



**K-POP STAR JINU TO
MAKE HIS SOLO DEBUT**
pg 08

**SCAMMERS DON'T CHEAT BECAUSE
THEY NEED THE MONEY — THEY
CHEAT BECAUSE THEY'RE CHEATERS**
pg 04

**AAMIR AND SRK WERE
KEEN TO DO 'SAARE
JAHAN SE AACHA'**
pg 08



SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Pages 8 | ₹ 5

*Nepal govt
annuls Nepali
citizenship
of 8 Indian-
origin people*

**SHIRISH B PRADHAN
KATHMANDU, AUG 4
(PTI):** The Nepal govern-
ment on Sunday annulled
the citizenship of eight
people of Indian origin
on the ground that they
procured the citizen-
ship certificate through
forged documents.

The decision to cancel
the citizenship certificates
of the eight individuals
was taken in a cabinet
meeting, officials said.

The eight persons are
identified as Ashok Shah,
Binde Mahato, Rajendra
Mahato, Danadevi Mahato,
Sushil Mahato, Rajeshwar
Mahato, Ramkishor Maha-
to and Rajkumar Mahato.

Meanwhile, Rastri-
ya Janta Party-Nepal
(RJP-N) joint general
secretary Rakesh Mishra
told PTI that the govern-
ment should properly in-
vestigate the matter be-
fore taking such decision.
“I doubt whether
the government had
accumulated sufficient
evidence that Indian
nationals were granted
Nepalese citizenship cer-
tificates. It is a mockery
to punish those who ac-
quire citizenship certi-
ficates without punishing
those officials responsi-
ble for providing the cit-
izenship without proper
documents,” he said.

*B'luru Mayor
'pays fine' for
using banned
plastic*

**BENGALURU, AUG 4
(PTI):** Facing flak for
presenting a basket
of fruit wrapped with
banned plastic to Karna-
taka Chief Minister B S
Yediyurappa recently, the
city Mayor Gangambike
Mallikarjun has said she
'voluntarily' paid a fine of
Rs 500 for the violation.

After the photo of her
presenting the basket
went viral, Gangambike
was criticised because
there is already a ban on
plastic ban and several
traders in the city had
been penalised in the
past for storing and using
the plastic products.

“My photograph of
gifting a basket of dry
fruits wrapped with a
plastic cover to the chief
minister went viral in the
social media.

Being the first citizen
of the city, I did not wish
to send across a wrong
message to the people of
the city. Hence, I decided
to pay the penalty of Rs
500,” the mayor said in a
statement Saturday.

The Mayor, however,
pointed out that there
was no clause in the rules
for penalising those us-
ing plastic though there
was such a provision
against traders.

She also said there
turn to pg02

SDF accuses SKM of wasting Budget Session on allegations

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 04 AUG:**

Sikkim Democratic
Front today accused
the Sikkim Krantikari
Morcha Government of
hoodwinking the peo-
ple of Sikkim with mis-
information and dis-
tracting them from real
issues by devoting the
budget session almost
entirely to blaming the
previous government.

An SDF press re-
lease issued today by its
spokesperson, JB Darnal,
underlines that the Bud-
get Session should have
been about discussing
sustainable development
of Sikkim, explaining
how the State Govern-
ment intends to meet the
basic needs of the people
and setting the course
for economical, social
and educational develop-

ment of the State.

The SKM govern-
ment, however, went in
the opposite direction
with a “pre-planned
conspiracy” of trying to
discredit the achieve-
ments and development
achieved by the people of
Sikkim during SDF's term
in office, the release rues.

The release has also
taken issue with the
RMDD Minister, Sang-

ha MLA Sonam Lama,
alleging that the SDF
President, Pawan
Chamling, when he was
the Chief Minister, had
accused him of being
an antinational.

Apart from question
why the Sangha MLA was
raising the issue now, the
release also comments
that the timing was rais-
ing doubts about the in-
tention behind the RMDD

Minister's comments.

The release also ac-
cuses the SKM Govern-
ment of casting doubts
on the successes and
awards received by the
previous SDF Govern-
ments for the implemen-
tation of several schemes
and projects as excuses
to cover up for its own
failure to carry on the
execution and delivery
managed by SDF.



USFC picks 15 for Sikkim League

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 04 AUG:**

United Sikkim Football Club
has shortlisted 15 players for
the upcoming Premier Division
Sikkim-League which is sched-
uled to begin 18 August here at
Paljor Stadium.

Around 30 aspirants from dif-
ferent corners of the State signed

up for the selection trials on Sat-
urday. USFC is putting together
a fresh squad after several of its
players moved on to other clubs
and bigger leagues.

The selection trial was held
under the supervision of USFC
senior manager, Arjun Rai, and
senior players of the club.

The training sessions of the

club will be starting Monday.

Club officials inform that
most of the new players hail from
rural Sikkim.

They add that several hope-
ful could not attend the trials
because they were busy with
the many Independence Day
football tournaments underway
across the State.

AIIMS doctors call off strike after meeting with health minister



**NEW DELHI, AUG 4
(PTI):** Resident doctors
of AIIMS called off their
strike and resumed du-
ties on Sunday after
Health Minister Harsh
Vardhan assured them
that their concerns over
the NMC Bill will be duly
addressed. In a commu-
nique to the AIIMS direc-
tor, the Resident Doctors
Association (RDA) said
that during a meeting,
the Union minister as-
sured them of address-
ing their concerns while
drafting the regulations
of the National Medical
Commission (NMC).

