



**NEWA WORKSHOP  
CONCLUDES IN SINGTAM**  
pg 03

**SIKKIM-BJP PREZ CALLS ON SDF  
TO ATTEND BUDGET SESSION**  
pg 02

**HOLLYWOOD ACTION  
CHOREOGRAPHERS ROPED IN  
FOR HRITHIK, TIGER'S 'WAR'**  
pg 08



# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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**SOCCER GYAN FROM THE STAR:** Footballer Nirmal Chettri interacting with aspiring footballers of the State on the concluding day of the week-long Summer Football Camp organised by a Gangtok-based premier division club, Sikkim Aakraman Football Club, at Tashi Namgyal Academy playground on Saturday morning.

## LTVC wants ST quota for medicine and engineering to be restored to 15%

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 20 JUL:**

Limboo Tamang Voluntary Committee has demanded that the Scheduled Tribes quota for MBBS and engineering courses be restored to 15% as is the norm. This was reduced to 13% by the previous State Government.

An LTVC delegation comprising of its president Yehang Tshong and general secretary Prazal Tshong called on HRDD Minister Kunga Nima Lepcha yesterday pressing for this demand and also submitted supporting documents along with their petition.

An LTVC press release informs that its president received may requests



and complaints from LT students and their guardians regarding hardships faced by students from the two communities due to the reduction in

ST quota.

"Due to decrease in ration to 13% by previous SDF govt. bright and deserving LT (ST) students are facing many

hardship to get themselves enrolled in MBBS & Engineering colleges," the release reiterates.

The LTVC president explained the issue to the Minister in detail and emerged from the meeting convinced that it was fruitful.

"The Minister assured to look into the matter. We are hopeful that SKM led New govt will come out with solution to resolve the matter at the earliest and give justice to deprived LT (ST) communities students to enable them to become Doctors and Engineers in order to serve their State Sikkim in future," the LTVC release issued by its publicity secretary, Samso Subba, concludes.

## Raffong Khola stretch to remain closed till 24 July



**WANGCHUK BBHUTIA  
MANGAN, 19 JUL:**

The Mangan-Chungthang road was damaged at Raffong Khola on 16 July, and although GREF personnel remain hard at work, this stretch, which was earlier to remain closed till 19 July, will now be kept free of vehicular traffic till 24 July.

This stretch had remained closed from the

night of 17 July till 19 July. However, given the challenging work of restoration, the road closure notification has been extended till the evening of 24 July.

Vehicles can instead move from Singhik via Ringdang Teesta Urja HEP Power House site towards Mangan Bazaar and Chungthang and above areas.

## Sikkim and Darj MPs meet Minister of Tribal Affairs

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 20 JUL:**

Lok Sabha MPs Indra Hang Subba [Sikkim] and Raju Bista [Darjeeling] met Minister of Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda, in the Parliament on 19 July and had a brief discussion regarding inclusion of 11 left out communities in the Scheduled Tribes list. Sikkim's MP also took

the opportunity to apprise the Minister of Tribal Affairs regarding pending issues of seat reservation for Limboo and Tamang communities in the Legislative Assembly.

The Minister responded positively and assured us all possible support from his ministry wherever necessary, a press release informs.

## SSA wins inaugural U-17 League



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 20 JUL:**

A brace by John Tshering Lepcha helped State Sports Academy win the Sikkim Football Association U-17 Football League here at Paljor Stadium today.

In a contesting final match played this afternoon, SSA has outplayed Dzongu Football Club 2-0 to lift the champion's trophy.

John Tshering picked an early lead for SSA in the 8th minute itself and completed his brace soon after in the 11th minute.

In response, Dzongu FC boys played their hearts out but failed to convert any chance into a goal.

In the second half, both teams got some good opportunities but missed the net and finally

the State Sports Academy became the champion of the first ever U-17 league of SFA.

Lakpa Sherpa of the State Sports Academy was adjudged Man of the Match while Dzongu FC goalkeeper, Sushan Tamang, received the Best Goalkeeper trophy.

Two very young footballers of Gangtok FC, Avinash Rasaily and Roshan Kumar were adjudged the Most Promising Players of the Tournament.

A total of ten teams participated in the U-17 League: Dzongu FC, Sports Academy, Gangtok FC, JVC FC, Singtam, FC Melli, Chujachen FA, Namthang FA, New Light Academy, Namchi, Howler's FC, Singtam and Sikkim Boys.

## Irregularities in B.Ed. courses earn ire of regular students

*"Regular B.Ed. degrees despite distance education format unfair on those genuinely wanting to become teachers"*

**SAGAR CHHETRI**

**GANGTOK, 20 JUL:**

Students of regular B.Ed. courses from the three B Ed colleges in Sikkim have demanded justice and due respect and weightage for their degrees. Their complaint is against the practice in which others manage to get "regular" B Ed degrees from institutions outside the State without attending regular classes.

Addressing a press conference here today, these trainees informed that as per National Council of Teachers Education norms of 2014, at least 200 working days of physical presence, excluding admission and examinations, was necessary for B Ed trainees to earn a regular degree. A minimum of 75 to 80% of attendance was compulsory for B Ed trainees.

This was informed during a press conference here today addressed by a section of regular B Ed trainees from Government B Ed College, Soreng, Loyola College of Namchi and Harkamaya College, Gangtok.

The press conference was addressed by Bhawan Dulal, Puran Khal-



ing, Bandana Gautam, Arjun Sharma and Kaushila Sarki.

"We are doing regular B Ed from three B Ed Colleges in Sikkim but nowadays a trend has developed in the State where many have also been getting regular degrees even after pursuing distance education courses from different institutions outside the State," they said.

They informed that candidates employed as school teachers on adhoc basis or doing jobs in government departments and even some pursuing higher studies in other universities are also pursuing B Ed courses at the same time in institutions outside the State and getting regular B Ed degrees without attending any classes, something

that the prescribed rules don't allow.

"As per the NCT norms, 75% attendance is a must compulsory to get a B Ed regular degree but they have been getting the regular B Ed degree by working elsewhere throughout the year and just going to their respective institutions for the examination by taking the leave," they alleged.

They added that this was tantamount to buying a degree from the outside.

"As we are going our respective colleges on a daily basis and doing assignments and teaching practice, making models and teaching aids day and night working for a degree, how have these candidates getting de-

grees which carry the same recognition by going to their institutions just for 15 days to give the exams," they asserted.

They said that this trend has been affecting the regular trainees.

"We have been pursuing B Ed to be able to teach and when apply to the department after finishing our courses we are told there is no vacancy because most of the posts are occupied by candidates who got regular degrees from outside the State," they said.

They alleged that many with such degrees were selected at the recent language and PGT interviews.

They alleged that these candidates have been

turn to pg02



**Screening of BTS performances**

**Games & Activities**

- Dance Offs
- Cham Cham
- Chinese Whispers with a Twist!
- Quiz Competition
- ...And lots more!

**Date: 27th July 2019**

**Venue: Thuendel, Sichey.**

**Time: 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

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# Agro-Based Village Eco Tourism promotion at Kamarey

**KAMAREY BUDANG, 20 JUL (IPR):** Agriculture Minister Lok Nath Sharma addressed a programme on Green Economy, Agro Based Village Eco Tourism Promotion at Kamarey village under Budang Kamarey Gram Panchayat Unit, Rhenock, today.

He was accompanied by the area MLA Bishnu Kumar Khatiwara, Agriculture Secretary Khorlo Bhutia, Horticulture Secretary DK Bhandari, senior officials from Animal Husbandry, Livestock Fisheries and Veterinary Services and Tourism Department.

The programme was also attended by the Panchayats, Self Help Groups, NGOs, farmers and public.

Addressing the programme the Minister emphasised Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry as top-priority sectors of the State Government.

Referring to his inspection visit to three Model Integrated Organic Farms in the locality, the Minister said that he was encouraged and motivated by the progress of the farmers.

The Minister and the



area MLA jointly visited Model Integrated Organic Farm CP Bhattarai, floriculture farm of Phalaenopsis species of Mani Kumar Pradhan and Bee Keeping, Shivansh Compost, Vermicompost farm of KK Bhattarai before the programme.

With respect to the various demands placed before him, the Minister sanctioned Agro Village Tourism, Establishment of Community Tank, Establishment of Cluster under PMKSY, Research and Development cluster, Stockment Centre of Animal Husbandry in a rented house, two large-scale Green Houses for Budang Kamarey GPU.

He added that the state government under the leadership of the Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] believes in delivery rather than claims.

Motivating people towards farming, he said that the agriculture was a lucrative profession and educated youth should adopt farming for sustainable income and economic growth.

He also pointed out the scope in future perspectives in the Agriculture sector.

He assured to address issues and challenges of marketing and urged people to utilise unused land for cultivation and farming purpose. He articulated an enlightening stanza to motivate gathering towards productive and positive work.

Minister also congratulated the area MLA for securing electoral victory with a huge margin and appreciated social worker, Prabha Pradhan, for donating 1,500 saplings to farmers.

The area MLA pro-

posed the welcome address and expressed happiness over organising the event to benefit farmers of the locality.

He urged Tourism Department to conduct a survey in his constituency and act for development in this sector accordingly.

He also shared his experience of working as a Panchayat in the past and urged for consistent support from respective Departments to uplift the farmers of his Constituency. During the programme, the Minister handed over a cheque of Rs. 3,32,956 to 20 farmer beneficiaries of Carnation and Gerbera cut flower production as second installment under NEC programme of Horticulture Department.

Farmers also received tokens of polypipes, green houses, polytanks,

Turmeric grinders and spray machines from the Horticulture Department.

Besides, the Minister also presented HIDPE polypipes to seven beneficiaries, Battery Operated Knapsack Spray to three farmers and a power tiller to a beneficiary under Agriculture department.

In addition, Minister also distributed two milch cows to two farmers under a scheme of the Animal Husbandry department and also presented two Chaff Cutter Machines and also tokens for Rural Backyard poultry Scheme under National Livestock Mission to two beneficiaries and a token of Entrepreneurship development through broiler farming under State earmarked fund to one beneficiary.

Secretary Khorlo Bhutia detailed facilities being provided under various programmes and informed about the upcoming distribution of improved variety of Goattery under RKVY and Power Tiller for a group of farmers and explained provisions of financial exemptions for interested farmers.

He also stated that Sikkim IFFCO Organic

will be established as a joint venture of Sikkim Government and Epco.

Horticulture Secretary DK Bhandari acknowledged the hard work of farmers and recalled their appreciation at the national and international levels. He also spoke on indispensability of farmers contributions in progress of Horticulture and encouraged farmers to take up Bamboo production, medicinal plant and assured continued support and assistance from the department.

Additional Director, Horticulture Department, PL Dahal applauded the role of Panchayats for contributing significantly towards organic production. A village will embrace sustainable growth in economy through farming and Kamarey has witnessed a paradigm shift in the field of Agriculture, he added.

The programme was also addressed by the Ward Panchayat, CP Bhattarai who highlighted ongoing progress of Kamarey village in organic farming and urged the state government to connect agricultural cultivation with the tourism sector for village Eco Tourism Promotion.

## Sikkim-BJP prez calls on SDF to attend budget session

**NITESH R PRADHAN GANGTOK, 20 JUL:**

BJP's Sikkim unit president, DB Chauhan, has stressed that SDF legislators should attend the upcoming budget session and urged the SDF president, Pawan Chamling, to reconsider his party's decision to boycott the assembly.

"The proper forum to address people's issue is the legislative assembly and I will urge members of the opposition to attend the budget session," he said while speaking to this correspondent.

The Sikkim Democratic Front, it may be recalled, has announced that it will stay away from Assembly sessions until the SKM president, PS Tamang [Golay], continues as the Chief Minister. This position has been taken to reiterate SDF's protest against a person disqualified from contesting elections being appointed CM.

