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DISEASE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS**

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**WHAT KABIR BEDI SAID ABOUT
GRANDDAUGHTER ALAYA WORKING
WITH 'SEASONED ACTORS'
IN JAWAANI JAANEMAN**

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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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All convicts in Nirbhaya case have to be hanged together, says Delhi HC

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (PTI):

The Delhi High Court Wednesday said all convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case have to be executed together, and not separately.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait directed convicts to file any application which they want within one week after which authorities should act.

The high court dismissed the Centre's plea challenging the trial court's order staying the execution of the convicts.

The Centre and the Delhi government had challenged the trial court's January 31 order staying "till further orders" the execution of all the four convicts in the case -- Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Kumar Sharma (26) and Akshay Kumar (31), who are lodged in Tihar Jail.

Education Dept reminder notice to private institutions

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 FEB:

Education Department has issued a reminder notice to all private institutes/schools in Sikkim to get themselves registered, recognized or renew their registration with the Registration Cell of Education Department on or before 31 March, 2020, a press release informs.

Failure to this will invite penal action including closure of school and fine as per the RTE Act, 2009, the release adds.

Earlier, a Notice was issued vide Reference No. 42/JD/Exam/2019 on 9th December, 2019, by the Education Department.

49 recommendations shortlisted for police reforms

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (PTI):

The government has shortlisted 49 recommendations made by various panels for bringing police reforms and a meeting of home ministers of states would soon be held to evolve ways to implement them, Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday.

Replying to supplementaries during Question Hour, Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said four committees have been set up from time to time for making policing effective and transparent, out of which the government has identified 49 of them and is working on ways

Screening underway at all border posts; 81,237 screened so far

SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 05 FEB:

Health Department has so far screened a total of 81,237 persons entering Sikkim at five check-posts of the State as a preventive measure against Coronavirus. No cases of Coronavirus were found during this screening process.

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, Director General-cum-Principal Director, Health Department, Dr PT Bhutia mentioned that an intense screening process has been going on 24x7 at the State's check-posts at Ut-

tarey [Indo-Nepal border], Rangbang, Rangpo, Reshi and Melli from 29 January.

He informed that till now 160 persons have been screened at Ut-tarey, 639 at Rangbang, 52,209 at Rangpo, 1908 at Reshi and 26,321 at Melli. He stated that the teams at the check-posts have been asking people entering the State about their travelling history and symptoms.

Dr Bhutia mentioned that along with the screening at check-posts, the department has launched an awareness campaign across the State through poster and leaflets in different languages and messages on different media and social media.

The department has established a 20-bedded ward in old STNM hospital complex for quar-



antine process and isolation wards, ambulances and personal protection gears have been kept ready in all district hospitals, he said. He added that a 20-bedded ward in

new STNM hospital has also been kept ready for quarantine.

"So far 857 persons across the world have recovered from this disease, so it is treatable and

people should not panic," Dr Bhutia said.

He added that the State has been in continuous touch with the Centre through video conferencing and other mediums.

"We have also launched a helpline 104 for information regarding coronavirus and its symptoms but we have just received three calls so far. The people need to

come forward to use this helpline to stay aware and informed," he said.

Responding to a query on three students who returned to Sikkim from China, he informed that the department tracked and traced the three students who arrived in Sikkim before 10 January. He mentioned that the department kept them in home quarantine and they have already passed their incubation period of 14 days and are absolutely fine and safe.

Health Department Additional Director-cum-Nodal Officer, IDSP, Dr YD Chankapa mentioned that teams of doctors and nurses, Infected Disease Management Committee, Rapid Response teams were ready and orientations and trainings have been conducted for them.

CID Sikkim recovers large number of lost smartphones



REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 05 FEB:

The cyber cell team of CID Sikkim Police has made a major breakthrough in recovering dozens of lost smartphones. The owners of these phones had given up hope of getting back their phones since considerable time had passed after they had

reported the matter to the police.

However, it came as a pleasant surprise when they got a call from one of the cyber cell team members informing them that their phones had been recovered.

Technical surveillance along with human effort is a must in such cases as it takes a long

time and dedicated efforts to track the lost phones, said SP CID, Manish Verma.

Today the phones were handed over to a few owners. They thanked the department as some of the phones were high end and expensive. Further the personal data of the users were stored in the phone.

SACAA unloads criticism on SKM president's foundation day address

Group sees SKM Govt going the SDF way

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK 05 FEB:

Sikkim Against Citizen-Ship Amendment Act [SACAA] has criticized the address of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha president and Chief Minister, PS Tamang during the 8th foundation day celebration of SKM held at Rangpo on 04 Feb.

Addressing a press conference here today, SACAA member, Passang Sherpa alleged that Mr Tamang's speech was an attempt to hide the mistakes of his government in these 8 months. He stated that despite repeated protests on the appointment of Prof Mahendra P Lama as the Chief Economic Advisor, the CM defended him instead of removing him immediately.

It was during Prof Lama's tenure as economic advisor to the state from 2002 to 2009 under the previous government,



that hydel projects and pharma companies were brought into the State without proper studies.

"Now these hydel projects and pharma companies have become a headache for the State government and the people of the State are only getting temporary jobs in insignificant posts," he said.

On appointment of retired CBI officers for Vigilance Police, Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee president, Bharat Basnet, said that the State does not need any retired CBI officials as the people have voted for SKM in the hope that the party would allow CBI to investigate corruption in Sikkim.

"In 25 years of SDF government, PS Tamang had also served as a Minister for 15 years so he does not want to bring the CBI as he may also be involved in corruption," he alleged.

Mr Sherpa criticized the CM's statement that former SPs and DSPs are being appointed on contractual basis for the Vigilance Police in order to punish the corrupt.

"It is an attempt of the SKM to renege on its promise to bring the CBI into the State by bringing in retired CBI officials in the State," he said.

He also questioned the appointment of Sunil Saraogi as OSD

to CM stating that the Managing Director of a Kolkata-based company would not work without expecting any profit.

On the same, Mr Basnet stated that the Resident Commissioner at Delhi is competent to pursue the State's issues at the Centre and there is no need to appoint an OSD.

On the statement of the CM on service extension, Mr Sherpa stated that service extension and reemployment are the same thing and the government should immediately remove all officials who have been given service extension and reemployment.

turn to pg 02

EB-Man U proposed match hits financial hurdle

KOLKATA, FEB 5 (PTI):

East Bengal are desperately looking for sponsors to host English Premier League giants Manchester United for a dream clash, later this year.

A Manchester United delegation did a recce for the match, planned as per their ongoing centenary celebrations, but with the budget estimated to be Rs 30-crore plus, East Bengal are now in a quandary.

"They are happy and have submitted the report after the inspection. After May we can decide

whether they would play or not. As of now we are busy with finding a new investors," East Bengal executive member Debabrata Sarkar told PTI. Having severed ties with current sponsors Quess Corp who are set to leave after the end of the season, East Bengal are looking for sponsors.

On the field too East Bengal are going through a rough patch having suffered four defeats from five matches, including a derby debacle to slip to seventh in the table. East Bengal's Bengaluru-based ti-

tle sponsors Quess Corp drew criticism in social for the performance as they have posted an apology.

"QEBFC management expresses its sincere regret and apology for any statement/comment which have hurt our fan base and anyone in the East Bengal Family," it said in their tweet post.

Last month, shoes were thrown at Quess East Bengal CEO Sanjit Sen and COO Biswajit Chatterjee following their 1-3 loss to Gokulam Kerala in an I-League match in Kalyani.

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Golay turns 52

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 FEB:

Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang [Golay] turned 52 on Wednesday.

President of India, Ram Nath Kovind has conveyed his best wishes and regards to Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) on his birthday.

The President has wished him good health, happiness and many more years of continued and dedicated service to the nation.

Along with the President, the Vice-President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu has also extended his warm wishes to the Chief Minister on his birth anniversary and wished for his healthy life and many more years of dedicated service towards the nation.

Secretary to the Chief Minister, S.D. Dhakal handed over the messages from the President and Vice President of India to the Chief Minister this morning at his residence.

The CM has thanked the President and Vice-President for their wishes.

"I am extremely pleased and humbled to receive birthday greetings from the Hon'ble @rashtrapatibhvn and the Hon'ble Vice-President @MVenkaiahNaidu," Mr Tamang has said in a post on Twitter.

CBI registers case in Rs 1,000 cr scam in Chhattisgarh

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (PTI): The CBI on Wednesday registered an FIR against unidentified officials in connection with a Rs 1,000 crore rehabilitation scam in Chhattisgarh, officials said.

The officials are accused of siphoning funds amounting to Rs 1,000 crore from the State Resource Centre (SRC) and the Physical Referral Rehabilitation Centre (PRRC) of the state government over a period of 10 years. The Chhattisgarh High Court had directed the CBI to take over the probe, officials said.

On January 30, the high court ordered the CBI to register a First Information Report against 12 bureaucrats, including seven IAS officials, in the case of the alleged irregularities.

The order was passed by a division bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Parth Pratim Sahu.

District Advisory Committee on Youth Programme meets

NAMCHI, 05 FEB (IPR): A planning and co-ordination meeting on District Advisory Committee on Youth Programme (DAC-YP) under the chairmanship of District Collector (South), Ragul K was held at DAC Namchi today.

Present in the meeting were State Director for NYK, Sibasis Banerjee alongside District Youth Coordinator NYK (West), Dev Nepal, District Youth Coordinator NYK Namchi, Muskan Rai. The meeting was also attended by HOD's from various line departments alongside executive members of NYK South.

In the course of the meeting, District Youth Coordinator NYK (West), Mr Nepal presented a brief report of the activities and programmes un-



dertaken by NYK in the district so far.

He also spoke about the objective of the upcoming National Integration Camp (NIC) which is to create nationwide opportunities for larg-

est ever participation of youth particularly belonging to rural areas and informed that the camp will have the participation of 300 youths from 16 states.

In addition, he also

highlighted the achievements of the organization and called for coordination from the District Administration and line departments for successfully conducting the NIC.

DC South also ad-

ressed the meeting wherein he handed over roles and responsibilities to the stakeholders for ensuring smooth conduct of the NIC and extended full cooperation from the DAC.

He also placed suggestions before the NYK body to mobilize youth from the district through departments such as Sports and Social Justice and Welfare in order to establish wide outreach of youth centric programmes.

It may be mentioned here that National Integration Camp (NIC) will be held from 23 to 27 Feb at Chemchey and will include various programs such as youth rallies, cultural programs and sporting events for the youth to participate.

CM prays at Rolu Mandir and Sribadam monastery



GYALSHING, 05 FEB [IPR]: Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] today offered prayers at Rolu Mandir in South Sikkim Phunchok Choling Gumpa at Lower Sribadam in West Sikkim where he also called on the Rimpoche and assured to extend all

possible support for the monastery.

His son, Soreng Chakung MLA, Aditya Golay, concerned officers of the respective districts, sub division and BACs, along with local residents at large were also present during the visits.

BJP local leaders held with arms in Barddhaman

BARDDHAMAN (WB), FEB 5 (PTI): Two local leaders and as many workers of the BJP were arrested with arms and ammunition from Purba Bardhaman district, police said on Wednesday.

They were allegedly carrying a country-made gun, three bullets, four bombs, a sword, a bow and a number of arrows in a car which was parked by the side of a road in Jamalpur area on Tuesday night, police said.

The four were remanded to police custody by a local court where their counsel claimed that they were implicated in a false case.

The arrested four included Asish Das and

Mahadeb Soren, president and secretary of two 'mandals' (local units) of the party in neighbouring Hooghly district.