The minister also told
them that the represen-
tatives of the AIIMS RDA
and students' union will
be consulted while draft-
ing the regulations of the
commission.
Vardhan met the
delegation of resident
doctors associations of
AIIMS and Safdarjung
hospital and hoped that
they will end their strike
in view of problems faced
by patients.

However, the Safdar-
jung resident doctors are
yet to resume non essen-
tial services. According
to sources, the resident
doctors of the hospital
are likely to take a de-
cision on the strike at a
governing body meeting.

“Agitating doctors
from the All India Insti-
tute of Medical Sciences
(AIIMS) have called off
their strike.
“The health minister
explained the objectives
of bringing NMC bill
2019 at length and as-
sured us that the appre-
hensions... will be duly
addressed while drafting
the regulations by the
NMC once it is constitut-
ed,” the AIIMS RDA said
in the communique.

It referred to section
14 (1) para (2), admis-
sions into undergraduate
courses at AIIMS New
Delhi, section 15(5) ad-
missions into AIIMS New
Delhi vide Exit Test and
section 32 (Community
Health Providers).

“We were also as-
sured by the minister
that representatives of
RDA and students unions
AIIMS (New Delhi) will
be consulted before
framing of regulations of
the NMC bill under sec-
tion 57 of the bill,” the
AIIMS RDA said.

After a governing
body meeting of the RDA
AIIMS, the executive
committee decided to
withdraw the strike and
resume all services with
immediate effect. They
said the AIIMS adminis-
tration also assured them
that the strike period,
August 1 to 3, would be
considered as “on duty”.
turn to pg02

Celebrating

3 YEARS



WE ARE 3!

Dear Readers,
...and just like that, it has been three years of Summit
Times on the newsstands!
Well, not quite just like that. There has been a lot of
hard work, occasionally some slacking also, but never
any abject compromising.
Have we achieved everything we set out to deliver?
Obviously not.
In fact, hopefully not, because if we managed to secure
everything we wanted to achieve so early in the years,
then we were clearly not aiming high enough. So we
will stay the course, keep growing, continuously
aspiring to improve and diligently remaining faithful to
the line we have chosen.
And we can stay the course as much because of the
indulgence of our publisher [who bankrolled a

SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

newspaper at a time when obituaries were being
written for print] as because of our readers whose
tribe continues to thankfully grow [despite the
more exciting distractions made possible by
universal bandwidth]. Stay with us. It is going to be
[hopefully] a beneficial collaboration.
On that note, congratulations to the entire
SummitTimes family, of which you, the readers
form the largest and most important segment, on
the anniversary.

Editor

[PS: Since it is time for a celebration today, there
will be no edition of the paper tomorrow. We return
to the stands on Tuesday, a year older, and who
knows, maybe even slightly wiser]

J-K parties will fight attempt to abrogate special status of state: Abdullah

SRINAGAR, AUG 4 (PTI): Regional parties in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday unanimously resolved to fight any attempt to abrogate the constitutional provisions that guarantee it special status or any move to trifurcate the state.

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah, reading out a resolution adopted at the meeting, said the parties have decided to send delegations to meet President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and leaders of political parties to apprise them about the consequences of any attempt to abrogate Article 370 and Article 35A of the Constitution, or carry out delimitation of constituencies or trifurcating the state.

The meeting was also attended Mehbooba Mufti (PDP), Omar Abdullah (NC), Taj Mohiuddin (Congress), Muzaffar Beig (PDP), Sajad Lone and Imran Ansari (Peoples Conference), Shah Faesal (J&K Peoples Movement) and M Y Tarigami (CPI-M).

The parties appealed to India and Pakistan not to take any steps that will escalate tension in the region, Abdullah said. He also appealed to the people of the state to maintain peace. The meeting, which was scheduled to be held at residence of PDP president Mufti, was held at Farooq Abdullah's residence due to his ill health.

Kashmir remained on edge on Sunday as authorities stepped up security deployment at vital installations and sensitive areas amid heightened terror threat and flare up of hostilities with Pakistan along the Line of Control (LoC).

After the Jammu and Kashmir administration curtailed the Amarnath Yatra and asked pilgrims and tourists to leave the valley at the earliest on Friday, anxious residents continue to throng markets to stock on essentials and serpentine queues have been visible outside shops and fuel stations.

Alka Lamba to quit AAP, party says ready to accept resignation even on Twitter

NEW DELHI, AUG 4 (PTI): AAP's disgruntled MLA Alka Lamba on Sunday said she has decided to resign from the primary membership of the party and will contest the upcoming Delhi Assembly polls as an independent candidate. The AAP said it is ready to accept her resignation even on Twitter.

The Chandni Chowk MLA, who has been at odds with the party leadership for some time, said she took the decision after consulting the people of her constituency through a Jan Sabha.

Lamba said she will soon resign from the primary membership of the party but will continue to be an MLA of the assembly.

Reacting to her remarks, AAP spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj in a tweet said, "She has announced this a dozen of times in the past. It takes 1 min to send a written resignation letter to party leadership. We will ac-



DRUG HAUL:

Singtam Police seized a huge consignment of contraband substances allegedly being smuggled aboard a truck today at 20th Mile, Baghey Khola, on NH 10. The driver, who has been taken into custody, reportedly hails from Lohapul, Birik Dara, West Bengal.