Mr Chauhan also took the opportunity to congratulate SKM and its Chief Minister on forming the government in Sikkim and added that the people's fi-

nal verdict will become crystal clear only after by-elections in three constituencies.

On the new government's administrative moves which is being seen by many as victimization, he commented that a change in government would include some turmoil.

He also contended that powerful government servants crossed the line many times in the past and said that the suspension of ADGP Akshay Sachdeva must have been a well thought out decision of the new government.

He also called on the State Government to come with a clear policy and rules on transfers.

He also expressed satisfaction with BJP's performance in the Sikkim elections where it emerged as the third best in terms of vote share.

Further he also urged the State government to put to action its poll promises of curbing corruption and bringing CBI and good governance to Sikkim.

## Irregularities in B.Ed. ...

getting their degrees bypassing the NCT norms and if the NCT finds out it will directly cancel their degrees.

That said, they insist that this trend was a big injustice to candidates pursuing regular B Ed courses and not getting jobs.

Responding to media queries, they explained that there used to be two kinds of B Ed degrees - regular and distance, but after 2014 due to NCT norms distance education colleges for B Ed were removed since this was a professional course and physical attendance of the candidates was made compulsory.

They added that only IGNOU has been providing this course with provision of two years teaching experience, graduate degree and Diploma in Elementary Education.

They alleged that the private coaching centres were equally responsible for the trend who has been inviting candidates for the course with big advertisements. They asserted that HRDD and teachers recruitment board of the State need to stay vigilant and conduct proper verification of such degrees. They informed that some States have already cancelled such degrees.

"We took this issue to HRDD repeatedly for the past one year but no positive response was received. Recently, we again raised this issue with the HRDD Minister and got a positive response and we are hopeful with the new government will do justice," they said.

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## NMC bill to be introduced in LS on Monday: Vardhan

**HYDERABAD, JUL 20 (PTI):**

The National Medical Commission Bill, which seeks to replace the Medical Council of India and usher in major changes in the country's medical education sector, will introduced in the Lok Sabha on July 22, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said Saturday.

The minister said the Bill was supposed to be introduced in Parliament on Friday but could not be done so due to some technical reasons.

"I can only say right now day after tomorrow (July 22), I will be introducing the National

Medical Commission Bill which will replace the Medical Council of India.

"Right now, as you know the Medical Council of India has already been superseded and replaced by a board of governors," he told reporters on the sidelines of a programme at the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR)-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology here.

"The National Medical Commission Bill has been approved by the cabinet... I was thinking of getting it introduced yesterday, but there were technical formalities, so on Monday morning I'll be introducing the Bill in parliament," Vardhan said, expressing hope

## BKKS residential career counseling prog for SC youth in Aug

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 20 JUL:**

Biswakarma [Kami] Kalyan Samiti [BKKS] has announced plans to organize the 2nd Residential Career Counselling Programme on government's policies and schemes for the welfare of Scheduled Castes from 04 to 10 August here at Paljor Stadium.

The main objective of the initiative is to generate wider awareness on policies and programmes of the government for the SC community and also to inform young participants on the scopes and opportunities available to them in higher studies and jobs.

Addressing a press conference here today, BKKS general secretary, Dr RB Biswakarma, shared that after the grand success of the first edition of the programme, the organisation resolved to continue the initiative.

He mentioned that this week-long residential programme is aimed to create awareness on policies and programmes of the government in education, legal, political, social, sports and cultural sectors among young members of the SC community to help them in career development and

employment opportunities.

The programme has been categorized into specific and general areas.

The specific area includes government policies and schemes in organic farming and its impact, policies in environment and sustainable development, policies and schemes in HRDD, role of atrocity acts for SC community for social justice and empowerment and in other sectors.

Dr Biswakarma informed that the programme also includes awareness on the Article 371F, RTI and other fundamental principles of the Indian Constitution along with contributions of members of the SC community in different areas, values of religious culture and traditions, Art of Living and importance of Yoga and Meditation etc.

Dr Biswakarma further informed that a group of SC youth was presently taking Purohit training at Kanpur sponsored by the Chinmaya Mission.

He added that the organisation will send another group for Purohit training in Allahabad in September. BKKS, registered in 1977, is among the first registered organisations of the State.

that it will be passed and becomes a law.

On the Ayushman Bharat scheme, the minister said as of now, only Telangana, Odisha, Delhi and West Bengal had opted out of the BJP-led NDA government's flagship programme.

He said he had written to the chief ministers concerned requesting them to participate in the scheme in the national interest.

He hoped that Odisha would join the bandwagon soon.

"West Bengal had joined (in Ayushman Bharat) earlier and in view of elections they came out. We will continue to pursue because

## Earthquake jolts Arunachal again, tremors felt in Assam

**ITANAGAR/GUWAHATI, JUL 20 (PTI):** An earthquake of 5.5 magnitude hit Arunachal Pradesh Saturday, a day after three quakes shook the state within minutes of each other, the MeT Department said.

The latest quake, tremors of which were felt in Assam, occurred at 4.24 am at a depth of 10 km with the epicentre in East Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh, it said.

No loss of life or damage to property has been reported so far due to the quake that lasted for a few seconds, police said.

On Friday, three

earthquakes of 5.6, 3.8 and 4.9 magnitude hit Arunachal Pradesh and shook Itanagar, Guwahati, other parts of Assam and Dimapur in Nagaland.

The epicentres of two quakes were located in East Siang district and the third in Kurung Kumey district of Arunachal Pradesh, the Meteorological (MeT) Department website said.

According to seismologists, the north-eastern region comes under Zone 5 on the seismic map, making the states susceptible to earthquakes.

**MISSING:**



Name	: Divya Sharma
Age	: 17 yrs.
D/O	: Chandras Prasad Sharma
Height	: 4'5" (approx)
Complexion	: Fair
Wearing apparel black & pink	: Blue colour jeans pant & Shirt, colour Nike shoe.

Missing since : 22.01.2019 from Lossing Machong, East Sikkim.  
CID PS case FIR NO. 06/2019 date 08.07.2019 U/S 363/363/IPC. 1860 at CID, Police HQ, Gangtok, East Sikkim. Contact No. 03592 202087(O) 204297(F). Email: spcid@sikkimpolice.nic.in

## BEFORE THE OATH COMMISSIONER, SOUTH SIKKIM AT NAMCHI AFFIDAVIT

I, BINAYAK SHRESTHA, aged about 28 years, son of Loken Pradhan, resident of Tinzir Namchi P.O & P.S Namchi, South Sikkim do hereby solemnly affirm on oath and declared as under:-

1. That SHRESTHA is the sub caste of caste PRADHAN.  
2. That my name has been found recorded as BINAYAK SHRESTHA in my Birth Certificate bearing registration No. 670/91 dated 21/09/1991 issued by Registrar of Births & Deaths Government Hospital, Namchi, South Sikkim.

3. That my name has been found recorded as BINAYAK SHRESTHA PRADHAN in my Passport bearing Passport No.L7764156 issued by issuing Authority of Passport, Government of India.

4. That my father's name has been found recorded as LOKEN PRADHAN in my aforesaid Birth Certificate.

5. That my father's name has been found recorded as LOKEN SHRESTHA PRADHAN in my Abovesaid Passport.

6. That I have sworn this affidavit to declare SHRESTHA is the sub caste of caste PRADHAN and the names mentioned above BINAYAK SHRESTHA & BINAYAK SHRESTHA PRADHAN denote the names of one and the same person i.e., myself and further the names mentioned above LOKEN PRADHAN & LOKEN SHRESTHA PRADHAN denote the names of one and the same person i.e., my father.

**Deponent**

## Dzongu prepares for Tendong Lho Rum Faat



**SUMMIT REPORT DIKCHU, 20 JUL:**

The final meeting for the celebration of Tendong Lho Rum Faat was held at Gor Secondary School ground today chaired by former Dzongu MLA, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, in the presence of area MLA, Pintso Namgyal Lepcha, OSD Ton Tshering Lepcha, Additional Director HRDD, Sonam Lepcha, Govern-

ment officials, Panchayat members and the organising committee.

Gor Secondary School ground has been selected as the venue for the celebrations coming up on 08 Aug.

The celebration will include culture competitions, poetry and literature competitions among students from different schools of Dzongu.

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

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

**WANTED**  
**HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER.**  
**Contact: 9933443442/9800500696.**

### GENERAL INFORMATION

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

**Mr. Subash Lama**  
**Proprietor**  
**Hotel Parasol Residency,**  
**Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim**

### BUILDING FOR SALE

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

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



Newa workshop concludes in Singtam



SUMMIT REPORT SINGTAM, 20 JUL:

The valedictory program of the 20-day Newa workshop on Language, Food and Dance was held here today and included an exhibition of Newa food items prepared by the trainees. Newa dance and presentation of mementos to the teachers were the

other highlights of the day. More than 26 Newars from in and around Singtam had registered for the workshop. The program was organised by Newa Bhay Bowneykuti, Singtam. Laxmi Sakya, Member, Newa Deya Dabu, Tamsipakha, Kathmandu, and Yogbir Sakya of Kalimpong were the

two teachers for the workshop. While Laxmi Sakya took classes on preparation of food items and dance, Yogbir Sakya taught Newa language. Anmol Pradhan was presented with 100% Attendance Award and Newa dance was presented by Aadarsh Pradhan, Reshma Pradhan and Tanishka

Pradhan. The trainee students from the food learning class exhibited food items prepared by them and explained the recipes to guests. Laxmi Sakya and Yogbir Sakya appreciated efforts of the Newars of Singtam and spoke about preservation of culture and custom for future generations.

Belt test at Hee Karate Academy



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 20 JUL:

Fifteen karatekas from Hee Karate Academy, West Sikkim underwent a Belt Test (Grading) at Indoor Hall, Paljor Stadium on 20 Jul, 2019. The examination was conducted by Technical Director of Sikkim State Karate-Do Association, Shihan Bidhan Ballav Subba.

The karatekas who successfully completed the examination are as follows:

Omer Gurung - Sho Dan Black Belt, Rohit Poudyal - Sho Dan Black Belt, Meeke Hangma Limboo - Sho Dan Black Belt, Mingso Hang Limboo - Sho Dan Black Belt, Anjali Subba - Sho Dan Black Belt, Suyem Limboo - 3rd Kyu Brown Belt, Bishal Limboo - 2nd Kyu Brown Belt, Srijana Subba - 4th Kyu Green Belt, Sandipa Subba - 4th Kyu Green Belt, Thungwa Mukma Limboo - 5th Kyu Green Belt, Muksam

Limboo - 5th Kyu Green Belt, Pema Gyalmu Bhutia - 5th Kyu Green Belt, Anurag Limboo - 5th Kyu Green Belt, Mukkum Hang Limboo - 5th Kyu Green Belt, and Arbin Deep Limboo - 5th Kyu Green Belt.

Hee Karate Academy was started in 2013 at Hee Yangthang, West Sikkim. The Karatekas from this Academy have bagged numerous medals in National Championships for the state so far and hope to bring home many more.

Danfe Culture Exchange and Information Centre inaugurated



**GANGTOK, 20 JUL [IPR]:** Minister Lok Nath Sharma inaugurated Danfe Culture Exchange and Information Centre at Lower Chandmari's Church Area at a special function organised this evening.

The programme was also attended by Rhe-nock MLA Bishnu Kumar Khatiwara as guest of honour and Secretary Horticulture DK Bhandari, personalities from literary background and others.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister congratulated Danfe Culture

Exchange and Information Centre and extended his best wishes for progress and prosperity.

In his address, the Minister advised information centre to be determined to the aim, objectives and prime purpose for the benefit of Sikkimese people. He touched on the importance for promotion of Art, Culture, Literature and Tradition in broader spectrum.

MLA Bishnu Kumar Khatiwara appreciated the initiative and hoped for more pres-

ervation and promotion of culture through the establishment of the centre and also extended his best wishes to the organisers.

Chairman of Danfe Television, senior journalist from Nepal, Prem Sagar Poudyal, spoke about the advantages of international culture exchange and its benefits for the future generations.

He urged the Sikkimese people to extend cooperation to accomplish objectives of mutual benefit.

Sikkim Aakraman FC's Summer Football Camp concludes

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 20 JUL:

The week-long Summer Football Camp organized by Sikkim Aakraman Football Club for boys and girls aged between seven to 18 years concluded here at Tashi Namgyal Academy ground this morning.

A total of 60 aspiring young footballers from in and around Gangtok attended the camp.

The valedictory function had Sports & Youth Affairs Minister, KN Lepcha, as the chief guest also accompanied by retired Secretary to the Government of Sikkim, TW Rinzing, and TNA Director-cum-Principal, Brigadier [retd] M George Jacob, as guests of honour.

In his valedictory address, the Minister congratulated Sikkim Aakraman FC for having taken the



initiative to provide a good foundation for young footballers.

He further encouraged the club to continue with such activities for the promotion of games and sports in the State and guide young minds towards productive and sporting engagements.

He also urged the young participants of the camp to engage in the healthy and productive activities.

The Minister also congratulated the TNA Principal for creating new infrastructure in sports for the school.

Sikkim Aakraman FC president, Jigme Singey Rinzing Wangchuk, thanked all individuals and organisations who supported the camp for

their faith in the club and commitment towards the young. He mentioned that Sikkim Aakraman FC has been working tirelessly over the years towards enhancing and popularizing sports and social activities in the State.

He also thanked the Director-cum-Principal of TNA for allowing them the use of the school ground and for other support towards the success of the camp. Sikkim Aakraman FC vice-president Karma Phintso Wangdi further informed that the club has been working to scout talented footballers from different corners of the State by providing them a better platform.

The enthusiasm and progress shown by children at the camp indicates the bright future Sikkim has in football, he said.

Malabika Sarkar appointed vice-chancellor of Ashoka University

**NEW DELHI, JUL 20 (PTI):** Malabika Sarkar, the principal advisor of the Ashoka University, has been appointed as its vice-chancellor.

She succeeds Pratap Bhanu Mehta who has stepped down from the post to focus on his academic ambitions. Mehta will continue to teach at the university, according to a statement issued by the varsity.

Sarkar is a former vice-chancellor of Presidency University, Kolkata, and a professor of English literature.

She was earlier the head of the Department of English at Jadavpur University, Kolkata, a member of the Jadavpur University Council and of various academic bodies of the university, it said.

She was also a member of the University

Grants Commission Panel of Experts in English and Foreign Languages and a panel member of the NAAC. "Professor Sarkar has been a part of the team that has shaped the university into one of India's finest liberal arts and sciences universities," founding vice-chancellor and current chancellor of Ashoka University, Rudrangshu Mukherjee, said.

SLSA organizes training for Panel Advocates

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 20 JUL:

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, under the directions of Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge, High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairperson, Sikkim SLSA, organized a training programme for Panel Advocates and members of the Bar as per the Training Module of NALSA today.

Justice Rai's prime concern was with regard to members of the Bar who appear before the Bench of the High Court and the Trial Courts to be well versed and sound in all legal procedures and acquire leadership qualities



with punctuality as a main tool for becoming good professionals.

Resource Persons for today's programme were Master Trainers

KW Bhutia, Registrar, High Court of Sikkim, and Sr Advocate N Rai, High Court of Sikkim and Sr Panel Advocate, Sikkim SLSA, who had undergone the first

batch of Training of Trainers Programme for the Master Trainers at the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, in July 2015.

The programme commenced with the welcome note from Suraj Chettri, Member Secretary, Sikkim SLSA.

Mr Bhutia began the training with an ice-breaking session and

then deliberated on topics such as Professional Ethics for Lawyers, Law of Property, Consumer Protection Act, 1986 followed by role play and discussion.

Mr Rai, in turn, spoke on Property Rights of Women under Hindu Law, Hindu Marriage Act, Law of Maintenance to Wife, Child Sexual Abuse and the POCSO Act, 2012 and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 followed by discussion and concluding remarks.

The programme ended with a quiz and interaction between the advocates and resource persons.



## GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

### RURAL MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

### TASHILING, GANGTOK – 737101, SIKKIM

# Corrigendum

In the recently published tender BID ID No SK-PMGSY II Batch I Retender 04 Online (2019-20), the following details of Tender for online bidding may be read as

PMGSY-II (Batch-I) 2018-19

Sl	District	Pkg.No	Block	Name of Road works	Road length in kms	Tender amount (Rs in lakhs)	Tender rate (above/below/at par)	Contract value(Rs in lakhs)	Earnest Money (rs. In lakhs)	Tender form cost	Completion time
1	North & East	SK01/02 PKG1 RT4	Mangan	MRL 06-DAC road to North Sikkim Academy	1.00	79.94	All Class I-B Contractors enlisted with the Sikkim Public Works Department	Within STATE through e-tendering system	20.02	50000	1 year
			Gangtok	MRL04-Rumtek Rey Ranka Road to Falay Busty via Tyempem Busty	2.30	178.18					
			Pakyong	T08-Andheri to Gakcha	2.50	196.34					
				MRL-23-Pakyong Machong SPWD road Km2 to Pachey via Theeng dara.	2.50	193.29					
				Tender Value in Lakhs	10.30	800.94					
2	South	SK03 PKG@ RT4	Jorethang	MRL04-Link road from Mungram to Golitar Tamley Pokhari	2.00	167.47	All Class II-B Contractors enlisted with the Sikkim Public Works Department	Within the DISTRICT through e-tendering system	11.98	50000	1 year
			Namchi	MRL01-Phongla Mamring to Kanam Busty	2.00	158.22					
				T10-Phongla Mamring Road to Pamphok	2.00	153.38					
				Tender Value in Lakhs	6.00	479.07					

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding		Last date of time for seeking tender clarification	Date & time of Opening of tender.
		From	To		
Chief Engineer, RMDD	SK-PMGSY II Batch I Retender 04 Online (2019-20)	02/07/2019 from 10 AM	1/08/2019 to 10.00 AM	23/07/2019 upto 4.30 PM	01/08/2019 from 11.00 AM

**Sd/-**  
**Chief Engineer I cum Empowered Officer**  
**Rural Management & Development Department**  
**Government of Sikkim, Gangtok**

**R.O No. – 97/IPR/Pub/Classi./2019-20      Date. 19.7.2019**



## Accident Prone *Sikkim needs to study why its roads see so many accidents and its hospitals sign so many referrals*

It is now around two years since an enquiry was directed into what had caused a bus mishap near Mangan in North Sikkim which had claimed three lives and left 40 injured. It was hoped that the enquiry did a thorough enough job to ensure that lessons were learned and corrective measures undertaken to avoid a repeat. To its credit, the SNT bus service is among the most reliable modes of travelling in Sikkim and the North Sikkim mishap was after an eleven year gap. That said, there is always room for improvement and only a proper investigation by professionals could have established whether the accident was caused by human error, engine failure or road conditions, because once the cause is established, amends can be made and road travel made even more secure. And the issue is not about buses, because, as already mentioned, they remain the safer modes of passenger movement as compared to private vehicles, jeeps and two-wheelers in Sikkim. It is important to establish whether these mishaps are caused by poor driving skills, poor vehicular health or poor roads.

It might not be out of place here to suggest that a proper appraisal is made of the reliability of roads in the State. The monsoon has not been kind on road surfaces and repairs have been too piecemeal for too long to inspire much confidence. A proper check-up to verify the load-bearing capacities of roads across the state appears to be in order.

And while the experts deploy their expertise to address the issues flagged above, a parallel soul-searching should also look into the preparedness of health-care infrastructure for situations like the one which visited the district hospital at Mangan on the day of the accident. Except one injured passenger, the remaining 39 were referred to Gangtok. While there can be no challenging the fact that injured patients should receive the best of treatment, including referrals if so required, one is also bound to wonder how a district hospital found itself equipped enough to handle only one of the 40 injured accident victims. Staffing does not appear to be the issue and neither can be the efficacy of doctors and nurses, but what even the collective experience of the health workers cannot cover up for is the lack of equipment. Could that be the reason why district hospitals are forced to perform like first-aid centres? If so, then clearly an upgrade is required because district roads are prone not only to mishaps, but the districts themselves also frequently visited by natural disasters which can cause large-scale injuries. The district hospitals should hence be equipped with the best possible personnel and equipment to handle trauma cases.

Even to a non-medical mind, referrals appear ill advised when it comes to accident victims because not only do the patients have to be left without a doctor watching over them (for the duration of the road journey), but also because they have to travel over road surfaces which do not lend themselves too well to travel for those with possible internal, or for that matter any, injuries.

The concerned authorities should now resolve to carry out a detailed appraisal of roads and their stability and also check the road-worthiness of the fleets pressed into passenger service here. They should then confer with nurses at the PHSC level to doctors at PHCs, CHCs and district hospitals and specialists at STNM Hospital and invite them to draw up a wish-list of support staff and equipment required to deliver the best possible care for the level of complications they are expected to handle at their level. Once this list is secured, arrange for the funds and make their wishes come true and draw up a check-and-balance system to discourage excessive referrals. If this happens, a giant leap would have been taken towards ensuring improved healthcare in Sikkim like governments are fond of saying, right at the doorsteps of the people.

# Humans aren't designed to be happy – so stop trying

RAFAEL EUBA  
theconversation.com

A huge happiness and positive thinking industry, estimated to be worth US\$11 billion a year, has helped to create the fantasy that happiness is a realistic goal. Chasing the happiness dream is a very American concept, exported to the rest of the world through popular culture. Indeed, “the pursuit of happiness” is one of the US’s “unalienable rights”. Unfortunately, this has helped to create an expectation that real life stubbornly refuses to deliver.

Because even when all our material and biological needs are satisfied, a state of sustained happiness will still remain a theoretical and elusive goal, as Abd-al-Rahman III, Caliph of Córdoba in the tenth century, discovered. He was one of the most powerful men of his time, who enjoyed military and cultural achievements, as well as the earthly pleasures of his two harems. Towards the end of his life, however, he decided to count the exact number of days during which he had felt happy. They amounted to precisely 14.

Happiness, as the Brazilian poet Vinicius de Moraes put it, is “like a feather flying in the air. It flies light, but not for very long.” Happiness is a human construct, an abstract idea with no equivalent in actual human experience. Positive and negative affects do reside in the brain, but sustained happiness has no biological basis. And – perhaps surprisingly – I reckon this is something to be happy about.

### NATURE AND EVOLUTION

Humans are not designed to be happy, or even content. Instead, we are designed primarily to survive and reproduce, like every other creature in the natural world. A state of contentment is discouraged by nature because it would lower our guard against possible threats to our survival.

The fact that evolution has prioritised the development of a big frontal lobe in our brain (which gives us excellent executive and analytical abilities) over a natural ability to be happy, tells us a lot about nature’s priorities. Different geographical locations and circuits in the brain are each associated with certain neurological and intellectual functions, but happiness, being a mere construct with no neurological basis, cannot be found in the brain tissue.

In fact, experts in this field argue that nature’s failure to weed out depression in the evolutionary process (despite the obvious disadvantages in terms of survival and reproduction) is due precisely to the fact that depression as an adaptation plays a useful role in times of adversity, by helping the depressed individual disengage from risky and hopeless situations in which he or she cannot win. Depressive ruminations can



also have a problem solving function during difficult times.

### MORALITY

The current global happiness industry has some of its roots in Christian morality codes, many of which will tell us that there is a moral reason for any unhappiness we may experience. This, they will often say, is due to our own moral shortcomings, selfishness and materialism. They preach a state of virtuous psychological balance through renunciation, detachment and holding back desire.

In fact, these strategies merely try to find a remedy for our innate inability to enjoy life consistently, so we should take comfort in the knowledge that unhappiness is not really our fault. It is the fault of our natural design. It is in our blueprint.

Advocates of a morally correct path to happiness also disapprove of taking shortcuts to pleasure with the help of psychotropic drugs. George Bernard Shaw said: “We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it.” Well-being apparently needs to be earned, which proves that it is not a natural state.

The inhabitants of Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World live perfectly happy lives with the help of “soma”, the drug that keeps them docile but content. In his novel, Huxley implies that a free human being must inevitably be tormented by difficult emotions. Given the choice between emotional torment and content placidity, I suspect many would prefer the latter.

But “soma” doesn’t exist, so the problem isn’t that accessing reliable and consistent satisfaction by chemical means is illicit; rather that it’s impossible. Chemicals alter

the mind (which can be a good thing sometimes), but since happiness is not related to a particular functional brain pattern, we cannot replicate it chemically.

### HAPPY AND UNHAPPY

Our emotions are mixed and impure, messy, tangled and at times contradictory, like everything else in our lives. Research has shown that positive and negative emotions and affects can coexist in the brain relatively independently of each other. This model shows that the right hemisphere processes negative emotions preferentially, whereas positive emotions are dealt with by the left-sided brain.

It’s worth remembering, then, that we are not designed to be consistently happy. Instead, we are designed to survive and reproduce. These are difficult tasks, so we are meant to struggle and strive, seek gratification and safety, fight off threats and avoid pain. The model of competing emotions offered by coexisting pleasure and pain fits our reality much better than the unachievable bliss that the happiness industry is trying to sell us. In fact, pretending that any degree of pain is abnormal or pathological will only foster feelings of inadequacy and frustration.

Postulating that there is no such thing as happiness may appear to be a purely negative message, but the silver lining, the consolation, is the knowledge that dissatisfaction is not a personal failure. If you are unhappy at times, this is not a shortcoming that demands urgent repair, as the happiness gurus would have it. Far from it. This fluctuation is, in fact, what makes you human.

*[the writer is Consultant and Senior Lecturer in Old Age Psychiatry, King’s College London]*

# Why declaring Ebola a public health emergency isn't a silver bullet

YAP BOUM  
theconversation.com

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. It took the decision based on International Health Regulations agreed in 2005. These require the WHO to declare an emergency when a public health event, such as an outbreak, becomes extraordinary because it constitutes a risk to other countries, and when a coordinated international response is required.

The emergency committee from the WHO – which is responsible for taking this decision – has met four times since the outbreak was declared in the DRC’s North Kivu region on 1 August 2018. During the last meeting in June the committee decided that the outbreak didn’t constitute a public health emergency of international concern.

A month later the committee changed its mind. Its reasons for doing so were that the number of cases had increased from 2071 to 2522. Even though the mortality rate had remained at 67%, three new cases were detected in Uganda. In addition, a case of Ebola was diagnosed in Goma, a city of almost 2 million that is a busy entry point for the DRC. The town sits on the Rwandan border.

The expected impact of the decision is that more funding will be raised for the response teams in the field as international support is stepped up. It will also give the DRC’s Ministry of Health more flexibility to ensure response teams reach even



the remotest areas. More means are needed to ensure that teams are able to engage communities. Part of this is ensuring they have the logistics to access them, especially in the most remote places.

The decision is significant and should have a critical affect on the response. It will provide a second breath to address the new phase of the outbreak, hopefully ensuring that it is ended.

But the decision is not a silver bullet. The outbreak of a deadly disease within a conflict zone – and now in a major city – cannot be solved with a technical solution, such as more funding.

WHAT’S WORKING, WHAT’S NOT  
The Ebola response have not been enough to stop the spread of the outbreak. This is despite major efforts by the tireless Ebola response teams, community engagement, surveillance, vaccination and communication.

The number of cases and deaths

have not declined. This suggests that people are still avoiding going to Ebola treatment centres to get care. This is despite the fact that new therapeutics are now being made available through a randomised clinical trial.

More than 100 000 people have been vaccinated. The vaccine hasn’t stopped the spread of the disease, although it has contributed to controlling it. The introduction of a second vaccine through a clinical trial would support the response, especially in the neighbouring regions of North Kivu, where no cases have been reported.

The other factor holding back efforts to eliminate the outbreak has been the increasing number of attacks on personnel in the area. Dr Richard Mouzoko, an epidemiologist working for the WHO, was killed in April and clinics have been torched. The attacks highlight the complexity of responding to the already compli-

cated outbreak in a conflict zone.

The violence is also getting in the way of engaging with communities, a major part of any Ebola response.

The DRC has also been facing challenges in getting the funds it needs to manage the response efficiently.

The Public Health Emergency of International Concern announcement is a call to the international community for action. But extra funds won’t be enough. The issue of unrest in North Kivu needs to be solved as it remains one of the major catalysts of this outbreak. Solving the outbreak requires a peaceful environment, wherein the community trusts the Ebola response team, and therefore, increase its engagement. Without a higher community awareness and engagement, it is difficult to see the end of Ebola outbreak in the DRC.

*[the writer is Professor in the faculty of Medicine, Mbarara University of Science and Technology]*



## FIELDWORK REFLECTIONS

## A stopover at Ram Gauri Sangralaya.



RONGNYOO LEPCHA

We started early in the morning. The clouds had lifted after weeks of downpour. The sun was shining bright a perfect day for fieldwork. The journey took us more than three hours away from the main town of Gangtok. Monsoon brings a lot of things other than the life giving water, it also bring with it chaos. Roads swept away, landslides, floods, vehicles lined up carefully not to fall victim to any unfortunate disaster. Ruins of old buildings which once were homes now abandoned for the airport at Pakyong; some still inhabited by people who refused the bargain. New roads carved out of the hillsides as old ones were already swept away. An unending battle with nature as human needs grow.

We reached quite late due to all the hurdles on the way. We were visiting a private museum belonging to Mr Ganesh Kumar Pradhan. Ram Gauri Sangrahalaya is situated on Thakurbari Path, Rhenock, Sikkim, and is managed by Mr Pradhan and his wife, Kamala Pradhan, along with their two sons. Though it was established way back in 1970 by his father, Ram Pradhan, and mother, Gauri Maya Pradhan, the museum was officially registered under the Law Department of Sikkim in 2001.

The museum has a huge collection of stamps and first day covers collected from India, Nepal and Bhutan, including special covers from Sikkim, the recent one added to their collection is the special cover is a special cover of the Pakyong Airport released on the day of the inauguration of the airport. It also houses a huge collection of coins and currency from various countries like Cambodia, Tibet, Brazil, Republic Philippines, Australia, Sri Lanka, Russia, Mongolia, Qatar, Korea, Kenya, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Zambia, Bahrain, Egypt, Nepal, Bhutan, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, Pakistan, Italy, China, Kazakhstan, Polska, Portugal, New Zealand,



Singapore, Turkey, United States of America, England, Netherlands, Oman, UAE, Deutschland, Belgium, Israel, France, including error currencies from India. Silver coins from colonial India and coins from ancient empires in India are also in display. Mr. Pradhan states that his father had been collecting these currencies and they have continued his legacy.

The museum is more interactive, where visitors are allowed to touch the items on display except the currencies and old documents as they are carefully displayed under glassed stands. The documents on display are mostly religious texts like stories of Vikramaditya and other myths plus a collection of Mr. Ram Pradhan's personal diaries that he ritually maintained till he passed away in 1982.

The museum has a section for relics and on one side they have a collection of traditional Newari household materials from traditional copper wine glasses to religious items like the Sukunda, oil lamp with meticulous designs of deities which are used during rituals, Jwala Nhyake, a traditional copper mirror which translate to "Sun Mirror", Dhalu or Dhalucha, newari hanging lamp, again with beautiful detailed designs, these are oil hanging lamps used for daily purposes, Kharkura, a large copper vessel used for multiple purposes, Libata a copper bowl and iron tai or a deep frying pan used for making the traditional sel roti. Other than the newari artifacts they also had a collection of artifacts belonging to other communities like an incense burner Mr. Pradhan explained belonging to a Roman Catholic Church, a Dhamphu a musical instrument belonging to the Tamang community, takshyor a strainer made of bamboo and a sader long which the Lepchas believe to be thunder stone was also among their collections.

Old television sets all the way from the first television set introduced in India with beauti-

ful wood carvings to old cameras and telephone sets were also among their prized collections. Old locks Ghorkhey tala a technology deceptively simple were a site to behold as Mr. Pradhan demonstrated them all one by one. One could truly see the technological genius our ancestors were. He also enjoyed demonstrating a puzzling chain usually seen exhibited during magic tricks.

There is a small collection of jewelries heavy iron and silver bangles, and neckpieces, mostly of unknown origin but a close resembles to Tibetan jewelries. Most of these materials Mr. Pradhan states were self-collected, some were gifts or souvenirs and some were bought to be a part of the museum.

The museum also has in display driftwoods and artistic stones carefully polished and molded into a piece of art. Mr. Pradhan and his sons scout these driftwoods and preserve them intact with their blissful stage of erosion. A beautiful chandelier made of driftwood, uncanny designs of woods and stones decorate the shelves solely dedicated to the artisan i.e., nature. These are for their private collection and are not sold to anyone.

A small library attached to the main museum where Mr. Pradhan and his family has archived thousands of newspapers since 1970, even the ones which are already ghosts like the "Kanchenjunga". Mr. Pradhan and his family has many plans for the future of the museum, providing a detailed description for all the materials displayed is at the top of their list. And in the future to extend the museum to house many more relics and materials.

With their motto "preservation of antique is the only root of modernization" Mr. Pradhan has the full support of his family and now the state. Last year the he was awarded the State Award or the Sikkim Sewa Samman on 16th May 2018, for the Museum for its role in preserving the cultural heritage of the state. There are many smaller museums like Ram Gauri Sangrahalaya in Sikkim, though small in magnitude the quality and heritage they represent is far richer.

With the lack of a major state museum which the government is still working for, these small museums have been thriving unnoticed under their own stride and preserving their heritage. Though starting off with preserving their own culture these collectively becomes the heritage of the state. An identity of the whole helping us understand our own the past and present and it is not hard to see a preview of where we are going from here. And in the end it is the understanding of human advancement that we yearn for.

## Mamata welcomes Jagdeep Dhankhar as West Bengal governor

**KOLKATA, JUL 20 (PTI):** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee welcomed the appointment of Jagdeep Dhankhar as the new governor of the state on Saturday.

She said Union Home Minister Amit Shah informed her about Dhankhar's appointment.

"I welcome Jagdip Dhankhar (sic) who has been appointed as the new Governor of Bengal. I just now came to know from media about this. I welcome him to our beautiful state," Banerjee wrote on her Twitter handle.

"Hon'ble Home Minister just now talked to me about appointment of new Governor of West Bengal. I informed him that I have already welcomed the new Governor," the Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo added.

The Centre appointed Dhankhar, noted Supreme Court lawyer and a former MP, as the West Bengal governor on Saturday.

Dhankhar will replace Keshari Nath Tripathi, who will be completing his tenure as the 19th governor of West Bengal on July 23.

## BJP demands probe into Rs 86 cr Khadi Board scam in Odisha

**BHUBANESWAR, JUL 20 (PTI):** Opposition BJP Saturday alleged that a major scam involving Rs 86 crore had taken place in the Odisha Khadi and Gramodyog Board (OKGB) and demanded an impartial probe into it.

The demand was raised by Leader of Opposition Pradipta Kumar Naik of the BJP in the Assembly.

"There has been a major scam in the OKGB. The organisation gets financial assistance for the development of Khadi and Village Industries Commission," Naik said.

He claimed that the Board had approved fake quotations mentioning the price of each beehive kit as Rs 30,000, though the actual cost of each beehive kit was Rs 1,000 only.

A total of 2,400 beehive kits were distributed to 480 beekeepers, the BJP member said.

The OKGB, under the MSME department, in a statement on May 20 last year had said 1,200 beekeepers were trained by the Board and 480 of them got the kits.

Stating that the OKGB had received Rs 86 crore from both the state government and the Centre's Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) between 2014 and 2017, Naik claimed, "The public money has

been misappropriated by the Board's chief and some dishonest officials."

Citing a written reply of then MSME Minister Prafulla Samal in Assembly on July 15, 2017, he said the OKGB had received Rs 39.94 crore from the state government and Rs 46.28 crore from the KVIC in three financial years from 2014 to 2017.

Naik also alleged that there had been corruption in the name of imparting training to beekeepers.

"False bills were prepared in the name of fake bee farmers," he claimed and added that crores of rupees have been misappropriated in the name of some "benami" advertisement agencies and consultancy companies.

During the three financial year between 2014 and 2017, the OKGB had undertaken business of only Rs 3.58 crore towards sale of Khadi dress and clothes, Naik said.

The BJP member urged Speaker S N Patro to instruct the minister concerned to make a statement on the issue on the OKGB scam and order an impartial probe into the matter.

Naik also alleged that the state run boards and corporations have become rehabilitation centres for the ruling party leaders.

## JE claims four more lives, death toll increases to 101

**GUWAHATI, JUL 20 (PTI):** Four more people in Assam died due to Japanese Encephalitis (JE), taking the toll to 101 in the state, a National Health Mission (NHM) bulletin said.

One death each was reported from Udalguri, Baksa, Golaghat and Karbi Anglong districts on Friday, it said.

The deceased were undergoing treatment at different hospitals.

The number of

JE-positive cases increased to 439, as 13 new ones were registered, the bulletin said.

JE is a vector-borne disease that affects the brain.

The NHM bulletin further said that cumulative figures for JE/AES (Acute Encephalitis Syndrome) deaths in the state since January was 222, while the number of JE/AES-positive cases during this period stood at 1,569.

## TMC delegation on way to meet Sonbhadra victims' kin detained, sits on dharna

**VARANASI (UP), JUL 20 (PTI):** A TMC delegation was detained at the airport here on Saturday when it was going to meet families of the Sonbhadra clash victims, party MP Derek O'Brien said.

After being denied permission to proceed, the delegation sat on a dharna at the airport here.

Ten people were gunned down and 28 injured in the clash between supporters of a village head and Gond tribals this week over a land dispute.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) team of MPs comprises O'Brien, leader of the delegation, along with Sunil Mondal and Abir Ranjan Biswas.

In a tweet, O'Brien said: "After meeting families of those injured, Trinamool delegation stopped from proceeding to #SonbhadraMassacre spot. We shall continue our dharna at Varanasi airport."

"The BJP indulges in hooliganism and disrupts 'good governance' every day in Bengal. The same BJP in UP don't allow a delegation of Opposition MPs to even

meet, build confidence & comfort grieving families of tribals massacred over land rights," he said.

Speaking after meeting the family members of the injured here, O'Brien said, "The team met the injured persons in the BHU Trauma centre. The UP Administration has not given us permission to go to Sonbhadra."

"We wanted to meet the families to give them confidence. It is a most unfortunate incident of innocent Dalits, tribals, adivasis being killed in the shootout. It is the murder of democracy," he added.

The doctor there said that he has never seen a mass murder like this in his long career, O'Brien said further.

The TMC delegation's detention comes a day after Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra too was detained in Mirzapur district and prevented from going to Sonbhadra to meet those injured in the incident as well as the victims' families.

Soon after they were stopped from proceeding, O'Brien tweeted: "Trinamool Parliamenta-

ry delegation detained at Varanasi airport. ADM,SP have not told us under which section.(Doing as told from topmost). We have told them that we will cooperate,wish to meet injured & then proceed to Sonbhadra to meet & give confidence to grieving families (sic)." "We were stopped by police at the Varanasi airport while we were going to Sonbhadra to meet the victims.There is no violation of Section 144 as we are less in number," he said.

The delegation arrived in Varanasi to meet the injured at the hospital here and then proceed to Sonbhadra to meet and give confidence to the grieving families, O'Brien said.

The TMC delegation was scheduled to return by an evening flight after their visit to Sonbhadra.

The party had announced Friday that a team of its MPs will visit on Saturday the families of the Sonbhadra clash victims in Uttar Pradesh.

The TMC decision to meet the victims and their kin assumes significance due to the intensified political bickering and violence between

the TMC and the BJP since the Lok Sabha elections in which the saffron party made significant inroads in West Bengal.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee had attacked each other during the election campaign in the eastern state.

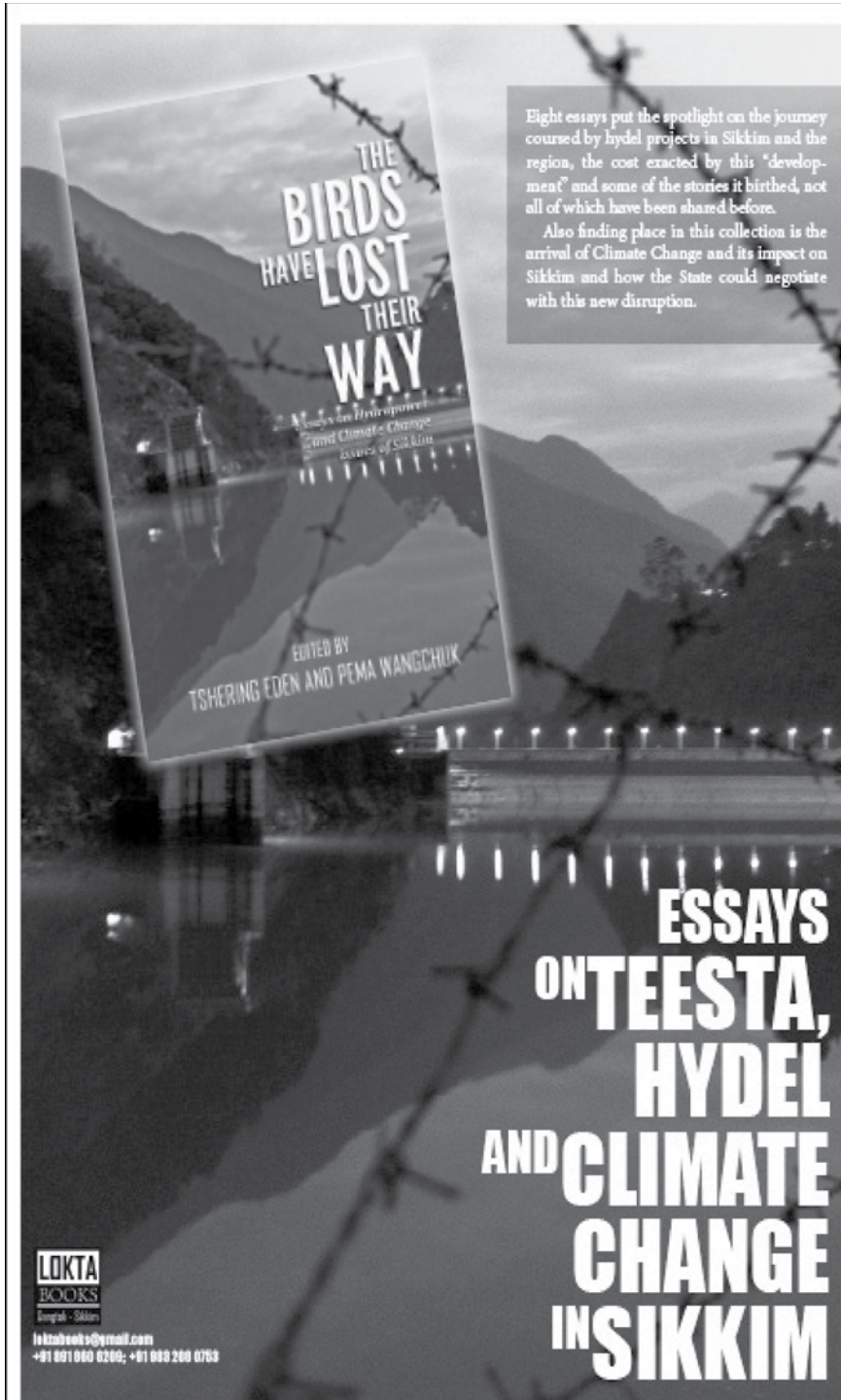
The BJP has emerged as the main opponent of the ruling TMC in West Bengal ever since the saffron party won 18 of the 42 seats in the state in this Lok Sabha polls up from two seats it had won in 2014.

Ten people were killed and 28 injured in the clash between supporters of village head Yagya Dutt and Gond tribals over a piece of land in Sonbhadra's Ghorawal area on Wednesday. Dutt's supporters allegedly opened fire on the tribals.

Twenty-nine people, including Dutt and his brother, were arrested.

Prohibitory orders are in force in Ghorawal area in Sonbhadra district and a thorough checking of vehicles is on to monitor the movement of people.

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**  
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**summittimes16@gmail.com**



## Sindhu seals first final spot of season at Indonesia Open



**JAKARTA, JUL 20 (PTI):** Olympic silver medallist P V Sindhu enjoyed one of her finest hours of the season as she entered the finals of the Indonesia Open BWF Tour Super 1000 tournament with a straight-game win over All England Champion Chen Yufei of China here Saturday.

Sindhu, who has been struggling a bit this season, showed her brilliance once again as she saw off world no 3 Chen 21-19 21-10 to enter her first final of the season.

The World no 5 Indian, who reached the semifinals at Singapore and India Open this year, thus set up a summit clash with Japan's fourth seed Akane Yamaguchi.

Sindhu holds a 10-4 advantage over Yamaguchi, whom she has beaten in the last four meetings.

Chen, who won at Australia, Swiss and All England this year, has been the most prolific player this season and looked good in the first game but a fighting Sindhu held her own in the opening game and then completely dominated the second to seal the final spot.

The match started with a long rally but soon Sindhu fell behind at 4-7. The Indian then reeled off five straight points with Chen playing two bad shots. But a body smash helped the Chinese to span the run of points as she grabbed a slight 11-10 advantage at the break.

But even after the break, the Indian kept breathing down Chen's neck and grabbed seven of the last eight points that mattered to pocket the opening game.

Chen moved to 15-12 with a few good-looking smashes. But Sindhu fought back and produced a precise return, and then Chen went wide before finding the net

## Windies A sneak 5-run win over India A despite Axar's valiant effort

**COOLIDGE (ANTIGUA), JUL 20 (PTI):** Axar Patel's rearguard heroics went in vain as India A suffered a narrow five-run loss against West Indies A in the fourth unofficial ODI of the five-match series here.

With the series already in pocket after winning the first three games, India A tasted their first defeat in the tour on Friday despite Axar's (81 not out of 63 balls) valiant effort with the bat while chasing 299 runs.

Chasing the home team's 298 for nine, India A's top-order failed to put up big scores despite getting starts and at one stage were struggling at 160 for six.

Then came in Axar and in the company of Washington Sundar raised 60 runs for the seventh wicket to keep India A in the hunt.

Axar marshalled the tail beautifully but Khaleel Ahmed and Navdeep Saini

as the Indian erased the deficit and made it 18-18.

Sindhu caught the shuttle early and produced an acute angled return near the nets to grab a one point lead.

But she went wide next and it was 19-19.

Another rally ended with Chen failing to clear the net and it was advantage Sindhu.

The Chinese then left one at the backcourt, which landed in, to hand Sindhu the bragging rights.

In the second game, Chen zoomed to 4-0 lead early on but Sindhu again clawed back with the Chinese going long twice.

Sindhu smashed hard and followed it with another one to put pressure on the Chinese, who again went long and Sindhu continued to gather points.

After seven straight points, Chen managed to push one at the back court to break the rhythm.

A whopping smash to Chen's serve gave another point to Sindhu. After a couple of missed opportunities, Sindhu managed to grab a three-point advantage at the interval with a precise net return, which kissed the tape on the way.

Chen then crumbled under constant pressure from Sindhu.

The Chinese found the net and went wide to allow the Indian double her lead to 16-8.

A fired up Sindhu dominated the proceedings after that even as Chen suddenly looked clueless.

Another smash took Sindhu closer and she sealed 11 match points when Chen misjudged a shuttle.

A cross court smash helped Chen to save one but Sindhu wrapped up the contest with another accurate shot, even as the Chinese's video referral went in vain.

fell in a space of three balls towards the close as West Indies' registered their first win in the series. India A needed nine runs of the last over but could only manage three to finish on 293 for nine.

Axar hit eight boundaries and one six during his fiery knock.

Sundar (45), Krunal Pandya (45), skipper Manish Pandey (24), Ruturaj Gaikwad (20) and Hanuma Vihari (20) all got starts but couldn't prolong their stay.

Rovman Powell (2/47) and Keemo Paul (2/61) shared four wickets between them for West Indies A.

Earlier, West Indies A rode on Roston Chase (84), Devon Thomas (70), Jonathan Carter (50) and skipper Sunil Ambris' (46) fine efforts with the bat to post 298 for nine after being sent into bat.

## Shiva Thapa becomes India's first gold-medallist in Kazakhstan President's Cup



**NEW DELHI, JUL 20 (PTI):** Four-time Asian medallist Shiva Thapa became India's first gold-medallist at the President's Cup boxing tournament after getting a walkover in the finals in Astana, Kazakhstan on Saturday.

Making his international debut in the newly-introduced Olympic

category of 63kg, Thapa was to fight Kazakhstan's Zakir Safiullin in the summit clash but his

opponent had to pull out due to injury.

Thapa had lost to Safiullin in the Asian Championship semifinal earlier this year.

Signing off with a silver medal was woman boxer Parveen (60kg) who lost her final bout to local hope Rimma Volosenko.

"The new weight category has been easy to adapt. I have not faced too much difficulty. Obviously there are chal-

lenges of facing boxers who are coming from 64kg, given their power but nothing is impossi-

ble," Thapa, a 60kg category boxer before the rejigging of Olympic divisions, told PTI from Astana.

Thapa couldn't make the cut for the September world championships after losing in the trials to Commonwealth Games silver-winner Manish Kaushik.

Thapa had defeat-

ed Kyrgyzstan's Argon Kadiribekuulu 4-1 in the last-four stage bout.

"Shiva had a great tournament, beating some really fancied opponents. It was an impressive performance," said India's High Performance Director Santiago Nieva.

Earlier, Sweetie Boora (81kg) and Duryodhan Singh Negi (69kg) had ended their campaign with bronze medals following semifinal defeats.

## Dhoni pulls out of WI tour, takes two-month break amid retirement speculation

**KUSHAN SARKAR**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 20 (PTI):** Former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni Saturday made himself "unavailable" for the tour of West Indies but ruled out immediate retirement a day before the selectors meet in Mumbai to pick the squads for the upcoming away series.

Amid mounting speculation around his international retirement after India's semi-final exit from the recent World Cup, Dhoni has told the BCCI that he will take a two-month sabbatical from the game to serve his paramilitary regiment.

Dhoni is an Honorary Lieutenant Colonel in the Parachute Regiment of the Territorial Army,

"We would like to clarify three things. MS Dhoni is not retiring from cricket right now. He is taking a two month sabbatical to serve his paramilitary regiment which he had committed much earlier. We have now intimidated his decision to skipper Virat Kohli and chairman of selectors MSK Prasad," a senior BCCI official told PTI on Saturday.

The 38-year-old Dhoni's refusal to take retirement now leaves the ball in the court of the selectors, who were expected to drop him from the squad for the West Indies. India will play three T20 Internationals, as many ODIs and two Tests in the tour starting August 3.

It is believed that the selection committee chaired by MSK Prasad

will

be

the

selection

committee

chaired

by

MSK

Prasad

will

be



wants to move forward with an eye on future but they would also like to get a sense of where the Indian captain stands on this issue.

"The selection committee has always been clear on one issue. They have no right to tell anyone irrespective of their stature as to when they should call it quits but when it comes to team selection, it remains their domain," a senior BCCI official said.

With Dhoni pulling out of the tour, Rishabh Pant is expected to be first wicketkeeper in all three formats while Wriddhiman Saha will be Pant's understudy in the Tests.

From now, the focus will be more on T20 cricket keeping the World T20 in mind, which is scheduled to be held in Australia next year.

India will be playing a lot of bilateral three-match T20 series in run-up to the global meet and with Dhoni expected to play one

more season of IPL with Chennai Super Kings, things are a bit tricky at the moment.

There are a few questions that the selectors need to answer:

Whether they see Dhoni playing till World T20? If the answer is yes, are they willing to give him 15 to 18 T20s during the phase as a keeper-batsman?

If that answer is also yes, it would boil down to whether skipper Virat Kohli sees him as a batsman in T20s where keeping isn't the primary skill required.

With Dhoni's ever-declining hitting abilities, can he come in at Nos 6 or 7 where he might, at best, get 6 to 8 balls in most games and even less in some?

If that answer is also yes, the next question that would crop up is if he can hit the likes of Jofra Archer, Jason Behrendorff or Mohammed Amir straightaway in the slog overs.

There is a case about

Dhoni's stellar success in death overs at the IPL. He always gets one weak Indian bowler -- say a Mohammed Siraj, Harshal Patel or Dhawal Kulkarni or Sandeep Sharma from whom he scores those 15 to 20-run overs.

But would that be possible against a Lockie Ferguson or a Pat Cummins?

The current selection committee's term ends in October when the BCCI elections are scheduled and they would like to put a transition phase in place in consonance with what the captain and the coach want.

However, once the board members take over after the elections and if Dhoni decides to stick with his decision of not retiring, there could be some twists and turns in the coming months.

Till then, all roads lead to the BCCI headquarters on Sunday where Prasad will address the most defining press conference of his eventful tenure.

bo from the tournament where Sri Lanka finished a disappointing sixth. "I hope to remain until my contract runs out." Hathurusingha also acknowledged that team management had to "accept responsibility for what happened."

Bangladesh arrive in Sri Lanka on Saturday to become the first foreign sports team to visit the island since the April 21 suicide bombings that killed 258 people.

The series starts on

July 26 and ends on August 1 at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo.

The

## Maymol Rocky: Focus should be on AFC Qualifiers



**NEW DELHI, JUL 20 (PTI):** Head coach Maymol Rocky Saturday said the Indian women's team should focus on the AFC qualifiers which will help it climb the Asian football ladder.

"Now, it's time for us, as a team, to take things forward from here. We missed out in Round 2 of the Olympic qualifiers by a whisker, but I feel that our next objective should definitely be the AFC Qualifiers," Maymol said.

"Qualification for the Asian Championship will be a big step for this team, and that is something that we all need to prepare ourselves for," she added.

The India women's team created history last year by progressing to the AFC Olympic Qualifiers for the first time in the side's history. They further went on to put up a brilliant performance in the second round of the Olympic Qualifiers, only falling behind home side Myanmar on goal difference.

With the team departing for Spain on Saturday to play in the COTIF Cup, Maymol believes that her team is much better prepared as compared last year, to face the tough opponents in the upcoming tournament.

"We played the COTIF Cup last year as well, but I think we are more prepared this time around. The players have really improved over this last year, and we saw that in the AFC Olympic Qualifiers Round 1 and Round 2," she said.

The team has had a three-week-long training camp at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi and Rocky feels that

the new training techniques that she and the coaching staff have implemented over the course of the camp have put the team in good stead.

"It's been a very fruitful few weeks at the camp, where we have implemented some new training techniques. The results are really paying off, as I've seen a number of players make good improvements over this period."

The camp also saw the introduction of a number of new faces and while Maymol said that these players still have a long way to go, proper work can get them to the levels where they may get the desired results.

"We brought a number of new faces to the camp, and they have been adjusting to the different training techniques and schedules really well. Of course, they all have a long way to go to reach the levels we are aiming for, but there's nothing that hard work and dedication can't achieve."

The fixtures for the tournament are below:  
August 1: India vs Guinea  
August 3: India vs Bolivia  
August 4: Mauritania vs India  
August 5: Spain vs India  
August 8: Final

Squad:  
Goalkeepers: Linthongambi Devi, Aditi Chauhan, Sowmiya Narayansamy

Defenders: Sweetie Devi, Jabamani Tudu, Ashalata Devi, Michel Castanha, Pakpi Devi

Midfielders: Sangita Basfore, Sanju Yadav, Ratanbala Devi, Manisha, Ritu Rani, Grace Lalrampari, Ranjana Chanu

Forwards: Anushka Samuel, Dangmei Grace, Anju Tamang, Bala Devi, Renu, Roja Devi, Daya Devi.

## Pacquiao, Thurman face off at weigh-in

**LAS VEGAS, JUL 20 (AFP):** Manny Pacquiao and Keith Thurman both tipped the scales at 146.5 pounds ahead of their much-anticipated WBA world welterweight title clash.

Filipino icon Pacquiao on Friday smiled and waved to several thousand fans inside the MGM Grand Garden Arena as he faced off with undefeated champion Thurman for the final time before Saturday's bout.

"It's going to be a good fight," Pacquiao said from the stage.

"I want to prove something in this fight. It's all set for tomorrow," added Pacquiao, who was half a pound lighter for his last fight in January against Adrien Broner.

Thurman meanwhile was greeted by loud boos from an overwhelmingly pro-Pacquiao crowd.

"It is my time. This is one time. Manny Pacquiao ain't doing nothing to me, baby," Thurman said.

Pacquiao is attempt-

ing to capture Thurman's WBA "super" welterweight crown, regarded as the sanctioning body's most important championship belt in the division.

The 40-year-old will be climbing into the ring for the 71st time in what is seen as his most challenging contest since defeat to Floyd Mayweather in 2015's "Fight of the Century."

Thurman meanwhile returned to the ring in January after a near two-year layoff, defeating Josesito Lopez to improve his record to 29 wins with 22 knockouts.

The 30-year-old from Florida is determined to boost his legacy with a win over Pacquiao, and has pledged to send the Filipino into retirement with a decisive victory.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to destroy a legend," Thurman told reporters ahead of Saturday's fight.

Pacquiao (61-7-2, 39 knockouts) meanwhile said he was unconcerned by Thurman's trash-talk.



## Pak Prime Minister Imran Khan leaves for visit to the US

SAJJAD HUSSAIN

**ISLAMABAD, JUL 20 (PTI):** Prime Minister Imran Khan on Saturday left for his maiden trip to the US to have face-to-face talks with President Donald Trump and “refresh” bilateral relations that were hit after he publicly criticised Islamabad, cancelled military aid and asked it to do more to fight terrorism.

Prime Minister Khan's visit comes at a time when talks between the US and Afghan Taliban are thought to have entered a decisive phase.

Relations between Pakistan and the US have remained tense during Trump's tenure. The US president has publically said that Pakistan has given us “nothing but lies and deceit” and also suspended security and other assistance for backing terror groups.

Prime Minister Khan, who is undertaking the three-day trip to the US on the invitation of Trump, will be accompanied by army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa and ISI chief Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed.

He would visit the White House on Monday for detailed talks with Trump and would also meet House Speaker Nancy Pelosi before returning on July 23.

Diplomatic sources said that issues like the Afghan peace process,



Pakistan government's action against terrorism and terror financing and restoration of military aid to Pakistan would be the highlights of the trip.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi is already in Washington to give final touches to the agenda points of the visit.

Foreign Office Spokesperson Muhammad Faisal earlier this month said that the “agenda of the meeting is being developed through diplomatic channels” but the focus will be to “refreshing bilateral relations.”

Khan would fly by a commercial flight and would land in Washington on Saturday evening. He would stay

at the residence of Pakistan's ambassador to reduce cost of expensing hotels during his visit.

During his visit, he would meet Pakistan diaspora, heads of IMF and World Bank, investors, media people, editors and also deliver a talk at the US Institute of Peace.

Efforts for arranging the Imran-Trump meeting have been going on for months.

However, The Express Tribune reported that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman played a key role in arranging the meeting.

According to officials with direct knowledge of the efforts, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Sal-

man used his personal contacts with Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner to arrange the invitation for the prime minister to the White House, the paper reported.

Efforts to arrange the prime minister's trip to the US began in December last year after Trump wrote a letter to Imran, seeking his help in facilitating the Afghan peace process.

An official, who is familiar with the development, told paper that the prime minister was keen to have a face-to-face interaction with Trump because he was of the view that such a meeting would help dispel many misperception the US president may have about Pakistan and its

role in the region .

In March, President Trump indicated his readiness to meet Pakistan's new leadership, amidst the ongoing peace talks between the US and the Taliban facilitated by Islamabad to end the brutal war in Afghanistan.

“Pakistan - we'll be meeting with Pakistan. I think our relationship right now is very good with Pakistan,” Trump said at the end of a White House media interaction when a journalist asked him to comment on the current situation between India and Pakistan.

US envoy Zalmay Khalilzad is spearheading efforts to strike a peace deal with the Taliban with the help of Pakistan.

Khalilzad, the Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, said that Pakistan has an important role to play in Afghan peace talks and cannot be under estimated.

The representatives of the Afghan Taliban, the US as well as officials from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have been meeting in Doha, Qatar. The talks were facilitated by Islamabad as Washington continues to seek an end to the nearly 18-year war in Afghanistan that has killed over 2,000 US soldiers.

## Pakistan hires lobbying firm to advance its interests in US

**ISLAMABAD, JUL 20 (PTI):** Pakistan has hired the services of a leading lobbying firm to ensure effective representation of Islamabad's interests in the US, a media report said Saturday amid strained relations between the two countries.

Relations between Pakistan and the US have been turbulent since Donald Trump took office in 2017, with the president repeatedly singling out Islamabad for failing to rein in extremists and being an unfaithful partner in the fight against terrorism.

Prime Minister Imran Khan is scheduled to meet Trump at his Oval Office on Monday, the first by a Pakistani leader in nearly four years, the last one being that of Nawaz Sharif in October 2015.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi witnessed the contract signing and held discussion with Reynolds and his team members in Washington, Pakistani news agency APP reported.

Qureshi said he was confident that Holland & Knight would be able

## 8 killed due to monsoon related incidents in Sri Lanka

**COLOMBO, JUL 20 (PTI):** At least eight people have been killed and over 700 homes damaged due to monsoon-related incidents in Sri Lanka's central and southern region, authorities said on Saturday.

Sri Lanka is witnessing inclement weather since Thursday and is likely to witness continuous rain for a few days in the central, western and south western regions.

Till Saturday eight people have been killed

to work efficiently with the Pakistani embassy to advance Pakistan's interests in the US.

Reynolds thanked the foreign minister for reposing confidence in the firm and assured him of their full support in efforts to forge stronger Pakistan-US bilateral relations based on mutual respect and interests.

The lobbying team will comprise of Reynolds and other former members of congress, former senior administration officials, Capitol Hill veterans and other professional experts.

The Pakistani embassy had no lobbyist in Washington DC for the past six years, the report said.

The agreement coincides with Prime Minister Khan's maiden visit to the US since assuming office.

The premier is accompanied by Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, ISI Director General Lt-Gen Faiz Hameed, Adviser on Commerce Abdul Razzak Dawood and Special Assistant on Overseas Pakistanis Zulfi Bukhari.

due to monsoon related incidents.

“Seven deaths have been reported from the central hill areas. Landslide warnings have been issued in the central hill areas, Pradeep Kodippilly, the disaster management center's spokesman, said. The eighth death was reported when a tree fell on a motor cycle from Southern part of the country, police said.

Kodippilly said the people have been warned of the impending

## Manila asks Iran to free Filipino on seized British-flagged tanker



**MANILA, JUL 20 (AFP):** The Philippines said Saturday it would ask Iran to free a Filipino crew member of a British-flagged tanker seized by Tehran's Revolutionary Guards.

The Swedish-owned Stena Impero was seized in the Strait of Hormuz on Friday for colliding with a fishing boat, Iranian authorities said, as tensions mount in a key waterway for the world's oil supplies.

The Philippine foreign department said one of the ship's crew is a Filipino citizen, and that the others were 18 Indians, three Russians and a Latvian.

The agency that supplied the Filipino crew member told Manila there were no reported

injuries as the vessel headed for the Iranian coast on Friday, the department said in a statement.

“(Philippine) Ambassador to Iran Fred Santos is contacting Iranian authorities to seek assurance that the Filipino seafarer is safe and will be released soon,” it said, adding the unidentified crew member's family has been notified.

Iranian authorities said the tanker has anchored off the port of Bandar Abbas with all its 23 crew aboard.

Britain said a second ship had also been seized in the Persian Gulf -- the Liberian-flagged Mesdar.

The Mesdar's British owner said its ship had been tem-

porarily boarded by armed personnel, but was free to leave and that all crew were “safe and well”.

Tensions in the Gulf have soared in recent weeks, with US President Donald Trump in June calling off air strikes against Iran at the last minute after Tehran downed a US drone, and blaming Iran for a series of tanker attacks.

Washington has been ratcheting up sanctions against Tehran after the US unilaterally withdrew from a 2015 deal under which Iran agreed to limit its sensitive nuclear development activities in return for the lifting of crippling economic sanctions.

## Second ship seized in Gulf free to leave: British owner

**LONDON, JUL 20 (AFP):** The British owner of a second tanker reportedly seized by Iranian authorities in the Gulf on Friday said the ship had been temporarily boarded by armed personnel but was now free to leave.

“Communication has been re-established with the vessel and (the captain) confirmed that the armed guards have left and the vessel is free to

continue the voyage. All crew are safe and well,” Norbulk Shipping UK said in a statement about the ship, the Mesdar.

The company said the Liberian-registered vessel was boarded by armed personnel at around 1630 GMT. It did not give any more details about the personnel but said the ship began heading north towards Iran.

The company said

that by 2000 GMT the armed personnel had left and the ship was free to continue on its voyage. According to the website Marine Traffic, the ship was on its way from China to Saudi Arabia.

The British government earlier accused Iranian authorities of seizing two vessels in the Gulf, including a UK-registered one, but did not name them.

## Western allies back UK over tanker seizure

**PARIS, JUL 20 (AFP):** Iran's seizure of a UK-flagged tanker in the Strait of Hormuz has further heightened tensions in the Gulf region after the US military claimed it had downed an Iranian drone.

Britain's allies have called for the release of the vessel, warning of the danger of escalation.

US President Donald Trump said he would hold talks with Britain about the tanker's seizure by Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

“And this only goes to show what I'm saying about Iran: trouble.

Nothing but trouble,” he told reporters at the White House on Friday.

He again denounced the 2015 deal between Iran and Western powers aimed at curbing Tehran's nuclear ambitions, describing it as a “ridiculous agreement” made by his predecessor Barack Obama.

landslides in the south western hilly region of Imbulpe in the Ratnapura district.

Fishing society groups said around 200 fishermen with their 30 boats are believed to be trapped in the gusty winds in the seas.

Trump pulled the United States out of the deal last year and began ratcheting up sanctions against Iran.

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said Tehran's seizure of the tanker showed “worrying signs Iran may be choosing a dangerous path of illegal and destabilising behaviour”. The incident came hours after a court in the British territory of Gibraltar extended the detention of an Iranian tanker seized two weeks ago on allegations of breaching EU sanctions against Syria.

“Our reaction will be considered but robust. We have been trying to find a way to resolve Grace 1 issue but WILL ensure the safety of our shipping,” Hunt said on Twitter.

British cabinet minister James Brokenshire said London was still seeking to establish dip-

lomatic connections with Tehran over the incident.

“The action of the Iranians is completely unacceptable. It is so important that we maintain this free navigation through the Gulf,” he told BBC radio.

“We want to see this matter resolved in a diplomatic way.” -

Germany called on Iran to immediately release the Swedish-owned, British-flagged Stena Impero.

The seizure was a “dangerous further aggravation of an already tense situation,” a foreign ministry statement said.

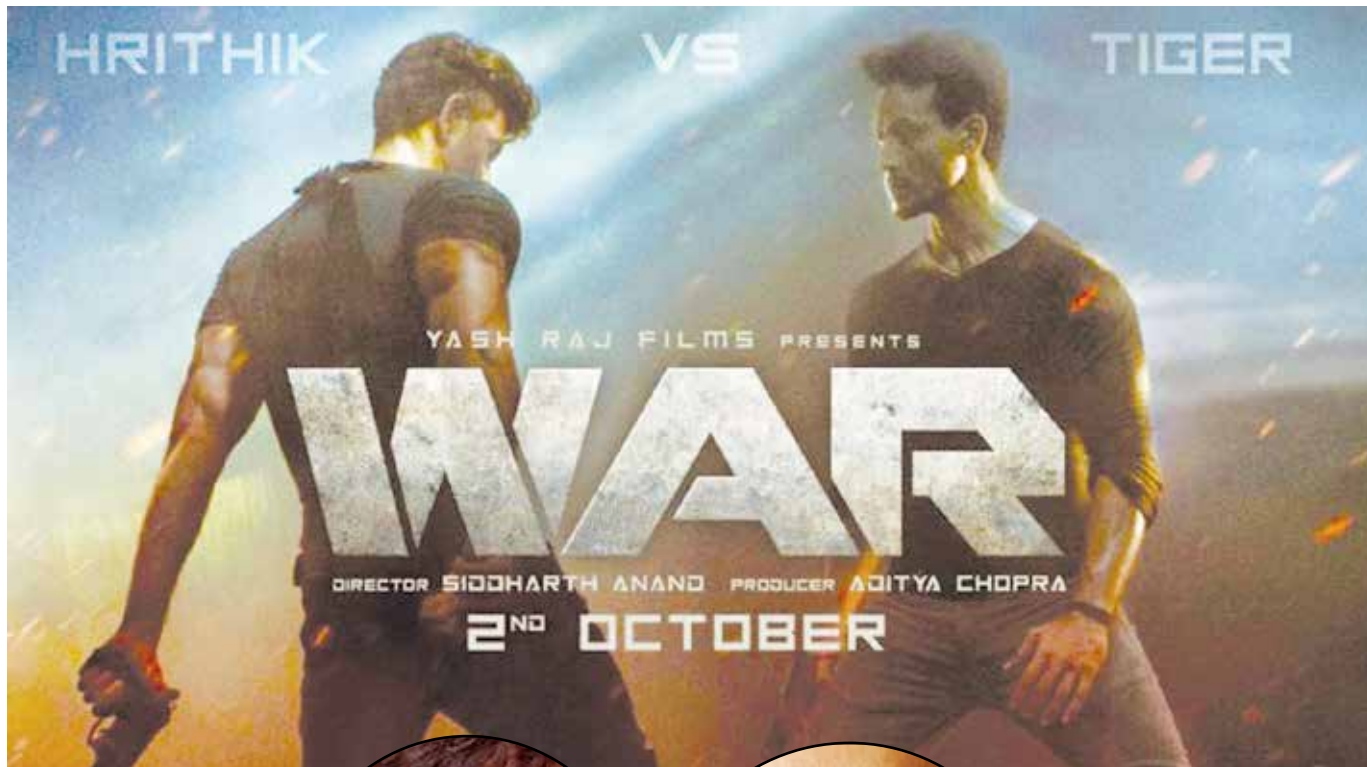
France made a similar call, with the foreign ministry saying Iran's action “hampers a necessary de-escalation of tensions in the Gulf region”.

“We call on Iranian authorities to quickly release the ship and its crew, and to respect freedom of navigation principles in the Gulf.”

**www.summittimes.com**



# Hollywood action choreographers roped in for Hrithik, Tiger's 'War'



**MUMBAI, JUL 19 (PTI):**

Touted as one of the biggest action entertainers of the year, "War", featuring Hrithik Roshan and Tiger Shroff, has three Hollywood action-choreographers working on the sequences of the film.

Paul Jennings, Franz Spilhaus, SeaYoung Oh and famous Bollywood action-director Parvez Shaikh have choreographed the action sequences of the Yash Raj Films project.

"When we have Hrithik taking on Tiger, the promise of the film to audiences become huge and we wanted to deliver the action experience for people to feel the adrenaline rush.

"We have four of the top action directors from different parts of the world like Paul Jennings, Franz Spilhaus, Sea Young Oh and Parvez Shaikh all specialists in creating a different type of spectacle, choreographing breath-taking,

**There is work for actors across all age groups on TV, says Urvashi Dholakia**

**MUMBAI, JUL 20 (PTI):** Popular TV star Urvashi Dholakia says the television industry has been kind to actors across all age groups.

At the age of 41, she features in dance reality show "Nach Baliye 9". Before that, she appeared in the supernatural-fantasy show "Chandrakanta Ek Mayavi Prem Gaatha".

"The TV industry has evolved and there is room, work for all actors, across age groups. What matters is a lot of talent, hard work and luck and I have a mix of all three. I am happy the way people see me in a different way. Producers approach me for diverse work because they have trust and faith in me that I could deliver," Urvashi told PTI.

The actor says TV was considered over the top and regressive even in the early 2000s but still there are shows which the audiences remember even now.

"Till date TV is viewed on a large scale and masses are watching it. TV is still ruling. We were the lucky ones to do shows like 'Kasautii Zindagii Kay', 'Kahiin To Hoga' and others that were accepted by the audience. "TV has evolved and I believe I have also evolved along with it. We both are ageing very beautifully. TV wasn't this big then. There were a handful of channels but today there are so many channels and shows. The time has gone that one show will stick out. I feel lucky the shows that we did is still embedded in the minds of the audience."

Urvashi is coming back to a non-fiction format "Nach Baliye", a dance reality show, after a gap of seven years.

The show, which is backed by Salman Khan, will see real-life exes and current partners showing their dancing skills. In the ninth season of this show, she is said to partner with her ex-boyfriend Anuj Sachdeva.

"The concept was different and interesting so I gave it a shot," Urvashi said, adding, "Since Salman is backing it so I was all the more excited for it."

The show went on air on Star Plus channel from Friday.

never seen before action stunts," Siddharth Anand, director of the film, said in a statement.

He added that the makers will be revealing the big action sequences in a special way.

Jennings is best known for his work on Hollywood action spectacles like "The Dark Knight", "San Andreas",

"Jack Reacher" and "Game of Thrones", while South Korean master action director SeaYoung is known for designing hand-to-hand combat sequences in films such as "Avengers: Age of Ultron", "Snowpiercer among others.

Spilhaus is credited for action-direction in Denzel Washington and Ryan Reynolds' "Safe House" and "Death Race"

India's Shaikh has previously designed action in big ticket Bollywood films like "Tiger Zinda Hai", "Kesari" and "Mary Kom", among others.

"WAR", which also features Vaani Kapoor opposite Hrithik, is set to release in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu on October 2.

**ISRO wishes luck to Akshay Kumar and team for 'Mission Mangal'**

**MUMBAI, JUL 20 (PTI):** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has extended best wishes to Bollywood star Akshay Kumar and his "Mission Mangal" team after the first trailer of the movie was released recently.

The movie also features Vidya Balan, Taapsee Pannu, Sonakshi Sinha, Nithya Menon, Kirti Kulhari and Sharman Joshi.

The official Twitter handle of the premiere space agency, which is gearing up for India's second mission to the Moon, Chandrayaan-2, on Friday praised the film for its portrayal of ISRO team.

"#MissionMangalTrailer beautifully shows the glimpses of emotions and passion with which #TeamISRO works," read the tweet.

"As #ISRO prepares for landmark launch of #Chandrayaan2, #TeamISRO wishes @akshaykumar all the best for #MissionMangal and all his future endeavour," it said in another tweet.

In "Mission Mangal", Akshay plays the role of a scientist, who along with fellow colleagues spearheads India's mission to send a spacecraft to orbit Mars.

The film, directed by Jagan Shakti, is based on real-life scientists, who contributed to India's first interplanetary expedition, Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), launched by ISRO in 2013.

Responding to ISRO's tweet, Akshay wished the space agency best of luck for Chandrayaan 2, which was earlier set to lift off on July 15 but was called off due to a "technical snag" in its most powerful rocket. It will be now launched on July 22.

"Thank you so much and wishing best of luck once again to #TeamISRO for #Chandrayaan2" he wrote in a post.

"Mission Mangal", produced by Cape of Good Films, Hope Productions and Fox Star Studio, is scheduled to be released on August 15.



**HEY COWGIRL! The "High Horse" singer, Kacey Musgraves radiates onstage performing on the TODAY show in NYC.**

## Kanu Behl's announces next project 'Agra' with Rahul Roy

**MUMBAI, JUL 20 (PTI):**

Filmmaker Kanu Behl's next directorial will be "Agra", featuring Rahul Roy.

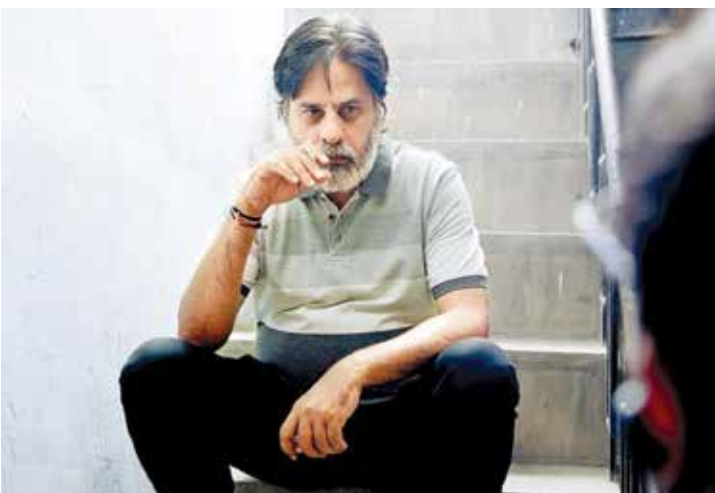
Roy, who made a name for himself in the '90s by starring in films such as "Aashiqui", "Phir Teri Kahani Yaad Aayee", "Junoon" and "Sapne Sajan Ke", is making a comeback to big screen with "Agra".

"Agra", which is Behl's follow-up to his 2015 film "Titli", will chronicle the sexual dynamics that operate within a close dysfunctional family.

The project, produced by Yoodlee films, also features Priyanka Bose, Mohit Agarwal and Ruhani Sharma, Vibha Chibber, Sonal Jha and Anchal Goswami in pivotal roles.

"Agra" is a story of a cosmos of a family throbbing and pulsating, hunting and escaping the dynamic energies that people in the family inhabit. Its an exploration of space in an increasingly crowded world, and the quest for a sexual odyssey of an individual here.

"Having a production house like Yoodlee Films to come onboard and back this project



gives me confidence in their commitment to create meaningful cinema cinema which is at once relevant and unique in content," Behl said in a statement.

Siddharth Anand Kumar, Producer Yoodlee Films and VP, Films and TV Saregama India, said the new project reiterates the company's commitment to create quality cinema.

"The fact that we have a talent like Kanu Behl is in charge of bringing this riveting story to screen makes this an exciting proposition to look out for all cine-goers," he added.

"Agra" will go on floors later this month and is expected to be released early next year.

### Aries:

"Love in its purest form is a sharing of joy. It asks for nothing in return, it expects nothing; hence how can you feel hurt?" A Osho quote to awaken you, wild one. Let go of your definition of what love looks like and embrace it in its purest form.

**Cancer:** Beware of the attachments that keep from experiencing transcendence. The truth is, the two of you may not even exist in each other's lives tomorrow. Should that keep you from experiencing what the present is offering you?

### Taurus:

Think of this as the metaphorical end of the darkness—one that's taking away all that is false in your relationships. Are there certain patterns that are keeping you from experiencing love in its most transcendental form? Attachments that preventing you from attaining Buddhahood? The waxing moon offers us the perfect opportunity to let go of that which no longer serves.

### Gemini:

Gemini, you are Freyja. You are Venus. You are Aphrodite. You are Isis. You are made from the same cosmic juju as the goddesses in the heav-

enly realms. Don't let anybody make you feel otherwise or shame you for putting yourself first. What this phase your life calls for: a greater degree of self-love. Turn to self-care rituals and practices that remind you of your true nature.

### Cancer:

'One step forward, two steps backwards' is never a fun move unless practiced on the dance floor. Stop making this about the other person, Cancer. They are but a mirror reflecting your own being. Start by understanding where you stand in this relationship. What if clarity is the key to breaking past old patterns?

### Leo:

Why does rest get such a bad reputation when it is vital to both our well-being and productivity? Try not to push against flow today. Balance your mission to take over the world with rejuvenation. Resist having a torrid affair with your bed though. See how you can change the scene for yourself. Taking your yoga mat outdoors for a lazy downward dog can help you make space for the good chi to pour in.

### Virgo:

"Love first has to happen in the deepest core

of your being. It is the quality of being alone, happily alone, joyously alone. It is the quality of being a no-mind, of being silent." An Osho quote on love to awaken you, dear Virgo. Have you been looking for love in all the wrong places? Have you been seeking acceptance and validation from others? This week, perfect the art of turning inwards and find that river of love within yourself. You will discover that there is no greater joy in this world.

### Libra:

Daily reminder, Libra: don't make somebody a priority if you are just an option in theirs. What if you chose to give yourself all the love and attention you have been showering onto others? You will be well on your way to creating a very different life for yourself. Your dreams and visions require your undivided attention. Make them a priority. Tapping into your highest potential will help your empire expand enormously.

### Scorpio:

You are a healer, a witch, a light worker and vessel for magick. You are a ray of hope in a world of dark clouds. Tap into your gifts, Scorpio. Tune into a higher frequency. This

will help you hold space for others, despite what you are going through. Remember, you can't always alleviate their problems, but you can make them feel seen and heard. Today, let compassion be the secret ingredient in all of your conversations.

### Sagittarius:

The divine feminine is, by no means, a women's only club. Despite our physical appearance, we are an amalgamation of both masculine and feminine energy (hello, yin and yang). What your higher self wants you to focus on today: connecting with the goddess consciousness. The part of you that creates. The part of your that nurtures. The part of you that flows. Is there a ritual, a ceremony or a spiritual practice that makes you feel 'connected'? Just the kind of Saturday night party you are looking to host on your roof.

### Capricorn:

We're leaving the old paradigms behind. We're letting go of that which adds no value to the script we're about to write. What does this mean for you, Capricorn? A relationship that has lived past its expiration date? If it's taking away more than it's giving you, you know ex-

actly what you need to do. Awaken to the new pathways that are opening up at this moment.

### Aquarius:

It's okay to change your priorities. It's okay to alter the course of your life. Your changing beliefs are proof of the fact that you are transforming at the speed of light. Continue to focus on the process of elimination. Take a moment to assess both your tangible and intangible reality. This will give you the clarity you need to rewrite the script. PS: Don't worry too much about what is being taken away from you—it's all a part of the divine plan.

### Pisces:

"In real love there is no relationship, because there are not two persons to be related to. In real love there is only love, a flowering, a fragrance, a melting, a merging." An Osho quote to awaken you, dear Pisces. This is the weekend to experience a love that transcends the boundaries of time and space; to explore intimacy on a deeper level. You may or may not exist in each other's lives tomorrow in the same form. But don't let fear keep you from embracing the blessings that you are being offered in this moment.