Police alleged that they were waiting by the roadside with the intention to rob cars. Two others who were also in the car had managed to escape.

When produced before a court on Wednesday, they were remanded to four day's police custody.

Their lawyers submitted before the judge that they were guarding an under-construction building which will house a party office, and were going to have food at the time of the arrest.

Chinese delegation skips DefExpo

LUCKNOW, FEB 5 (PTI): The Chinese delegation has skipped the DefExpo, India's biennial exhibition of military platforms and weapons, in view of the coronavirus outbreak in China's Hubei province, officials said on Wednesday.

Official delegations from over 40 countries and top executives of 172 military manufacturers are attending the exhibition which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday.

The Chinese government had conveyed to the government that it will not be able to send the delegation in view of coronavirus outbreak in Hubei province.

The Russian Trade Minister Denis Manturov also skipped the expo. However, the reasons for his trip cancellation were not known.

With China scrambling to contain the deadly virus that has killed 490 people there, India on Sunday announced

temporary suspension of e-visa facility for Chinese travellers and foreigners residing there, and issued a fresh advisory, saying anyone with travel history to China since January 15 can be quarantined.

The coronavirus has also cast a shadow at the auto expo in New Delhi.

On Tuesday, automobile industry body Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) had said all Chinese companies participating in the expo have confirmed that their exhibit area would be manned by their Indian employees.

In addition, auto component makers body (ACMA) said Chinese participants at the components show of the expo are unable to travel to India due to the outbreak of the coronavirus in China.

Apart from 490 fatalities, 24,324 confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus infection have been reported in 31 provincial-level regions in China.

SACAA unloads...

While criticizing the statement of the CM on the CAA, he stated that the State government should immediately pass a resolution in the Assembly against CAA and extend Inner Line Permit in the entire state.

Further, Mr Sherpa has asked the State Government to clear its stand on the Companies Act which has not been extended to Sikkim yet.

Stating that, in her budget speech, the Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman mentioned tax holiday for young entrepreneurs of the country, Mr Sherpa said that without the Companies Act, the youth of Sikkim will not be able to take advantage of this benefit.

He added that the Union Finance Minister has also mentioned that income tax exemption to Sikkim was for a certain period only. On the same, he questioned the silence of the State government on the matter.

Another SACAA member, Nawin Kiran Pradhan alleged that the State government has been trying to mislead people and is casting doubt on the competency of Sikkim Vigilance Police. While criticizing the CM statement on the service extension and reemployment, Mr Pradhan alleged that SKM government is repeating what the earlier government did.

SACAA member, Yehang Tshong brought up the Limboo-Tamang Assembly seat reservation issue and said that the SKM government should call a meeting of all stakeholders to resolve the issue.

Likewise, another member, Sonam Sherpa alleged that the CM is not talking about programme and policy for youths but is only using the youth as party flag carriers like the SDF government.

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General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College. Flat Land no cutting required. Price 27 Lakhs (negotiable).
Contact: 9800201335

LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

An area measuring 1 acre at Sadam South Sikkim near Loretto Convent School at Gupti road. Price negotiable any one interested can contact: 78640-04501,62970-03235, 98320-48410

Opp parties in RS say Constitution under threat, defend anti-CAA protests

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (PTI): Terming the protests over the amended citizenship law as "spontaneous", opposition parties in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday alleged that the Constitution is under threat from the ruling BJP which is "destroying" the social fabric of the nation.

Members from the NCP, DMK, TDP and the RJD also voiced concern over the detention of NC leader Farooq Abdullah since August 5 last year when Article 370 giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir was scrapped, and questioned the government's intent.

Participating in the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's address in the Upper House, the ruling BJP defended the government's decisions on Jammu and Kashmir and the Citizenship Amendment Act, saying they have strengthened the nation and democracy, and slammed the opposition for backing protests like in Shaheen Bagh.

"Nehru, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Constitution and we the people of India

are under attack.... Every day under the present government is January 30 when Mahatma Gandhi was murdered.

"Ecosystem of the nation is being destroyed and days are not far off when the word Taliban will not be alien here," RJD leader Manoj Kumar Jha said.

He said the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act were "spontaneous" including in Shaheen Bagh and the situation was so alarming that "5-6 states had passed resolution against CAA and NRC".

He apprehended that the days were not far-off when the fight between the Centre and states will reach the streets and added that "a majority in Parliament is not a licence for a majoritarian in Parliament".

Majeed Memon (NCP) asked what kind of terror was created by former J-K chief minister Farooq Abdullah that he was detained since August 5 and could not attend Parliament. The National Conference leader is an MP from Srinagar.

He charged that the President's

speech did not portray the true picture of the country and appeared like a political manifesto of a political party.

Memon said the constitutional validity of abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir is yet to undergo judicial scrutiny.

DMK's Vaiko termed August 5, 2019 as the "blackest day" in the history of India saying three former chief ministers were detained and added that it was a pre-mediated conspiracy of "Hindutva forces". Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi Naqvi said the BJP government has strengthened the social fabric of nation and believed in "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas".

He took a dig at the Congress, saying this is a strong government unlike in the past when "there used to be a PM and super PM and super PMO".

He said electricity connection has been provided in all villages, 11 crore toilets were built and loot in the corridors of power was nipped.

Naqvi charged the Congress with

Green Skill Development Programme and Certificate Course on Ecotourism



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 05 FEB:

A three-week Green Skill Development programme cum certificate course on Ecotourism Livelihood Enhancement is being organized by G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment & Sustain-

able Development at its Sikkim Regional Centre, Pangthang, from 03-22 Feb, a press release informs.

In the inaugural session, Joint Director ICAR-NOFRI, Gangtok, Dr. R.K. Avasthe, encouraged the participants by sharing several import-

ant views on ecotourism and connected various livelihood potentials with ecotourism and emphasized that there is a need to have soft skill in ecotourism which generates employment for local people.

In-charge, Spices Board, Gangtok, Dr.

T.N. Deka, mentioned that Sikkim Himalaya is blessed with accessible natural assets of the region which further needs to be integrated with ecotourism. Head GBPNIHESD, SRC, Dr. Rajesh Joshi explained the institutes' efforts towards ecotourism

development in the region/landscape and motivated the participants.

Dr. Joshi included that several local organizations like Tourism & Civil Aviation Department, Govt of Sikkim, Forest, Environment & Wildlife Management Department, Govt of Sikkim, Animal Husbandry Department, Govt of Sikkim, ICAR-NOFRI, BSI, KCC, ATREE, MLAS, MSME, ECOS, WWF, Spice Board, and National Horticulture Board, Sikkim University are supporting this event.

During the technical session, Ecotourism Expert, Rinzeno Lepcha, delivered an orientation on ecotourism and its sustainable wheel management. The GSDP cum certificate course is being coordinated by Dr. Devendra Kumar and Dr. Kailash S. Gaira.

U-17 boys return from National School Games football campaign



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 05 FEB:

Sikkim's U-17 boys football team returned home today with the runners-up trophy from the 65th National School Games held at Agartala, Tripura.

It may be recalled that Sikkim went down to home team Tripura by a solitary goal in the finals of the tournament

played on 02 February.

Sikkim's Ongda Lepcha was the highest scorer of the tournament with 10 goals against his name.

The U-17 boys received a warm welcome from a team of officials from Sports & Youth Affairs Department at Rangpo on Wednesday.

The officials congratulated the team for

winning the runners-up trophy, individual silver medals and the highest scorer trophy.

An 18-member State team had represented Sikkim at the tournament and was accompanied by Pushpa Gurung as team coach, Mayal Lepcha as team manager and Bharat Tamang as chef-de-mission.

Coronavirus: 104 kept at ITBP facility test negative

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (PTI):

A total of 104 people kept at an ITBP facility here have tested negative for the novel coronavirus, while results for over 300 inmates are awaited, a force spokesperson said on Wednesday.

As many as 406 people have been quarantined at the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) facility in Delhi's Chhawla area since last week after they were brought in two batches from Wuhan in China onboard separate

Air India flights.

"Samples of all the people being hosted at our facility were taken. 102 samples have been found negative for coronavirus infection, while the same report for the rest 302 people is awaited," ITBP spokesperson Vivek Kumar Pandey said.

Seven people from this group kept at the ITBP centre have been shifted to Safdarjung and AIIMS hospitals over the last two days as a precautionary measure and

there condition is not linked to the virus infection, he added.

The ITBP facility in the Chhawla area also has seven Malaysians and one Bangladeshi.

Over 600 Indians have been evacuated from Wuhan by the government. The remaining evacuees have been kept at another quarantine facility set up by the Army in Manesar.

Wuhan, Hubei's capital, is the epicentre of the outbreak.



Sikkim girls win Basketball Championship in Bhutan

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 05 FEB:

Clusters, women's basketball team from Sikkim lifted the Open Winter Basketball Championship organized by Phuentsholing Sports Association from 25 Jan - 02 Feb at

Phuentsholing, Bhutan.

In the finals of the tournament, Clusters defeated Viper, team from Samsee, Bhutan, with a score of 53-37.

Sikkim's Tshering Ongmu Bhutia was adjudged Most Valuable Player of the tournament.

Letter to the EDITOR

CMMSS DESERVES RESTRUCTURING AND TAKING FORWARD

I am writing this in gratitude to the article titled, "Merit Deserves Scholarship" you have brought forth in SummitTimes editorial page dated 05 February, 2020. There is indeed much need to revive, re-structure and take forward the Chief Minister's Merit Scholarship Scheme. I being one such fortunate student to avail the benefit from this scheme have strongly felt and believe that equal and quality education is the only medium to equalize the people of all the sections of the society.

As Benjamin Franklin has rightly said that investment in knowledge pays the best interest, I would like to thank former Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling, who was the architect of this Scheme. My huge respect and gratitude to the present SKM government and Shri PS Golay sir taking this initiative forward. I am sure, we the students studying under this scheme will contribute much to the society and will be the asset for the state in the days to come.

Also I would like to thank the editorial for bringing up this much needed article. I look forward to reading such important matters in your esteemed paper.

Sabin Pandey, BA VI Semester, Department of Humanities, Sikkim Manipal University

[A student of CMMSS 2010 batch]

Kejriwal invites Shah for public debate



NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (PTI):

AAP supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal invited Union Home Minister Amit Shah for a public debate on any issue on Wednesday, saying the people of the national capital wanted to know why should they vote for the BJP in the February 8 Assembly polls.

He also wondered why the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) did not clear the roads near Shaheen Bagh, where a public protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) is going on for nearly two months, and said the saffron party was doing "dirty politics" over the issue to grab power in Delhi.

The people of the national capital wanted to know what had the BJP done for Delhi in the last five years, Kejriwal said, seeking to know why the saffron party was oppos-

ing free schemes for Delhiites.

He said Shah was seeking people's votes saying he will decide who will be the next chief minister of Delhi.

"How can the people of Delhi give you (Shah) a blank cheque? They are not fools," the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor said.

"I want to invite Amit Shahji with an open mind and honesty for a debate on any issue before the people of Delhi to make democracy strong.... He can decide the time and place for the debate," he said.

On Tuesday, Kejriwal had challenged the BJP to declare its chief ministerial face for Delhi by 1 pm on Wednesday and said he was ready for a public debate.


"I ask Amit Shah that if his party does not want to declare the name its chief ministerial candi-

date, he should at least tell the names of the likely candidates. Whether Smriti Irani, Manoj Tiwari, Vijay Goel, Hardeep Singh Puri are the likely chief ministerial candidates," he told reporters on Wednesday.