Golay meets Meghalaya Governor



GUWAHATI, 04 AUG [IPR]: Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang [Golay] met the Governor of Meghalaya, Tathagatha Roy, at Guwahati Airport today. The two exchanged warm wishes and wished the very best

in the times ahead. They also talked about mutual cooperation between the two states and said that they should all work together for the betterment of the respective states and the nation as a whole.

SKM convenes constituency level meeting at Makha



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 04 AUG:

The constituency-level monthly meeting of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha for Tumin Lingee constituency was held at the SKM party office in Makha Old Market held on Saturday. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of

Tumin Lingee Incharge, Sandup Tshering Bhutia, and was attended by CLC members, WLC members, Yuva Nari Shakti and general public, a press release informs. The meeting decided to build better unity and coordination for the holistic development of Tumin Lingee.

BJP membership drive reaches Kitam



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 04 AUG:

The BJP-Sikkim membership drive reached Kitam in South Sikkim today with a meeting chaired by BJP-Sikkim president, DB Chauhan, accompanied by BJP-Sikkim general secretary SB Karki, south and west district membership drive in-charges and other activists of the party.

While addressing the meeting, Mr Chauhan appealed to people across

party lines to take BJP membership.

"People need to analyse the schemes to uplift the underprivileged as well as developmental works done by the Modi government in past five years. More than 130 welfare and developmental schemes have been launched by the NDA govt, which, if implemented properly, will eradicate poverty and take India to new heights," he said.

"The State BJP will put all efforts to take Sikkim at par with all other states, be it in development, peace or security of the Sikkimese people," he added.

He stressed that the elections were now over and that people should not allow themselves to be divided on party lines.

"The five years till the next elections should be utilized for development of our society which is possible through unity," he said.

HRD Minister reminds public servants of expectations from them



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 04 AUG:

HRD Minister, KN Lepcha, was present as chief guest today for the Men's Open Football Tournament underway at Soreng in West Sikkim.

In his address, the Minister highlighted that immediately upon formation of the SKM government, all Saturdays were declared hol-

idays for government servants as a 'care and cure' measure.

In return, the government expected punctuality and sincerity from the public servants, he stressed.

Today was the fourth day of the tournament being organized as part of Independence Day celebrations in Soreng.

Also today, ten teachers

were felicitated for their dedication to their jobs.

In the matches played today, SDM Office Soreng eased past Co-operative (SDM Office, Soreng) 8-1 while in the second match, Jorethang Football Club was humbled 8-0 by Sanju Academy.

SDM Office Soreng and Sanju Academy are now through to the quarterfinal stage.

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B'luru Mayor...

was a proposal to impose fine on the end users of plastic products and it would be incorporated in the law.

"In order to spread awareness among masses about the problems posed by polythene bags, I decided to pay the penalty even before this clause is incorporated in the plastic ban bylaw," the mayor said.

Gangambike rued that the plastic ban was in place since 2016, yet it had not been effective in curbing the polythene menace.

"Even the efforts to create awareness among people did not yield any result. If we continue to use plastic the way we are doing it now, it will become killer for our coming generations because plastic never gets destroyed even after thousand years," she pointed out.

AIIMS doctors...

The NMC bill provides for setting up of a National Medical Commission in place of the MCI for development and regulation of all aspects of medical education, profession and institutions.

Doctors are demanding certain amendments in the bill. According to them, if not amended, the bill will lead to deterioration of medical education and degradation of healthcare services.

The fraternity is opposing section 32(1), (2) and (3) of the bill saying it will encourage quackery by providing licence to practice modern medicine as community health providers for persons other than those possessing MBBS degrees.

The doctors say there was no clarity over the introduction of NEXT and scrapping the NEET-PG.

They are also opposing decreasing the percentage of seats under controlled fees structure in private medical colleges and deemed universities from 85 to 50 per cent, reducing the representation of elected members from 75 per cent in MCI to 20 per cent in National Medical Commission and autonomous boards constituted there-under.

KUTSE SHEGU

The Kutse Shegu of late Norbu Tshering Bhutia (Khamdong Norbu) who passed away on 19th of June 2019, falls on the **6th of August 2019**.

Family members, friends and well wishers are most welcome in joining us in offering prayers for his departed soul at our residence at Khamdong, East Sikkim. We wish to thank all of you who supported us during the time of our grief with your condolences and apologise in case we weren't able to do so personally.

Pempa Doma Bhutia (Khamdong Anyola)
Sonam Wangdi, Tashi Chopel, K.P.Tshering, Karma Loday, Karma Thendup, Karma Yenten (sons), Karma Doma (daughter), N.T.Bhutia (son-in-law) and Family Members Khamdong.



~ SummitTIMES ~
CLASSIFIEDS

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

WANTED

HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER.
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GENERAL INFORMATION

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

Mr. Subash Lama
Proprietor
Hotel Parasol Residency,
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Goa govt threatens to invoke ESMA, taxi unions refuse to budge

PANAJI, AUG 4 (PTI): The Goa government on Sunday asked striking tourist taxi operators to re-join work or face action under the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA). Tourist taxis are off the road in the state since August 2 in protest against the operation of Goa Miles, an app-based cab service backed by the state-run Goa Tourism Development Corporation. Taxi unions, however, said they would wait for the government to respond positively to their demand till Wednesday, after which they themselves would come forward and relinquish their permits.

