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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Wildlife Board meets, discusses expediting of Wildlife Clearance for 'developmental projects'



GANGTOK, 18 DEC (IPR): The 21st meeting of the State Board of Wildlife was held at Samman Bhawan here today chaired by Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] who is also the Chairperson of the Board. The main agenda for

the meeting was to facilitate Wildlife Clearance for developmental projects involving diversion of forestlands under Protected Areas for rural water supply schemes, road constructions and Defence proposals for

establishment of the Border Outposts. As per the agenda, the representatives of different user agencies presented their diversion cases which included Yumeysamdong and roads in Protected Areas.

The CM also raised concern about the prevailing situation of human-wildlife conflict, especially in Daramdin constituency. He directed that this issue be addressed and tackled under the provi-

sions of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

The Board is also sensitive towards the Defence security requirement with ameliorative measures.

A major outcome from the discussions was increasing ex-gratia payments for victims of Human Wildlife conflict resulting in death, grievous injury and simple injury caused by wild animals.

The meeting was attended by Forest Minister Karma Loday Bhutia, MLA Sunita Gajmer and PS-PCCF-cum-Member Secretary of the Board, ML Shrivastava.

The Members of the Board and their representatives from various Government Organizations namely DGP, Sikkim Police, Secretary, Social Welfare

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SFA mourns passing away of football-loving founder-member Pannalal Chatterjee



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 18 DEC:**

Sikkim Football Association convened a condolence meeting here at Football House on Tuesday on the passing away of one of its founder member's, Pannalal Chatterjee, who passed away yesterday at the age 86 in Kolkata, West Bengal.

An SFA press release issued by its president, Menla Ethenpa, informs that late Mr Chatterjee was a member of SFA since its inception in 1979 and was helping SFA bring teams from Kolkata every year for the All In-

dia Governor's Gold Cup Football Tournament. It is added that he, accompanied by his wife, had attended all the Gold Cup tournaments.

Football was his passion. He is the only Indian who has witnessed 10 FIFA World Cups in different countries.

The condolence meeting observed a two-minute silence as a mark of respect of the departed soul.

The meeting also resolved to depute the SFA President to Kolkata to offer condolences on behalf of SFA and all the football loving fans of Sikkim.

Mr Ethenpa recalled

that it was during the final of this year's Governor's Gold Cup on 12 November that he had requested the Chief Minister to help Mr Chatterjee travel to Qatar for FIFA World Cup 2020, and that the CM had agreed to sponsor the trip.

SFA has lost a true and dedicated member in the Late Pannalal Chatterjee. During a semi-final match on 09 November, the Late Mr Chatterjee was also felicitated by Governor Ganga Prasad, the SFA release states.

Mr Chatterjee is survived by his wife Chaitali Chatterjee, who is also a football enthusiast.

Animal Husbandry inspects deptt land at Dodak, directs better utilisation

DODAK, 18 DEC (IPR): Animal Husbandry Minister Lok Nath Sharma made an extensive visit to the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department complex at Dodak Ahley in West Sikkim this evening.

After a thorough inspection of the departmental land, the Minister Sharma directed the concerned official to first carry out a land survey and demarcate the boundary with fencing at the earliest.

Further, he instructed the official to prepare a field for fodder plantation within 15 days.

He also spoke to the concerned Secretary and instructed that



space be allotted for sheep rearing.

Thereafter, he chaired a brief session and urged utilisation of land comprehensively for productive purpose.

Earlier, he visited the Dodak veterinary dispensary and took stock on the

available facilities and enquired about assignments of the existing manpower.

The Minister was accompanied by the Press Advisor to the Chief Minister, CP Sharma, Chairperson State Bank of Sikkim, DB Gurung, Joint Director Animal Hus-

bandry and Veterinary Services Dr Kishore Thapa, Executive Engineer Agriculture, Jigme Lepcha, Deputy Director Agriculture, Pranay Gurung, Deputy Director Horticulture, Dilip Gurung, Officials, departmental employees and the villagers.

Priyanka Gandhi throws back challenge to PM

PAKUR (JHARKHAND), DEC 18 (PTI): Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Wednesday sought answers from Narendra Modi on CNT/SPT Acts, starvation deaths and 'divisiveness', a day after the Prime Minister threw challenges to Congress on Citizenship, Article 370 and Triple Talaq.

She also attacked the prime minister on economic slowdown, Citizenship Act, National Register of Citizenship and alleged assaults on women in different parts of the country. "From Bhognadih Modi ji gave some challenges to Congress. From here (Pakur), on behalf of the people of Jharkhand, I would like to challenge the prime minister.

"Modi ji speak about Santhal Pargana Act; tell about starvation deaths in Jharkhand; Answer about

turn to pg 02

Delhi HC agrees to hear 2 PILs on Jamia violence

NEW DELHI, DEC 18 (PTI): The Delhi High Court on Wednesday agreed to hear two PILs moved on the recent violence at Jamia Millia Islamia University here during protests against the Citizen (Amendment) Act (CAA).

Both the petitions were mentioned before a bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Rekha Palli which allowed them to be listed for hearing on Thursday.

The first petition was moved in the morning by advocate Rizwan seeking setting up of a fact-finding committee to look into the violence at the university.

The second petition was moved around 1.30pm jointly on behalf of the Imam of the Jama Masjid mosque opposite the Parliament House and two residents of Okhla seeking investigation by an independent agency like the CBI or the SIT into the violence at JMI.

The petition, on behalf of the Imam and two others, was filed through

advocate Mehmood Prachha and also seeks "registration of FIR against the erring officials, including police personnel who orchestrated the incidents of violence to create unrest and have, thereafter, resorted to brutalities against the students".

It said that immediate action was required to be taken against the erring police officials so that they "do not get any time to fabricate and manufacture facts and evidence against the protestors".

It also said that every citizen has the right to peacefully hold protests and police assault on such protesters was a violation of their fundamental right.

The petition by Rizwan alleges that Delhi Police "resorted to use of arbitrary, excessive, discriminatory and illegal force against students, more particularly female students, of JMI, on the false pretext of restoring law and order". It further

alleges that students and teachers were protesting in a peaceful manner against the amended Citizenship Act but the police disrupted it and used "unjustified, excessive, arbitrary and brute force" against them.

The petitions were moved in the Delhi High Court after the Supreme Court said on Tuesday that such petitions relating to violence be moved in high courts concerned.

Apart from seeking appointment of a fact-finding committee, comprising former judges of the Supreme Court and the high court, the PIL by Rizwan also wants no FIRs be lodged against students and no coercive steps be taken in complaints already registered, in connection with the violence, till the panel gives its report.

Directions to police not to enter the university campus without requisite permission from authorities concerned as well

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National Commission for ST's Chairperson meets CM



GANGTOK, 18 DEC [IPR]: Chairperson, National Commission of Scheduled Tribes, Dr Nand Kumar Sai, along with his delegates called on Chief Minister PS Tamang [Go-]lay] at Samman Bhawan this morning.

During the meeting, they discussed various issues related to development and the CM requested the Chairperson to include UPSC coaching and Scholarship programs for interested candidates from Sikkim in the Commission's initiatives.

The CM also discussed certain challenges faced by a lot of areas in Sikkim located in difficult terrains

which makes it complicated for developmental programs and schemes.

He asked the Chairperson to look into this matter as schemes like MGNREGA, BADP and other such schemes which are based on population should factor in areas as well.

The Chairperson has assured to help the state in all Central Government Schemes and was delighted to know that all other schemes are being implemented smoothly. He has also assured to render ample support for the development of Scheduled Tribes and all other sections of society in Sikkim.

MLA inaugurates CA office in Soreng



SUMMIT REPORT

SORENG, 18 DEC:

Soreng-Chakung MLA, Aditya Golay, inaugurated a Chartered Accountant's Office at Daragaon, Soreng, today amidst a gathering of local business persons, government officials of Soreng sub-division, members of local panchayats and others.

Kedia Agrawal & Co., Chartered Accountants from Kolkata, has partnered with a local entrepreneur, Kishor Kumar

Sharma, and has started business operations here from 18 December.

The people of Soreng and the adjoining areas can now avail services like GST filing and consultancy services, accounting and auditing services, preparation of project reports, branding and trademark services, investment consultancy services, etc., at Soreng itself.

Press Advisor to the CM, CP Sharma, was present as a special guest on the occasion.

NHPC sponsored tailoring course ends at Singbel



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 DEC:

'Tailoring for Self Help Groups' training sponsored by NH2PC Teesta Stage-V Power Station under its CSR & SD initiatives concluded at Singbel today. The closing ceremony was attended by Sahadev Khat-

ua [Head of the Teesta V Power Station and CEO of Teesta Lanco Project], Nivedita Khatua [president of Ladies Welfare Association, NHPC, Teesta V Power Station] and other senior officers of NHPC and members of the Ladies Welfare Association.

NCST team calls on Governor

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 DEC:

Chairperson, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, Dr Nand Kumar Sai, called on Governor Ganga Prasad at Raj Bhavan today, an official press release informs.

He was accompanied by NCST members Hari Krishna Damor and Harshadbhai Chunilal Vasava. The NCST team is in Sikkim on a 5-day visit and arrived here on 15 Dec.

During the brief meeting, the NCST Chairperson expressed delight on the socio-economic status of Scheduled Tribes in Sikkim and also apprised the Governor about his efforts to ensure that the policies and pro-



grammes of the central government aimed at the welfare and upliftment of scheduled tribes across the country yield desired results.

He informed about the series of meetings the panel has had with various organisations and

stakeholders since his arrival and mentioned that his endeavour is to address the concerns and issues of the tribes in coordination with state government departments and agencies.

The Governor conveyed his pleasure on

meeting the NCST team and assured to look into the issues if brought to his notice.

He underlined Sikkim's strength of harmony, brotherhood and non-discriminatory social bonding among all sections and tribes.

ICAR-NOFRI training on Organic Seed Production of Rajmash



GANGTOK, 18 DEC [PIB]:

A Field Day-cum-Training Program on organic seed production in Rajmash was organized by ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute on 17 Dec for more than 30 farmers from across the State.

Speaking on the occasion, Joint Director, ICAR-NOFRI, Dr RK Avasthi, highlighted the importance of quality seeds in pulses and mentioned that Rajmash is in high demand round the year in Sikkim and its production needs to be enhanced through adoption of new improved technologies.