"You (Shah) are telling people that the Centre has abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution and paved the way for the construction of a Ram temple. People have already voted you (BJP) to power for this (in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls)," he said.

Kejriwal added that the BJP had fielded 10 chief ministers of states ruled by the party and 70 Union ministers for campaigning for the upcoming polls to defeat a small person like him.

The 70-member Delhi Assembly will go to polls on February 8 and the results will be declared on February 11.



**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
FINANCE DEPARTMENT
TASHILING SECRETARIAT
BLOCK-B, GANGTOK.**


No. 653/FIN/ADM Dated: 28.1.2020

TENDER NOTICE
N.I.T No. 649/FIN/ADM Dated: 28.1.2020

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the bonafide Internet Service Provider (ISP's) having Infrastructure Provider-1 (IP-I) License and ISP License holders with credential 80% of the similar nature of work for at least last 3(Three) Years and having existing Optical Fibre Connectivity in the specified locations. The others details relating to the tenders can be downloaded from www.sikkimfred.gov.in under the link "OFC N.I.T Details". The last date for submission of tenders is on 27.02.2020 up to 4.00 PM.

Sd/-
Secretary Revenue
Finance Department
Government of Sikkim.

R.O. No. 347/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20 Date: 29.1.2020



**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
OFFICE OF THE SR.SUPERINTENDENT
OF PRISONS
STATE CENTRAL PRISON
RONGYEK**

Memo No: 15/J/97(Pt-III)478 Dated: 29.01.2020

CORRIGENDUM

With reference to Tender Notice issued vide R.O. No. 334/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20 Dated: 22.01.2020, regarding supply of Ration Grocery and Other Vocational items to the State Central Prison, Rongyek and District Prison, Namchi, the last date for receiving of quotation shall be on 03.03.2020 at 10 am. Further, the Tender Committee shall open the Tender in the office of the Sr. Superintendent of Police/Prison, Rongyek at 11 am on the same day in presence of the Tenderers and their authorized agents.

Sd/-
Sr. Superintendent of Police
State Central Prison, Rongyek

R.O. No. 350/IPR/PUB/Classi./19-20 Date:29.01.2020.



**SOCIAL JUSTICE & WELFARE DEPARTMENT
CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**

No. 284/SJ&WD/CPS/2020 Dated: 03/02/2020

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited from eligible local candidates for filling up the following posts on contractual basis for a period o three years under the Child Protection Scheme sponsored by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India. The details of posts and eligibility criteria area as under:

| Sl.No. | Name of the post | No. of post | Educational Qualifications | Salary |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------------|--|-------------------------|
| 1 | Pro-gramme Officer | 01 | * Graduate in any discipline. * Preference will be given to: i) Degree holder in Sociology/Social Work/ Law AND/OR ii) Having experience in the field of Child Rights/ Welfare/ Protection and in Advocacy, Research, Documentation, Training & Capacity Building. | Rs.26,250/- per month. |
| 2. | Pro-tection Officer | 04 | * Degree holder in Sociology/ Social Work/ Law * Preference will be given to those having experience in the field of Child Rights/ Welfare/ Protection. | Rs. 21,000/- per month. |
| 3. | Le-gal-cum-Probation Officer | 02 | * Degree holder in Law. * Preference will be given to those having experience in the filed of Child Rights/ Welfare/ Protection. | Rs. 21,000/- per month. |
| 4. | Accoun-tant | 01 | * Degree Holder in Commerce. * Preference will be given to those having experience in Accounting and computer skills | Rs. 14,000/- per month. |
| TO-TAL POST | | 08 | | |

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Selection will be done through written examination and viva-voce.
- Only those candidates fulfilling the above eligibility criteria as prescribed against each post should apply.
- Must be in good health and physically fit to discharge his / her duties.
- The successful candidates are liable to be posted in any districts of the State.

Those fulfilling the eligibility criteria must submit their application along with documents addressed to Additional Secretary-cum-Director, CPS on or before 28.02.2020 latest by 4.30 p.m.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Attested copy of mark sheet and degree certificates of academic qualification.
- Attested copy of Sikkim Subject Certificate/ Certificate of Identification from the authorized attestation Authority.
- Attested copy of valid Local Employment Card.
- No Objection Certificate from the Head of Department in case of any temporary employee serving in Government Departments.
- Experience Certificate duly certified by the relevant Authority.
- Medical fitness certificate from a Government Medical Officer.

Applications with attested documents shall only be entertained.

Social Justice & Welfare Department reserves the right to reject any application not found fulfilling the above terms and conditions.

Note: This notice is also available in the departmental website www.sikkimsocial-welfare.gov.in.

**R.O. No. 354/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20 Sd/-
Date: 03.02.2020 Additional Secretary -cum- Director, CPS.**

The NE Club

An idea whose time has come

People of the North-East are seen as one group by the mainland. Of course, this grouping-together is not political or issue-based or even cultural, but results from a collective profiling as “chinkis”. And while we rant often about this “racial” attitude, we continually fail to leverage this recognition of people from the region as one group to secure better privileges for the states of the North-East. Efforts have been made in the past to find common ground to engage with Delhi, but these have too half-hearted and half-baked and have thus failed to deliver anything of any consequence. The CAA affront presents an opportunity for the region to command more attention, and even though it might appear so, it is still not too late to attempt it. Unfortunately, the region continues to ignore a huge opportunity by failing to unite at least for some common causes.

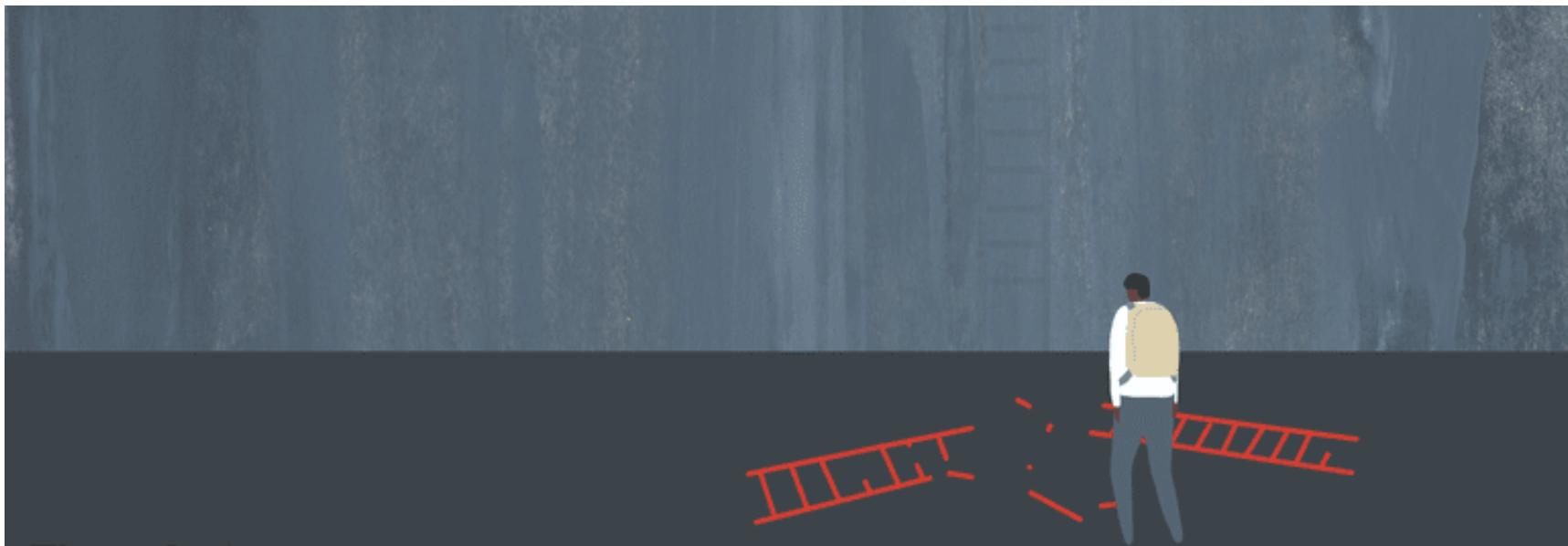
The region has had the North East Council since 1971 and a full-fledged Department for Development of North East Region as well, and even as these institutions have brought funds and infrastructure to the NE, the parochial suspicions of the member states have somehow held the region back from developing together and pursuing larger goals. One could blame petty politics for this lack of cohesion, but the differences obviously run much deeper than that. This, however, should not mean that the NE cannot cobble together a common minimum programme, a set of unanimously endorsed agenda points that the region can pursue with New Delhi. In this regard, Sikkim, the state initially seen as an aberration in the NEC in that it was not contiguous to any North East State, could play a major role. Since Sikkim does not have any shared ‘history’ with the rest of the NE states, it does not even have any points of conflict with any of them either. It is also a very small state, so it is not even in any serious contention for larger shares of NE funds. It is thus ideally positioned as the mediator to bring the region to collaborate more effectively. And this was even attempted some years ago when the North East Members of Parliament Forum met in Gangtok and passed a set of around a dozen resolutions on matters of common concern. The NEMPF had been around for a while before that meeting, but the Gangtok meet was perhaps for the first time that they formalised a common cause and agreed to present a united lobby in New Delhi to get the region heard in Parliament. The fact that the Members of Parliament were meeting on the neutral ground of Sikkim must have facilitated a more intense exchange of ideas and aspirations. But that was all that was achieved and the initiative lost momentum from thereon.

May be some MPs should have taken a more proactive role to keep the club together and then the initiative might have grown in strength. The Gangtok meet of 2010 was after all only the first such meeting and if the resolutions adopted then had been pursued in one northeastern voice in New Delhi, a strong lobby would have been created. The eight states send 37 MPs to the Parliament, including, until Modi happened, even the Prime Minister. In the fractured mandates of the recent times (save the 2014 and 2019 BJP sweep), this is a strong presence.

Mamata’s TMC has only 22 MPs, CPM 3, Congress 52, DMK 24, and Samajwadi Party 5 and look at the kind of muscle they command in Parliament despite the record-shattering 303 MPs that wear the BJP colours in the Parliament. Granted, the MPs from the North East belong to different parties and espouse conflicting ideologies, but if they could agree on a common set of goals for the region and formalize an action plan on how to raise it in Delhi, the Centre will be forced to listen. These issues have to be about more than more funds and investments, they have to be about ensuring more participation in the planning process. The region also has a common complaint against the mainstream media and its ignorance of the region. When 37 MPs speak together and do so often enough, even the mainstream media will be forced to sit up and pay attention, it will be forced to learn about the region as well. And then there is the tiresome charade of lip-service paid to the region as the gateway to southeast Asia, and in Sikkim’s case, to Tibet. Nothing substantial has come of it because thus far the interest has remained limited to individual states. Should the gateway actually open, at a scale more effective than Nathula, the entire region will benefit, but that can happen only if the people of the northeast are taken into confidence in the decision making process. A united body of 37 MPs can ensure that. But they have make a concerted effort first. Should such a collaboration be practiced often enough, even the inter-state issues that trouble the region could at least get discussed in a language more civilized than blockades and staredowns...

WRITE US:

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



What is Systemic Racism and Institutional Racism?

MARY FRANCES O'DOWD
theconversation.com

At the 2020 BAFTA awards, Joaquin Phoenix called out systemic racism in the film industry in his acceptance speech for leading actor.

He said:

“I think that we send a very clear message to people of colour that you’re not welcome here. I think that’s the message that we’re sending to people that have contributed so much to our medium and our industry and in ways that we benefit from. [...]”