State Director of Transport Rajan Sartadkar on Sunday issued a public notice asking drivers to resume service or face action under ESMA.

Under ESMA, he said, permits of taxis which fail to rejoin work will be cancelled, and the driver disqualified from applying for a fresh one, and subsidies on purchase of vehicles, fuel etc would be withdrawn.

“The government will also prosecute them under section 4 of ESMA, which is punishable with imprisonment of six months,” he added.

However, agitating tourist taxi unions hardened their stand threatening to surrender their permits on Thursday if their demand to scrap Goa Miles was not accepted by the government. In a show of strength, over 1,000 taxi operators met at Karmali, 10 kilometres from here, and said they would continue the agitation.

At the meet, All Goa Taxi Association president Chetan Kamat said they would wait till Wednesday for the government’s response.

“If the state government does not scrap Goa Miles, on Thursday all 26,000 tourist taxi operators will surrender their permits to the transport department. We won’t give in to the threat of permit cancellation by the government,” Kamat claimed.

35 clear belt test in Bijoy Karate Academy’s debut examination

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 04 AUG:

Thirty-five Karatekas from Bijoy Karate Academy successfully passed their Belt Test held here at White Hall complex on Sunday.

The academy was established by international Karateka, Bijoy Gurung, last year and has been running classes at 6th Mile, Tadong and Samsa, Ranipool.

This was BKA’s first belt examination and was held under the supervision of Sikkim State

Karate-Do Association chief technical director Bidhan Ballav Subba and assisted by coaches Bhim Subba , Binam Gurung and Rahul Choudhary.

The Karatekas who cleared the test are Surakchya Rai, Pranab Das and Romit Panigrahi for Junior Brown 3rd kyu and Biyoncey Gurung, Diwas Sharma, Ahana Gurung, Shradha Chettri, Mahima Sharma, Binayak Hazra, Abinay Tamang, Deepam Chettri, Ayush Tamang, Samarpan Gurung, Awadhi Chettri,

Kripa Rai, Shreya Gurung, Pritika Subba, Dipesh Sharma, Sangay Waiba, Hijam L Leima and Sneha Sharma for Orange belt 6th kyu.

Likewise, Ananya Tamang, Anugrah Mangar, Ayushna Limboo, Srijana limbo, Diya Subba, Ditya Chettri, Reyad Chettri, Apsana Rai, Atharav Yadav, Priam Ray, Rajveer Rawat, Anuj Tamang, Swarya Pratap and Vivek Mangar have been qualified for Junior Orange 7th kyu.

On the successful

completion of the examination, Bijoy Karate Academy founder, Bijoy Gurung expressed gratitude towards all technical supporters for the examination and also parents and guardians of the participants for their support.

He also thanked his wife Bimala Gurung, herself a 1st Dan black belt, and his daughters Babyana Gurung [1st Dan black belt] and Kerolin Gurung for their support to bring the academy to this level.

Four injured in Kohima landsides

KOHIMA, AUG 4 (PTI): Incessant rain in the last few days caused landslides here in which four persons were injured, officials said on Sunday

Four members of a family including a minor girl were injured as the RCC wall collapsed upon their house due to landslide at Upper Bayav Colony here on Friday, the officials said.

Incessant rain on Saturday night completely washed away a portion of the road in the Old KMC dumping area. No vehicles can ply through the road unless the road is reconstructed with new alignment, sources said, adding that the repair works will take time and till such time the Jotsoma bye-pass route has to be used for small and medium vehicles.

Football at Chongay

SUMMIT REPORT RANGPO, 04 AUG:

Pre-quarter final matches of the Independence Day Open Football Tournament at Chongay were played today between Dhanu Team Vs Redbull Arithang which the former team won 7-4 and

then Lingtam Boys won 4-2 against Tourism Dept.

Organised by Chongyek Development Committee the match attracted a huge gathering of spectators today and had Sikkim Krantikari Morcha’s Tenzing Lamtha present as chief

guest accompanied by ACE, Education Department, NY Gautam, as guest of honor.

The first match of the veterans division was also played today in which Tathengchen Veterans outplayed Merung Veterans 9-1.

Kalimpong ICSE schools team excels at CISCE regional games

SUMMIT REPORT KALIMPONG, 04 AUG:

Kalimpong District ICSE School Team participated in the CISCE Regional National School Games & Sports -2019 Karate Competition for Under-14 & 17Yrs Boys & Girls held on 02 and 03 August organized by Divine Mercy School, Howrah.

The Kalimpong District ICSE Schools Team

bagged three Gold, three Silver and five Bronze medals at the tournament.

All three gold medalist are from Rockvale Academy - Karya Ekru, Priyadarshan Thapa and Stephen Tamang. The trio has also qualified for the National CISCE School Games scheduled for September.

Meanwhile the sil-

ver medalist are Wangchen Bhutia [Rockvale Academy], Varsha Sagar [Vrindavan School] and Aakriti Dangal [Vrindavan School].

Chief Coach, Sensei Sushan Thapa, expressed happiness over the team’s performance and said that now the three gold medalist will be trained for the upcoming national games.

India successfully test-fires 2 quick reaction surface-to-air missiles

BALASORE (ODISHA), AUG 4 (PTI): India successfully conducted two back-to-back flight tests of its state-of-the-art quick reaction surface-to-air missiles (QRSAM) against live aerial targets from a base in Odisha on Sunday.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test-fired the two missiles from the integrated test range (ITR) at Chandipur near here. “Two missiles were tested against two live targets meeting complete mission objectives of engaging the targets. QRSAM, with many state-of-the-art technologies, engaged the targets at different ranges and altitudes,” an official statement said.