He urged farmers to adopt and replicate im-

proved production technologies in their farms and stated that even though agriculture in the hills is a challenging task, there was ample scope to make organic farming remunerative.

Guest of Honour, Additional Director, Agriculture, Bina Kumari Rai, urged farmers to adopt organic package of practices for Rajmash cultivation, pointing out that Rajmash has vast production potential in Sikkim and was a profitable crop of high returns in short time.

Coordinating the program Scientist (Plant Breeding), Dr Chandan Kapoor, informed that along with improved

production techniques, new varieties for organic conditions have also been developed by the institute for hilly regions.

During field visit various aspects of seed production were demonstrated to farmers.

A new variety of Rajmash - SKR 57A - developed by the institute was also demonstrated to farmers.

Dr Chandan Kapoor informs that SKR 57A is a pure line selection from local common bean germplasm of Sikkim. This variety matures in 100 days, has determinate and synchronous habit and has average yield of 10.0-12.0q/ha under organic conditions of Sikkim.

SC dismisses convict's review plea in Nirbhaya case



NEW DELHI, DEC 18 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed the plea filed by one of the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case, seeking review of its 2017 judgement upholding his death penalty.

A three-judge bench headed by Justice R Banumathi said there are no ground to review the 2017 verdict and the contentions raised by convict Akshay Kumar Singh were already considered by the top court in the main judgement.

The bench also comprising justices Ashok Bhushan and A S Bopanna, said that review petition is not "re-hearing of appeal over and over again" and the top court had already considered the mitigating and ag-

gravating circumstances while upholding the death penalty to the convict in the 2017 verdict.

The apex court said that it found "no error" on the face of the main judgement requiring any review.

As soon as the bench pronounced the verdict, advocate A P Singh, appearing for convict Akshay, sought three weeks time to file mercy petition before the President.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Delhi government, told the bench that one week time is prescribed under the law for filing the mercy petition.

"We are not expressing our view in this regard. If as per the law any time is available to the petitioner, it is for the petitioner to avail the

remedy of filing mercy petition within that stipulated time," the bench said. While pronouncing the judgement, the bench said the convict has again sought to assail the prosecution case and the findings of courts on it and this cannot be permitted.

The bench said that the grounds raised by Akshay were almost identical to the grounds taken by the other three convicts in the case whose review pleas were rejected by the top court last year.

Regarding Singh's submission about the alleged flaws in the investigation, the bench said, "All these things have already been well considered by the trial court, High Court and the Supreme Court.

GST Council fixes 28 pc uniform tax rate for lottery

NEW DELHI, DEC 18 (PTI):

The GST Council on Wednesday fixed a uniform tax rate of 28 per cent on both state and private lottery.

Briefing reporters after the 38th meeting of the Council, Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said the new rate for lottery will come into effect from March 2020.

The Council also rationalised tax rate on woven and non-woven bags to 18 per cent, he said, adding exemption has been given on long-term lease for industrial plots to facilitate setting up of industrial parks.

The panel also relaxed levy of penalty for non-filing of GSTR-1 from July 2017, he said.

We will go for win against Sweden: Dennerby

MUMBAI, DEC 18 (PTI):

Sweden outplayed his side 0-3 in the league match but head coach Thomas Dennerby on Wednesday said that India will push for a win in the summit clash of U-17 women's international football tournament here on Thursday.

"We will go for the win against Sweden. No matter who we play, we always strive to win, not for a draw or to lose by just one or two goals. We can change tactics for different games and that is to win and not to let in lesser goals. We are going for it," Dennerby said at the pre-match press conference.

India sealed their spot in the final with a 1-0 win against Thailand on Tuesday, which Dennerby termed as "crucial."

"It was a crucial win and means a lot for the team's self-confidence. You can win by luck or by deserving it and in this case, we deserved it. We played well, created many chances and should have scored at least three more goals," he said.

The former Sweden and Nigeria head coach also reserved a special word for goalkeeper Manju Ganju, saying, "Our keeper was very good and made crucial saves. We were looking to attack towards the end of the match and Thailand could have scored on the break." Manju spoke about how the team was preparing for the next game and credited goalkeeping coach Precious Dede for helping her improve.

Priyanka Gandhi...

unemployment; Tell about rape of women..say about corruption.

"For whom are you Prime Minister? Are you Prime Minister of the country or 'batwara' (division) ka Prime Minister?" she quipped.

"But you dont have answers to those questions," she told the poll rally.

The Prime Minister had on Tuesday dared the Congress to announce if it would give every Pakistani the Indian citizenship, re-introduce Article 370 and bring back Triple Talaq to its previous status.

Equating a student who takes several excuses if he or she failed in school, Priyanka Vadra said, "Prime Minister takes excuses for his governments failures be it failures in economy, strengthening farmers or providing security to women and blames Congress."

Priyanka Vadra was addressing her maiden election meeting in the Jharkhand Assembly elections on the last day of the campaigning.

Opposition coalition chief ministerial candidate Hemant Soren of JMM and Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Singh Baghel shared dias with her.

JMM, Congress and the RJD comprise opposition coalition in the Jharkhand polls.

She informed the people of the Santhal Pargana about the attacks on tribals in Uttar Pradeshs Sonbhadra district and a BJP MLAs alleged involvement in a rape case.

Taking on the BJP government on CCA and NRC, the Congress general secretary claimed that Rs 1600 crore was spent in making NRC, "but it failed in Assam. Now they brought CCA.

Assam is burning students, who raised voice in Delhi, are beaten up."

Making a jibe at the incumbent government in Jharkhand, Priyanka Vadra said, "When I came here, chairs were being removed for want of space. The way you removed chairs from the ground, remove this government from its 'chair'.

"What did it do for you? Vote for such a government which will work for your interest, listen to students, waive farm loans, protect women and your culture," she asked.

Alleging that the Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act and Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act were meddled with by the BJP government, the Congress leader said, "The Congress will never tolerate anyone touching CNT/SPT acts that protect tribal land."

"I learnt from Indira Gandhi that protecting the tribals is not only Congress policy but also it is in the blood," she said.

Taking a swipe at the saffron party, she said the BJP is "super hero" in campaigning, but "zero" in work with its hollow promises.

It has not fulfilled its promises made to the people of the country...failed to give Rs 15 lakh as promised to every citizen from money brought back to the country from abroad while farmers committed suicide, she claimed.

Priyanka Vadra said, "Wrong policies of the central government has led to slow down of the economy.

The Congress leaders said, "You are the owners of water, forest and land; can anyone forcibly snatch them? This election is to save your identity and land.

Wildlife Board...

Department, Director DST, CEO STDC, Director Animal Husbandry Deptt, Customs Deptt, Roads & Bridges Department, Rural Development Department and Home Department were present.

Defence Personnel from the ITBP, SSB, and 17 Mountain Division were present alongside officials from the Forest & Environment Department and NGOs WWF, Sikkim, Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee, Muntanchi Lom Aal Shezum and TMI.

The meeting concluded with vote of thanks given by Conservator of Wildlife, DC Nepal.

Delhi HC agrees...

as proper medical treatment and compensation for the injured students are the common reliefs sought in both petitions.

Several public buses and two police vehicles were torched in the clash between students and police at New Friends' Colony near Jamia university during a demonstration against the amended Citizenship Act.

Students and police personnel were injured in the incident.

~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

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

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For more details: 9083826462 /9832556698

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

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LAND FOR SALE

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

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TO SHARE?**

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Rajnath Singh visits US naval air station, reflects on strong defence ties

BY LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, DEC 18 (PTI): Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited Naval Air Station base at Norfolk in Virginia in the US during which he observed a static display and a Boeing fighter jet demonstration as the two sides reflected on the “strong defence ties.”

Singh, along with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, is in the US for the second 2+2 dialogue on Wednesday. They are being hosted by their US counterparts Defense Secretary Mark Esper and the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Visited the Naval Air Station Oceana, Norfolk in the USA and observed a static display, and also F/A-18E flight demonstration, Singh said in a tweet on Tuesday.

At the Naval Station Norfolk, I had the opportunity to be on board USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier and we reflected on the strong defence ties between India and the United States, he said in another tweet.

Singh's visit to the air station gains significance given that India is seriously looking into these options of fighter jets both for its air force and navy.

Boeing, the manufacture of F/A-18E, has offered Block III of these fighter jets which, according to its officials, has carrier compatibility, advanced capability, affordability meaning low acquisition cost plus low cost per flight hour.

International interest in the Super Hornet remains high and includes Finland, Switzerland, India and Germany, who recently down selected the Super Hornet over the competition. There are over 400 F/A-18 sales opportunities outside the US, said Thom Breckenridge, vice president, Strike, Surveillance & Mobility, Global Sales and Marketing, Boeing Defense, Space & Security, in a recent interview.

The F/A-18's integration with Indian carriers would demonstrate India's commitment as a Major Defense Partner' and the Asia Pacific Reassurance Initiative, serving as an important symbol of the new relationship between the United States and India, Breckenridge told PTI.

In fact, the F/A-18 is the anchor of US-India naval aviation cooperation that can result in sharing of tactics, upgrades and knowledge and sharing of best practices in modern naval aviation systems, carrier integration know-how, services and training and weapon systems.

New to our India offer is By India For India sustainment, training services and upgrades offering. Will leverage our current supplier base in India for F/A-18 Super Hornets to deliver high rates of mission readiness to our customers at competitive pricing, throughout the lifecycle of the aircraft, he said.

Neighborhood Youth Parliament at Lingi Payong School



SUMMIT REPORT

LINGI PAYONG, 18 DEC:

The Red Ribbon Club of Lingi Payong School hosted the neighborhood youth parliament today. The programme was organised by Nehru Yuva Kendra, Namchi.

RRC Coordinator of South District, Kishore Baniya, and Programme Officer, SIRD, Deepak Rai, were present as resource

persons for the event which had Panchayat President, Lingmoo Payong GPU, Yogesh Bhandari, as chief guest.

Following the welcome address by Headmaster Suraj Kumar Sharma, Nodal Teacher [RRC], Pradeep Gurung, spoke in detail about HIV/ AIDS while Kishore Baniya highlighted the role of

youth in NYK and RRC and informed the gathering about the present health scenario and HIV/AIDS status in Sikkim.

Deepak Rai presented a motivational talk on life-skills and positive attitude while Reema Chhetri of Class X recited a poem on HIV/AIDS and student members of RRC presented a skit on IRCTC

and voluntary blood testing for HIV/AIDS.