I think it’s more than just having sets that are multicultural. We have to do really the hard work to truly understand systemic racism.”

“Systemic racism”, or “institutional racism”, refers to how ideas of white superiority are captured in everyday thinking at a systems level: taking in the big picture of how society operates, rather than looking at one-on-one interactions.

These systems can include laws and regulations, but also unquestioned social systems. Systemic racism can stem from education, hiring practices or access.

In the case of Phoenix at the BAFTAs, he isn’t calling out the racist actions of individuals, but rather the way white is considered the default at every level of the film industry.

Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton first wrote about the concept in their 1967 book *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*.

They wrote:

“When a black family moves into a home in a white neighborhood and is stoned, burned or routed out, they are victims of an overt act of individual racism which most people will condemn. But it is institutional racism that keeps black people locked in dilapidated slum tenements, subject to the daily prey of exploitative slumlords, merchants, loan sharks and discriminatory real estate agents. The society either pretends it does not know of this latter situation, or is in fact incapable of doing anything meaningful about it.

INVISIBLE SYSTEMS

Systemic racism assumes white superiority individually, ideologically and institutionally. The assumption of superiority can pervade thinking consciously and unconsciously.

One most obvious example is apartheid, but even with anti-discrimination laws, systemic racism continues.

Individuals may not see themselves as racist, but they can still benefit from systems that privilege white faces and voices.

Anti-racism activist Peggy McIntosh popularised the understanding of the systemic nature of racism with her famous “invisible knapsack” quiz looking at white privilege.

The quiz asks you to count how many statements you agree with, for items such as:

“I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented

I can be pretty sure of having my voice heard in a group in which I am the only member of my race

I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.”

The statements highlight taken-for-granted privileges, and enable people to understand how people of colour may experience society differently.

CULTURES OF DISCRIMINATION

Under systemic racism, systems of education, government and the media celebrate and reward some cultures over others.

In employment, names can influence employment opportunities. A Harvard study found job candidates were more likely to get an interview when they “whitened” their name.

Only 10% of black candidates got interview offers when their race could be implied by their resume, but 25% got offers when their resumes were whitened. And 21% of Asian candidates got interview offers with whitened resumes, up from 11.5%.

Systemic racism shows itself in who is disproportionately impacted by our justice system. In Australia, Indigenous people make up 2% of the Australian population, but 28% of the adult prison population.

A study into how systemic racism impacts this over-representation in Victoria named factors such as over-policing in Aboriginal communities, the financial hardship of bail, and increased rates of drug and alcohol use.

Australia’s literature, theatres and art galleries are all disproportionately white, with less than 10% of artistic directors from culturally diverse backgrounds.

A WAY FORWARD

Systemic racism damages lives, restricting access and capacity for contribution.

It damages the ethical society we aspire to create.

When white people scoop all the awards, it reinforces a message that other cultures are just not quite good enough.

Public advocacy is critical. Speaking up is essential.

Racism is more than an individual issue. When systemic injustices remain unspoken or accepted, an unethical white privilege is fostered. When individuals and groups point out systemic injustices and inequities, the dominant culture is made accountable.

Find out if your children’s school curriculum engages with Indigenous and multicultural perspectives. Question if your university course on Australian literature omits Aboriginal authors. Watch films and read books by artists who don’t look like you.

As Phoenix put it in his speech:

“I’m part of the problem. [...] I think it is the obligation of the people that have created and perpetuate and benefit from a system of oppression to be the ones that dismantle it. That’s on us.”

Understanding systemic racism is important. To identify these systemic privileges enables us to embrace the point of view of people whose cultures are silenced or minimised.

When we question systemic racism, worth is shared and ideas grow.

[the writer is Senior Lecturer, Indigenous Studies, CQUniversity Australia]

Quarantines have tried to keep out disease for thousands of years

LESLIE S. LEIGHTON
theconversation.com

The recent global spread of a deadly coronavirus originating in Wuhan, China, has led world leaders to invoke an ancient tradition to control the spread of illness: quarantine.

The practice is first recorded in the Old Testament where several verses mandate isolation for those with leprosy. Ancient civilizations relied on isolating the sick, well before the actual microbial causes of disease were known. In times when treatments for illnesses were rare and public health measures few, physicians and lay leaders, beginning as early as the ancient Greeks, turned to quarantine to contain a scourge.

In January, Chinese authorities attempted to lock down millions of residents of Wuhan and the surrounding area, to try to keep the new coronavirus from spreading outward. The country’s neighbors are closing borders, airlines are canceling flights, and nations are advising their citizens against traveling to China, a modern instance of the old impulse to restrict people’s movements in order to stop disease transmission.

U.S. authorities are holding travelers returning from China in isolation for two weeks as an effort to halt coronavirus’ spread. Always at the center of the policy of quarantine is the tension between individual civil liberties and protection of the public at risk.

Keeping contagion at bay The meaning of quarantine has evolved from its original definition “as the detention and segregation of subjects suspected to carry a contagious disease.”

Now it represents a period of iso-

lation for persons or animals with a contagious disease – or who may have been exposed but aren’t yet sick. Although in the past it may have been a self-imposed or voluntary separation from society, in more recent times quarantine has come to represent a compulsory action enforced by health authorities.

Leprosy, mentioned in both Old and New testaments, is the first documented disease for which quarantine was imposed. In the Middle Ages, leper colonies, administered by the Catholic Church, sprung up throughout the world. Although the causative agent of leprosy – the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae* – was not discovered until 1873, its disfiguring and incurable nature made civilizations wrongly believe it was easily spread.

The plague of the 14th century gave rise to the modern concept of quarantine. The Black Death first appeared in Europe in 1347. Over the course of four years, it would kill between 40 million and 50 million people in Europe and somewhere between 75 million and 200 million worldwide.

In 1377, the seaport in Ragusa, modern day Dubrovnik, issued a “trentina” – derived from the Italian word for 30 (trenta). Ships traveling from areas with high rates of plague were required to stay offshore for 30 days before docking. Anyone on-board who was healthy at the end of the waiting period was presumed unlikely to spread the infection and allowed onshore.

Thirty was eventually extended to 40 days, giving rise to the term quarantine, from the Italian word for 40 (quaranta). It was in Ragusa that the

first law to enforce the act of quarantine was implemented.

Over time, variations in the nature and regulation of quarantine emerged. Port officials asked travelers to certify they hadn’t been to areas with severe disease outbreaks, before allowing them to enter. In the 19th century, quarantine was abused for political and economic reasons, leading to the call for international conferences to standardize quarantine practices. Cholera epidemics throughout the early 19th century made clear the lack of any uniformity of policy.

Imported to America

The United States has also had its share of epidemics, beginning in 1793, with the outbreak of yellow fever in Philadelphia. A series of further disease outbreaks led Congress in 1878 to pass laws that mandated involvement of the federal government in quarantine. The arrival of cholera to the United States, in 1892, prompted even greater regulation.

Perhaps the best known example of quarantine in American history, pitting an individual’s civil liberties against public protection, is the story of Mary Mallon, aka “Typhoid Mary.” An asymptomatic carrier of typhoid fever in the early 20th century, she never felt sick but nevertheless spread the disease to families for whom she worked as a cook.

Officials quarantined Mary on North Brother Island in New York City. Released after three years, she promised never to cook for anyone again. Breaking her vow and continuing to spread the disease, she was returned to North Brother Island,

where she remained for the remainder of her life in isolation.

More recently, in 2007, public health officials quarantined a 31-year-old Atlanta attorney, Andrew Speaker, who was infected with a drug-resistant form of tuberculosis. His case grabbed international attention when he traveled to Europe, despite knowing he had and could spread this form of TB. Fearing quarantine in Italy, he returned to the United States, where he was apprehended by federal authorities and quarantined at a medical center in Denver, where he also received treatment. Following release, deemed no longer contagious, he was required to report to local health officials five days a week through the end of his treatment.

Quarantine today continues as a public health measure to limit the spread of contagious disease, including not just coronavirus, but Ebola, flu and SARS.

Its stigma has largely been removed by emphasizing not only the benefits of quarantine to society, by removing contagious individuals from the general population, but also the benefit of treatment to those who are ill.

In the United States, where the Constitution guarantees personal rights, it’s a serious decision to restrict an individual’s freedom of travel and compel medical treatment. And quarantine is not an ironclad way to prevent the spread of disease. But it can be a useful tool for public health officials working to stop the spread of a contagious disease.

[the writer is Visiting Lecturer of History, Georgia State University]

BJP party of “fekus”: Mamata

KRISHNANAGAR (WB), FEB 5 (PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday described BJP as a party of “fekus” (those who bluff) who threaten people with guns and bullets to divide the country on the basis of religion.

Without naming Union minister Anurag Thakur or his ‘gaddaron ko goli maro saalo ko’ remark, Banerjee, who was speaking at a convention of TMC workers at Krishnagar in Nadia district, questioned how a central minister continues in a constitutional post despite speaking unconstitutionally.

The TMC supremo also slammed Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for his “goli vs boli” comment.

She said, “BJP is a feku party. It is only interested in giving out fake news. It is trying to divide the country on the basis of religion and are threatening people with guns and bullets”.

“I was born in Hindustan, not in a nation governed by BJP who attack people with guns and bullets,” she added.

The TMC supremo also criticised the BJP-led government at the Centre for destroying the harmony in the country by forcibly trying to implement the CAA, the NPR and the NRC.

There will be no shortage of funds for NSFs: Rijiju

NEW DELHI, FEB 5 (PTI): Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Wednesday assured that there will be no shortage of funds for the National Sports Federations (NSFs), despite the government slashing its allocation in an Olympic year. The government last week gave a substantial hike of Rs 312.42 crore to its flagship Khelo India programme but reduced allocation to the NSFs, National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) and incentives for sportspersons.

“If there are shortage of funds for the federations, these can always be taken up, that is why there is a provision for revision. If they need more money, they will get more money,” Rijiju told reporters during an interaction here. The highest reduction in the sports budget was seen in National Sports Federations with Rs 245.00 crore being allocated, which is Rs 55 crore less than the revised Rs 300.85 for 2019-20.

As far as incentives for sportspersons are concerned, the budget has proposed to slash the amount from Rs 111 crore to Rs 70 crore. The budget for NSDF also got reduced to Rs 50 crore from the earlier Rs 77.15 crore. Overall, Rs 2826.92 crore was allocated to the sports budget for the next financial year in the Union Budget, which is an increase of a mere Rs 50 crore from the revised estimates of 2019-20.

Rijiju said: “You are looking from a different angle. Whatever we got in the last budget allocation, we had a jump of more than 50 %, what you are saying 50 crores, you are comparing from the Revised Estimate (RE), if you see the original allocation in last budget, it is a historical jump.

Rohingya demand role in running camps and tell NGOs stop ‘ignoring us’

KAAMIL AHMED

DHAKA, 05 FEB [THEGUARDIAN]: In a tea room just outside Bangladesh’s Rohingya refugee camps, a group of young activists fiddle with their phones, which have suddenly started pinging in chorus now they are finally reconnected to the internet.

To circumvent a government internet blackout around the camps in Cox’s Bazar, they have to break a ban on travelling to nearby Bangladeshi towns, from where they can communicate and coordinate messages for the international community.

With simple smartphones the activists have been able to build some kind of Rohingya voice, speaking to the world through WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter. But their efforts have often been frustrated, mostly for a more fundamental reason than the technological barrier in place since August: they believe the aid community sent to help them is not listening.

“The Rohingya community are not weak, but the situation makes us weak,” says Mohammad Arfaat, an activist who was part of a Rohingya team that made a short film about how violence had forced them from Myanmar in 2017.

He has been calling for more help for Rohingya to launch their own initiatives, for everything from education to arts, but complains there has been no support. “The Rohingya youth are very talented ... but nobody sits, nobody talks with them, so their voices have stopped,” says Arfaat.

These concerns have risen since August, when Bangladesh responded to a failed attempt to repatriate the Rohingya – for which not a single refugee volunteered – by imposing tighter restrictions on their movement and communication.

Arfaat says that, despite the crackdown, UN agencies and international aid groups have not been present.

“No one comes to research what’s happening. [They] have protection officers, but what are they



protecting? Whenever there’s violence, they’re not here,” he says. “You see them on social media, talking to the public, but they don’t come to talk to us.” Lack of education has been a particularly pressing concern among Rohingya activists, who have campaigned for years against a government ban on all but the most basic level of schooling, warning of a “lost generation”.

They won a victory last month when Bangladesh announced a pilot programme to teach children between 11 and 13 the Myanmar curriculum. Rohingya teachers and activists had little knowledge of how the plan would work, however.

The restrictions had been in place since the existing camps were established in 1991, when the same fears about future generations prompted Rohingya who had been educated in Myanmar to set up their own independent learning centres in secret, funded by small monthly contributions from parents.

Similar models have become more prevalent since 2017, when the Kutupalong refugee camp became the world’s largest as it ab-

sorbed the hundreds of thousands of people who fled a Myanmar military operation described by the UN as having “genocidal intent”.

Activist Khin Maung says that despite three decades of Rohingya experience in the refugee camps, their expertise is not tapped by humanitarian workers.

“They don’t have the interest to develop our children, they just have the interest to implement their [own] projects,” says Maung, who heads the Rohingya Youth Association. “They are ignoring us because we are refugees. If they treated us as human beings, they would listen to us.”

He complains that organisations implementing education projects often employ underqualified tutors who teach only basic phrases and nursery rhymes, failing to utilise the talents of refugees.

A 2019 study by the Peace Research Institute Oslo said that, despite the barriers imposed on the humanitarian community by the government’s education ban, more could have been done to map out the work carried out by Rohingya them-

selves. “The humanitarian sector often falls short on centring community voices in this way, which I think is due in part to policy restrictions, limited resources and a lack of flexibility,” says the report’s co-author Jessica Olney.

“It’s also due to quick staff turnaround, as many humanitarian staff are new to the Rohingya community and aren’t encouraged or permitted by their agencies to spend time in the camps just talking to people and listening to gain a deep understanding of the context and people’s needs.”

The relationship between the Rohingya and the humanitarian community has been strained by a recent government order to stop paying refugee volunteers in cash, which the authorities claim is used to buy false documents. The government has encouraged the hiring of Bangladeshis instead.

Refugees claim they have been removed from volunteer roles, which typically pay a daily stipend of less than £3, which forces them to rely solely on the aid supply of oil, lentils and rice. NGOs operating in

the area claim “miscommunication” was a reason some Rohingya had been dismissed.

“There is a major communication breakdown between some international humanitarian organisations and the Rohingya refugee volunteers about why they are being dismissed,” says John Quinley, human rights specialist for the advocacy group Fortify Rights, which has documented the dismissals. There was a similar outcry by refugees when the UN refugee agency, the UNHCR, signed an agreement with Myanmar on repatriating the Rohingya in 2018. Refugees said they were not consulted on that deal, or about a system for biometric registration.

A spokesperson for the UNHCR says the agency used several methods to share information with refugees and engage community leaders, including face-to-face meetings, drama performances and podcasts.

The spokesperson adds: “The Rohingya refugee population in Cox’s Bazar is more than 850,000 people. This alone presents a challenge in terms of ensuring that all voices are heard. Furthermore, to communicate effectively with a very large population requires the utilisation of technology. Currently, this presents challenges in Cox’s Bazar due to restrictions on mobile connectivity.

“UNHCR works to ensure that refugees are consulted on key issues and are involved in decision-making processes including through regular protection monitoring and profiling, as well as community outreach. Refugees should be consulted on all issues related to their daily lives and not only significant political developments.”

Maung says the role played by refugees in the humanitarian response over the past two years, from volunteering as translators to other key roles, has been underestimated.

“They ignore us but without Rohingya involvement they can’t do anything in the camps, they can’t even understand us properly. They don’t know our language,” he says. “We are the nuts and bolts.”

Madhya Pradesh Cabinet passes resolution against CAA



BHOPAL, FEB 5 (PTI):

The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet on Wednesday passed a resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act and sought its abrogation, contending the new law was against the Constitution’s secular character.

The resolution was passed during the state Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Kamal Nath, public relations department minister P C Sharma told reporters.

Madhya Pradesh is currently ruled by the Congress.

Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal have already passed resolutions demanding scrapping of the CAA.

Sharma said the Madhya Pradesh Cabinet passed the resolution describing CAA as “against the secular character of the Indian Constitution and differentiating people on religious lines”.

The Citizenship Amendment Act passed by Parliament in December last year endangers the “country’s secular fabric and tolerant nature,” the minister said.

“Secularism is the

basic foundation of the Indian Constitution and which can’t be changed. It is clearly mentioned in the Constitution that India is a secular country.

Besides, Article 14 of the Constitution grants equality to all citizens of the country under the law,” reads the resolution by the state Cabinet.

It asked the Centre to not only take back the CAA, but also clear doubts in the minds of citizens on the issue, as people across the country were protesting against it.

The resolution also demanded that information sought from people in connection with the National Population Register (NPR) be taken back and only after that the census be conducted. To a query, Sharma said a resolution will also be passed against the CAA in the state Assembly.

The CAA, under which non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan will be given Indian citizenship, came into force from January 10. It was passed by Parliament on December 11, 2019.

Mega tribal festival begins in Telangana

HYDERABAD, FEB 5 (PTI):

The biennial ‘Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara,’ a mega tribal festival was celebrated with gaiety and fervor at Medaram village in Mulugu district of Telangana on Wednesday. According to an official release, about one crore pilgrims from Telangana and neighbouring Maharashtra, Odisha and Chhattisgarh are expected to visit the festival.

State Governor Tamilsai Soundararajan and Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao are expected to visit the congregation on February 7, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar told PTI. The four-day mega tribal festival would conclude on February 8. The state govern-

ment has released Rs 75 crore for providing necessary facilities for the devotees.

Around 12,000 policemen have been deployed to oversee security arrangements.

As many as 300 CCTV cameras and 10 drone cameras were installed as part of the security detail, it added. State-owned TSRTC is operating 4,000 bus services to ferry people to and from Medaram.

During the Jatara, declared a state festival by the Telangana government, tribal devotees offer obeisance to goddesses Sammakka and her daughter Saralamma. As per folklore, the festival commemorates the

fight of Sammakka and Saralamma against the oppression of Kakatiya rulers.

On the first day, the arrival of Saralamma on the ‘Medaram Gaddhe’ (platform) is celebrated while the second day marks the arrival of Sammakka.

White jaggery is the traditional offering made to the two deities. Devotees often offer jaggery equivalent to their weight, to Sammakka and Saralamma. They also take a holy bath in Jampanna Vagu (stream).

Somesh Kumar along with the Director General of Police Mahendar Reddy visited the spot and reviewed the arrangements.

Rare reel of Kishore Kumar’s banned Hindi film found after 60 years

PUNE, FEB 5 (PTI): The National Film Archive of India has found a reel of a banned 1957 Kishore Kumar starrer “Begunah”, more than 60 years after the Mumbai High Court ordered all prints of the film to be destroyed.

The rare clip, found last week, shows music composer Jaikishen (of Shankar-Jaikishan fame) on the piano, actor Shakila dancing and Mukesh as the playback crooning the song “Ae Pyaase Dil Bezubaan”.

“Several people have been searching for the reel for many years. Since we didn’t have it, we too started looking for it actively. It is a miracle of a discovery,” NFAI Director Prakash Magdum told PTI.

The film, which released in 1957, got mired in controversy with Paramount Pictures America alleging it was a copy of their 1954 movie “Knock on Wood”.

It won the rights and the Mumbai High Court ordered all the prints of


the film to be destroyed.

All the prints were thought to have been destroyed after the court order but Magdum believes a few travelled elsewhere and survived.

“We obtained the reels from cinema lovers within India,” he added.




He said fans of music composer duo Shankar-Jaikishan had been looking for the footage for a long time as it is the only film to feature Jaikishan in a major appearance.

“We have two 16 mm reels of Kishore Kumar’s film ‘Begunah’ in two phases consisting of around 60 to 70 minutes. One reel came two months back and another came last week. The second one has the song ‘Ae Pyase Dil Bezubaan’. It features Jaikishan on the piano and actor Shakila dancing. The song is sung by Mukesh,” Magdum said. The condition of the reel is not in good condition but the song is “runnable”.



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

The Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) is new strain of Coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China. Notorious for mutating quickly and acquiring new qualities, it is a rising epidemic that was previously not identified in humans.

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|--|--|
| <h4 style="background-color: #ff0000; color: white; padding: 5px;">Symptoms of nCoV</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever Difficulty in breathing Dry Cough Severe acute respiratory syndrome Pneumonia - like symptoms | <h4 style="background-color: #ff0000; color: white; padding: 5px;">Precautions to Prevent nCoV</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash your hands often with soap. Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer Observe good personal hygiene. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. Avoid contact with people with possible symptoms. Avoid contact with animals and consumption of undercooked meats. Avoid travel to nCoV affected places. Wear a mask if you have respiratory syndrome. and cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing. |
| <h4 style="background-color: #00ff00; color: white; padding: 5px;">Treatment</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment is symptomatic and supportive, based on the patient's clinical condition. No vaccinations available as of now. Visit Doctor in case symptoms detected. | |
|    | |
| <p>If you seek help, you may call :</p> <p>- Toll free no. 104</p> <p>District surveillance Officer</p> <p>EAST : 7029372100</p> <p>WEST : 9593297809</p> <p>NORTH : 9641957468</p> <p>SOUTH : 7407691463</p> <p>New STNM</p> <p>AMS : 9434711402</p> | |
| <p>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE</p> <p>GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM</p> | |

Quarantined Chinese footballers forced to train in Brisbane hotel corridor

SYDNEY, 05 FEB [THEGUARDIAN]: The Chinese women's football team have been forced to train in hotel corridors ahead of their Olympic qualifying opener in Sydney on Friday. The team has been in isolation at a Brisbane CBD hotel since their arrival in Australia last week due to strict protocols in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Their quarantine does not end until Wednesday, meaning the 32 players and staff have been unable to leave their hotel during the past week and photos of the team stretching on towels in hotel corridors were published by Chinese sports media group Titan Sports on Twitter.

It is understood the team, who have shown no signs of the deadly virus, will arrive in Sydney on Thursday before taking on Thailand in their opening match at Campbelltown Sports Stadium on Friday. They then face Taiwan on Monday and the Matildas next Wednesday.

The team was placed in quarantine due to having trained in Wuhan – the epicentre of the outbreak – within 14 days of



their arrival in Australia.

The virus has played havoc with the qualifying tournament which has been relocated from Wuhan and Nanjing and then Sydney. Officials have had to adjust the match schedules as well to enable the Chinese to compete.

Several players, including experienced star Wang Shuang, were unable to travel to Australia having returned to Wuhan for Chinese New Year celebrations before the city was placed into lockdown.

While her teammates trained in a Brisbane ho-

tel hallway, footage has emerged of Wang kicking a ball with her brother on a rooftop due to being unable to visit a football pitch in her hometown.

Meanwhile, with officials scrambling to find a way to get the opening round of matches for the Asian Champions League group stage played, Perth Glory's opponents appear to have made their own plans.

Perth were due to kick off their maiden ACL campaign against Shanghai Shenhua on Tuesday at HBF Park in Perth. The federal government's re-

strictions on foreign nationals entering Australia from mainland China in response to the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus in China has however created a huge headache for organisers.

Last Sunday the FFA advised the AFC neither the Glory match nor Sydney's clash with Shanghai SIPG next Wednesday can now be played in Australia.

FFA head of leagues Greg O'Rourke is in Malaysia attending an urgent meeting with stakeholders at AFC headquarters in Kuala Lumpur on

Tuesday as a solution is sought. It seems however that whatever the outcome, Shanghai Shenhua will not be playing Glory next week with reports the team had cancelled their travel plans to Australia.

"Since their entry to Australia is blocked, Shanghai Shenhua cancelled their tickets to Australia on Sunday and went to Dubai for pre-season training this morning instead," Titan Sports Plus tweeted on Tuesday, adding the club didn't expect the Glory match to go ahead as scheduled.

Newcastle's Allan Saint-Maximin sinks Oxford with stunning late winner

ED AARONS

OXFORD, 05 FEB [THEGUARDIAN]: Steve Bruce was not even born when Newcastle won their sixth FA Cup in 1955. But after a superb individual goal from the substitute Allan Saint-Maximin helped them edge past Oxford in extra time, despite a stirring comeback from the League One side, the veteran manager may just allow himself a moment to dream.

Like Newcastle, Bruce has unfinished business in this competition having seen his Hull team surrender a 2-0 lead in the 2014 final against Arsenal and he will know they were fortunate to come through this contest. The visitors had been cruising into the fifth round for the first time since 2006 with only six minutes left to play before a free-kick from substitute Liam Kelly, and Nathan Holland's brilliant volley, turned this game on its head. With their owner, Mike Ashley, watching on in the stands, however, Saint-Maximin's brilliant solo effort set up a trip to West Brom in the next round that will have their manager and all Newcastle supporters hoping it may finally be their year.

"I thought we were in complete control until the last five minutes," said Bruce. "But overall the better team won. It's significant for a club like ours to get to the fifth round – I know what it means for the club and the city. We've made hard work of it but we're there."

Bruce had reacted angrily this week to suggestions that his side had sacrificed style over safety since he succeeded Rafael Benítez as manager, with pre-season predictions that they would struggle to survive having so far proved to be unfounded. Yet despite the mid-season break meaning that their next league match is not until mid-February against Arsenal, he still made five changes for what looked a tricky assignment at this strange stadium with only three stands.

Joelinton was retained in attack, while the Long-staff brothers were paired in midfield despite doubts about both their futures still swirling on Tyneside. A tribute to Jim Smith was unfurled by the home supporters just before kick-off in honour of the manager who took charge of both clubs during the 1980s and died at the end of last year. Oxford reached the top flight for the first time in their history under him before he fell out with the then chairman Robert Maxwell and left to join QPR. Smith subsequently lost to his former employer in the League Cup final the following season but remains a cult figure in this part of the world having returned for another spell in charge in 2006. As a proponent of attacking football, Karl Robinson is a fitting successor to his legacy although the sales of two of his best players – Shandon Baptiste and Tariqe Fosu – to Brentford in the final days of last month have not helped his main objective of achieving promotion to the second tier. Oxford came into this match having drawn five of their previous seven including the 0-0 at St James' Park 10 days ago, although victory over Blackpool at the weekend saw them move up to eighth spot.

With their celebrity fan Timmy Mallett watching on, they were the architects of their own downfall on two occasions in the first half. The decision to play the ball out from the back in the 15th minute appeared to have paid off until Alex Gorrin was caught in possession and an excellent lay-off from Joelinton allowed Sean Longstaff to curl home a brilliant shot.

Messi demands Abidal name names after dressing room criticism

BARCELONA, FEB 5 (AFP): Lionel Messi has hit back at Barcelona sporting director Eric Abidal after the Frenchman blamed slackness in the dressing room for the departure of recently-fired coach Ernesto Valverde.

In an interview with Spanish daily Sport Abidal said that under Valverde, who was sacked in mid-January, many players had been unhappy, hadn't worked hard enough nor communicated properly.

Now Argentine ace Messi has fired a salvo at across his own ranks just as the club are trying to get him to sign a contract extension.

"Sincerely I don't like doing this kind of thing but everyone has to be made responsible for their actions and what they say," Messi said on Instagram.

"We the players in the



dressing room are the first to admit it when we haven't played well. The directors need to take their responsibilities too.

"I believe that if you talk about the players (in this way) you should name names instead of worrying everyone and encouraging rumours that are far from certain."

Earlier Tuesday Abidal had spoken glowingly of Messi and had sounded optimistic of an extended deal.

"I'm sure we'll come to a deal with Leo because he knows we need

him. He's on top form, enjoying his game and breaking records," said Abidal. "We as a club want to make him even happier and to do that by surrounding him with the right teammates. We want a strong team with a good everyday feeling and above all we want to win titles."

Messi signed his last extension in 2017, with his current deal running through to 2021 but reportedly containing a clause that could allow him to quit Barcelona in June.

FA Cup roundup: Wayne Rooney scores to set up Manchester United reunion

LONDON, 05 FEB [THEGUARDIAN]: Wayne Rooney faces a fifth-round reunion with Manchester United after Derby overcame Northampton 4-2 at Pride Park on Tuesday night.

Rooney scored the fourth goal from the spot as the Championship side held on to defeat their League Two opponents, earning a home tie against the team for whom he scored a record 253 goals in 559 appearances.

Andre Wisdom opened the scoring for the home side midway through the first half and Duane Holmes made it 2-0 before half-time. Nicky Adams pulled a goal back for the Cobblers just after the interval but Jack Marriott and then Rooney gave Derby a comfortable cushion before Sam Hoskins's late penalty reduced the deficit once more.

Phillip Cocu said the United tie would be "beautiful" for Rooney. "He's going to face the club where he had a wonderful career so of course it is special," Derby's manager said. "He comes

back from the States, joins us and now plays his old club where he had a great career. We have to wait for a month but I'm sure he'll be ready.

"It will be a beautiful game not just for Wayne, but everyone at the club. It's a great game to look forward to and we will also try to win it. Nothing is impossible in football. If you play them six times you lose five times but maybe one time you can win – we have to make sure that time is in March."

Lee Camp was Birmingham's hero as the Championship side clinched a fifth-round place on penalties against Coventry.

Camp saved penalties from the substitutes Liam Walsh and Jamie Allen as Birmingham won 4-1 in a shootout after twice coming from behind in a 2-2 draw after extra-time.

Harlee Dean's spot kick sealed victory, while the substitutes Lukas Jutkiewicz, Jeremie Bela and Gary Gardner also netted from the spot to enable Birmingham to book a trip to Leicester in the

last 16.

Dean made it 1-1 in the second minute of time added on, and a hopeful cross by Bela in the 120th minute saw Birmingham draw to cancel out goals from Amadou Bakayoko (50) and Max Biamou (114).

Reading claimed a dramatic shootout victory over Cardiff to book a fifth-round home tie with Premier League Sheffield United.

In a game that finished 3-3 after extra time, Josh Murphy and Robert Glatzel struck either side of the interval for Cardiff before Omar Richards and the substitute Andy Rinomhota forced another 30 minutes.

Murphy pounced on a Gabriel Osho mistake to poke home his second and restore Cardiff's lead, but Yakou Méité forced penalties four minutes from time.

Reading won the resulting shoot-out 4-1 as Garath McCleary, Osho, Jordan Obita and Sone Aluko gave the Royals a 100% return from the spot and Cardiff's nerve buckled as Aden Flint and Will Vaulks missed.

Premier League boss admits VAR needs to improve

LONDON, FEB 5 (AFP): Premier League chief executive Richard Masters admits his organisation must try to improve VAR after a season marred by controversy surrounding the review technology. A recent survey from opinion polling firm YouGov showed more than two-thirds of Premier League fans questioned believe VAR has made the game less enjoyable since it was introduced into the English top-flight.

Players, managers and fans have all complained about the way the system is used, with lengthy review delays and dubious eventual decisions causing widespread frustration.

Masters, who started his permanent role with the Premier League in December, told BBC Sport that VAR would stay in the game, but he hopes it can be improved. "I don't think VAR has been damaging but I accept it needs improvement," Masters said.

"Scrapping it is not an option -- what we have to do is try and make VAR better." VAR has been brought in to the Premier League to decide on goals, penalties, red cards and offside decisions.

Masters revealed to the BBC that the Premier League would discuss changes to VAR with the clubs in April.

"We are going to have a debate about what sort of VAR they would like next season and what improvements can be made to the system," he said.

"It's going to be a work in progress this season and next as we try to rebalance it so you get the positives of better decision-making and fewer of the perceived negatives about delay and sometimes confusion." Meanwhile, in his first

major media interviews, Masters said he does not believe homegrown player quotas will improve the fortunes of the England team.

The balance between homegrown and overseas players in a 25-man Premier League squad is back in the spotlight following the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, which will affect the way clubs do their international transfer business once the transition period ends at the end of the year.

- 'DIFFERENT SYSTEM' -

The Football Association has previously stated in November 2018 that it favoured cutting the number of overseas players per squad from 17 to 13 with a view to boosting the chances of young English talent. FA representatives are due to present to Premier League clubs at the league's shareholders' meeting on Thursday, and Masters says the conversation will be taken forward from there.

"We have to come up with a different system," he said.

"The FA, the EFL and the Premier League all agree that (system) shouldn't impact on the competitiveness of the Premier League, that concept of the best versus the best. Clubs should still be able to acquire the best talent and support a cohort of homegrown players coming through the system.

"We don't necessarily believe quotas are the answer"

Masters also spoke about the relationship between Premier League clubs and betting companies, following criticism of the Football Association for allowing FA Cup matches to be streamed on betting websites.

De Kock guides South Africa to seven-wicket ODI win over England

CAPE TOWN, FEB 5 (AFP): Quinton de Kock made an ideal start to his full-time captaincy of South Africa's one-day international team on Tuesday when he hit a century as his side beat England by seven wickets in the first ODI at Newlands.

De Kock made 107 and Temba Bavuma hit 98 as South Africa chased down an England total of 258 for eight with 14 balls to spare. De Kock and Bavuma shared a second wicket partnership of 173 off 170 balls, dominating an England team which included only five of the side that won the World Cup last year.

De Kock made his 107 off 113 balls with 11 fours and a six, while Bavuma faced 103 deliveries, hitting five fours and two sixes.

"It was a good night. It feels good to get back to winning ways," said De Kock.

"We had one or two chats about how we want to take this ODI team forward.

Today was a good start -- but it's only one game." South Africa's team also had an experimental feel, featuring only six of the squad who had a dismal



World Cup. "We were way off the mark," admitted England captain Eoin Morgan. "South Africa completely outplayed us in every department."

Bavuma made a strong case for a long-term place in South Africa's one-day team. A veteran of 40 Tests, he had only played in two previous ODIs, both relatively low-key games in which he

made 113 against Ireland in 2016/17 and 48 against Bangladesh the following season.

Batting at number three, Bavuma was largely untroubled, hitting the ball crisply, while he and De Kock seemed to have an almost telepathic understanding in their rapid running between wickets. Bavuma seemed set for a cen-

tury until he went back to Chris Jordan and was trapped in front of his stumps by a ball which kept low.

"We understood it was pretty difficult to hit boundaries," said De Kock.

"It was a matter of finding a way to get momentum and we understood that running hard between the wickets was the way to go about it."

Joe Denly was largely responsible for England reaching what appeared to be a reasonable total on a slow pitch. Denly made his highest one-day international score of 87 and helped rescue England from a precarious 131 for six. He and Chris Woakes, who made 40 in his 100th one-day international, put on 91 for the seventh wicket.

Left-arm wrist spinner Tabraiz Shamsi did the major damage for South Africa, taking three for 38.

"Every batsman apart from Joe Denly and Chris Woakes struggled to get on," said Morgan.

"South Africa bowled well, they bowled accurately and used the conditions with slower balls. (Then) the partnership between De Kock and Bavuma we couldn't penetrate.

Pelosi expresses her disdain as Trump pitches for re-election

ED PILKINGTON

WASHINGTON, 05 FEB [THEGUARDIAN]: An emboldened Donald Trump bragged about the “great American comeback” in his State of the Union address on Tuesday night, in a speech resembling an 81-minute re-election rally that prompted the most powerful woman in Congress to rip up her copy of the speech on national television.

The House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, said she tore up the address, which he delivered on the eve of the verdict in his impeachment trial, because she couldn’t find “one page with truth on it”.

Only the third president to be impeached in US history, Trump addressed a joint chamber of Congress on the eve of his almost certain acquittal by Republican loyalists in the US Senate. Despite the ignominy of that position, he struck an upbeat, at times euphoric, tone.

“In just three short years, we have shattered the mentality of American decline and we have rejected the downsizing of America’s destiny,” Trump began, to shouts of “Four more years!” from Republicans in the chamber. “We are moving forward at a pace that was unimaginable just a short time ago, and we are never going back!”

This is not the first time a president has delivered a State of the Union speech in the midst of impeachment. Bill Clinton was still three weeks away from acquittal for lying in the Monica Lewinsky scandal when he gave his State of the Union in 1999.

But Trump also faces an election, now only nine months away. As such it was no surprise that the theme of the speech was the “great American comeback”.

The president delivered a



speech rippling with jingoism, xenophobia and untruths just feet away from the Democratic leaders who inflicted on him the impeachment trial that he has tried so hard to dismiss as a “witch-hunt”.

Several Democrats, including Congresswomen Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, walked out during the speech. One senator, Chris Murphy of Connecticut, compared it to a “2020 campaign rally”.

“It was a total mistake for Democrats to be there. That was a 2020 campaign rally; that was not a State of the Union,” he said. “I regret stepping one foot inside.”

But Pelosi’s protest overshadowed all others. As Trump came up to the podium, Pelosi reached out to shake his hand. In a striking moment, the president declined to return the gesture. She had the last laugh, though: the moment he fin-

ished speaking she calmly tore in half her copy of his script.

Republicans quickly seized on the moment, with former speaker Newt Gingrich accusing Pelosi of “childishness”.

“Next week, when the president presents his budget, the American people will see the stark reality of his agenda,” Pelosi later said in a statement defending the move. “A federal budget should be a statement of our national values, and the president has sadly shown that he does not value the good health of the American people.”

Trump’s advisers and senior Republicans had been pleading with him to take the high ground and focus on positives rather than unloading on his Democratic rivals in the joint chamber of Congress before him. As the White House counselor, Kellyanne Conway, put

it: “Success is the best revenge.”

Hewing to that advice, Trump devoted a lengthy part of his speech to what he called the “roaring” US economy, boasting that it was “the best it has ever been”.

Mindful that the economy is certain to be a major – potentially even decisive – factor in November’s election, he ticked off all the electoral blocks that he needs to seduce if he is to have a shot at securing a second term.

He focused on low unemployment rates for African Americans, women, young people, workers without a high-school diploma – all of whom will be critical in November’s poll.

Trump said his administration had created 7m new jobs and reduced unemployment to the lowest in almost half a century. “Our agenda is relentlessly pro-worker,

pro-family, pro-growth, and most of all pro-American.” But in common with his three previous State of the Union addresses, Tuesday night’s was packed with misleading statements, exaggerations and blatant untruths. In one of the most memorable passages, Trump claimed that he was increasing social mobility in America.

“The vision I will lay out this evening demonstrates how we are building the world’s most prosperous and inclusive society – one where every citizen can join in America’s unparalleled success, and where every community can take part in America’s extraordinary rise.”

In fact, income inequality has reached its highest level since the Census Bureau began tracking the data 50 years ago.

Trump also repeated several of his favorite falsehoods in other areas. “We will always protect patients with pre-existing conditions,” he said, when in truth he has encouraged numerous Republican attempts to overturn President Obama’s Affordable Care Act and abolish protections for people with pre-existing conditions.

Without naming his presidential rivals, Trump unleashed a ruthless attack on several of them. In particular, he tore into the healthcare plans of Bernie Sanders, the Vermont senator who narrowly came second to Pete Buttigieg in the early results out of the Iowa caucus on Monday.

The “radical left,” he said, wanted to “take away your healthcare, take away your doctor and abolish private insurance entirely”. To ecstatic cheers from his Republican enablers, Trump addressed “those watching at home”, telling them: “Tonight I want you to know we will never let socialism destroy

American healthcare.” That was not the only red meat that Trump threw his base. He hailed a “man beloved of millions of Americans” – the controversial rightwing radio talkshow host Rush Limbaugh who has been diagnosed with stage four lung cancer – awarding him the presidential medal of freedom.

Among other treats for the ranks of Trump supporters was his pledge to protect second amendment gun rights, backing of the right to pray in public schools, and his name-check for Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, the two conservatives he appointed to the supreme court. Most significantly, he returned to the toxic issue with which he initiated his presidential bid in 2015 – his attack on “criminal illegal aliens”.

On foreign policy, Trump was no less contentious. He was self-congratulatory about his “peace plan” for the Middle East, no matter that it has been universally rejected by Palestinians.

He did some more bragging about the assassination last month of Qassem Soleimani, Iran’s top military leader, without referencing the Iranian counter-attack on US troops in an Iraqi base that it provoked.

Among the exceptionally rare moments of concord within the chamber was when Republicans and Democrats stood together to applaud the Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaidó who attended as a guest of the White House. Brief bipartisanship returned when Trump talked of Afghanistan, saying “we are looking to end America’s longest war and bring our troops home”.

But for most of the 81 minutes the president addressed one half of the room, and one half of the nation.

Israel strikes in Gaza after projectiles, explosive balloons

JERUSALEM, FEB 5 (AFP): Israeli aircraft struck Hamas positions in Gaza early Wednesday, the military said, after Palestinians in the enclave launched projectiles and explosive balloons at the Jewish state.

The “fighter jets targeted Hamas terror targets in the southern Gaza Strip” including “a weapons manufacturing site”, the army said in a statement.

There were no immediate reports from Gaza of casualties.

Prior to the Israeli attack, militants in Gaza launched three projectiles and a number of “explosive balloons” at southern Israel, the army said, with neither medics nor police reporting casualties or damage.

Since US President Donald Trump’s announcement last week of his plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, rockets, mortar shells and explosive balloons have been launched almost daily from Gaza into southern Israel, provoking Israeli retaliation.

Palestinians strongly reject the US plan, seen as heavily favouring Israel.

Hamas and Israel have fought three wars since 2008 but over the past year the Islamists have gradually shaped an informal truce with Israel, under which the Jewish state has eased its crippling blockade of Gaza.

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Hundreds of Salvadorans deported by US were killed or abused, report reveals

NINA LAKHANI

WASHINGTON, 05 FEB [THEGUARDIAN]: At least 200 Salvadoran migrants and asylum seekers have been killed, raped or tortured after being deported back to El Salvador by the United States government which is turning a blind eye to widely known dangers, a new investigation reveals.

Human Rights Watch has documented 138 deported Salvadorans murdered by gang members, police, soldiers, death squads and ex-partners between 2013 and 2019. The majority were killed within two years of deportation by the same perpetrators they had tried to escape by seeking safety in the US.

The report, *Deported to Danger: United States deportation policies expose Salvadorans to death and abuse*, also identifies more than 70 others who were subjected to beatings, sexual assault and extortion – usually at the hand of gangs – or who went missing after being returned.

El Salvador, the most densely populated country in Central America with just over 6 million citizens, has one of the world’s highest rates of homicide and sexual violence. In addition, almost 11,000 people were registered missing during the last decade – more than the number of people who disappeared during the 1979-1992 civil war. Authorities are largely ineffective in protecting the population from this violence, which is often perpetrated by street gangs which have 60,000 or so members across the country.

Extrajudicial execu-



tions, sexual assaults, enforced disappearances and torture have also been perpetrated by state security forces with almost total impunity.

Amid widespread terror and impunity, the number of Salvadorans fleeing has soared, with asylum applicants in the US increasing by almost 1,000% in five years to 60,000 in 2017, according to UN figures.

The dire security situation is well documented, but despite this, the US continues to deport Salvadorans to face abuse and even death, according to HRW.

For instance, 17-year-old Javier escaped gang recruitment in 2010 and sought asylum in the US where his mother Jennifer had already fled. His asylum application was rejected, and Javier was deported in early 2017, aged 23. Four months later he was killed by members of the Mara Salvatrucha-13 gang.

“The United States has to have known this was happening because the cases were publicly reported and more importantly because Salvadorans make it clear in asylum applications

that this is their reality. But this reality is ignored or not believed by US authorities,” said Elizabeth Kennedy, co-author of the report.

International law prohibits the US from returning anyone to a country where they face serious risks to their lives or safety.

About three-quarters of the 1.2 million Salvadorans living in the US without citizenship lack papers or hold a temporary legal status making them vulnerable to deportation. Between 2014 and 2018, the US deported 111,000 Salvadorans, and granted asylum to just 18.2% of applicants – the lowest rate in the region.

Deportations – and violence against deportees – is not a new phenomenon. But the approval of asylum claims plummeted since the Trump administration rolled out a series of hostile policies including Remain in Mexico – officially known as Migration Protection Protocols – and imposed tight restrictions on gender-based and gang-related grounds for asylum. “The attack on asylum is unique

in the Trump administration, which has put even more Salvadorans – and others – at risk of deportation, and made it much less likely that they are able to even present their case to get effective protection,” said Kennedy.

HRW researchers tracked and verified hundreds of press reports, and conducted 150 interviews with deportees, surviving family members, government and security officials, and US immigration attorneys.

The actual number of killings and attacks is probably significantly higher than reported as most crimes in El Salvador go unreported, state violence are covered up, and it’s too dangerous for journalists to enter some neighbourhoods.

Alison Parker, managing director of HRW’s US programme and co-author of the report, said: “Salvadorans are facing murder, rape and other violence after deportation in shockingly high numbers, while the US government narrows Salvadorans’ access to asylum and turns a blind eye to the deadly results of its callous policies.”

Syria: half a million people have fled Idlib offensive, says UN body

HAZANO, 05 FEB [AFP]:

A regime offensive in Syria’s last rebel enclave has caused one of the biggest waves of displacement in the nine-year war, as tensions spiked between Ankara and Damascus following a deadly exchange of fire.

Weeks of intensive aerial bombardment and a bruising ground offensive have emptied entire towns in northwest Idlib and sent huge numbers fleeing north towards the Turkish border.

“Since 1 December, some 520,000 people have been displaced from their homes, the vast majority – 80% – of them women and children,” said David Swanson, spokesman for the United Nation’s humanitarian coordination office, OCHA.

The exodus, coinciding with a biting winter, is one of the largest

since the 2011 start of a conflict that has seen more than half of Syria’s pre-war population of 20 million displaced.

“This latest displacement compounds an already dire humanitarian situation on the ground,” Swanson said.

He said the UN was alarmed by the plight of more than three million people – half of them displaced by violence elsewhere – who live in Idlib province and surrounding areas.

Government troops and militia forces backed by Russian and other allied forces have in recent weeks upped the pressure on the jihadist-dominated region.

Mohammad Bahjat, 34, said he and his family were escaping deadly bombardment for the third time in days. “We fled in the middle of the night and have no idea

where to go,” he told AFP, sitting in the front of a pickup truck next to his wife and three small boys. You never know when a rocket or shell is going to hit.”

Regime forces also exchanged deadly fire with Turkish troops on Monday, an escalation UN chief António Guterres called “extremely worrying”.

Regime shelling of Turkish positions in Idlib killed at least five Turkish soldiers and three civilians, Ankara said. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that retaliatory fire from Turkey killed at least 13 Syrian government troops.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on Tuesday told his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin that Ankara would respond “firmly” to any new Syrian attack.

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What Kabir Bedi Said About Granddaughter Alaya Working With 'Seasoned Actors' In Jawaani Jaaneman

Alaya Furniturewalla, daughter of Pooja Bedi and granddaughter of Kabir Bedi, just made her Bollywood debut with Jawaani Jaaneman. Veteran actor Kabir Bedi, who cheered for Alaya at her film launch last week, told news agency during an interaction how "proud" he is of his granddaughter: "I am so proud of Alaya for the performance she has given. It's such a beautiful performance and that too working with seasoned actors like Saif and Tabu." Alaya plays the role of Saif Ali Khan and Tabu's daughter in Jawaani Jaaneman. "She has worked so hard and prepared so well. So, she deserves every good review she is getting," Kabir Bedi added.

Parveen Dusanj, who accompanied husband Kabir Bedi to the event in Mumbai, also told IANS: "We are very proud of Alaya. She has done a great job in the film." Kabir Bedi married Parveen Dusanj in 2016. This marked Mr Bedi's third marriage - he was previously married to dancer Protima Bedi and then radio and television presenter Nikki Bedi.

Earlier, Alaya's mother Pooja Bedi

(daughter of Kabir Bedi and Protima Bedi), had shared this photo of three generation of actors from the Jawaani Jaaneman launch event. "Three generations in film!" she had written, while giving a massive shout out to her daughter

formance being talked about by critics. In his review for NDTV, film critic Saibal Chatterjee wrote: "The brightest spark in Jawaani Jaaneman is Alaya Furniturewalla. When you watch a young actress having fun before the camera rather



on her debut: "Wishing Alaya the very best! Post me your comments on your favourite scene once you see the film."

Jawaani Jaaneman opened to decent box office numbers and positive reviews, with Alaya's easy breezy per-

than striving to prove herself, you instantly know that she's one confident performer. She has the chops. Saif will draw you into Jawaani Jaaneman. Alaya will keep you glued even when the pace of the film seems to flag a bit."

Shannen Doherty reveals stage 4 cancer diagnosis

LOS ANGELES, FEB 5 (PTI): "Beverly Hills 90210" star Shannen Doherty has been diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer, the actor has revealed.

The 48-year-old actor, also known for "Charmed", announced in 2017 that she was in remission for breast cancer that had been initially diagnosed in 2015. "It's going to come out in a matter of days or a week that I have stage 4. So my cancer came back and that's why I'm here," Doherty said appearing on ABC News on Tuesday.

The actor said she decided to go public with her diagnosis because the court filings of a legal battle, which she is fighting against an insurance company include her current health status, are set to release this week.

"I'd rather people hear it from me," she asserted. Doherty said she has been dealing with the disease in private for more than a year now, while continuing to work, including shooting for the "Beverly Hills" reboot, "BH90210."

She was contemplating her diagnosis while she mourning the death of her "90210" co-star and friend Luke Perry last year.

"It was so weird for me to be diagnosed and then somebody who was seemingly healthy to go first. It was really shocking and the least I could do to honour him was do that show. I still haven't done enough in my opinion.

"It's a hard one because I thought when I finally do come out, I would have worked and worked 16 hours a day and people can look at that and say, 'Oh my God, she can work and other people with stage 4 can work. Our



life doesn't end the minute we get that diagnosis. We still have some living to do," she added.

Doherty said she is yet to come to terms with the return of the disease.

"I don't think that I've processed it. It's a bitter pill to swallow in a lot of ways. I definitely have days where I say, 'Why me?' And then I go, 'Well why not me? Who else? Who else beside me deserves this?' 'None of us do. I would say that my first reaction is always concern about how am I going to tell my mom, my husband.'"

The actor is married to photographer Kurt Iswarienko.

Netflix series 'Taj Mahal 1989' to release on Feb 14

MUMBAI, FEB 4 (PTI): "Taj Mahal 1989", a series exploring with the themes of love, friendship, politics, and heartbreak, is slated to be released on February 14, Netflix announced on Tuesday. Starring Neeraj Kabi and Geetanjali Kulkarni, the Lucknow-set series will encompass the old-world charm of love and the complicated nature of relationships in small town India.

"Tracing the lives of a Lucknow

University professor couple, their students, a long-lost friend, his lover, and a schoolgirl in love with an older boy, this series is a tribute to love in all its unadulterated forms," read the synopsis of the show.

"Taj Mahal 1989" also features Danish Hussain, Sheeba Chaddha, Anud Singh Dhaka, Anshul Chauhan, Paras Priyadarshan, Shiri Sewani, Mihir Ahuja and Vasundhara Singh Rajput.

I would love to play Catwoman: Michelle Rodriguez

LOS ANGELES, FEB 5 (PTI): "Fast and Furious" star Michelle Rodriguez says if given a chance, she would love to play DC superhero Catwoman.

The actor, 41, said Catwoman was her favourite from the comic book franchise as she is both "bad and good".

"I would love to be a superhero. I think DC has my favourite superhero, which is Catwoman. I like her because she's bad and good and I'm in the middle when it comes to being good.

"I'm pretty bad and good so I would go the DC route 'cause there aren't a lot of really great female superheroes in general and so I need a little edge or I can't play and so Catwoman I think is my favourite," Rodriguez told MTV International.

The actor will next reprise her role of Letty Ortiz in "Fast and Furious 9".

Lady Gaga makes romance with Michael Polansky internet official

LOS ANGELES, FEB 5 (PTI): Pop star Lady Gaga has a new man in her life and the singer has finally made her relationship with investor Michael Polansky social media official.

The Oscar-winning musician, who travelled to Miami to perform at the AT&T TV Super Saturday Night show over the weekend, shared a picture with Polansky on Instagram on Monday.

"We had so much fun in Miami. Love to all my little monsters and fans, you're the best!" Gaga captioned the photo which appears to have been clicked on a yacht possibly taken during their Miami trip. In the picture, the "Alejandro" hit-maker is seen sitting on Polansky's lap as he smiles at her.

According to E! News, Polansky is the CEO of the San Francisco-based Parker Group.

The couple has been dating for over a month and was also seen holding hands and kissing in Las Vegas on New Year's Eve.



CHILLY WEATHER CHIC! Top model Heidi Klum is cool and cozy during a day out in NYC.

Artistes should have guts to talk about rights: Anurag Kashyap

KOLKATA, FEB 4 (PTI): Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap, who was among a clutch of eminent personalities to voice support to the recent anti-CAA protests, feels that an artiste should have "guts" to talk about rights.

A creative person should be socially conscious, the acclaimed director said here, after inaugurating the 5th Dum Dum International Film Festival.

"An artiste should have the guts and courage to talk about his rights. He is the mirror of society, the conscience of society," Kashyap said on Monday evening.

The 'Gangs of Wasseypur' maker has time and again made statements on social media against the central government, including on the issue of the contentious Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

Last month, Kashyap was present at a protest rally in Mumbai against the violence on the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) campus.

Kashyap had also backed actor Deepika Padukone when she was heavily trolled for visiting the JNU campus in January to show solidarity with the students.

"An artiste should speak the truth instead of making politically correct statements," the

director, who has often faced flak for his remarks, said.

Kashyap said the works of Satyajit Ray and Ritwik Ghatak, among other auteurs, inspired him to become a filmmaker.

"Had I not attended a (particular) film festival and got bowled over by certain movies, I would have become something else, perhaps



a scientist," he said.

"Bengal has made great contribution to cinema - from Bimal Roy, Guru Dutt to doyens such as Ray and Ghatak," the 'Black Friday' director said.

finer our relationships with not just the self, but also the world. Where are you vibrating at, Gemini? Do you believe you are being of light who is worthy of being loved? Give yourself the love and care you deserve, wild one. Address the old wounds that are keeping you from making space for the one.

Tip: Claim your independence.

CANCER: There is more than enough to go around, Cancer. So where does the feeling of lack arise from? Could our own limited beliefs be creating a sense of mistrust? Awareness is the first step to breaking old patterns and making space for the good stuff to enter. Continue to address the limiting beliefs.

Tip: You are connected to the cosmic flow of Abundance.

LEO: Those who resort to aggression in order to make a point are usually the weakest. Understand the difference between assertiveness and aggression.

Course correct if you have chosen the latter. What Spirit wants you to know: there is a way to stand up for your beliefs without going to war.

Tip: Choose assertiveness over aggression.

VIRGO: Two's a party, three's a crowd. Now that we have this out of the way, let's talk about you, Virgo. What are you going to do with this precious life of yours? Why do you keep selling yourself short or settling for less-than-perfect love? You've been seeing the signs for a while now.

Tip: It's better to fly solo than to hold onto a relationship causing you harm.

LIBRA: Libra, you're a beautiful amalgam of the mother and the crone, offering a warm cup of cocoa and sage advice to your soul circle. While giving unconditionally is truly a gift, today, you're being asked to turn your energy inwards. While, you're at it, refresh your bucket list and do at least one thing that brings you

joy and awakens that spirit of playfulness. Tip: Live a little.

SCORPIO: The trouble is, we save our kindness and compassion for the world, while being unkind to ourselves in private. Pay attention to that inner dialogue, Scorpio. The words you are choosing in order to communicate with yourself. Replace judgements with openness.

Tip: Let your self-talk be a source of empowerment.

SAGITTARIUS: Today, you're in the mood to up your style game as you find a sustainable answer to the eternal dilemma of 'I have nothing to wear'. First things first, Marie Kondo your wardrobe. Donate the things that no longer fit right or spark joy. You always have the option to lend it to a friend who resonates with that particular style.

Tip: Reinvent your style.

CAPRICORN: Your heart isn't breaking, Capricorn. It's simply coming together.

Allow the old wounds to resurface. Consciously work through emotional entanglements in order to find your freedom. You will find that your relationships will evolve in the process.

Tip: Embrace the in-between.

AQUARIUS: What if your experiences have the power to add value to the life of another? Don't shy away from holding space for a circle or sharing your narrative with those who matter. There's a reason storytelling was considered as a form of medicine in ancient cultures.

Tip: Storytelling is a form of medicine, Aquarius.

PISCES: Cosmic truth: everybody experiences emotional pain at some point. Should that keep you from radiating like the sun, or believing that you deserve to be loved in the right way? Anything but. You're at a point in your journey where you are integrating the past lessons and seeing your experiences through the eyes of wisdom.

Tip: A period of deep healing is on the cards.