The entire mission was captured by various electro-optical tracking systems, radar systems and telemetry systems. The all-weather and all-terrain

QRSAM system has been developed for the Army, with search and track on the move capability having a very short reaction time. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has congratulated the DRDO on achieving the significant milestone, the statement said. “The systems are equipped with indigenously-developed phased array radar, inertial navigation system, data link and RF seeker,” it said.

The missile, which can be mounted on a truck and stored in a canister, is equipped with electronic counter measures against jamming by aircraft radars, defence sources said.

QRSAM uses solid-fuel propellant and has a range of 25-30 km, the sources said. The first trial of the QSRAM was conducted on June 4, 2017, they said. On February 26, 2019, two rounds of trials were successfully carried out on the same day.

DM, SP of Sonbhadra removed

LUCKNOW, AUG 4 (PTI): The Uttar Pradesh government on Sunday shunted out the district magistrate and superintendent of police of Sonbhadra, besides ordering action against 13 other officials after they were indicted in an inquiry into the killing of 10 Gond tribals last month over a land dispute.

Addressing a press conference at his residence, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said FIRs have been registered against against 28 people in this matter. Twelve primary members of Adarsh Krishi Sahkari Samiti, Umbha, who are alive, will also be booked for grabbing gram sabha land.

The disputed land in Umbha and Saphi villages also be transferred back and registered in the name of gram sabha, he said, while announcing that a Special Investigation Team (SIT) will look into the matter.

Adityanath said departmental proceedings have been initiated against Sonbhadra District Magistrate Ankit Kumar Agrawal and Superintendent of Police Salman Taj Patil for taking “one-sided decision” against the villagers.

Directives have been issued

to attach Agrawal and Patil to the Department of Appointment and Personnel and the DGP Headquarters, respectively, he said. S Ramalingam has been made the new district magistrate of Sonbhadra, while Prabhakar Chaudhary is the new superintendent of police, officials said.

“The entire matter will be probed by an SIT. The SIT will be headed by DIG SIT J Ravindra Gaud, and will have Additional SP Amrita Mishra along with three inspectors. DG SIT R P Singh will be monitoring the work of the SIT,” the chief minister said.

“Action has been initiated against eight gazetted officials, including the district magistrate, superintendent of police, additional SP, three circle officers, ARO co-operative and ARO (Revenue Department). Seven non-gazetted officials, including three inspectors, one SI, two head constables and one constable, will also be probed,” he said.

He said another team will be set up under Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) Renuka Kumar to look into the issue of land grabbing by “fake” societies in the last 60-70 years in Mirzapur and Sonbhadra.

“Fake societies in Sonbhadra and Mirzapur have grabbed more than one lakh acre of land. In 1972, then chief minister Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna had constituted a probe committee under Mangaldev Visharad. However, no action was taken as a number of Congress leaders were involved,” Adityanath said. “The government has formed a six-member team which will probe into the land grabbed by fake societies in Mirzapur and Sonbhadra and then using it for their personal use. The probe report will be submitted in three months’ time,” he added.

In July, 10 people were killed and 28 injured in the clash after a village headman and his supporters opened fire on a group of tribals over a land dispute. The Department of Appointment and Personnel has initiated action against Ghorawal SDM Vijay Prakash Tiwari, and an FIR will be registered against him, according to an official statement.

Disciplinary action has also been initiated against Ghorawal Circle Officer Abhishek Singh, Sub-Inspector Lallan Prasad Yadav, Inspector Arvind Kumar Mishra and Constable Satyajit Yadav, it said.

MARUTI SUZUKI

NEXA

NEXA IS NOW HIRING IN SIKKIM

SHOWROOM MANAGER

JOB DESCRIPTION

- Profit Center Head
- Overall in- Charge of sales Operation
- Responsibility for:
 - Sales Target Achievement
 - Promotion of value added services.
 - Customer satisfaction
 - Co-ordination with principal.

PROFILE

- Experience: Min 7 Yrs with 2 yrs as Manager
- Age 30-45 years.

CUSTOMER CARE MANAGER

JOB DESCRIPTION

- Ensuring Quality of sales
- Customer care & grievances handling.
- Enquiry Management

Experience: Min. 2yrs. In Automobile Industry.

CASHIER

- Candidate Should be a B.com
- Should be able to handle cash independently.
- Computer knowledge & Tally is Must.

ACCESSORIES FITTER

- Should be ITI holder.
- Experienced in accessories fitment & Lamination.

DRIVER

- Minimum 3 yrs Experience in Both manual & AGS vehicle.
- Should have valid Driving License

OTHER BACK- END REQUIREMENTS:

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No Longer About If

...but planning still stuck for scenarios after 'when'

The monsoon has been persistent, and as has been typical for the past few cycles, it is reiterating the human-induced fragility of the mountain slopes with some forcefulness; time for everyone to pause and take stock.

When natural disasters stop being about 'if' and get reinforced with the certainty of a 'when', you know that it is time to get worried. As far as Sikkim is concerned, this 'when' has been a 'now' for a while now. When it comes to nature, it is obvious that its violent turns cannot be prevented. However, centuries of living in a particular region grooms people to instinctively respect the brute force of nature and adopt lifestyles which mitigate their impact. This preparedness of indigenous communities needs to now be resurrected and used to guide how the deployment of the best available modern technology can make Sikkim more natural disaster resilient. The urgency to wake up to such a realisation is rung in every year when the monsoon holds Sikkim hostage to its ferocity. In the recent years alone, this urgency should have entered the red band of alarm of public consciousness with the monsoon-imposed landslides of 1997 in the heart of Gangtok and then the temblor trailer of Valentine's Day 2006 which bookmarked the destruction which followed on 18 September 2011 with the rattle of an earthquake and the rumble of landslides. Sikkim has suffered extensive devastation to slides and quakes through history but has preferred a bury-in-the-sand approach towards preparedness of late.

This is not an attempt to instigate panic - although a little panic for the right things might not be a bad idea for disaster preparedness - but a wondering aloud on when the realization will arrive that development need not always involve the destruction of something and ignorance is not something that only government-sponsored awareness programmes can dispel. One wonders what happened to the hill people's pragmatism which streamlined lifestyles over centuries to bring it in sync with nature, only to lose it all in less than half a century of concrete-crafted development. The people of Sikkim have traditionally identified the best and most secure ridges to settle their villages in, and in the past five decades, gone ahead and assaulted everything in the neighbourhood to compromise the stability of their own settlements. Reckless construction - of buildings and roads - has delivered traps which spring every monsoon and collapse too often. Neither landslides nor earthquakes are new to Sikkim; they have been around since much earlier than these hills were populated and people learned to live with it and survive the occasionally furious events. In the very recent, pre-2011 rattle, that of 2006, several buildings were damaged, and although suggestions were made to retrofit all important buildings - religious, cultural and administrative - of Sikkim, that idea found no takers. At that time, only structures which had suffered substantial damage and were too significant to be allowed to remain weak were retrofitted thanks to some aggressive lobbying by those who matter. In Gangtok, the Raj Bhavan [which had to be vacated after Valentine's Day 2006] and Enchey Monastery received this technological assistance. These works completed just in time, it appears, to validate the need for refitted reinforcements, because when the 18 Sept 2011 quake rattled Sikkim, even though a building near Raj Bhavan collapsed and huts in the Enchey compound came down, both structures made it through the 18 September earthquake with no noticeable damage. Similarly, the State Archives Building which had been retrofitted after taking damage in the 1988 Bihar earthquake, weathered the 2006 earthquake rather well despite its proximity to Raj Bhavan which suffered substantially at the time. Tashiling Secretariat should have been considered for such reinforcement after the 2006 earthquake, but was ignored and then an entirely new building had to be constructed after the 2011 event left the secretariat unstable.

There is still time for some other structures. The Government should invest in retrofitting the more important buildings and then promote them as examples of what can be done. The technology can then be passed on to private citizens to adopt for their own constructions.

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Scammers don't cheat because they need the money — they cheat because they're cheaters

MARCO A. PALMA
theconversation.com

Why do people cheat?

When we hear that a poor person scammed others out of money, we may attribute this behavior to their poverty, rationalizing that the person violated ethics and the law because they needed the money.

But the rich and powerful also cheat: falsifying loan applications, evading taxes, and running Ponzi schemes that defraud investors of millions.

As a behavioral economist, I am fascinated by how money affects decision-making. If money were the driving factor behind cheating, for example, it wouldn't really make sense for wealthy people to break the law for financial gain.

To find out whether cheating is driven by economic necessity or personality, economist Billur Aksoy and I conducted an experiment. We wanted to understand the role money plays in financial frauds.

Our findings, published in the Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization in July, suggest that people's propensity to cheat does not reflect their economic situation. People inclined to cheat will do so whether they are rich or poor.

PERFECTLY ISOLATED

To conduct our study, we identified an unusual place - a kind of petri dish where the same people experience both wealth and poverty. It's a remote and isolated coffee-growing village at the base of Guatemala's Fuego Volcano.

Part of the year, the seven months before the autumn harvest, the villagers experience scarcity. During Guatemala's five-month coffee harvest, however, the village is relatively prosperous. Without banks or access to credit, the farmers can't really make their earnings last much beyond the harvest period.

I say "relatively" because even during the harvest, the Guatemalan village still lacks access to health care, food and clean water. Residents told us they earn, on average, about \$3 a day. The coffee harvest is a time of comparative prosperity that briefly eases their poverty.

The unique financial situation of these villagers meant we could study the same group of people in both scarcity and abundance, knowing that mitigating factors - stress level, physical activity, domestic instability and so on - would remain similar across the population.

And since a recent study conducted in 23 countries shows that people cheat at about the same rates in rich and poor countries, we knew that our results would not be exclusive to Guatemala.

ROLL OF THE DICE

We first visited these Guatemalan villagers in September 2017, before the first harvest, when

their financial resources were scarcest. We returned in December, when coffee sales had significantly boosted their disposable income.

On both visits we played a simple game with the same set of 109 villagers. The participants in our study would put a six-sided die in a cup and roll it. They would then tell us - but not show us - the outcome of their roll, and shake the cup again so that no one else could see what they rolled.

The game's design ensured we wouldn't know whether individual players were accurately reporting their rolls.

The villagers were paid the Guatemalan equivalent of US\$1 for the number they rolled. So, if they rolled a four, they got \$4. A two earned \$2. The exception was six,



which according to our rules paid nothing.

Statistically, we knew, the three highest payout numbers of the six possible rolls - three, four and five - should have come up 50% of the time. The rest of the rolls should be low-earning numbers: one, two and six.

Yet, on both trips, the participants in our study reported rolling the high payout numbers about 85% of the time. The number five, the most lucrative roll, was reported more than 50% of the time. And almost no one admitted to rolling a six, which paid nothing.

These results indicate cheating on a large scale, both in prosperous times and in poverty. If people are inclined to cheat, it seems, and they think they can get away with it, they'll do it - rich or poor.

UNEXPECTED GENEROSITY

After running this first experiment, Prof. Aksoy and I asked players to roll the dice again.

This time, their roll would determine the payment for someone else from their village. In a small town like this village, in practice that meant people were playing to boost the earnings of their friends, family, neighbors and coworkers.

In this round of play, the high-payout numbers were reported at a somewhat lower rate than during the first round - 73% during the abundant harvest season and 75% during lean times. Cheating was still occurring, but somewhat less often. As

in the prior round, the cheating rate was similar in scarce times and abundance.

That pattern changed when we asked the villagers to roll the die to determine the payment for a stranger - someone from outside the village.

In December, a time of abundance, the villagers reported both high and low payouts about 50% of the time - right in line with their statistical probability. They did not cheat for the financial gain of strangers. In times of scarcity, however, the villagers reported rolling high payout numbers about 70% of the time, lying to benefit strangers at roughly the same rate they had for their neighbors.

Why would people break the rules for someone else when they themselves were at their poorest?

We believe that the villagers became more empathetic during times of scarcity, feeling the same concern for outsiders as they did for their friends and family.

FOR RICHER OR POORER

Our two biggest findings - that people will game the system at roughly the same rates whether they are rich or poor and that generosity for strangers does not depend on wealth - should be taken with caution. This was just one study in one country.

But researchers in Thailand recently reached conclusions similar to ours in an experiment they conducted with rice farmers. The participants in their unpublished study also lied for personal gain in both good and bad times.

The evidence suggests that wealth influences cheating much less than a person's ethics - that is, whether or not they are inclined towards cheating. This conclusion is in line with recent studies suggesting that people who engage in antisocial behavior or commit crimes may have a genetic predisposition to do so.

In other words, some people may be born with a propensity to cheat others out of their money. If so, then environmental factors like poverty and opportunity are not the reason for cheating - they are an excuse to explain bad behavior.

[the writer is Professor of Agricultural Economics and Director Human Behavior Laboratory, Texas A&M University]

Fast fashion lies: Will they really change their ways in a climate crisis?

ANIKA KOZLOWSKI
theconversation.com

Recently Zara introduced a sustainability pledge. But how can Zara ever be sustainable? As the largest fast-fashion retailer in the world, they produce around 450 million garments a year and release 500 new designs a week, about 20,000 a year. Zara's fast-fashion model has been so successful it has inspired an entire industry to shift - churning out an unprecedented number of fashion garments year-round.

We live in an era of hyper-consumption in the middle of a climate crisis.

Clothing production doubled from 2000 to 2014. The average consumer bought 60 per cent more clothing in 2014 than in 2000, but kept each garment half as long. Apparel consumption is projected to rise by 63 per cent in the next 10 years. And less than one per cent of all clothing produced globally is recycled.

With production numbers like these, can any fast-fashion retailer claim sustainability?

FAST FASHION IS NOT ECO-FRIENDLY

The fast-fashion business model itself is the very antithesis to sustainability.

Some ideas that have been presented by fast-fashion companies include recycling. But even if garments are collected in-store, the capabilities to recycle clothing at the scale needed for current production rates do not exist. It's also typically more energy-intensive to recycle than to produce new products.

Another concept, the one put forth recently by Zara, is to use only sustainable fabrics. But switching to sustainable fabrics while producing fashion clothing under the same model will not make any fast-fashion retailer sustainable.

There is no such thing as a 100 per cent sustainable fabric. Fabrics

require a tremendous amount of energy and natural resources to produce. Sustainable fabrics are just less harmful by reducing their environmental impact.

I spend a lot of time reading the corporate social responsibility reports of larger brands and interviewing micro-to-small sized enterprises to see how they approach sustainability. The largest significant difference between the two entities is culture.

Small brands focus on creating a culture of sustainability by producing less from the onset. They use strategies like producing made-to-order, so they are not making more than what is sold. They do this because waste is one of their biggest concerns. They also design clothing to be of the highest quality, ensuring durability and longevity, so clothes last a long time in your wardrobe. They will also repair your clothing so that you may keep it longer.

The most significant difference is that most small brands are opting to work under an "anti-fashion calendar." They deliberately chose not to follow the intense seasonal calendar that fashion functions under. Instead, they produce as needed. This is the opposite of how large companies function.

Large global corporate retailers are not seeking to change their fundamental business model or create cultures of sustainability. That would require re-working their entire business structure.

CORPORATE SOCIAL IRRESPONSIBILITY

The fast-fashion growth model used by all large companies is predicated on limitless growth and disposable consumption.

Corporate brands and retailers provide statistics about their environmental impact reductions within their supply chains. Unlike annual financial reports, corporate social

responsibility (CSR) reports are voluntary and not verified externally. Also, the way they measure their improvements is not consistent or standardized. Therefore, consumers can't compare one company to another without doing some wizard math.

Annual financial reports usually include ambitious goals to grow and expand. For example, H&M opened up 145 new stores this year and has expanded into four new markets: Ukraine, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Inditex, Zara's parent company, expects to open 300 new stores this year and launch online sales in Dubai, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and UAE.

Fast fashion is a "grow or die" business. And fast fashion continues to export this western consumerism into the Global South: this could have disastrous consequences. This is the paradox at the heart of western consumerist culture and one that goes beyond fast-fashion industry. Neoliberal capitalist economies require continuous consumption and define success through growth - concepts at odds with sustainability. Business growth must be decoupled from resource use.

The global population is set to grow by another two billion people in the next 30 years. To make a dent in the climate crisis, we have to cut emissions by more than 55 per cent in the next 10 years.

The current carbon footprint of the fashion industry is over eight per cent of total global greenhouse gas emissions, larger than all international travel. Therefore, to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including the 2C global temperature target, the fashion industry must play an active role in changing how they operate, source, manufacture, distribute and

approach the market.

It's not as simple switching out current textiles or packaging for more sustainable versions. Solutions to sustainability must include cultural change.

HOW MANY WEARS DOES YOUR CLOTHING GIVE YOU?

Even when a garment is produced using all sustainable materials, there are still many problems. Cheap costs and speedy production are why we still have labour issues like sweatshop conditions.

Zara has 1,800 suppliers in its supply-chain but does not disclose how often it audits individual suppliers per year to ensure compliance. If a garment is made to withstand only a couple months of wear - it is a massive waste of resources to produce that garment.

Fast fashion doesn't nudge consumers towards more responsible consumption behaviours because that would ultimately hurt their bottom line.

I would have more faith in the sustainability initiatives by large fashion companies if they started to introduce alternative sustainable business model practices. One small step could be to offer repair or tailoring services. Tailoring creates clothes that fit impeccably, subsequently increasing their emotional value. I believe that when garments fit well and are flattering to our body, we love them, and we keep them longer.

For the benefit of the earth and humanity, large brands need to look at how to move away from their continuous offerings of weekly new products. If these kind of changes were to occur, I would start to believe Zara and other fashion brands had good intentions to curb climate change.

[the writer is Assistant Professor of Fashion Design, Ethics and Sustainability, School of Fashion, Ryerson University]

Planter scripts unique tea tale along Indo-Bangla border

RANGAMURA (TRIPURA) AUG 4 (PTI): A Tripura planter has paved the way for growing tea on a vacant tract of land along the India-Bangladesh border, an initiative, which industry experts feel, could benefit the state's tea sector.

Fifty-year-old Animesh Deb, a small tea grower in West Tripura district, came up with the idea four years ago after attempts by fellow villagers to cultivate paddy on the 150- yard stretch -- between the actual border and the barbed wire fence on the Indian side -- failed due to grazing cattle.

"The BSF officers open the border gates at a fixed time every day, allowing us to nurture the plants. Cultivation of tea does not require guarding against cattle," he said.

Deb's initiative is in compliance with the 1975 Border Agreement between BSF and then Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), which prohibits construction of structures over four feet in height on 137.16-metre stretch between the actual border -- or the zero line -- and the fencing on either sides. The barbed wire



fence has been erected 150 yards away from the zero line, in adherence to the border agreement. Tea bushes usually do not grow to be four-foot tall.

"After the fence was erected in 2014 to check infiltration, smuggling and other border crimes, a vast tract of land fell vacant along the fence. As growing vegetables was not an option and the land and weather seemed conducive for growing tea, I took the initiative," Deb said.

The tea grower said he would be earning Rs

5 lakh annually from the six hectares of tea plantation between the fencing and the zero line.

Enthused by his success, Santosh Saha, the chairman of the Tripura Tea Development Corporation (TTDC), has proposed to expand the initiative on the border stretches.

"I had sent a proposal to Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb for growing more such tea gardens along the fence and he agreed to extend support to the project," Saha told

PTI. The corporation has

decided to provide technical assistance to small farmers for growing tea along the border.

"The idea was conceived during a meeting of tea growers of West Tripura district and the representatives of Tea Board of India and TTDC last week. If implemented successfully, the project would benefit the tea industry in the state," Saha said.

The TTDC chairman said that output from the initiative along the border stretches will be procured by bigger tea

gardens in the state for processing in their units.

Tripura annually produces over nine million kg of tea from 54 tea gardens in the state.

Several tea growers have taken cue from Deb's success.

Harishankar Deb-nath, another tea grower from Sepahijala district who is following in Deb's footsteps, said, "If TTDC helps us in growing the gardens, the tea industry in the state will flourish."

Tripura shares 856-km-long border with Bangladesh.

Centre to launch Rs 3,000 cr projects in 100 days in Northeast

NEW DELHI, AUG 3 (PTI): The Centre has decided to launch 200 projects worth Rs 3,000 crore in the Northeast in the first 100 days of the new Modi government, DoNER Minister Jitendra Singh said on Sunday.

Keeping in mind the targeted approach for bringing the rest of India closer to the Northeast, an action plan has been formulated for the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER).

Among the initiatives the DoNER has taken in the 100 days action plan is to sanction or start or complete or operationalise 200 projects worth about Rs 3,000 crore, which means on an average two projects for Rs 30 crore per day, Singh, Union minister for DoNER, said.

He said the Narendra

Modi government has always accorded top priority to the "hitherto neglected" areas of the country - the Northeastern region being one of them.

During the first five years of his term as prime minister, