the Judicial Magistrate and Alternate Dispute Redressal Centre. Thereafter, he met with the members of Namchi BAR Association wherein they briefed the Chief Justice regarding the working of this association and presented a memorandum. The Chief Justice also interacted with the advocates wherein he gave suggestions, advice and guidance.

The Chief Justice and his spouse also visited Siddheshvara Dham at Solophok, Namchi and offered their prayers.

Summer Training organized by NIELIT on Internet of Things (IoT)

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

As a part of its initiative to train engineering students on modern technology under the Digital India initiative of Government of India, National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) - Gangtok Centre conducted 12-day intensive Training on Internet of Things (IoT) and Python Programming using Arduino and Raspberry Pi devices for engineering students during the summer vacation from 28 June to 12 July, 2019, a press release informs.

The training was attended by students of Centre for Computers and Communication Technology (CCCT), Chisopani, South Sikkim and other colleges. Fourteen students completed the training and received certificates from NIELIT.

In this context a valedictory session was organized last Friday, 12 Jul, 2019 where the students demonstrated various innovative applications of IoT devices developed by them. The programme was attended by HOD, Prof Deepak Rasaily, department of Electronics & Communication, CCCT

and other dignitaries.

Pawan Kumar Sharma, Anugra Wangchuk Lepcha, Arup Chattopadhyay, along with Dr Rupam Kumar Sharma from Assam Don Bosco University participated as faculty in the above training.

Director In-charge, Arup Chattopadhyay, NIELIT-Gangtok gave an overview of the IoT ecosystems involving integrated sensors, processors, and actuators that are reshaping every industry today across the world through internet enabled smart devices. He also informed the initiatives of the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), Govt. of India in generating trained manpower in state-of-the art IT and IT Enabled Services at Pan India level under Digital India - the flagship program of Government of India.

Professor Deepak Rasaily informed that the initiative of NIELIT Gangtok centre in imparting the training to the students of CCCT on state-of-the-art IoT technology will go a long way in making them industry ready and complimented NIELIT for giving exposure to the students in this modern technology.

Himalayan conclave to be held in Mussoorie on July 28

DEHRADUN, JUL 12 (PTI): A conclave to deliberate on the problems faced by Himalayan states will be held in the queen of hills on July 28.

Being held in Uttarakhand for the first time, it will be attended by the chief ministers of all Himalayan states besides administrators and experts.

States to attend the conclave include Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur.

The conclave will discuss methods to protect the Himalayan eco system from global warming, water conservation measures to be adopted besides working out an action plan for sustainable development in the Himalayan region and submitting its draft to Niti Ayog, an official release here said.

"The deliberations at the conclave will help in apprising institutions like the Niti Ayog and the Finance Commission with the conditions existing in the Himalayan states and making better financial resources available to them," Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said.

NCC Combined Annual Training Camp begins at Kamrang



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

Three Sikkim Battalions NCC Gangtok under the aegis of NCC Group HQ Darjeeling has commenced a 10-day long Combined Annual Training Camp at OBC School Kamrang, Namchi from 10 to 19 Jul, 2019. A total of 363 NCC Cadets along with 06 Associate NCC Officers from various schools and colleges in East and North districts of Sikkim are attending this camp.

During the camp, the main emphasis will be on imparting collective

training to NCC cadets, acquaint them with community living, fostering spirit of unity & discipline, imbibing leadership qualities & inculcating spirit of adventure for all round development of Cadets personality.

The Cadets will be trained in military subjects like weapon training, drill, map reading, field craft & battle craft as also in Social service & community development subjects aiming towards nation building encompassing National Integration, leadership, Swatch Bharat Abhiyan, etc. A

number of competitions are also scheduled during the camp namely firing, drill, tent-pitching, Obstacle training, cultural, etc.

Col Rajeev Kumar, Camp Commandant Combined Annual Training Camp informed that guest lectures by eminent personalities will also be conducted for subjects of common interest like firefighting and rescue, road safety & traffic signs, Tuberculosis (TB), HIV AIDS, environment awareness & conservation, health & hygiene, hygiene and sanitation and career counseling.

New team of Lions Club of Rangpo takes charge



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

Installation program for the new team of Lions Club of Rangpo was held at Rangpo Tourism office today, as per a press release.

The program was attended by Region Chairperson Lions Club International 322F, Namita Chettri as Installation Officer, Representatives from Lions Club of Singtam,

Satyanarayan Agarwal along with members.

Program started with welcome speech and peace prayer by Sikkim state coordinator, Sanjay Agarwal. He highlighted the mission and programs organised in 2018-19.

Dr Dixya Poudyal, Rajen Gurung, Rakesh Agarwal, Pramod Prasad and Namita Chettri were felicitated and awarded for their work. Four new

members were also inducted in the program by Region Chairperson, Namita Chettri.

The new team for 2019-20 was also installed on the day. Ramakant Rai was nominated as the president followed by Yasawant Singh and Rakesh Agarwal as vice president, Gaurav Chettri as secretary, Pramod Prasad as cashier and several other committee members.

Training for organic farmers at Singhik



SUMMIT REPORT MANGAN, 12 JUL:

An Organic Growers training by Horticulture Department under the NSQF level Sikkim Organic Mission was organized up by Spices Board, Mangan, at Singhik Gram Prashasan Kendra from 10 to 12 July 2019.

The training, attend-

ed by 40 farmers, included practical sessions on organic farming, discussion on soil health card, organic smart production and marketing.

They were also informed about Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Agriculture Skill Council of India and Skill Development Management systems.

SC serves...

Whether a non-elected disqualified person holding office of the Chief Minister can be permitted to remain in office and exercise all constitutional powers in teeth of Articles 164 (4), 173 (c), and 191 (1) (e) of the Constitution read with Section 8 (1) (m) of the Representation of People's Act.

Code prohibits...

Vardhan said such complaints are referred by MCI to the State Medical Councils concerned where doctors and medical practitioners are registered. The MCI is an Appellate Authority.

The minister said the Department of Pharmaceuticals has received some complaints of unethical marketing practices by pharmaceutical companies.

Vardhan said as informed by Department of Pharmaceuticals, the complaints received are forwarded to Pharma Associations concerned for necessary action as per provisions of Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP), as prepared by Department of Pharmaceuticals.

The Managing Director or CEO of the pharma company is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to the code, he said.

GHEWA

The Ghewa (Antayasti Kriya) of my beloved husband late Ashok Lama (Ex-Panchyat) Son of late Pema Tamang who left for heavenly abode on 23rd June, 2019 falls on 14th July, 2019.

All relatives, family, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Upper Syari, Kopibari, below Deorali Khadi, Gangtok, East Sikkim. We also express our gratitude to all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.

Mrs. Phigu Tamang (Wife) : 9832469895.

Mr Tshring Chopel Tamang: 7908416933

Mr. Dilip Tamang (Brother): 9002624755

Mr B M Tamang (Brother): 9002775011

Mr M B Rai (Bother in law) : 9851926384

Mr BB Tamang (Brother)

~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

URGENTLY REQUIRED:

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

PLOT FOR SALE:

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

WANTED

HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER.

Contact: 9933443442/9800500696.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This is for general information of all concerned that Hotel Parasol Residency, Panihouse, Deorali East Sikkim shall remain closed for a period of six months for carrying out necessary repairs. All concerned tour operators and clients are requested to refrain from booking or deal with any sort with regard to Hotel Parasol Residency, Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim.

Mr. Subash Lama

Proprietor

Hotel Parasol Residency, Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim

BUILDING FOR SALE

A 5 storied building with 3 floor completed having a land area of 30x70 at DABUWA, Melli road (2km from Namchi) is for sale. Rate reasonable. Interested parties please contact: 6296370905, 9733284142, 8597088755.

Four & half Storied building on SALE, behind Hotel Agarwal at Pani House, Gangtok, East Sikkim. Interested parties may also buy flats - 2 flats - 1650 sq.ft, 1 Flat - 1186 sq.ft & 1 Flat on top (1 & half)- 3000 sq.ft. Contact: -9434751150

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Sensitization on Positive Mental Health for Govt employees



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority [SSLSA] in collaboration with Sikkim Chapter of the Indian Psychiatry Society organized a Sensitization Programme on Positive Mental Health for the Employees of Human Resource Development Department at the Sikkim Judicial Academy, Sokeythang, East Sikkim today, a press release informs.

The programme was organized under the directions of Jus-

tice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairperson, SSLSA. The programme was attended by SSLSA Member Secretary, Suraj Chettri, Officers/Officials from HRDD, Press and Media and staff of Sikkim SLA.

The Sensitization Programme was held to address mental health issues arising out of work stress and other factors faced by government employees as well as to spread awareness on mental health, the re-

lease mentions.

The Resource Persons for today's programme were Head of Department of Psychiatry, Dr CS Sharma, Consultant Neuro-Psychiatrist, Dr CL Pradhan, HC HS & FW Department, Assistant Professor, Archana Chhetri, Department of Psychiatry, SMIMS/CRH.

The programme commenced with the welcome address by Member Secretary, Suraj Chettri, Sikkim SLA, who gave a brief introduction about World Mental Health Day,

which is celebrated on 10th October every year.

He also informed that with the increase in stress level in our day-to-day life, it is important for us to be aware about our mental well being and to stay healthy not only physically but mentally also. This programme is being held with the view to achieve mental well-being of all the employees working in various Departments, he added.

Dr CL Pradhan, spoke on suicide while Dr C.S Sharma spoke on coping

skills and Archana Chhetri on effective ways to reduce stress in the work place and mental well-being in work place, models, inclusion and awareness of psychological harassment. This was followed by interactive sessions between participants and Resource Persons.

The moderator of the programme was Deputy Secretary, Bikash Sharma, Sikkim SLA while the vote of thanks was proposed by Under Secretary, Praveen Pradhan, Sikkim SLA.

Road condition plays spoilsport in U-17 League

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

Continuing its winning streak, State Sports Academy secured three more points from another win in the ongoing Sikkim Football Association U-17 Football League 2019 here at Paljor Stadium on Friday. State Sports Academy outplayed Melli Football Club 3-0. John Tshering Lepcha scored a brace and his teammate Milan Chettri contributed a

goal in SSA's victory.

The second match of the day between Namthang Football Academy and Howler's Football Club, Slingtam was postponed as both teams could not reach Gangtok due to blockage of the national highway by landslides.

Mr Bishal from Red FM was present as the chief guest while RJ Prabal of Red FM was the guest of honour, who handed over four gar-

den umbrellas to Sikkim Football Association. SFA thanked Red FM team for donating four garden umbrellas for League Organising committee members, referees, medical teams, ball boys and stretcher bearers.

On Saturday, Dzongu Football Club will take on Gangtok Football Club at noon, which will be followed by another match between Chujachen Football Academy and New Light Academy, Namchi.

Two school students killed in landslides in Arunachal Pradesh

ITANAGAR, JUL 12 (PTI):

Two students were buried alive and two others injured after a boundary wall of a school hostel collapsed in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang district due to landslides triggered by incessant downpour, police said on Friday. The incident occurred on Thursday at the hostel of a government school located at Namtsering village when 19 girl students were asleep in their rooms, Tawang Superintendent of Police (SP) Sagar Singh Kalsi said.

The deceased have been identified as Genden Wangmu and Rinchi Lhamu, students of Class 5 and 6, respectively.

With the state capital witnessing landslides, mudslides and road blockades due to heavy rainfall for several days, the district administration has ordered closure of all schools in Itanagar till Sunday.

A 23-year-old woman was reportedly swept away by flashfloods in West Kameng district on Monday and is still untraceable.

The Itanagar-Naharlagun stretch of NH-415, which is being up-



graded to a four-lane highway, is the worst hit by the monsoon fury.

Landslides and disruption of surface communication have also been reported from West and East Kameng, East and West Siang, and Pakke-Kessang districts.

The Bhalukpong-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road remained closed in West Kameng district for the sixth day on Friday as massive landslides were reported at several places.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of the district Sonal Swaroop has restricted the movement of all types of vehicles on the road between the Pinjoli bridge point and Tenga for over a month since July 11.

The DC has advised commuters to avoid travelling through the road and to take a detour through the Orang-Ka-

laktang-Shergaon-Rupa-Tenga (OKSRT) road.

The Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) has been asked to clear the debris and take up road restoration works on war footing. Meanwhile, the Seppa-Tezpur road has been blocked near Jayanti village in East Kameng district due to a massive landslide.

Expressing concern, Chief Minister Pema Khandu has asked all the departments concerned to coordinate among themselves and work out an emergency mitigation plan under the supervision of the chief secretary.

He has also directed the disaster management department to issue instructions to all the district administrations to provide sufficient relief materials, food and drinking water to the flood-affected people.

CM's greetings on Bhanu Jayanti

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Go-lay) has conveyed warm greetings to the people of the state on the birth anniversary of poet Bhanu Bhakta Acharya, as per an IPR press release.

"May this auspicious occasion bring peace, prosperity and progress and strengthen the bond of brotherhood among

the people of the State," the CM has said.

Bhanu Bhakta Acharya also known as 'Adi Kavi' has made invaluable contribution to Nepali literature and the crucial role that he played in bringing Nepali literature to the forefront. His greatest work has been his translation of 'Ramayana' from Sanskrit into Nepali language, the release mentions.

Governor's greetings on Bhanu Jayanti

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 12 JUL:

Ganga Prasad has extended warm greetings to the people of Sikkim on the occasion of 205th Bhanu Jayanti 2019, as per a Raj Bhavan press release.

In his message the Governor has said, "I take immense pleasure in conveying my greetings on the occasion of 205th Bhanu Jayanti, a celebration with exemplary display of harmony, unity and brotherhood among different Sikkimese communities

that has remained the hallmark of our society over the years. The work of Adikavi Bhanu Bhakta Acharya transcends beyond the barriers of region, language and community and has inspired the scholars and litterateurs across the linguistic world. He will be remembered always as an iconic poet, who with his immortal epic Nepali Ramayana, has bridged the cultural and literary gap that existed between the Himalayan communities and the mainland India. His unparalleled efforts

have strengthened the spiritual and moral foundation of our society.

On this happy occasion, I deem it worthwhile to remind you all about the harmony, brotherhood and mutual co-existence that has characterised Sikkimese society for ages and urge everyone to work towards fostering and enriching it further. Let us all pay rich tribute to Adikavi and rededicate ourselves towards the development and preservation of this great language and tradition."

UPSC civil services prelims exam results declared



NEW DELHI, JULY 12 (PTI): The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Friday declared the results of the civil services preliminary examination, a government order said.

The results of the examination held on June 2 can be seen on UPSC web site- www.upsc.gov.in.

"The candidature of these candidates is provisional. In accordance with the Rules of the Examination, all these candidates have to apply again in the detailed application Form-I (DAF-I) for the Civil Services (Main) Examination, 2019, which will be available on the web site <https://upsonline.nic.in> during the period from August 01, 2019 (Thursday) to August 16, 2019 (Friday) till 6:00 P.M.," the government said in a statement.

It said the e-admit card along with the timetable of the main examination will be uploaded on the Commission's Website for the eligible candidates around 3-4 weeks before the commencement of the examination.

"Changes, if any, in the postal address or e-mail address or mobile number after submission of the DAF-I may be communicated to the Commission at once," it said. The candidates

are also informed that marks, cut off marks and answer keys of screening test held through the civil services preliminary examination will be uploaded on the website only after the entire process examination is over i.e. after the declaration of final result of civil services examination, the statement said.

The civil services exam is conducted annually in three phases -- prelims, mains and interview -- to select officers for Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), Indian Police Service (IPS), among others.

Nepal to raise foreign tourist visa fees from Wednesday: Report



KATHMANDU, JUL 12 (PTI): Nepal will raise the visa fees for foreign tourists from July 17, according to a media report.

The decision to hike the foreign tourist visa fees was taken in May this year as the Government had not raised the charges for almost a decade, The Himalayan Times reported citing an order from the Department of Immigration (DoI).

However, DoI officials said that the change in visa fee structure was minor and the fee structure would be revised again after the completion of the Visit Nepal Year 2020.

"Change in the visa fee structure for foreign tourists is necessary to make the fee contextual," Eshor Raj Poudel, director general at DoI said.

He mentioned that significant changes in the visa fee structure were not made in view of the tourism campaign next year.

"We will rework on the visa fee structure following the completion of the Visit Nepal 2020

tourism campaign," he said. The department has hiked visa fee for tourists in a range between USD 5 and USD 35.

While the tourist visa fee for 15 days (multiple entry) has been raised by USD 5 to USD 30, tourist visa fee for 30 days (multiple entry) has been raised to USD 50 from USD 40, the paper reported.

Similarly, the tourist visa fee for 90 days (multiple entry) has been raised by USD 35 to USD 125, it said. The DoI has also raised the visa extension fee for the foreign tourists.

"As per the department, the visa extension fee (within valid visa period) has been raised to USD 3 per day from USD 2 per day. Similarly, visa extension fee (with multiple entry) has been raised to additional USD 25 from additional USD 20," the report said.

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

BUILDING & HOUSING DEPARTMENT

CORRIGENDUM

For the following works put to tender by Buildings & Housing Department:

1. Construction of 2 nos of 6 units & 1 no. of 10 units grade D Police Quarter below Palzor Stadium at Sichey, East Sikkim.
2. Construction of two storied of male barrack and single storey female barrack at state Jail, Rongyek, East Sikkim.
3. Construction of Sainik Rest House-cum-office at DPH Road Gangtok.

The dates for submission and opening of e-tender has been changed along with few other changes which can be viewed in the web portal www.eneter.gov.in.

R.O No. 86/IPR/Pub/Class./19-20
Date: 12.7.2019

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer (N&E)
Buildings & Housing Department.



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

GANGTOK

No. 257/CS/SK/2019

Dated: 08.07.2019

CIRCULAR

This is for the general information of the public that preparations are going on for the ensuing Budget Session of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly. Consequently, the Hon'ble Chief Minister will be engaged w.e.f. 8th July, 2019 to 12th July, 2019. Hence, it is to inform, with regret, that the Hon'ble Chief Minister will not be available to meet the public during the aforementioned period.

Sd/-
(Alok.K.Shrivastave, IAS)
Chief Secretary, Sikkim.

Writers, Readers and Publishing

Nepali literature might be in good health, but publishing could use a professional boost

Usually around Bhanu Jayanti, tentative efforts are made to tease out an update on Nepali literature's health in these parts. The feedback has been far from encouraging for a while now. Nepali reading has apparently shrunk to newspaper reading, with literature finding ever fewer patrons. Newspapers, even journalists will admit, are not where literature finds expression; for that, the more relaxed indulgence of books, book shops and libraries is required. Newspapers can provide space to announce new arrivals and commission reviews to ponder on books, but to sustain literature, writers need readers of books not cursory skimmers of headlines.

Speak to writers and researchers and they rue the lack of professional publishers in these parts. Writers in English, and the region has had some exceptional ones in this language in the recent past, have benefitted from the professional handling of the bustling Indian publishing scene. Nepali writers, unfortunately, have no such recourse available to help refine and promote their works. Writers here are increasingly being required to also become publishers, printers and retailers. In these times, when reading habits are down all over the world, such multitasking just won't cut it. At a time when writers and publishers the world over are going out of their way to woo readers and entice a wider audience, the Nepali literati in the region remains unmoved, or so it appears. The world of letters might be an exclusive club, but the work it churns out needs to be circulated more widely for creativity to be celebrated. It appears that not enough of this is happening. A book launch, for example, should mean more than just a formal release by a VIP and should excite anticipation among readers. Too many writers release their books at official functions where the protocol itself distances them from their readers. Someone should start the trend of book reading and meet-the-author sessions for Nepali publications too.

There was a time when the people of letters might have sniggered at such showbiz gimmicks and stayed away from them, but the written word, let us accept it, is in the danger of extinction and such desperate times demand urgent/ grand measures. Flashy book launches and promotion drives are the order of the day in the publishing business and are no longer seen as debasing the work. These are required tools. Writers who live off their writing are constantly under pressure to put out consistently good work whereas those who write as a "hobby" can afford to be slack. Of course there are exceptions, but this is still a reasonably accurate analogy. Why hasn't the Nepali publishing industry here delivered the professionalism that the writers and readers are so desperately seeking?

In their defence, the "local" market is extremely small and the local politics too sensitive to allow the more creative writers the space for irreverence that is so important for the more ambitious works to arrive. Advancements in desk-top publishing and affordable printing options have not helped either. Earlier, if not for anything else, then at least to handle the complicated world of typesetting and finding printers in Benaras required writers to seek out publishers. Now, anyone can 'publish' a book and while that is fine when limited to vanity publishing, it has been to Nepali literature's disadvantage that publishing has been reduced to printing. A publisher is expected to help writers refine their work, slice away the flab and help them polish their work. Take away this process, and amateurish attempts abound. That said, it cannot also be ignored that publishers here have not made an earnest stab at becoming professional either. To this day, most publishers believe that the job is over with the printing of a new title. They have to realize now that they are "publishers" and not just "printers." A publisher's work, once a piece of work has been found fit for release, begins after the printing is done. Copies of the book have to be circulated for reviews, the writer has to be promoted in the media, the markets have to be identified and consignments reached there before the publicity blitz. All this does not cost much. All it requires is a professional approach. Given the identifiable pockets in India where Nepali readers reside, the paucity of reading material [thanks largely to poor marketing], and the presence [thankfully] of some great writers still in our midst, an educated and well researched approach to publishing should save the day for Nepali literature.

Modern Slavery Act is having unintended consequences for women's freedom in Sri Lanka

SANDYA HEWAMANNE
theconversation.com

The Modern Slavery Act was seen as a big achievement for combating the issue of forced labour. But since it was passed by the UK government in 2015, many have pointed out its shortcomings. In particular, how the legislation helps cover up serious forced labour issues, all the while making citizens who are concerned about the problem feel better.

Less well known is how Article 54 of the act, which assigns British companies the responsibility to clean up their global supply chains, hurts factory workers in developing countries. I've witnessed how British companies outsource this responsibility to local factory managers in Sri Lanka.

These local managers feel tremendous pressure to monitor their workforce, even beyond the shop floor, for fear of losing their contracts. And this leads to an excessive amount of surveillance, with devastating consequences for factory workers, most of whom are female.

The Modern Slavery Act was passed after years of pressure from anti-trafficking organisations, which promoted global laws that hold all commercial actors jointly accountable for forced labour. Article 54 of the act requires UK companies to prepare slavery and human trafficking statements that account for their supply chains. Besides protecting vulnerable workers, these statements are also geared toward enhancing their reputations and improving investor confidence.

But by recommending universal policies, the Modern Slavery Act fails to take into account how local suppliers around the world respond to it, even though the law effectively transfers to them the responsibility to keep the workforce free from modern slavery. It has led to a climate of suspicion and fear that exacerbates the already difficult lives of their workforce.

I spent two summers speaking about the Modern Slavery Act to female factory workers in Sri Lanka's free trade zones, which are industrial areas with a number of garment factories that supply

many foreign companies. I found there is intense pressure on local managers to clean up their assembly lines in such a way that the western companies which hire them could not be accused of modern slavery. The pressure to appear "clean" results in an unhealthy working environment.

It also limits women's freedom in a number of ways. For instance, a number of women I spoke to engaged in part-time sex work to make extra money outside of their factory jobs. This work was of their own choosing – and very different to the sexual trafficking or exploitation that the Modern Slavery Act is also designed to stop. But local managers feared it would be seen by Western auditors as exploitation and threaten their contracts. As one factory manager told me: "If we do not fire part-time sex workers, our factories can get blacklisted, and our orders will be cancelled."

SURVEILLANCE AND SUSPICION

Some international companies also have whistleblower policies which put the onus on workers to report any concerns they have about colleagues being exploited. It's meant to be for their protection, but increases the environment of suspicion and surveillance in factories.

While there is nothing in the Modern Slavery Act that says workers must behave a certain way outside the factory premises, managers are consumed with anxiety over being accused of aiding and abetting sexual slavery.

Many factory workers told me how factory compliance officers asked them to stop doing any part-time work, including sex work, as soon as possible. They were also told to report on colleagues.

One worker speculated that the sudden firing of a colleague had something to do with the new policies that came into place after the Modern Slavery Act. While nobody had actually accused her of sex work, there were rumours that she engaged in casual sex with various boyfriends. Considering the cultural context of Sri Lanka, where this behaviour is heavily frowned upon and even equated with prostitution at times, it can be seen as the misappli-

cation of the Modern Slavery Act at the local level, resulting in an even more stressful work culture.

It's not the first instance where international attempts to stop human trafficking has complicated things for the local workforce. In Congo, the efforts to halt child labour associated with cobalt mining led to thousands of legitimate adult jobs being lost and much socioeconomic upheaval due to blanket policies being put in place, which pay little attention to local issues at play.

PRECARIOUS PAY

The workers I spoke to who engage in part-time sex work told me that they do so because their factory pay is not enough. Many women are hoping to earn enough to buy a small plot of land to achieve financial independence.

So a better remedy to stop women from sex work might be to pay them a meaningful living wage. Instead, the Modern Slavery Act's emphasis on clean supply chains is making women's livelihoods more precarious. Perhaps if the act emphasised better pay for workers in global supply chains the outcome might be different. But the bottom line is, it must encourage better engagement with the local workforce.

The act was imposed in Sri Lanka without consulting global factory workers and now threatens a space that previously allowed women a path to economic empowerment. The conflation of sex trafficking with sex work assumes the majority of women in developing countries are victims that lack their own agency. But, for many of the women I spoke to, sex work was their own choice.

More disturbingly, intentionally or not, Article 54 makes global factory managers responsible for the leisure activities of their workers and, by extension, their moral conduct. Rather than requiring UK companies to ensure a living wage and help the education and economic empowerment of their supply chain workforce, the Modern Slavery Act punishes them.

[the writer is Senior Lecturer in Sociology, University of Essex]



Living with rats involves understanding the city as an ecosystem

CHELSEA HIMSWORTH
theconversation.com

Rats! They eat our food, chew through our property and spread all sorts of nasty diseases. And they are gross (right?), with those naked tails and quick, unpredictable movements. Rats invade our homes — our castles! — the one place where we should be safe and in control.

Over the millennia that we have lived with them, rats have proven themselves virtually impossible to expunge. They are so adaptable that they can exploit and infest virtually every corner of our cities. They avoid traps and poisons and reproduce at such a staggering rate that extermination attempts usually end up being a game of whack-a-mole... or, rather, whack-a-rat.

Is it any wonder that many cities seem to be plagued by rats? Or do the cities themselves bear some responsibility for their rat problems? This is what I have been exploring over the past 10 years as a wildlife and public health researcher with the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative and the University of British Columbia.

CHALLENGES OF MANAGING URBAN RODENTS

For the most part, when it comes to dealing with rats, cities have it all wrong. For example, rat-related issues are addressed using a hodgepodge of unrelated policy and programming. At best, municipal leadership is highly fragmented; at worst, it's absent altogether.

Municipal governments may address rat infestations that occur on public properties or in buildings scheduled for demolition. Local health authorities may address infestations in food establishments or where there is a demonstrated health risk.

For the most part, people are left to fend for themselves.

Another problem is that we know very little about urban rats. There is simply not enough information about them to answer even the most basic questions like: How many rats are there? Where do they live? Why are they there? Is the problem getting worse?

Despite this lack of knowledge, cities are often willing to invest tremendous amounts of time and resources into pest control interventions, such as New York City's \$32 million "war on rats."

It means that cities have no metric to determine the return on their investments, because without knowing what the rat problem looked like beforehand, there is no way of knowing whether an intervention made the problem any better.

THE COHABITING SOLUTION

The key to solving this problem may lie in simply changing our perspective. Rather than viewing the city as a place entirely under human control that's being invaded by rats, we need to recognize that the city is an ecosystem and that rats live here too.

This does not mean that we should love rats, nor does it mean that we

need to leave them alone. Rather, it shifts the focus to managing the ecosystem of which rats are a part, rather than focusing on the rats themselves.

Once we recognize that we are managing a system, it becomes clear that leadership and strategic planning are critical. The very concept of a system is that the whole is more than the sum of its parts; this is the antithesis of the reductionist approach that we're accustomed to that deals with infestations on a case-by-case basis.

Instead, we need to understand the urban ecosystem, just like we would if we were trying to manage polar bear populations in the Arctic or elephant populations on the savanna.

This means substantive, long-term investments in collecting data on rat populations and the specific conditions that support them, as well as the impact of any implemented interventions.

It also means understanding the interface between rats and humans. For the majority of urban centres, rats pose a relatively minor threat to people. The threats are certainly not in proportion to the amount of negative attention rats receive. This means we need to understand why we find rats so disturbing, and what can be done to reduce that fear.

URBAN ECOLOGIES

An ecosystem lens also directs us to look at areas of vulnerability and resilience within the system. When it comes to rats, our homes are the most

obvious place of vulnerability, where the relationship between rats and people is least acceptable. However, private residences are often the areas most ignored by municipal powers.

Also, rats and rat-related issues disproportionately affect impoverished, inner-city neighbourhoods, and residents of these neighbourhoods are particularly vulnerable to the physical and mental health impacts of living with rats. By identifying and focusing on these highly vulnerable scenarios, cities can start to make meaningful changes in how we perceive and deal with rats.

This is not to say the rest of the urban landscape should be ignored. Rather, the identification of particular areas of vulnerability needs to take place within a larger framework that uses ecosystem-based principles to address rats specifically. Examples include changing the way that garbage cans are designed and enacting tougher bylaws that enshrine the right to live in a healthy and rat-free environment.

These sorts of policies and programs that increase the resilience of the system have the potential to curtail the physical and psychological damage done by rats. The result is that co-existence with rats will come to seem no more unthinkable than our co-existence with, for instance, squirrels.

[the writer is Regional Director for the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, University of British Columbia]

CBI books former Arunachal CM Nabam Tuki

NEW DELHI, JUL 12 (PTI): The CBI has booked former Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Nabam Tuki for alleged corruption in awarding a contract for a government project to his brother in 2003, officials said Friday.

They said the contract worth Rs 3.20 crore was given without following tender norms when Tuki was the minister of consumer affairs and civil supplies in the state.

His brother Nabam Tagam, the then director civil supplies, and the then chief manager United Commercial Bank Sohrab Ali Hazarika have also been booked, they said.

Tuki was the chief minister of the state during 2011-16.

Cong protests against scarcity of beef in Meghalaya, blames BJP-backed govt

SHILLONG, JULY 12 (PTI): The Opposition Congress in Meghalaya has protested against the scarcity of beef in markets of the state and has blamed the BJP-backed government for depriving the people of their favourite food.

The Congress also demanded that the government put an immediate stop to illegal smuggling of cattle to Bangladesh.

Local butchers protesting against cattle smuggling had refused to sell beef for a month forcing the authorities of East Jaintia Hills and South West Garo Hills districts to impose prohibitory orders under section 144 CrPC along the Indo-Bangla border.

They had called off their protest last weekend after the district authorities stepped up the vigil Indo-Bangladesh border.

Why has beef disappeared from the markets in the state? What is the reason? Where have the cows gone? It only means that the chief minister and the state home minister are sleeping. Or they are awake, seeing and allowing things to happen, Leader of Opposition Mukul Sangma said.

The government of the day should verify. It is their job. We are concerned that we have been deprived of our most delicious beef. The government should have responded. I am told that there is a smuggling of cattle going on in which some big people are involved, he alleged. Mukul Sangma, who heads the Congress Legislative Party said at a meeting here late Thursday night that the party has discussed the issue at length.

Cattle are coming to Meghalaya but not reaching the markets. I think there is a subway to divert them somewhere else, he said in a jibe.

An official statement said the prohibitory order was imposed after receiving reports that the international border in East Jaintia Hills and South West Garo Hills district is prone to smuggling of cattle, dry fish, betelnut, bidi and cigarette.

Flood situation in Assam remains grave

GUWAHATI, JUL 12 (PTI): The flood situation in Assam continued to be grave on Friday with more than half of the districts submerged by waters of the Brahmaputra river and its tributaries, leading to the death of three persons and affecting 4.23 lakh people.

The swirling flood waters have forced the railway authority to control train services due to "settlement of tracks" in the Lumding-Badarpur hill section, Northeast Frontier Railway sources said.

According to Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), the affected districts are Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Biswanath, Nalbari, Chirang, Golaghat, Majuli, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Nagaon, Morigaon, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Baksa, Sonitpur, Darrang and Barpeta.

Barpeta is the worst hit with over 85,000 people reeling under the impact of the floods, it said.

The ASDMA said nearly 800 villages in 41 revenue circles are under water and about 2,000 marooned people have been put up in 53 relief camps and relief



distribution centres set up by the district administrations.

Kaziranga National Park, the famed habitat of the Great Indian Rhino and a World Heritage site, has been affected too forcing the authorities to set up road barricades on the national highway passing near it to limit the speed of vehicles, said Kaziranga divisional forest officer

Ruhini Saikia.

The Golaghat administration has also imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 CrPC in the areas near the park as the animals are coming out from it to go to the Karbi Anglong hills across the national highway in search of safety in its high grounds.

To ensure the safety of ferry passengers in view of the rising water

level and fast current in Brahmaputra, the Inland Water Transport Division has temporarily suspended operation of all departmental boats/vessels in the Guwahati-based ferry services under it from July 12 till further order.

ASDMA said many of the rivers in the state are flowing above their danger marks in various places. Brahmaputra is

flowing above the danger mark at Nimatighat in Jorhat and Tezpur in Sonitpur, while Dikhow river is doing so at Sivsagar town, Dhansiri river at Numaligarh in Golaghat, Jia Bharauli at NT Road Crossing in Sonitpur, Puthimari at NH Road Crossing in Kamrup and Beki river at Road Bridge in Barpeta.

A Northeast Frontier Railway release here said

that heavy rains have affected the train tracks between Jatinga Lumpur to New Harangajao station in Lumding Badarpur hill section of NF Railway.

The "track settlement" occurred at about 9.30 am on Friday making it unsuitable for train movement and repair work is on, said N F Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Pranav Jyoti Sharma.

As a result some trains have either been cancelled or short terminated, Sarma said.

The Sealdah-Agartala Kanchanjunga Express has been terminated at Lumding and will remain cancelled between Lumding and Agartala, while the Silchar-Sealdah Kanchanjunga Express which was scheduled to leave Silchar Friday will remain cancelled, he said.

The Guwahati-Silchar passenger, which left Guwahati on July 11 and arrived at New Haflong station this morning has been short terminated and will remain cancelled between New Haflong and Silchar, while the Silchar-Guwahati passenger of Friday has been short terminated at Chandranathpur station and will return to Silchar, Sarma said.

The railway authority has made provision for adequate drinking water for all passengers of the short-terminated trains at the respective stations and announcements are also being made to make passengers aware about cancellations and short terminations, the CPRD added.

Assam govt to set up 200 additional Foreigners Tribunals by Sept 1



GUWAHATI, JUL 12 (PTI): The 1000 Foreigners Tribunals, which were to be set up in Assam by July 31, would now be established in phases, with the first 200 expected to come up by September 1, official sources said Friday.

Realising that having 1,000 FTs by July 31, the deadline to publish the National Register of Citizens (NRC), is not an easy task, authorities have reworked the target.

Currently, Assam has 100 FTs that have the mandate to decide whether a person is a foreigner or an Indian citizen.

A person whose name is not part of the NRC, currently being updated under the supervision of the Supreme Court, can approach any FT with a certified copy of the rejection order received from NRC authorities along with grounds for appeal.

"We have to set up 1,000 FTs in total, but these cannot be set up in one go. It has to be done in phases. So, we will set up 200 new FTs in the first phase by September 1. Then another 200 in the next phase. We have already begun the process," an official source of the state Home Department told PTI.

To implement setting up of the new FTs, the government has already formed an Electronic Foreigners Tribunal Mission Directorate (e-FTMD).

"We have appointed IPS officer Anand Prakash Tiwari as the CEO of the Directorate. It will recruit the manpower, create logistics and look after any other requirement for setting up the new FTs. Already

some advertisements have been made," he said.

When asked how long it will take to have the 1,000 FTs from the 100 at present, the home department official said, "It will take at least two years".

"Once the final NRC will be published on July 31, then the state government will start referring the names excluded in the document to the FTs through Assam Border Police.

"The NRC cannot decide if someone is a foreigner or not. Only FTs can declare a person foreigner. So, we will gradually refer all the applicants, whose names will not appear in the NRC, to the FTs to determine their nationalities," he added.

Besides, the government is at present taking legal opinion to those probable cases, in which a person's name will be excluded from NRC but he has a valid Indian passport or figures in voter's list or owns registered land and properties or works in government job.

Last month, the Centre had decided to help the state in setting up 1,000 FTs by July 31 and even Home Ministry Secretary (Border Management) B R Sharma held a meeting with the Assam government regarding this.

The move came after the Supreme Court questioned the state government's plan to set up 1,000 FTs, pointing out that it would be difficult to find 1,000 legal officers to preside over them.

It is estimated that the tribunals will require nearly 12,000

personnel, including judicial officers. The state government along with the Home Ministry and other agencies have been tasked to identify retired judicial officers for the purpose.

Recently, the Home Ministry laid down the modalities for FTs in Assam for deciding appeals made by people not satisfied with the outcome of claims and objections filed against the NRC.

In a statement, the ministry had said that an order was issued mandating the FTs to deliver verdict of any case related to those people, whose names could be excluded from the final list of NRC, within four months.

In July last year, 40,07,707 people were excluded from the complete draft of the NRC, which contained 2,89,83,677 eligible persons out of a total 3,29,91,384 applicants.

An additional 1,02,462 persons were included last month in the list of excluded persons, taking the total ineligible persons to 41,10,169 in the complete draft of the historic document, touted to be a proof of Assamese identity.

In February this year, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary had informed the Assam Assembly that a total of 6,26,793 cases were registered against suspected foreigners since 1985 to August 2018 across the state.

"Of which, Foreigners Tribunal has declared 1,08,815 as Indians and 1,03,764 as foreigners. During this period, 29,829 foreigners have been deported," he had added.

BJP 'goons' threatening our Tripura panchayat poll candidates: CPI(M)

NEW DELHI, JUL 12 (PTI): The CPI(M) Friday claimed their candidates for the upcoming panchayat poll in Tripura on July 27 were being "threatened" and "attacked" by BJP "goons".

The party said during the nomination period from July 1 to 8 candidates of the CPI(M) and other opposition parties were prevented from collecting and filing nomination papers by armed gangs of the BJP.

"Bike-borne hoodlums of the BJP were stationed before the election offices, so that no opposition candidate could collect or submit nomination papers. In most of the places, the police were just onlookers.

"Physical attacks on prospective candidates

and attacks on CPI(M) offices and leaders such as on the North Tripura District Committee and sub-divisional office in Dharmanagar were resorted to, creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation," a statement from the Left party said.

The party claimed in this situation 121 CPI(M) candidates were forced to withdraw their nomination papers on the last day of withdrawal -- July 11.

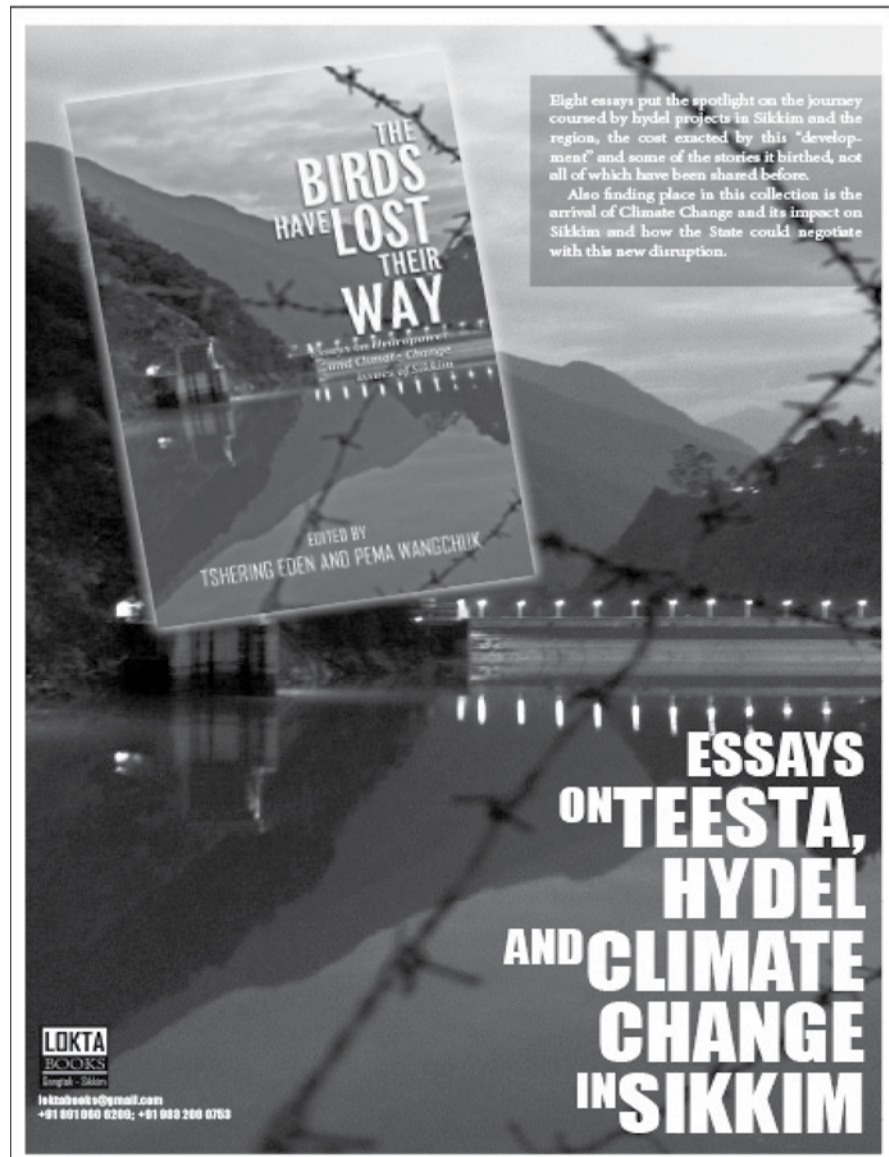
"As a result of this terror campaign, after the last date of withdrawal, over 90 per cent of the seats in the panchayat samitis and gram panchayats have gone uncontested to the BJP," the statement said.

For the elections on July 27, there are now

306 candidates of the Left Front in the fray out of 6,111 seats, for the panchayat samiti there are 56 candidates in the field out of 419 seats, and in the zilla parishad there are 67 Left Front candidates for the 116 seats, the party said.

The CPI(M) accused the BJP of repeating what it did in the by-elections to the three-tier panchayats held in September 2018, where in 96 per cent of the seats the BJP won uncontested.

"It may be recalled that the BJP had loudly protested the rigging of panchayat elections in West Bengal and had gone to the Supreme Court regarding the matter. It is doing precisely this in a heightened manner in Tripura under its state government.



England's Jason Roy fined for showing dissent

BIRMINGHAM, JUL 12 (PTT): England opener Jason Roy has been fined 30 per cent of his match fee for showing dissent at an umpires decision during his side's eight-wicket win over Australia in the second semifinal of the World Cup here.

Roy was fined for breaching Level One of the ICC Code of Conduct during the match at Edgbaston on Thursday.

"Roy was found to have breached Article 2.8 ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to showing dissent at an umpires decision in an international match. In addition to the 30 per cent fine, two demerit points have been added to Roy's disciplinary record," the ICC said in a statement. The incident occurred during the 19th over of England's chase when Roy showed dissent at being given out, caught behind by Alex Carey off Patt Cummins at the personal score of 85.

Chasing a modest 224 for win, Roy was going great guns as he piled up his runs off just 65 deliveries with the help of nine boundaries and five hits over the fence. Roy admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by ICC match referee Ranjan Madugalle.

On-field umpires Marais Erasmus and Kumar Dharmasena, third umpire Chris Gaffaney and fourth official Aleem Dar levelled the charges against the hard-hitting right-hander.

Archer and Rashid the precious cogs in England's World Cup machine

ANDY BULL
theGuardian

Some strange day-dream, this, a child's idea of what an England win might look like, or a revenge fantasy perhaps, cooked up by despondent English fans in their lowest moments. By the middle of the afternoon, the thousands at Edgbaston seemed almost drunk with happiness watching it come true in front of them.

From the top of the pavilion, where their victory songs echoed around the rafters, you could see the heavy weather circling Birmingham. The Met Office had put out a weather warning and, judging by the smudges away on the horizon, they were getting plenty over on the far side of the city. But everyone was left waiting for a storm that never came as England made their way smoothly, serenely, easily into the World Cup final.

There had already been thunder and lightning, though, and lots of it. It was there in Jason Roy's batting, and Jofra Archer's bowling. He was the man who started it all, with his very first ball, a waspish delivery to Aaron Finch, exactly as Archer must have seen it in his mind when he was visualising the beginning of the innings.

Finch tends to plant his front foot across in front of his stumps when he starts and Archer's



delivery was designed to exploit exactly that. It slid in and hit Finch plumb in front. Archer spun on his heel and dropped to one knee, spread his arms high and wide like he was launching into the chorus. His voice was just beginning to break when the umpire Kumar Dharmasena raised his finger.

England won the semi-final in the field, which is the way it has been all summer. A World Cup that was supposed to be all about the batsmen has belonged to the bowlers. For four years, bowling has been England's weaker suit but, six weeks into the tournament, they have grown

into a formidable unit.

Eoin Morgan has a superpower's arsenal to choose from now. In 2015, when Morgan's team lost against Australia by 111 runs in their opening match of the previous World Cup, he was picking between four right-arm fast-medium bowlers and an off-spinner. Now he is packing two of the fastest men around, Archer and Mark Wood, a wizardly leg-spinner in Adil Rashid, as well as the craft and guile, seam, swing and cut of Chris Woakes, Liam Plunkett and Ben Stokes.

It was Woakes who was the man of the match

for his three for 20. He got David Warner with a delivery that popped off a length, turned Peter Handscomb inside out with balls that seamed this way and that, then bowled him with one that ricocheted off his inside edge. After half an hour, Woakes and Archer had Australia reeling at 14 for three and scrambling to find a way back into the match. Like Mike Tyson said: "Everyone has a plan, till they get punched in the mouth."

The blows kept coming. Alex Carey was in now. He came forward to a length delivery from Archer and played it out to cover. You could see

Archer bristle at that. He made up his mind what to do before he had even reached the end of his follow-through.

The next ball was short, fast, and nasty, as ugly a bouncer as anything anyone has bowled in an England shirt since Steve Harmison was in his prime in 2004. It shot up at Carey's face and knocked his helmet clean off the top of his head. He was left bleeding from a cut on his chin. The wounded Carey batted on, together with Steve Smith, while Morgan cycled through his bowling changes. Australia were just beginning to recover, and had reached a hun-

dred partnership, when Carey made a fatal mistake. He tried to flick one of Rashid's leg-breaks through midwicket, where he picked out the fielder. It was the opening Rashid needed.

Rashid, struggling with a shoulder injury, has had a quiet time of it in these past few weeks. He had only taken one wicket for 129 runs in his last three matches. But now he burst into life. He bamboozled Marcus Stoinis with a googly that had him lbw, and then got Pat Cummins too, with a wider one that the batsman edged to slip. By the end of his spell Rashid was

bowling so well that, if he had not run out of overs, you sensed he might have run clean through the Australia tail all by himself.

In among all this Archer got Glenn Maxwell with a cunning little trick of his own. This time he followed a bouncer with a slower delivery – a knuckle ball, it turned out – which Maxwell prodded straight to cover.

Morgan is blessed with a rare and precious pair in Archer and Rashid, for England to have a fast bowler that menacing is unusual, for them to have a wrist spinner that deadly is almost unprecedented. The pair seem to have become great friends, too. They sought each other out as soon as the innings was over walked off the pitch together, Archer with his arm draped around Rashid's shoulder, their heads together so they could joke and chat about everything that had just happened.

That rain did reach Edgbaston in the end, by the way, but no one cared because by then England were 222 for eight, and one shot away from finishing off one of the greatest victories in their history. It fell heavily right as they set off the fireworks, mixing in with the brilliant light and fire that lit up the grey skies of this English summer.

India hopes for improved show in do-or-die match against North Korea



AHMEDABAD, JUL 12 (PTT): Embarrassed by Tajikistan in the opening match, hosts India will be desperate for a better show when they take on North Korea in a do-or-die match of Intercontinental Cup football tournament, here Saturday.

Defending champions India suffered a 2-4 defeat against Tajikistan on July 7 and that result has placed them in a precarious position in the race for the final.

The top two teams will make it to the final in the four-team event. India cannot lose any match out of the remaining two if they are to qualify for the final on July 19.

India led 2-0 at half time against Tajikistan through goals from captain Sunil Chhetri but then let in four goals in the second half to lose the match. An out-of-sorts Indian defence crumbled into pieces and undid all the good work done in the first session.

Adil Khan and debutant Narender Gahlot, who manned the central defence, were found wanting on many occasions, while wing backs Rahul Bheke and Mandar Rao Desai also struggled. Most of Tajikistan attacks

came from the right side through Bheke.

The Indian back-four committed mistakes after mistakes in the second half but to be fair to them, all of them were an inexperienced lot at the international stage. Gahlot and Desai debuted for India in that match while Adil and Bheke were just a few matches old.

Senior player and defensive mainstay Sandesh Jhingan did not play as he had a minor niggle while his earlier long time partner in central defence, Anas Edathodika, who was called out from retirement, was not 100 per cent fit and did not make it to the final 23-member squad.

But the Indian team will now be boosted with the likely return of Jhingan who is available for the North Korea match. He is expected to marshal the Indian defence to a much improved show. North Korea will also go into Saturday's match with the same mind set as India as they had suffered a 2-5 defeat against Syria in their campaign opener.

Their defence also looked shaky against Syria, letting in five goals, with four coming in the

second half, and Chhetri and Co. will look to exploit the chinks in North Korea's armoury.

Chhetri scored India's first goal against Tajikistan through a cheeky 'panenka' from the dreaded spot in the fourth minute and another clinical finish in the 41st minute to showcase his goal-scoring prowess.

The talismanic Indian captain would look to continue his red-hot form and if the home side defence come up with an improved show, Igor Stimac's men would hope for their first win of the tournament.

Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu said the team can fix the mistakes.

"It's not much of a worry for me as a player and for my other teammates as well. I am sure that everyone is ready to learn, which is important, and make sure that we grow stronger day by day."

"The whole team is focused on the match against DPR Korea. What's done is done and we are not thinking about the loss to Tajikistan. We have been working hard so as to not repeat the mistakes we made. We want to play better," said midfielder Amarjit Singh.

Bankrupt Becker's trophy auction raises over half a million pounds

LONDON, JUL 12 (AFP): An on-line auction of 82 of the trophies and other memorabilia of bankrupt German tennis legend Boris Becker realised approximately £687,000 (£860,000), according to the company dealing with his bankruptcy.

The 51-year-old six-time Grand Slam winner was declared bankrupt two years ago and his debts could total as much as £50million although that could be reduced significantly if several claims are dismissed.

A replica of the 1989 US Open trophy -- when Becker beat Ivan Lendl -- realised the highest price of £150,250 in the auction which was extended by several hours due to last-minute bids.

Bidders included some from people attending Wimbledon, according to Terry Madden of the auctioneers Wyles Hardy.

In all there were 495 bidders from 32 different nationalities for trophies, photographs and other memorabilia, although several of the many trophies won by Becker --



including his two Australian Open wins and some from his three Wimbledon triumphs -- have yet to be found.

"Following huge amounts of global attention on the auction of the trophies and memorabilia from Boris Becker's career, we are pleased to announce that it has come to a close with the total bids significantly exceeding last year," said Mark Ford, of London-based firm Smith & Williamson, lead trustee

to the bankruptcy estate of Becker.

"The bids received show the enduring appeal Mr Becker has with the public, and supports the trustees' decision to postpone the auction last year and to hold it again this year during the grass court tennis season."

The auction had to be postponed last year when Becker, still the youngest player at 17 to have won the Wimbledon men's title in 1985, claimed diplomatic im-

munity due to being appointed the Central African Republic's "sporting, cultural and humanitarian attaché to the European Union".

Ford told AFP: "It certainly was a very unusual and probably difficult time." Becker subsequently withdrew that claim last December allowing Ford to proceed once more with the auction and it paid dividends in that last year the US Open trophy attracted a bid of just £36,000.

However, Ford once again asked that those with any knowledge of where the missing trophies are to come forward.

"We still hope to locate and recover the missing trophies including six relating to Mr Becker's successes at Wimbledon and his two Australian Open titles," he said.

"If anyone has any information relating to these, please contact the trustees in bankruptcy."

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Pakistan foreign minister Qureshi heckled in London over media freedom

LONDON, JUL 12 (PTI): Amidst reports of growing press censorship in Pakistan, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi was heckled by a Canadian journalist here alleging that his social media account was suspended over complaints from the government, according to media reports.

Qureshi was attending a press conference on 'Defend Media Freedom' here on Thursday when the incident took place, days after Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) suspended transmission of three private TV channels for airing an interview of jailed former President Asif Ali Zardari.

The move came as the Pakistan government decided to curtail the space given by the press to jailed politicians like Pakistan's former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and Zardari.

Journalist Ezra Levant of the Rebel media, a Canadian far-right political website, interrupted and verbally assaulted the minister alleging that his Twitter account was suspended over complaints from the Pakistan government, the Dawn newspaper reported.

That's exactly what I'm talking about. Twitter didn't delete my whole account. But they deleted a tweet they said violated Pakistani law. Twitter said that to me in an email. I'm in Cana-



da. Twitter is in America. But Pakistan censored us, he tweeted. In a video clip of the incident shared by Pakistan journalist Munizae Jahangir on Twitter, Levant said the organisers should be embarrassed to invite a censorious thug to talk about free speech.

Levant also accused the minister of adopting double standards on free speech, the report said.

Responding to the allegations, Qureshi said, first of all you want your sentiments to be respected. Just look at the tone to the panel you have adopted. Is that the correct way? You have a right to ask questions.

You have double standards what you call freedom; at times you are projecting certain agen-

das, the minister said.

Replying to a question on Pemra's recent decision to take three television channels off air, the arrest of journalists and deepening concerns about censorship, Qureshi said there was no question of gagging journalists. Believe you me, there is no question of gagging or controlling media, he told the conference co-hosted by Britain and Canada.

That time has gone and with the new social media, the advent of social media, even if you want to gag you can gag nothing, he said.

Further explaining, Qureshi said that three news channels were taken off and "I'm told for 6-8 hours, and now they are functioning again.

He said the channels had issues with the regulatory body and those issues have been settled.

Qureshi was also asked about an interview of Zardari, which was also abruptly taken off air.

Pemra had on July 1 taken off air an interview of the former president which was being conducted on the premises of the Parliament House, where Zardari came to attend a National Assembly session after the speaker issued his production order.

Qureshi said Zardari, who is currently facing corruption charges, was not permitted to be interviewed in the way he was, otherwise he can say what he wants to.

The media curbs im-

posed by Pemra has been criticised by a media watchdog.

"This is an absolutely unacceptable violation of the principles of media pluralism and independence during a revelation that was clearly in the Pakistani public interest," said Daniel Bastard, head of Reporters Without Borders' Asia-Pacific desk, in a statement on Tuesday.

"We call on Prime Minister Imran Khan's civilian government to take immediate steps to ensure that cable transmission of the three TV channels is restored. The recent surge in sudden acts of media censorship is exposing the current regime's increasingly dictatorial nature," he said.

Trump unloads on Paul Ryan, calls him 'a lame duck failure'

WASHINGTON, JUL 12 (AP): President Donald Trump unloaded via Twitter on former GOP House Speaker Paul Ryan, calling him a "lame duck failure." Ryan is very critical of Trump in the book "American Carnage" by Tim Alberta of Politico, in excerpts running in various publications.

Alberta wrote the former speaker could not stand the idea of another two years with the president and saw retirement as the "escape hatch," according to The Washington Post.

Ryan is quoted say-

ing: "I'm telling you, he didn't know anything about government. I wanted to scold him all the time."

Trump tweeted late Thursday: "He had the Majority & blew it away with his poor leadership and bad timing. Never knew how to go after the Dems like they go after us. Couldn't get him out of Congress fast enough!"

Trump may have been angered by various revelations in the book, including accounts recalling widespread negative GOP reactions to

his off-color videotaped comments in the "Access Hollywood" scandal in the closing weeks of the election campaign. But Ryan was the main focus of his Twitter rage.

"Paul Ryan, the failed V.P. candidate & former Speaker of the House, whose record of achievement was atrocious (except during my first two years as President), ultimately became a long running lame duck failure, leaving his Party in the lurch both as a fundraiser & leader," Trump began his tweetstorm.

Trump says cryptocurrency is 'not money'



WASHINGTON, JUL 12 (AFP): Donald Trump expressed his mistrust of cryptocurrency Thursday, saying it was "not money" and warning that those wishing to join the trade would have to abide by banking regulations.

"I am not a fan of Bitcoin and other Cryptocurrencies, which are not money, and whose value is highly volatile and based on thin air," Trump tweeted.

He added that cryptocurrency, whose electronic nature makes it nearly untraceable, could facilitate illegal activity.

Cryptocurrency has flourished since Bitcoin launched in 2009. But when Facebook unveiled plans last month for its own virtual currency, Libra, the announcement rattled financial regulators the world over.

With more than two billion Facebook users, the social media giant's cryptocurrency -- which is slated for a 2020 launch and already has multiple partners --

could completely disrupt the financial world.

But Trump said that Libra has "little standing or dependability." He also warned Facebook and other companies that, should they launch their own cryptocurrency, they would have to abide by both American and international banking regulations.

"We only have one real currency in the USA, and it is stronger than ever," he tweeted.

"It is called the United States Dollar!"

A high-level G7 working group is expected to produce a preliminary report on asset-backed cryptocurrencies next week when the group's finance ministers meet in France. "The more we, the international regulators, investigate this project, the more we have serious questions and potentially reservations," said Francois Villeroy de Galhau, head of the French central bank.

His American counterpart at the Federal

Reserve also broached the topic Wednesday and Thursday when testifying before Congress.

"I think we need to do a very careful, patient, thorough assessment of what the risks really are," Jerome Powell said Thursday, adding that the size of Facebook's social media network points to Libra's "systemic importance."

Some American politicians have called for a total freeze on Facebook's Libra project.

Facebook has pledged to deliver a stable virtual currency that lives on smartphones and could bring over a billion "unbanked" people -- adults without bank accounts or those who use services outside the banking system such as payday loans to make ends meet -- into the financial system.

The ubiquity of smartphones means digital wallets for Libra could expand the use of banking, credit card services and e-commerce in developing nations.

Canada distances itself from ambassador on China warning

OTTAWA, JUL 12 (AP): Canadian officials are distancing themselves from a former ambassador who warned China that further trade disputes could lead to a less friendly government in Ottawa.

John McCallum is a former Canadian ambassador to China and he told the South China Morning Post this week that retaliating against Canada over a Huawei executive's arrest could lead to a Conservative Party takeover of Cana-

da's federal government.

And he said that the Conservatives "are much less friendly to China" than the current Liberal government. China has imposed restrictions on Canadian meat and canola and continues to hold two Canadians.

On Thursday, Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland said it "inappropriate for any Canadian to be advising any foreign government" on actions to affect election outcomes in Canada.

Duterte critics laud UN vote to scrutinize drug killings

MANILA, JUL 12 (AP): Critics of the Philippine president's deadly anti-drug campaign say a vote by the UN's top human rights body to look into the thousands of deaths of suspects is a crucial step toward bringing perpetrators to justice. However, President Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman on Friday

condemned the resolution adopted by the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva as Western meddling in Philippine government affairs and questioned the validity of the narrow vote.

A Duterte ally says the killings were not state-sponsored.

The Human Rights Council voted 18-14

with 15 abstentions Thursday to approve the Iceland-initiated resolution, which called on the Philippine government to take all steps to prevent extrajudicial killings and asked the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a comprehensive report on rights in the Philippines.

Taiwan former leader Ma cleared in political leaks case

TAIPEI, JUL 12 (AFP): Taiwan's former president Ma Ying-jeou was found not guilty in a political leaks case on Friday, a major legal victory for a politician facing a slew of lawsuits since leaving office.

Ma was cleared of charges of leaking secrets and instructing a top prosecutor to disclose confidential information about a 2013 judicial probe in a final verdict handed down by the High Court.

"The court ruled that relevant evidence provided by prosecutors failed to prove any crime committed by the defendant," a court spokeswoman told reporters, adding the decision was final.

Ma's Beijing-friendly Kuomintang (KMT) party held power from 2008 to 2016, before it was trounced by Tsai Ing-wen's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

While still in office,

Ma was protected by political immunity.

But since leaving office, the 68-year-old has been hit with a string of corruption allegations.

Ma was not present when the verdict was announced. He had maintained his innocence throughout and accused the prosecution of mounting a flimsy case.

"He is grateful and relieved by the not-guilty verdict in the retrial," his office said in a statement.

The High Court had initially sentenced Ma to four months in prison last year for violating the Communication Security and Surveillance Act but the Supreme Court revoked that conviction in January and ordered a new trial.

The case stemmed from a judicial probe in 2013 about whether the parliament speaker at the time -- a political rival of Ma -- had improperly influenced a court

case against an opposition lawmaker.

Investigators had been accused of tapping the lawmaker's phone to acquire the information that implicated the speaker.

The leaks controversy sparked a political storm in 2013 and saw two top officials resign, while thousands of protesters took to the streets to demand Ma step down.

The DPP, then in opposition, compared the probe to the Watergate scandal in the United States.

Ma was the third ex-president in Taiwan to be indicted on criminal charges.

His predecessor Chen Shui-bian was serving a 20-year sentence for corruption before he was freed on medical parole in 2015.

Lee Teng-hui was charged with embezzling state funds during his 1988-2000 presidency, but was acquitted.

Dutch PM to visit Trump for talks on trade, defence



THE HAGUE, JUL 12 (AP): Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte is visiting US President Donald Trump next week, amid reports that the Netherlands is considering an American request to help protect shipping in the Persian Gulf.

The Dutch government announced Friday that Rutte will visit Trump at the White House next Thursday to discuss bilateral relations, international trade and defense and security cooperation.

Last month, acting U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said after a meeting in Brussels that NATO allies gave him no firm commitments that they will participate in a global effort to secure international waterways against threats from Iran.

Since then, Dutch media, citing unnamed sources, have reported that the government in The Hague is considering sending a frigate to the Gulf. The government has not confirmed the reports.





GLOWING AT WIMBLEDON! The actress, Suki Waterhouse is in full glow while attending the tennis championships in London.

Darren Criss to headline musical comedy series 'Royalties'



LOS ANGELES, JUL 12 (PTI): Actor Darren Criss is set to play the lead in musical comedy series "Royalties" for Quibi.

The "American Crime Story: The Assassination of Gianni Versace" star will also executive produce and write songs for the show, reported Deadline.

Described as a "satirical take on the oft-untold story of songwriters behind the world's biggest hits", the show will follow the ascent of a ragtag songwriting duo Sara and Pierce (Criss) as they navigate the strange and hilarious challenges of creating a truly great song, week after week.

In every episode, real-life entertainment personalities will be making appearances,

portraying fictional music stars.

The show is backed by Gail Berman's newly launched banner SideCar.

Apart from Criss, the project will be executive produced by Nick and Matt Lang, Berman, Hend Baghdady, Joe Earley and Ricky Rollins.

Quibi, co-founded by Hollywood heavyweight Jeffrey Katzenberg and former HP CEO Meg Whitman, is set to launch next year.

The streaming service has already lined-up an impressive slate of projects in collaboration with celebs like Steven Spielberg, Jennifer Lopez, Idris Elba, Chrissy Teigen, Lena Waithe, Don Cheadle, Tyra Banks and Lorne Michaels.

Priyanka Chopra the only 'desi girl', no one can take her place: Parineeti

MUMBAI, JUL 12 (PTI): Actor Parineeti Chopra says she would never try to compete for the title of 'desi girl' in Bollywood as it belongs to her sister Priyanka Chopra. Priyanka has been called 'desi girl' ever since she featured in the chart-buster song of the same name in "Dostana".

At the song launch of her next "Jabariya Jodi", set in Bihar, co-starring Sidharth Malhotra, Parineeti was praised for her "desi avtar."

When asked if she is on her way to become the next desi girl, Parineeti told reporters, "What can I say? I think there can be only one desi girl in this world, in the industry. I wouldn't even try to compete (with Priyanka)."

"But we both (Sidharth and I) are very desi in this film. That's all I would like to say because there is only one desi girl and nobody can take her place."

The actor was asked if she has any plans to collaborate with Priyanka in the future, Parineeti said "definitely" if there is a correct script.

"I had recently also said that if any

producer or directors are making an action film we would love to work together on it. We both have spoken a lot about working together, but the script should be correct," she added.

With story and screenplay by Sanjeev Jha and dialogues by Raaj Shaand-



ilyaa, "Jabariya Jodi" is scheduled to be released on August 2.

'The Flintstones' adult animated series reboot in works

LOS ANGELES, JUL 12 (PTI): Warner Bros Animation is working on a new 'The Flintstones' adult animated series with Elizabeth Banks attached as producer.

"The Flintstones", which originally ran for six seasons and over 150 episodes on ABC between 1960 and 1966, followed the misadventures of the titular modern Stone Age family, comprised of Fred, Wilma, Pebbles, and family pet Dino.

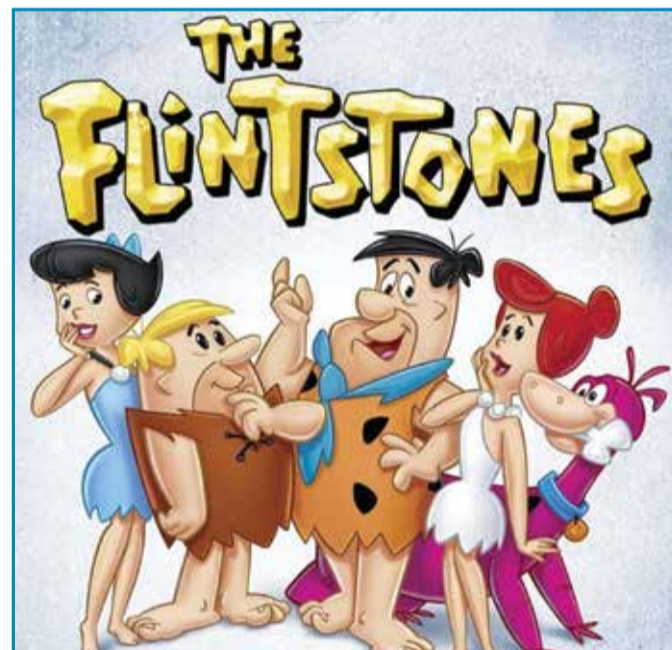
The classic, created by William Hanna and Joseph Barbera, also featured the Flintstones' neighbours, the Rubbles -- Fred's best

friend Barney, Wilma's best friend Betty, and their son, Bamm-Bamm.

According to Variety, no network is currently attached with the project.

The new Flintstones falls under Banks' Brownstone Productions' overall deal at Warner Bros TV which was recently re-upped.

Over the years, many new versions of "The Flintstones" have been created, including short-lived series like "The New Fred and Barney Show" and "The Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm Show". There have also been many TV specials as well as two live-action films.



Zack Snyder creating Norse mythology anime series for Netflix



LOS ANGELES, JUL 12 (PTI): Filmmaker Zack Snyder is teaming up with Netflix for an anime series set in the world of Norse mythology.

Snyder has co-created the series with frequent collaborator Jay Oliva, with whom he worked on features like "Justice League", "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice", "300: Rise of an Empire" and "Man of Steel".

Snyder will executive produce the series alongside Oliva, who will also serve as showrunner and director.

"Zack Snyder's innovation in visual storytelling has pushed the industry forward and established him as one of

the most distinctive filmmakers of his generation.

"We are beyond excited to partner with him and his exceptional team to bring the iconic characters and stories of Norse mythology to life in his inimitable style," John Derderian, head of anime programming at Netflix, said in a statement posted on the streaming platform's website.

The prolific writer-director-producer is currently working on Netflix's zombie feature film "Army of the Dead".

The Norse anime series will mark Snyder's first-ever TV project.

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ARIES: A simple exercise to get your creative juices flowing: take a piece of paper and start journaling the thoughts that come to you. No stopping. No editing. Revisit the copy with a fresh mind and examine the ideas or solutions that are of use to you. Want to take the juicing up a notch? Alternate between your right and left hand. The less dominant hand could help you unlock the potential of your subconscious mind. Tip: Give free writing a thought.

TAURUS: Statutory warning: things could get quite dramatic today. Be mindful of who you are sharing your energy with. Not everybody deserves a space in your sacred circle—especially not those who disrespect you or lower your vibrations in any way. Keep in mind that the eclipse season is in full force when others project their shadows onto you. Word for the wise: don't take any of this personally. Tip: Be mindful of who you are sharing your energy with.

GEMINI: Here's to blood sisters, soul sisters, witch sisters and synchronised moon cycle sisters. Raise a goblet of goodness to the ladies who have been showing up for you consistently, despite their own trials and tribulations. How can you reciprocate their kindness? It's not always about moving mountains. Sometimes, a simple 'I love you and you mean the world to me' is enough. Make your sisters feel seen and heard. Tip: Raise a goblet of goodness to your sisters.

CANCER: You can't always alleviate the troubles of another, but you can make them feel loved, seen, and heard. Here's to the spiritual warriors who show up for you consistently, despite their own troubles. You could find yourself vibing with a male mentor today—somebody who cares about you deeply and has your best interests at heart. See how you can apply his wisdom to overcome your current set of challenges. Tip: Here's to the spiritual warriors who show up for you consistently.

LEO: The world is your oyster—and literally so! Keep your eyes open for opportunities that inspire you to expand and venture outside your comfort zone. That's where the magic has been hiding all along! For some, this may be a time of changing the routine. A new way of being, a new way of expressing, and a new way of looking at the world is on the cards. Tip: Keep your eyes open for opportunities that inspire you to expand and venture outside your comfort zone.

VIRGO: Pay attention to what the Universe is revealing to you via signs, symbols and dreams. Your clairvoyant and clairaudient abilities are especially heightened at this point. Follow the guidance that is coming through; it could help you write a brand new story in your career and life path. It doesn't have to be a drastic shift. Think brand new ways of approaching the old. This will help you pave the way for opportunities you could not have dreamed of before. Tip: Follow the guidance that's coming through.

LIBRA: "Make a conscious effort to surround yourself with positive, nourishing and uplifting people—those who believe in you, encourage you to go after your dreams, and applaud your victories." A Jack Canfield quote that accurately describes where you are at in this moment. Libra, continue to make magick with your good vibes tribe. You are inspiring each other to be better versions of yourself each and every day. Tip: Make magick with your good vibes tribe.

SCORPIO: If you are a part of the organization, then it is your problem. Leadership requires a greater degree of responsibility and accountability. Rise to the occasion, Scorpio. Understand the root of your current set of challenges. This could be the first step to eradicating them and making a positive shift. Tip: This phase of your career requires a greater degree of responsibility and accountability.

SAGITTARIUS: Mercury retrograde, who? This is the time to enjoy excellent communication with your colleagues and employees. Give team building a thought today. Informal methods such as sushi with the crew could help you create that special bond. Your business/creative partnerships are also in the limelight. Being on the same page about the same things is helping your project progress at the right pace. Tip: Your partnerships are in the limelight.

CAPRICORN: It's easy to get caught in the rat race, given the speed at which your projects are progressing. The fine art of balance requires you to have one foot grounded in your material reality, as the other explores the depth of the subconscious. Set an hour aside each day for self-maintenance. Sing, dance, journal, paint, cook and meditate. Engage in activities that raise your vibrations and make you feel like the best version of yourself. Tip: You owe yourself an hour of self-maintenance each and every day.

AQUARIUS: It's easy to judge others on the basis of our preconceived notions, or resort to harsh words because of something they said to us many years ago. You know what takes an insane amount of courage? Tapping into a space of unconditional love. Today, listen more than you talk. Express affection rather than judge. Be a ray of sunshine in a world that's filled with dark clouds. Tip: Show up for people who show up for you.

PISCES: What does it take to get your creative juices flowing? What are the things that make you feel inspired? New ways of seducing the muse are on the cards. For some of you, this is a time of deepening your self-love. Channel your inner goddess by turning to the divine and the creative arts. Oh, the things 30 minutes of free dancing can unlock! Tip: Turn to the divine and the creative arts.