The Panchayat President also spoke on the occasion and expressed his happiness with the programme and thanked RRC-NYK for organising it. The Programme was hosted by RRC Nodal Teacher, Anusha Subba, and vote of thanks proposed by Yog Kumar Bhandari.

Annual Day at Blooming Buds Academy



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 DEC:

Blooming Buds Academy of Sudunglakha-Kopchey, East Sikkim, celebrated its Annual Function with different sports events, traditional dances, Bal Kabita, Speech & Skit performances, Felicitation, Raffle draw and prize distribution on 17 December.

Managing Director, Samastha Bharat, a Delhi-based magazine, Yusuf Bhutia, was present as chief guest accompanied by former area MLA, Bikram Pradhan, Zilla Panchayat of Su-

dunglakha, TC Madhu Sharma, Gram panchayat president Sudunglakha GPU and members, AWW, ASHA, HM of Posakey model primary school, Amrit Thakuri, Ex Army, senior citizens, Guardians, students, school management committee were present on.

The school felicitated its founder, Amrit Pradhan, ex teachers Indra Giri and Sashi Gurung (Vice President Sudunglakha GPU) and land donor Kumari Gurung with shawls, felicitations letters and mementos.

Training on Pest Management held for Upper Chumbong farmers

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 DEC:

Mevedir, a service-provider agency for Internal Control Systems under Organic Sikkim mission in West Sikkim, organized a ward-level training on Pest Management on 17 Dec at Upper Chumbong under Singyang Chum-

bong GPU. Wangchuk Bhutia (Field Assistant of Sakyong) and Ashish Chettri (Mevedir Supervisor) assisted by Sangmoo Lepcha (Mevedir Field Assistant) were the key resource persons for the training.

Around 20 farmers from the ward attended the training.

MYM's Prerna Branch installs sanitary napkin vending machine at Martam School



SUMMIT REPORT

RANGPO, 18 DEC:

The Prerna Branch of Marwari Yuva Manch, Gangtok, installed a Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine at Martam Secondary School today.

This vending machine is the third installed by the group and has been sponsored by one of its member's, Raksha Agarwal in the name of Radha Devi Agarwal and Saroj Garodia.

Children from CCIs off to participates in Hausla 2019

GANGTOK, 18 DEC (IPR):

The Social Justice & Welfare Department today sent off 44 children from Child Care Institutions all over Sikkim to participate in “Hausla 2019” being held in New Delhi by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Hausla is a unique all-India cultural and sport meet exclusively for children in need of care and protection residing in CCIs.

This year, the event is being held at the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development Campus from 19 to 21 December.

Children will be participating in football, chess, athletics (100meters, 200 meters, 100 meters relay, 200 meters relay, long jump

and high jump), painting, debate, skit and scrabble competitions.

The Sikkim squad was selected from the districts in coordination with the District Child Protection Units and at the state level by the State Child Protection Society with assistance from Sports & Youth Affairs Department and the Sikkim Chess Association.

For the skit competition, the assistance of Culture Department was taken.

The children are being escorted by 5 officials of the Child Protection Scheme under the Social Justice and Welfare Department.

The team was seen off at the SNT Bus Terminus here today by Secretary, Dhan Jyoti Mukhia.

5-day annual function begins at Rongli Secondary School



SUMMIT REPORT

SINGTAM, 18 DEC:

The Annual Function of Government Secondary School, Rongli, planned as a 5-day event, got underway today.

Highlights of the day were Inter-School Bad-

minton for Secondary Schools and Inter School Quiz competition for Primary Schools.

SKM's area in-charge, Damber Pradhan, was present as the chief guest accompanied by school heads of different schools.

Pls begin training on women's safety

GANGTOK, 18 DEC [IPR]:

A five-day training programme for Police Investigators on Women's Safety and Crimes Against Women, organized by Sikkim Police Training Branch, began on 17 December at the Police Headquarters here.

40 directly recruited Sub-Inspectors, Inspectors posted at Police Stations and other senior officers will be taking the training.

The objective of the training is to build capacity of officers at the Police Station level who are actively investigating cases relating to women's safety. The course is intended to provide concise and focused in-



formation through simulated exercise and close interaction.

The resource persons have been drawn from experienced Police Officers of the State and West Bengal, Senior Public Prosecutors, experts from CFSL, Kolkata, Cyber experts and members of the legal fra-

ternity. The training programme was inaugurated by Special DG, Sikkim Police, Sudhakar Rao.

Sikkim Police plans to conduct more such training in the coming months so that crimes against women are properly investigated and brought to their logical conclusion.

CM's Gold Cup to begin 05 Jan

SUMMIT REPORT

NAMCHI, 18 DEC:

South District Football Association introduced its new executive body at a press conference held here today. Arjun Rai, the new SDFA president, also announced that the 9th All India Chief Minister's Gold Cup International Football Tournament will be held from 05 to 19 Jan, 2020. The last time that this tournament was organized was in the year 2014.


Teams from across the country and some from Nepal and Bhutan are expected to partic-



ipate. The organizers add that they plan to lift the tournament to “international tier 2 level” this time.

The winning team will take home Rs 3 lakh with the runners-up receiving Rs 02 lakh.

The new executive committee was elected under the guidance of SFA and the Sports Authority of South District on the directions of the Chief Minister, SDFA informs.



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CEE 24 NOV 2019

(a) **English**

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

(b) **Hindi**

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





GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
GANGTOK- 737101, SIKKIM
WALK IN INTERVIEW

CRTI, an autonomous body under the Department of Information Technology, Government of Sikkim is conducting a "Walk in Interview" on 10th January 2020 for filling up 1(one) post of System Engineer and 1(one) post of BMS/NOC/Helpdesk Engineer of State Date Centre.

For further details, Pl. visit sikkim.gov.in.

Sd/-
Additional Director
Department of Information Technology

R.O. No. 277/IPR/Pub/Class./19-20 Date: 29.11.2019

Socially Challenged

For some resolutions beyond improving the self

Another year is drawing to a close, and in a yearend through which much continues to happen in the political arena, some would even say not enough, as was expected in the wake of a regime change and political decimations, it is still social concerns which underline the problem areas for Sikkim.

Given that the SDF Government was voted out after five terms and an SKM government is now a little over six months old, a spurt of politicking was always on the cards but not always from the usual suspects. There will obviously be some disgruntlement around and also the need to remain politically remembered, a task made easier by the State's intransigence to remain uncommunicative by way of explaining things even as it promulgates substantial policy decisions. But even as politics provides for some vicarious pleasures in the viciousness with which the different sections have a go at each other and the convenience with which divergent ideologies manage to find common ground by targeting a common adversary, experience bears out that these passions are only seasonal in Sikkim.

What are leaving more permanent scars, however, are the worrying social challenges which have been around for a while now, but because they have remained largely ignored by the people at large, have grown in their potential to harm. Petty crime is on the rise, with occasional reports of muggings coming in from the capital's by-lanes, and suicides continue to haunt. Addiction consistently converts more people at still younger ages and corruption stories remain in circulation. Now, crimes logged under the POCSO Act also surface routinely to disturb and distress. Social crimes, frauds and scams have made it to the headlines this year as well.

Much as one would want to get convinced that these are problems erupting out of sustained poor governance, because that would absolve the lay people of blame, fact remains that these are ills that a poor social fabric foment. All it takes to contain these "ills" is more sharing which will bring about more support and that will guarantee defence. There have been few, very few, instances when people have come together to further a good cause. There have been too many indications of a disinterested society more comfortable at sweeping its responsibilities under the carpet than addressing issues head on and solving them. The lethargy one often associates with the bureaucracy is as acute among the people who should make up the civil society and Sikkim remains the poorer for it. Agreed, there have been individual initiatives, some of which have dropped out while some continue with the struggle, but there has been no consolidated effort by the people [through their social organisations and other associations] for anything. Every initiative that should have come from the people has come from the government instead. This does not always work, because if the people themselves are not convinced or motivated enough or concerned enough, then mere legislations or policy initiatives will not help.

The present times are times of change, rapid change, and unless the society remains involved in this process of change, and thus noticing challenges early enough and preparing for it, it will soon realise that they have mutated into something ugly when they could have metamorphosed into something much prettier. With our vacuity, we also cripple the chances of an improved future for the coming generations. That will be a guilt difficult to live down and will hopefully play on all minds when New Year resolutions are made, again, in a fortnight's time. As more of us make resolutions to make our individual selves and health better, perhaps some moments can also be spent ruminating over how we can collectively improve as a collective.

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

Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

7 reasons to learn a foreign language

KATHLEEN STEIN-SMITH
theconversation.com

Half of the world population is bilingual, but only 25% of Americans can hold a conversation in another language.

Changing that is one of the goals of language advocacy efforts, such as the Lead with Languages campaign. As the author of a book on what I refer to as America's language deficit, here are what I see as seven of the best reasons for America's young to speak a language besides English.

1. MAKES YOU SMARTER

Research has shown that knowledge of more than one language is associated with better reasoning, problem-solving skills and creativity. It also helps people deal with unknown and unfamiliar situations. Use of another language tends to delay the onset of dementia

2. BOOSTS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Language learning supports academic achievement. This is true for English-speaking students studying a foreign language, as well as English language learners in bilingual and immersion programs. It also boosts academic outcomes at the college level.

Being bilingual has also been shown to especially benefit low-income children in terms of "their ability to direct and focus their attention when distractions were present." Another study found that kids whose families spoke a second language at home scored better on cognitive tests than those whose family only spoke one language.

3. PROVIDES PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER

ADVANTAGES

Foreign language skills are associated with increased job opportunities.

Research has shown that demand for bilingual workers in the United States has doubled from 2010 to 2015. About 11 million U.S. jobs are related to exports, and most of the top trading partners of the U.S. use languages other than English. While not all positions in export necessarily requires a second language, it is important to remember that 6.8 million American workers are employed by international companies operating in the United States. Nine out of 10 U.S. employers rely on employees with language skills other than English, and [one in four] U.S. employers lost business due to a lack of language skills.

4. PROVIDES BROADER ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

If you speak another language, you could earn a degree in another country, which could end up being a less expensive way to get a college education. If nothing else, it at least enables you to better enjoy studying abroad and to learn more than you would if you only spoke English.

The same is true when it comes to the news media. Those who only speak English cannot directly access news and perspectives in parts of the world where other languages are predominant.

5. GIVES YOU MORE SOCIAL AND GLOBAL SKILLS

As more than 60 million people in the U.S. speak a language other than English at home, those who only speak English miss out on being able to directly communicate in the mother tongue of many

friends and neighbors. Language learners also tend to develop a more positive attitude toward both the language and the culture of the country where it is spoken.

In the case where a language may be part of our own cultural heritage and identity, building on the knowledge of that language makes it possible for us to reconnect with the experience of past generations of family.

Speaking another language also opens up opportunities to do business and work in other parts of the world. Overall, 75% of the world population does not speak English. Those who only speak English may also be limited and less inclined to collaborate with others around the world to address global issues.

6. INCREASES NATIONAL SECURITY

On the national security front, various federal agencies and departments concerned with national security, including the FBI, CIA, and the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Defense, need more agents and employees who can speak and understand another language. This need was underscored in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, when it surfaced that lack of Arabic linguists led the U.S. to miss critical messages sent by al-Qaida about the 9/11 attacks a day before they occurred.

7. LIFE IS MORE INTERESTING

Think of all the people here in the U.S. (well over 60 million), around the world (75% of the world population), and online whom we are able to talk to if we speak their languages.

[the writer is Associate University Librarian; Adjunct Faculty, Fairleigh Dickinson University]



Feeling sick is an emotion meant to help you get better faster

JOSHUA SCHROCK
theconversation.com

You know what it's like to be sick. You feel fatigued, maybe a little depressed, less hungry than usual, more easily nauseated and perhaps more sensitive to pain and cold.

The fact that illness comes with a distinct set of psychological and behavioral features is not a new discovery. In medical terminology, the symptom of malaise encompasses some of the feelings that come with being ill. Animal behaviorists and neuroimmunologists use the term sickness behavior to describe the observable behavior changes that occur during illness.

Health care providers often treat these symptoms as little more than annoying side effects of having an infectious disease. But as it turns out, these changes may actually be part of how you fight off infection.

I'm an anthropologist interested in how illness and infection have shaped human evolution. My colleagues and I propose that all these aspects of being sick are features of an emotion that we call "lassitude." And it's an important part of how human beings work to recover from illness.

YOUR BODY SETS PRIORITIES WHEN FIGHTING GERMS

The human immune system is a complex set of mechanisms that help you suppress and eliminate organisms – such as bacteria, viruses and parasitic worms – that cause infection.

Activating the immune system, however, costs your body a lot of energy. This presents a series of problems that your brain and body must solve to fight against infection most effectively. Where will this extra energy come from? What should you do to avoid additional infections or injuries that would increase the immune system's energy requirements even more?

Fever is a critical part of the im-

mune response to some infections, but the energy cost of raising your temperature is particularly high. Is there anything you can do to reduce this cost?

To eat or not to eat is a choice that affects your body's fight against infection. On one hand, food ultimately provides energy to your body, and some foods even contain compounds that may help eliminate pathogens. But it also takes energy to digest food, which diverts resources from your all-out immune effort. Consuming food also increases your risk of acquiring additional pathogens. So what should you eat when you're sick, and how much?

We humans are highly dependent on others to care for and support us when we're sick. What should you do to make sure your friends and family care for you when you're ill?

My colleagues and I propose that the distinctive changes that occur when you get sick help you solve these problems automatically.

- Fatigue reduces your level of physical activity, which leaves more energy available for the immune system.
- Increased susceptibility to nausea and pain makes you less likely to acquire an infection or injury that would further increase the immune system's workload.
- Increased sensitivity to cold motivates you to seek out things like warm clothing and heat sources that reduce the costs of keeping body temperature up.
- Changes in appetite and food preferences push you to eat (or not eat) in a way that supports the fight against infection.
- Feelings of sadness, depression and general wretchedness provide an honest signal to your friends and family that you need help.

Of course these changes depend

on the context. Any parents reading this article are likely familiar with the experience of being sick but pushing through it because a child needs care. While it may make sense to reduce food intake to prioritize immunity when the sick individual has plenty of energy reserves, it would be counterproductive to avoid eating if the sick person is on the verge of starvation.

SICKNESS AS AN EMOTION

So how does your body organize these advantageous responses to infection?

The evidence my colleagues and I reviewed suggests that humans possess a regulatory program that lies in wait, scanning for indicators that infectious disease is present. When it detects signs of infection, the program sends a signal to various functional mechanisms in the brain and body. They in turn change their patterns of operation in ways that are useful for fighting infection. These changes, in combination with each other, produce the distinct experience of being sick.

This kind of coordinating program is what some psychologists call an emotion: an evolved computational program that detects indicators of a specific recurrent situation. When the certain situation arises, the emotion orchestrates relevant behavioral and physiological mechanisms that help address the problems at hand.

Imagine you're walking through the woods, thinking you're alone, and suddenly you are startled by sounds suggesting a large animal is in the underbrush nearby. Your pupils dilate, your hearing becomes attuned to every little sound, your cardiovascular system starts to work harder in preparation for either running away or defending yourself. These coordinated physiological and behavioral changes are produced by an underlying emotion program that corresponds to what you might think of as a certain kind of fear.

Some of these coordinating programs line up nicely with general

intuitions about what makes up an emotion. Others have functions and features that we might not typically think of as "emotional."

Some psychologists suggest these emotion programs likely evolved to respond to identifiable situations that occurred reliably over evolutionary time, that would affect the survival or reproduction of those involved.

This way of thinking has helped researchers understand why some emotions exist and how they work. For instance, the pathogen disgust program detects indicators that some potentially infectious agent is nearby. Imagine you smell the stench of feces: The emotion of disgust coordinates your behavior and physiology in ways that help you avoid the risky entity.

Another example is the emotion of shame, which scouts for signs that you've done something that causes members of your social group to devalue you. When you detect one of these indicators – a loved one rebukes you for doing something that hurt them, say – the experience of shame helps you adjust your mental map of what kinds of things will cause others to devalue you. Presumably you will try to avoid them in the future.

Drawing from the emerging discipline of evolutionary medicine, my colleagues and I now apply the idea of these emotion programs to the experience of being sick. We call this emotion "lassitude" to distinguish the underlying program from the outputs it generates, such as sickness behavior and malaise.

We hope that our approach to lassitude will help solve problems of practical importance. From a medical perspective, it would be useful to know when lassitude is doing its job and when it is malfunctioning. Health care providers would then have a better sense of when they ought intervene to block certain parts of lassitude and when they should let them be.

[the writer is Ph.D. Candidate in Anthropology, University of Oregon]

78 per cent immunization coverage in Arunachal Pradesh

ITANAGAR, DEC 18 (PTI): Only 78 per cent of children in Arunachal Pradesh are covered under the Universal Immunization Programme against the national average of 87 per cent, says a survey. The low vaccination coverage can be attributed to mixed belief systems and lack of awareness among people, a senior health official said.

According to a coverage evaluation survey (CES) carried out in 13 districts of the state in 2018, Longding and Upper Subansiri districts had less than 40 per cent coverage, State Immunization Officer (National Health Mission) Dr D Padung said.

Six districts had immunization coverage of over 70 per cent and the remaining five districts had more than 60 per cent coverage.

Deputy Director (IEC) O Thamphang said that the target was to attain more than 90 per cent coverage by 2020.

Medical Officer (Immunization) Dr Tage Taka said that the states target to vaccinate at least 90 per cent of the children who were yet to be vaccinated had become ineffective due to lack of awareness and apprehension of adverse effect following immunization (AEFI) among parents.

Urdu writer Mujtaba Hussain decides to return Padma Shri

HYDERABAD, DEC 18 (PTI): Amid nationwide protests over the Citizenship Amendment Act, city-based Urdu writer Mujtaba Hussain has decided to return his Padma Shri award, saying he was not happy with the current situation in the country.

He alleged criminal activities were increasing day by day and democracy has come under threat in the country. “The democratic set up built by Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Ambedkar, it is being broken...

the voice of many people is being shut, many are being killed and poor people are not in a position to laugh, he told PTI on Wednesday.

Hussain was awarded the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian honour in the country, for his contributions to Urdu literature in 2007.

He, however, said he would not hold the BJP responsible for the state of affairs and that standards have declined in politics.

“Politicians used to be statesmen. Now, statesmanship has come to an end,” the 87-year-old writer said. Asked for the reason that made him return the award, he said: “I am not happy with the situation today.

As a citizen, I am not happy in the country... mob lynching is happening, rapes are happening, criminal activities are growing day by day in the country, whoever is doing,” he said. “Politicians are not running the government or ‘goonda raj’ is happening or whatever is happening.

Tourism in Assam hit by stir against new citizenship law

DURBA GHOSH

GUWAHATI, DEC 18 (PTI): The tourism industry in Assam has been hit by the recent violent protests in the state against the new citizenship law, with many prospective visitors cancelling their bookings. However, the state government and stakeholders concerned are trying to allay the fears of the visitors and instil confidence in them in visiting the northeastern state.

“Many tourists were stranded during the protests and the subsequent curfew imposed in some districts. But, we made sure that they do not face any difficulty during their stay. “We escorted them to the nearest railway stations and airports,” Managing Director of Assam Tourism Development Corporation, Bhaskar Phukan told PTI.

Visitors were asked to contact senior officers of the tourism department whose contact numbers were displayed through the media, he said.

Phukan said those who reached out to ATDC were facilitated and did not face harassment.



“People from across the country and the globe are calling us up, inquiring whether it is safe to travel to Assam. We have assured them that normalcy has returned though their night travel plans might be restricted due to prevailing night curfew,” Phukan said.

President of Tour Operators Association of Assam (TOAA), Ranjit Das

said the state has witnessed a large number of cancellations of bookings during the ongoing peak tourist season as many visitors are scared to visit Assam now.

“We (tour operators) are mooting to meet the leaders of the All Assam Students Union (AASU) who are spearheading the agitation against the Act and request them to

say that it is safe to travel to Assam and that their protests are non-violent in nature,” Das said.

Assam had witnessed many crises earlier but no tourists were ever harmed even during the worst phases of violence in the state, he asserted.

The tour operators will also write to the Union Ministry of Tourism urging them to as-

sure people that it is safe to travel to Assam, Das said. “The state tourism department had in recent years taken several initiatives, particularly in branding Assam as a tourist destination and there has been a significant inflow of visitors but if that declines now, the situation will return to square one,” he said.

The TOAA president

said the initiatives taken by the tourism department to ensure the safety of visitors during the stir have sent positive vibes to prospective travellers.

Chairman of the Northeast chapter Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI) Arijit Purkayastha said transport and hospitality sectors of the industry have been

affected, particularly due to suspension of internet services. Several tourists were stranded in Kaziranga, Cherrapunjee and Majuli but it was made sure that they were escorted to hotels, airports and railway stations, he said.

“There have been cancellations of bookings but we are hopeful that the scenario will improve as broadband internet services have been restored,” Purkayastha said.

Cruise services for tourists on River Brahmaputra has been also affected due to the stir.

“Though we have resumed cruise services after curfew was lifted in Guwahati, very few people are availing it despite this month being the busiest as far as tourist footfall is concerned,” Sajida Doley, owner of a cruise service said. She assured visitors not to be scared and vowed to take utmost care of them.

The stakeholders in the industry said the losses incurred due to the violent protests can only be ascertained after the end of the tourist season.

Anti-CAA protest outside Jamia enters 3rd day



NEW DELHI, DEC 18 (PTI): Anti-government posters covered the long boundaries of Jamia Millia Islamia as protest against the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act and the proposed National Register of Citizens outside the university continued for the third consecutive day on Wednesday.

The protesters, including students and local residents, hung a large map of India outside the varsity gate number 7 showing the places where students from other universities across the country are carrying out protests against

the CAA. Another large poster urged the protesters ‘to maintain the acceleration with zero violence (sic)’. People from nearby areas and students started gathering outside the gate number 7 around 10:30 am.

They raised slogans against Home Minister Amit Shah, the government and the Delhi Police, demanding withdrawal of the CAA. “We don’t know if we will win or lose, but the fight will continue,” a student said addressing the gathering.

Joining the protest around noon, social activist Medha Patkar said

it was not “citizenship amendment act but citizen amendment act”. “If it came to NRC, we vow not to participate in it,” she said and asked the protesters to follow the path of non-violence shown by Mahatma Gandhi. The government wants to deflect attention from the real issues of bread and butter by pitching one community against another, she alleged.

The protest gained momentum after 1 pm when schoolchildren and women from the neighbourhood joined it.

A few protesters

taped their mouths and wore black bands. Some children in school uniform stood atop Jamia’s boundary walls holding placards. Police teams remained deployed on the roads leading to the university. Entry and exit gates remained opened at Sukhdev Vihar and Jamia Millia Islamia metro stations.

This is the third consecutive day of peaceful protests after the demonstration on Sunday turned violent.

On Monday and Tuesday, thousands of students took to the streets demanding a probe into the use of teargas on Sunday inside the Jamia university’s library as well as police entering the campus without permission from university authorities. Scores of protesters including Jamia students, policemen and locals were injured, four DTC buses were torched and over 100 private vehicles and 10 police bikes were also damaged in the violence and arson that took place during the protest on Sunday.



Protest march taken out in Solapur against CAA

PUNE, DEC 18 (PTI): Several Muslim organisations took out a protest march in Maharashtra’s Solapur district on Wednesday against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, alleging that it discriminates on religious lines. The Act violates the basic framework of the Constitution and is against the Muslim community, the protesters charged.

The march began outside the district court in Solapur and culminated at the collectorate, where the protesters submitted

a memorandum to Deputy Collector Ajit Deshmukh, demanding that the Act be revoked.

Mufti Sayyad Ahmed Ali Kazi, the city’s chief kazi, who had earlier appealed to citizens to support the protest, claimed nearly 40,000 people took part in the march. During the march, the protesters held placards and banners carrying messages like “revoke CAA”.

The protesters, in their memorandum, alleged that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act dis-

criminates on religious lines and is against human rights.

“The Act violates the basic framework of the Constitution and is against the Muslim community,” it said. Kazi said through the memorandum, they urged President Ram Nath Kovind to revoke the Act.

He claimed that the police allowed only him to deliver a speech outside the collectorate after the protest march, which was organised by the city’s Markazi Ittehad Committee.

Assamese community members in Maha protest against CAA



PUNE, DEC 18 (PTI): The Assamese community members staged a protest here in Maharashtra on Wednesday against the amended Citizenship Act, claiming that it endangered the culture of Assam.

The new legislation will lead to “erosion of ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity” of the Assamese people, the protesters said.

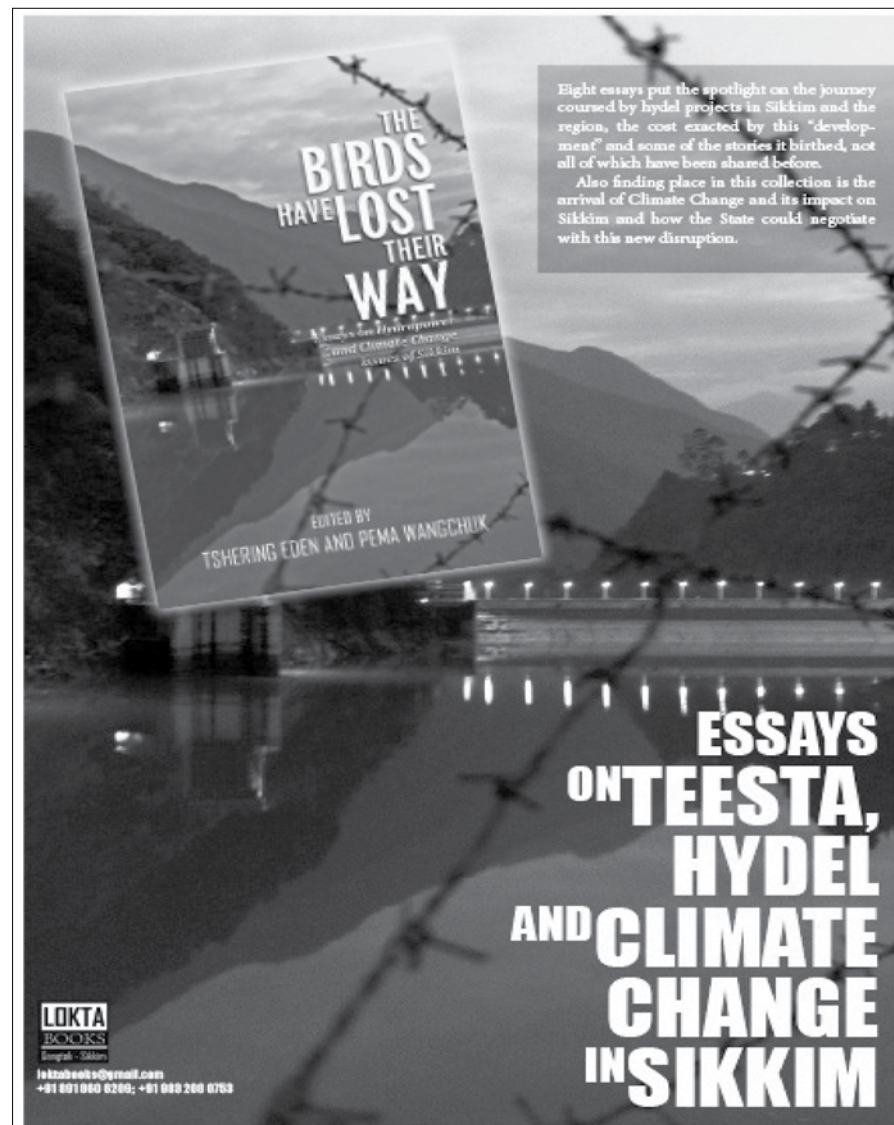
Around 200 members of the community, mostly students and working professionals, held a peaceful protest outside the Sambhaji Garden on

J M Road here. “This Act directly endangers the culture of Assam as the inclusion of immigrants, irrespective of their religion, under the CAA will lead to erosion of ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity of the indigenous Assamese people,” one of the protesters said.

Protests have broken out in various parts of the country, including Delhi and north-eastern states, against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), which provides to grant citizenship to non-Muslim minorities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and

Bangladesh. Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday asserted there was no question of going back on the implementation of the amended Citizenship Act and accused the opposition of engaging in a “false” campaign over the legislation.

Several opposition leaders have approached President Ram Nath Kovind, urging him to repeal the citizenship amendment law and form a commission to probe violent protests in several parts of the country and the subsequent police action.



Maxwell is a three-dimensional player, will return to squad soon: Finch



MELBOURNE, DEC 18 (PTI): Australia's limited-overs skipper Aaron Finch has backed all-rounder Glenn Maxwell to make a comeback to the national team soon, saying that a "three-dimensional" cricketer like him can't be kept out for long.

Facing mental health issues, Maxwell took a short break from the game in October this year but recently made himself available for the tour of India. He was, however, not picked and Marnus Labuschagne got his first call-up following his outstanding form in Test cricket.

Finch said the door isn't shut for any player who was not picked for the short India trip early next year. The team will play three ODIs starting January 14.

"Obviously he'll (Maxwell) be disappointed, like everyone who missed out is but at the end of the day he just hasn't got the runs required of a top order player in one-day cricket recently," Finch told 'Cricket Australia'.

"No doubt he'll be back. He's a gun. A three-dimensional player that can have such a huge impact. It's just a matter of time, he'll get some runs and be right back up there in the frame again," he added.

Maxwell, 31, had failed to score a half-century in his last 10 ODI innings for Australia.

The all-rounder will make his return to cricket when he leads Melbourne Stars in Friday's KFC Big Bash League match against Brisbane Heat on the Gold Coast.

Usman Khawaja, Shaun Marsh and off-spinner Nathan Lyon, Nathan Lyon were also ignored for the tour while Jason Behrendorff is injured.

But the Australia skipper said the door isn't shut for anyone. He said Ahston Agar was picked ahead of experienced Lyon as the selectors wanted to try the spin bowling all-rounder in Indian conditions.

"(Lyon) can still play a future part. We saw the way he bowled in the World Cup when he got his opportunity," Finch said.

"Just probably a change in our approach to the spinning all-rounder in Agar as opposed to the medium-pace all-rounder, that's probably where someone had to drop out and unfortunately that was Nath (Lyon).

"At the end of the day it still comes down to picking the best side to win. Probably a slightly different structure to how we did it last time but still very happy with how it looks," Finch added.

ICC opens anti-corruption investigations into Qatar T10 League

DUBAI, DEC 18 (PTI): The International Cricket Council is investigating the Qatar T10 league after intercepting "a number of known corruptors" in the event, which it sanctioned a year ago and featured some prominent retired players such as South Africa's Hashim Amla.

The ICC's Anti-Corruption Unit was working with the organisers to monitor the league since its inception.

"The ICC sanctioned this event 12 months ago based on the sound information provided by the organisers," ICC's Integrity Unit General Manager Alex Marshall said in a statement issued Tuesday night.

"However, substantial changes to both team ownership and the organisers just days prior to the event getting underway rang alarm bells for us and we applied additional investigative resource on the ground to address our concerns.

"As a result we have intercepted a number of known corruptors both in Qatar and globally and disrupted planned corrupt activity at the event. This has given rise to a number of new investigations for the ICC ACU team as we continue in our efforts to ensure cricket is a corruption-free sport," he added.

The inaugural edition of the Qatar T10 League, 10-over format tournament organised by the Qatar Cricket Association was held from December 7 to 16 this year.

The T10 league witnessed six teams comprising 24 international cricketers, 12 players from associate ICC countries, Qatar national cricket team players and other local players.

Falcon Hunters won the tournament by beating Swift Gallopers by four wickets.

Fast bowler Manpreet Gony, who played just two ODIs, was the only Indian to feature in the tournament.

Other prominent players to compete in the league apart from Amla were Pakistan discards Kamran Akmal, Mohammed Hafeez and Sohail Tanveer.

Aston Villa's Jonathan Kodjia shows no mercy to knock out Liverpool's kids

PAUL DOYLE

ASTON, 18 DEC [THEGUARDIAN]: On a night when Liverpool's next generation hoped to show their readiness for regular action at this level, Aston Villa's 30-year-old striker Jonathan Kodjia seized his chance to make a similar claim by playing a major part in Conor Hourihane's opening goal before scoring two himself. That haul, along with an own goal by Morgan Boyes, earned a place in the Carabao Cup semi-final for Villa and taught Liverpool's youngsters a lesson about the merciless reality of senior football. Wesley rammed the point home by making it 5-0 in stoppage time.

The scoreline made this seem like a caning but Liverpool were not exactly outclassed so much as defused with mature efficiency and some rotten luck. There were moments, particularly when 16-year-old Harvey Elliott went dribbling, when it seemed like the upstart visitors might just cause a shock. Villa's goalkeeper, Orjan Nyland, had to make some fine saves.

Ultimately, though, Villa made themselves comfortable long before full time and Dean Smith could take satisfaction in seeing Wesley score after being sprung from the bench. The striker's first goal in 10 matches was the perfect response to the challenge laid down by Kodjia. Thus Villa's strikers got a timely confidence boost in advance of three Premier League matches with relegation rivals over



what promises to be a fraught festive period.

Most of Liverpool's youngsters could take heart from their performances, too. Even the goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher impressed despite being beaten by two soft goals early on.

"I'm incredibly proud of the performance," said Neil Critchley, the Liverpool Under-23 coach who acted as manager for the occasion. "For large parts of the game we were well in it. I don't think we did too many things wrong."

Jürgen Klopp, watching from Qatar, relayed a similar message, letting the youngsters know at the break they were on the right track despite trailing 4-0. "We had some information at half-time from the manager," Critchley said. "He basically said to keep playing the way we were playing, keep being brave and to keep doing what we were doing,"

Some of the youngsters will fly out to Qatar on Wednesday morning to join the first team at the Club World Cup.

Rarely in Liverpool's modern history could they be described as an unknown quantity but their lineup contained several players who might have been asked for ID at the entrance, not so much to check their ages as to establish who they were. Their ages, having said that, were also remarkable as this was the club's youngest starting lineup, with a few of the players barely old enough to buy a scratch card let alone to compete as equals against Premier League opponents.

Villa made 10 alterations to the side who started Saturday's defeat at Sheffield United but still fielded a side consisting mostly of senior internationals.

Smith joked he had to

do "FBI detective work" before the game to get an idea of how Liverpool would play, yet for the first 10 minutes it looked like his team might get caught cold.

Nyland had to make two fine saves early on. First he turned away a shot by Elliott, then denied Herbie Kane from close range after a clever chipped pass by Isaac Christie-Davies.

But soon Liverpool's novices were shown how unforgiving top-level football can be. First, Hourihane opened the scoring direct from a free-kick wide on the right. He curled the ball into the net with his left foot past his compatriot Kelleher, who seemed to be distracted by Kodjia's attempt to get a touch on the ball as it approached. Kelleher's luck worsened three minutes later, when a cross from the right by Ahmed Elmohamady took a huge deflection

off Boyes and looped into the net. Liverpool enjoyed no such fortune a few minutes later when Ki-Jana Hoever's shot from the edge of the area took a nick off a defender and flew wide. By now Villa were engaged in wily game-management but their opponents occasionally rattled them. Elliot was a delightful pest with his wriggly dribbles and cute touches. In the 26th minute he scooted down the right before dinking a lovely pass between two defenders to Christie-Davies, who met it on the volley 10 yards out. Nyland batted away the shot. Villa scored a third in the 37th minute when Jota pounced on a hefty touch by Sepp van den Berg and slipped a pass through to Kodjia, whose finish did no harm to his cause of trying to take the place of Wesley in Villa's starting lineup. He gave that prospect an even bigger boost just before the break, when

he flicked the ball into the net from six yards after neat work by Jota and Elmohamady.

Villa saw no need to overexert themselves in the second half but Liverpool's players yearned for a goal to show for their effort. Kane almost got one in the 55th minute but Nyland denied him with a superb reflex save. Then Kelleher had some joy at the other end, tipping away a low shot by Kodjia. Kelleher later denied Mohamed Trezeguet and Henri Lansbury. But he could not stop Wesley from adding a late fifth.

Smith pointed out that Liverpool were not the only ones fielding young men trying to forge a career in difficult circumstances: "Wesley is a 23-year-old player in a foreign country in one of the toughest leagues in the world," Smith said. "Some of the criticism can be too harsh at times."

Dortmund's Jadon Sancho scores again in 3-3 thriller with leaders RB Leipzig



LEIPZIG, 18 DEC [THEGUARDIAN]: Jadon Sancho scored for the seventh successive game before hobbling off as Borussia Dortmund blew a two-goal lead in a 3-3 draw with the Bundesliga leaders RB Leipzig.

A brilliant first-half showing was rewarded with a 2-0 half-time lead thanks to goals from Julian Weigl and Julian Brandt, with the England international claiming an assist.

Timo Werner's quick-fire double at the start of the second half brought Leipzig level, only for Sancho to regain his side's advantage with his 12th goal of the campaign in all competitions.

But the 19-year-old's night ended soon after as he went off injured. The hosts could not see it out as Patrick Schick levelled again for Leipzig with 12 minutes remaining and Lucien Favre's side missed the chance to close the gap on Leipzig

to one point.

A stunning first-half blitz from Mainz, where Robin Quaison fired a hat-trick, set up a 5-0 demolition of Werder Bremen.

Quaison needed only 10 minutes to open the scoring and – after Jiri Pavlenka put through his own net four minutes later – and he grabbed his second before 20 minutes were on the clock. Quaison completed his treble seven minutes before the break to put his side in complete control. Mainz managed only one goal after the restart as Jean-Philippe Mateta netted after 81 minutes.

Augsburg made it three wins on the spin with a 3-0 beating of Fortuna Düsseldorf, with Philipp Max grabbing a double and Tin Jedvaj also scoring.

Second-half goals from Ihlas Bebou and Christoph Baumgartner gave Hoffenheim a 2-0 win at Union Berlin.

Flamengo come from behind to book Club World Cup final slot

DOHA, DEC 18 (AFP): Bruno Henrique scored one goal and made two more to book Flamengo's place in the final of the Club World Cup as the Brazilian giants came from behind to beat Asian champions Al Hilal 3-1 here.

Salem Aldawsari gave the Saudi club a deserved lead in the first half of this semi-final on a rare rainy night at the Khalifa International Stadium on Tuesday, but Flamengo woke up after the interval and equalised through Georgian De Arrascaeta in the 49th minute.

Bruno Henrique then headed home after 78 minutes and the Rio club made sure of their win when the same player's low cross was turned into his own net by defender Ali Albulayhi with eight minutes to play.

The Brazilians will play the winner of Wednesday's second semi-final in Doha, when Liverpool face Mexican club Monterrey.

"This is the cherry on the cake on the season that Flamengo have had," said Portuguese coach Jorge Jesus, the former Benfica boss who also had a spell in charge at Al Hilal last year.

"I don't care whether we play Liverpool or the Mexican side. We didn't think about Liverpool before playing Al Hilal but I am always impressed



with European football and I believe they are the favourites.

"When we came here to Qatar we wanted to win the Club World Cup, and now we want it even more."

- LIVERPOOL RE-MATCH? -

Fresh from winning the Copa Libertadores and the Brazilian title in the last month, Flamengo are hoping to win this trophy for the first time.

However, they did win the old Intercontinental Cup in 1981, a side captained by Zico defeating Liverpool 3-0 in Tokyo. A rematch between the clubs now looks to be on the cards, unless Monterrey can pull off a major shock.

However, Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp -- who was expected to attend this game before

watching his own club's second string play a League Cup tie against Aston Villa on television -- will have identified weaknesses his side might be able to exploit in a potential final.

Indeed, it looked halfway through this game that there might be another shock, with Flamengo in danger of losing in the semi-finals, just as River Plate had done last year in going out to Emirati side Al-Ain at the same stage.

Al Hilal won the Asian Champions League last month and boast the likes of ex-France striker Bafetimbi Gomis and diminutive Italian striker Sebastian Giovinco in their ranks.

They were the better team in the first half and deserved the lead given to them in the 18th

minute when Salem met a low ball in from the right with a first-time strike that deflected off defender Pablo Mari into the net.

Jesus managed to rouse his side at the interval, though, and they needed just four minutes to haul themselves level when a lovely move ended with Bruno Henrique squaring for the Uruguayan De Arrascaeta to score.

Bruno Henrique, who is a Brazilian international forward, then ended any possibility of the game going to extra time when he met Rafinha's cross with a thumping header to make it 2-1 before forcing the own goal that made sure of the victory to the delight of the several thousand travelling Brazilian supporters.

Samsung chairman jailed for union sabotage

The chairman of Samsung Electronics, the world's biggest smart-phone and chip maker, has been jailed for sabotaging union activities, prompting a rare apology on Wednesday from the firm.

Chairman Lee Sang-hoon and executive vice president Kang Kyung-hoon were both sentenced to 18 months for leading a wide-ranging operation to deter staff at Samsung's customer service unit from operating a union.

Samsung Electronics is the flagship subsidiary of the Samsung group, by far the biggest of the family-controlled conglomerates known as chaebols that have propelled South Korea's rise to the world's 11th-largest economy.

Along the way, the company has fought ferociously against union representation, until local authorities in Suwon, where it is headquartered, last month certified the National Samsung Electronics Union, which is affiliated with a powerful umbrella group.

Lee and Kang were found guilty by the Seoul Central District Court on Tuesday of violating labour union laws, with prosecutors saying they had ordered subordinates to cut union members' wages and to discover and exploit details of their personal lives such as pregnancies and debt, among other tactics. Both men had been on bail during the trial but were immediately taken into custody.

At the time in 2013, Lee was Samsung Electronics' chief financial officer, and both men have been members of the now-disbanded Future Strategy Office, the firm's key decision-making body.

The company issued a joint statement on Wednesday with construction affiliate Samsung C&T -- which has also had executives convicted of violating union laws -- acknowledging their errors. "We humbly accept that the companies' understanding and view towards labour unions in the past fell short of society's expectations," they said.

They pledged to ensure no repetition, adding: "We will endeavour to build a forward-looking and productive labour-management relationship based on the respect for our employees."

Lee had denied the charges but Samsung Electronics declined to comment on whether the men would appeal.

The Samsung group's founder Lee Byung-chul, who died in 1987, was adamantly opposed to unions, saying he would never allow them "until I have dirt over my eyes".

But the ruling showed that Samsung's long-running refusal to recognise unions was "antiquated" even in South Korea, said Vladimir Tikhonov, professor of Korean Studies at the University of Oslo in Norway.

The court was telling Samsung to "get smarter, stop old-style union busting", he said.

German crossbow YouTuber fights video giant for rights

At his out-of-the-way house in the forested German hills, Joerg Sprave spends his time building mutant crossbows and powerful slingshots -- and hounding one of the world's biggest technology companies.

The 54-year-old has for years uploaded clips of his ever-wackier projectile-throwing creations to YouTube, where hundreds of millions of views and 2.4 million subscribers put him in the top 50 channels nationwide. But years of hard blows to those making their living on the platform have turned him into a campaigner against YouTube itself, claiming to have enlisted some 26,000 fellow creators worldwide in a fight for better conditions and the unexpected backing one of Germany's biggest unions.

"I'm not fighting for myself, I'm fighting because I love YouTube, and I fear that the management's mistakes are endangering it," Sprave told AFP.

Sprave and the members of his "YouTubers' Union" Facebook group aren't global YouTube royalty, like gamer Felix Kjellberg with his 102 million followers under the alias PewDiePie.

But until 2017, many earned a healthy living from long days of creating, filming and building communities around their videos. Sprave says he used to make around 6,000 euros (\$6,500) per month after going full-time as a YouTuber.

These days he's lucky to break 1,200 euros.

His savings and his family income mean "I can put my channel at stake, firing massive broadsides at YouTube and Google" in the name of a battle for more rights, he says.



"For a lot of my colleagues it's very different, they'd kill themselves financially if they did that."

- 'We want to know the rules' - YouTube earns money by selling advertising slots before or during videos uploaded by its millions of users, sharing some of the revenue with users whose popular channels have earned them the title of "Partner". In 2012-17, "we were largely free when it came to content, and well paid if we managed to get enough views", Sprave recalls.

But advertisers keen to skirt controversy pressured YouTube to allow them more fine-grained control.

These days especially controversial videos, including some of Sprave's, are shut out from "monetisation" entirely, while all are placed into categories and awarded scores measuring their attractiveness to ad-

vertisers -- both invisible to creators. "We insist on transparency. We want to know the rules by which we are being judged," Sprave fumes.

And he complains there's often no human interlocutor. Powerful German union IG Metall, already closely following the growing "gig" or "platform" economy of people working for online portals, has joined his battle.

"We don't just want to stand and watch how the world of work develops, but to shape it ourselves from an early stage," says IG Metall official Robert Fuss. - 'Very expensive' for YouTube -

Google declined to meet Sprave alongside union officials in October, saying he and his group aren't representative of YouTubers.

Hoping to step up the pressure, the campaigners launched a mass letter-writing campaign targeting

the company's California headquarters -- so far to little effect.

But they have other arrows in their quiver that could become "very expensive" for YouTube, Fuss says.

One angle of attack is Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), under which companies must provide users with access to their personal data on pain of massive fines. That could cover the categories and advertiser scores handed out secretly by YouTube, Sprave and IG Metall believe.

Meanwhile a battle with wider implications could come over the question of "false self-employment".

IG Metall sees a potential legal case that YouTubers are so closely tied to the platform that they are de facto employees. A court ruling that this applies to YouTubers would imply a massive financial blow of back

payments for social security and pension contributions.

"There's a new class of workers who are called 'self-employed' entrepreneurs by the platforms, but don't deal with them like entrepreneurs on a level playing field," says IG Metall's Fuss.

"There's a growing awareness among politicians that people working on digital platforms need protection," he added, pointing to a recent California law classifying Uber drivers as employees.

- 'Edgy content' - But ultimately "we don't want to be YouTube employees. We want to be treated like partners", Sprave says. Google dismisses the prospect of a court case.

A spokesman told AFP that "contrary to what is being claimed, YouTube creators are not YouTube employees by legal status". Nevertheless it is taking some pains to coax online creatives towards its vision of YouTube as one revenue stream for them among many.

In a November blog post, YouTube chief executive Susan Wojcicki pointed to growing numbers of creators earning five or six figures annually -- without providing absolute numbers -- and prodded readers towards alternative sources of income such as fan merchandise.

But she also trailed "experiments" to match appropriate advertisers with "content that could be considered edgy" and that has been flagged by automated systems for limited or no ad sales.

"Hundreds of thousands of dollars in ads" had already been sold against such videos in the scheme's first month, Wojcicki added.

Trump writes to Pelosi, says stop impeachment



BY LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, DEC 18 (PTI) US President Donald Trump in a scathing letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi sought to halt impeachment proceedings against him by the lower chamber of the Congress, which is all set to start the process with a debate on Wednesday.

"This impeachment represents an unprecedented and unconstitutional abuse of power by Democrat lawmakers, unequaled in nearly two and a half centuries of the American legislative history," Trump said in a letter to the Pelosi.

Asserting that the Articles of Impeachment introduced by the House Judiciary Committee are not recognisable under any standard of constitutional theory, interpretation or jurisprudence, Trump said they include no crimes, no misdemeanours and no offenses whatsoever.

"You have cheapened the importance of the very ugly word, impeachment," said Trump, who is the third American president to be impeached.

"By proceeding with your invalid impeachment, you are violating your oaths of office, you are breaking your al-

legiance to the Constitution and you are declaring an open war on American democracy," he said.

Trump said he had been deprived of basic constitutional due process from the beginning of this "impeachment scam" right up until the present.

"I have been denied the most fundamental rights afforded by the constitution, including the right to present evidence, to have my own counsel present, to confront accusers, and to call and cross-examine witnesses, like the so-called whistleblower who started this entire hoax with a false report of the phone call that bears no relationship to the actual phone call that was made," he said.

"Once I presented the transcribed call, which surprised and shocked the fraudsters (they never thought that such evidence would be presented), the so-called whistleblower, and the second whistleblower, disappeared because they got caught, their report was a fraud, and they were no longer going to be made available to us. In other words, once the phone call was made public, your whole

plot blew up, but that didn't stop you from continuing," he added.

Trump said she and her people on committees have long said impeachment must be bipartisan it is not.

"You said it was very divisive it certainly is, even far more than you ever thought possible and it will only get worse," he said.

"This is nothing more than an illegal, partisan attempted coup that will, based on recent sentiment, badly fail at the voting booth. You are not just after me, as president, you are after the entire Republican Party," he said.

"But because of this colossal injustice, our party is more united than it has ever been before. History will judge you harshly as you proceed with this impeachment charade," said the US President.

"Perhaps most insulting of all is your false display of solemnity. You apparently have so little respect for the American people that you expect them to believe that you are approaching this impeachment somberly, reservedly, and reluctantly," he said.

Trump said since the moment he won the elec-

tions, the Democrat Party has been possessed by "impeachment fever".

"There is no reticence. This is not a somber affair. You are making a mockery of impeachment and you are scarcely concealing your hatred of me, of the Republican Party and tens of millions of patriotic Americans," he said. "The voters are wise, and they are seeing straight through this empty, hollow, and dangerous game you are playing," he said.

"I have no doubt the American people will hold you and the Democrats fully responsible in the upcoming 2020 elections. They will not soon forgive your perversion of justice and abuse of power," said the president.

"There is far too much that needs to be done to improve the lives of our citizens. It is time for you and the highly partisan Democrats in the Congress to immediately cease this impeachment fantasy and get back to work for the American people," he said.

"While I have no expectation that you will do so, I write this letter to you for the purpose of history and to put my thoughts on a permanent and indelible record," Trump said.

Snow business: The icemen behind China's frozen festival

Liu Yantao and six Lco-workers start toiling on a frozen river in northeast China before dawn, using hand tools and machines to carve large ice blocks for an annual winter sculpture festival. Liu and his team are among more than 100 people who work on the Songhua River to harvest the 170,000 cubic metres of ice bricks needed this year -- enough to fill 70 Olympic swimming pools.

Every year, a worker slips into the frigid water.

But that's a risk farmers are willing to take to earn extra money during the harsh winter by harvesting the pieces used to make crystal palaces and sculptures at the Harbin Ice and Snow Festival.

Liu's team cuts out 2,000 pieces of ice every day for about three weeks, arriving before sunrise and leaving after sunset.

The farmers, who grow corn and soybeans the rest of the year, get

paid 2.5 yuan (\$0.35) for each of the 1.6-metre-long, 400-kilo (5-foot long, 900-pound) rectangles of ice they produce for the festival, which will open before the New Year. They each make around 500 yuan per day. "There's nothing to do in the winter. People play mahjong at home. I don't like gambling, so I work," says Liu, a 36-year-old father of one.

"Prices of everything are going up. I make a little more money to make life easier," says the chain-smoking farmer.

- 'No one has really drowned' -

Liu has been mining ice for more than a decade. He is the team leader among a group of farmers who drive from Harbin's countryside to arrive at the river before 5:00 am every morning.

Resembling farmers ploughing a field, they use a large motorised saw to cut the icy surface into 220-metre-long, 190-metre wide grids --

bigger than two football fields. They slice the area into rectangles until the surface looks like a bar of ice chocolate.

Then, using large picks, the seven workers rhythmically stab at the ice down the line to separate the enormous block from the rest of the frozen river.

One by one, the crystal bricks are lifted onto a conveyor belt and picked up by a forklift that takes them to waiting trucks.

The workers don't talk much during the day but they can see their breath when they open their mouths in the -18 degrees Celsius (0 Fahrenheit) weather.

They stand at the edge of ice holes several metres deep. Even forklifts have fallen in the river in the past. Orange life-jackets are nearby but nobody wears them.

"If you fall down, you will be pulled out by your companions," Liu says, lighting up yet another cigarette.

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VIDEO NEWS SECTION
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DARING DAISY! Actress, Daisy Ridley stunned in a red dress at the premiere of Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker at TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles on Monday, December 16.

Will Ferrell to star in 'The Legend of Cocaine Island' adaptation

LOS ANGELES, DEC 18 (PTI): Will Ferrell is taking his partnership with Netflix a step further as the actor is set to star in the screen adaptation of documentary "The Legend of Cocaine Island".

The Twitter handle of Netflix's See What's Next shared the news, saying the 52-year-old actor will also produce the film.

The story is about a family man who hears a rumour that there is a buried stash of cocaine worth USD 2 million hidden in the Caribbean and decides to assemble a band of colourful misfits to retrieve it. Peter Steinfeld will adapt the screenplay from the documentary.

Ferrell and Netflix are already working on the film "Eurovision", based around the long-running global singing competition of the same name. The film will also feature Rachel McAdams, Peirce Brosnan, Demi Lovato and Dan Stevens.

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Charlize Theron details sexual harassment by 'famous director'



Actor and producer of a film about Fox News head Roger Ailes describes self-blame and anger about alleged incident early in her career

Charlize Theron has spoken in detail about her experience of sexual harassment at the start of her acting career, saying she found it frustrating that she "didn't do all of those things that we so want to believe we'll do in those situations".

Theron was speaking to NPR to coincide with the release of Bombshell, a drama about the ousting of Fox News head Roger Ailes over accusations of sexual harassment, in which she plays former Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly.

Theron outlined her own

harassment, which happened in 1994 and involved a "very famous director" whose house she visited on a Saturday night for an audition. She says he "wore silk pajamas and offered me a drink and rubbed my knee". "I was just starting out; I didn't know the ins and outs, and said to myself as I was driving there at 9pm ... 'Maybe that's how they do it in the movie industry'".

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Time to protest on social media alone is over: Farhan Akhtar

Mumbai, Dec 18 (PTI): Bollywood actor Farhan Akhtar on Wednesday said he will be hitting the streets to protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act as he believes that the time to express outrage on social media alone is over. The actor took to Twitter to announce that he will be partaking in a protest to be held on Thursday at August Kranti Maidan here.

"See you on the 19th at August Kranti Maidan, Mumbai. The time to protest on social media alone is over," Farhan said.

The actor also shared an image that sought to explain the ramifications of the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizen (NRC).

According to the amended act, members of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities, who had come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014, and were facing religious persecution, will not be treated as illegal immigrants but given Indian citizenship.

Farhan's response came three days after Delhi Police action against the students of Jamia Millia Islamia University on Sunday.

The police entered the campus after a protest against the Act by the students turned violent.

Many from the film fraternity including

his father veteran screenwriter Javed Akhtar, actors Mohammad Zeeshan Ayyub, Parineeti Chopra, Sidharth Malhotra, filmmakers Vishal Bhardwaj and Anurag Kashyap, and Holly-



wood actor John Cusack expressed solidarity with the youth over the police crackdown inside the campus.

'Narcos: Mexico' S2 to debut on Netflix on February 13

LOS ANGELES, DEC 18 (PTI): The second season of Netflix's hit series "Narcos: Mexico" will premiere on the streamer's platform on February 13.

The announcement was made by the official Twitter handle of the show which also shared the first look of its key characters from the second season.

"Catch him if you can. 'Narcos: Mexico Season 2' premieres February 13 on @netflix" read the tweet, alongside a video that offered a glimpse of actor Diego Luna, who is reprising his role of drug lord Felix Gallardo.

Joining the Mexican actor in the series is Scoot McNairy, who is rumoured to be playing an unnamed DEA agent.

The season one of "Narcos: Mexico", that started streaming from November 16, 2018, charted the rise of Mexico's Guadalajara Cartel in the 1980s as Felix Gallardo (Luna) takes charge.

It also featured Hollywood star Michael Pena as DEA agent Kiki Camarena, who was instrumental in shedding a light on the drug business of the Guadalajara cartel.

McNairy had served as a narrator for the first season

but his identity was revealed only towards the end of the last episode.

Production started on season two in Mexico City, Mexico in December 2018, with Eric Newman returning as showrunner and executive producer.

Jose Padilha, Doug Miro, Carlo Bernard and Andres Baiz have also executive produced the series.

"Narcos: Mexico" Netflix's cult hit "Narcos" series, which focused on the rise and fall of the notorious Colombian drug lord, Pablo Escobar (played by Wagner Moura), as well as the Cali Cartel.

Yorgos Lanthimos in talks to direct gothic Western 'The Hawklime Monster'

LOS ANGELES, DEC 18 (PTI): Filmmaker Yorgos Lanthimos is in negotiations to direct the big-screen adaptation of Richard Brautigan's novel "The Hawklime Monster".

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the film will be a gothic Western set at New Regency. Roy Lee and Steven Schneider are attached to produce the project.

Lanthimos, who received a best director Oscar nomination for his 2018's absurdist period drama "The Favourite", will also produce with Ed Guiney and Andrew Lowe of his frequent collaborator Element Pictures.

Written by black comedy scribe Brautigan, "The Hawklime Monster" follows two gunslingers hired by a 15-year-old girl named Magic Child to kill the monster that lives in ice caves under the basement of a house inhabited by a young woman named Miss Hawklime.

What follows is a unique adventure where there is more to Magic Child, Miss Hawklime

and the house than meets the eye.

Before Lanthimos, names such as Hal Ashby and Tim Burton also planned to adapt the novel for the big screen.



Ashby tried to make the film for a couple of decades, with stars like Jack Nicholson, Harry Dean Stanton and Jeff Bridges, and screenplay by Brautigan himself, but things never materialised.

Burton tried to make his version, with Nicholson and Clint Eastwood but it too fell apart.

ARIES: As the first sign of the zodiac, you pride yourself on initiative and action. This week, the cards are reminding you of your own strengths and asking you to be vigilant of the opportunities knocking at your door. The answer to 'what's next?' lies in capitalising on the given opportunities.
Tip: Seize the moment.

TAURUS: A quote from Dead Poet's Society to bring that sparkle back in your eyes "Medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for." As an inhabitant of Venus, you understand the importance of seducing the Muse all too well, Taurus.
Tip: Make time to do what makes you feel alive.

GEMINI: The difference between people who make it and people who don't is not skill alone. It is the determination to pursue their dreams and the courage to be different that helps them stand out from the crowd. Do you want to live a life being just about average or do see yourself reaching for the stars? Make a choice and follow it through,

Gemini. The Universe is providing you with an opening. What you make of it will ultimately define your future.
Tip: You can create your best life right here, right now.

CANCER: Cancer, you're three seconds away from the miracle. Do you really want to give up now? The last stages of a project are usually the most tiresome. What you need to keep in mind as you inch towards the finish line: you have what it takes to emerge triumphant with or without external support. Some of you may be feeling inspired to break away from the system. Now is a good time as any to take the freelance route.
Tip: Trust the infinite wisdom of the Universe.

LEO: Words of wisdom by Sadhguru to help you look beyond the illusion of your 3D reality: "There is no such thing as work-life balance - it is all life. The balance has to be within you." Leo, let recalibrating on a core level become a priority this week. Looking within is never easy, is it? It urges us to face the uncomfortable truths we've been running away from.

Tip: Find the balance within first.

VIRGO: A Nayyirah Waheed verse to help you find the strength you need you need at this moment: "Become intimate with your fears. Listen to them. Sit crossed legged. Give them your undivided attention. Offer them comfort. Offer them rest." Only you know the depth of your pain. Ergo, only you can bring yourself back to a place of love again. As for the things you have lost, maybe they are not in alignment with who you are becoming at the moment.
Tip: Face your fears.

What a wonderful feeling it is to be in the right place at the right time! The work you are putting in is bringing you success, recognition and power—not to mention, the kind of financial stability that was once a distant dream. What's interesting about this phase is that it is bringing both your creative and entrepreneurship skills to the fore. Word for the wise: continue to strike a balance.
Tip: You are writing a success story.

SCORPIO: This week is all about following your ikigai! Find a middle ground be-

tween what you do for money and what you do for love. This will not only fuel your ability to earn big bucks but also help you fulfill your sacred purpose and find the satisfaction you seek.
Tip: Be consistent in your efforts.

SAGITTARIUS: In a world that prides itself on creating replicas, you understand (and embrace) the virtue of individuality. Some may call this the 'black sheep syndrome' and try to single you out in different ways. Don't let the fears of the collective make you question the path you have chosen. You were born to be a leader, Sagittarius. Some of you may feel the urge to strike out on your own professionally, which is a good thing. Avoid making any hasty decisions.
Tip: Dare to be different.

CAPRICORN: Words of wisdom courtesy Robin Sharma: "You need to fail to win. And the faster you fail, the more quickly you'll learn precisely what you need to do to win. So fail fast. Outfail the competition. Outfail the person you once were." Now how is that for mid-week motivation, Capricorn?

Just because you have reached a dead-end, doesn't mean you can't retrace your steps and find a new way out.

Tip: Miles to go before you sleep.

AQUARIUS: French clarinetist Paul Meyer once said, "Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort." How's that for mid-week motivation, Aquarius? This week, you're being asked to gather yourself and commit to your goals with a new-found fervour. Once you prioritise success, the Universe will help clear the distractions on your path and align you with opportunities that will help you level up.
Tip: Make focus your power word.

PISCES: Oh, the magic of waking up on the right side of the bed! You are feeling like the most creative version of yourself. Channel this positivity into your many projects. Who knows? You may just find the solution you have been looking for. For others, this may be a time of pouring themselves into a brand new project.
Tip: Put this surge of clarity into action.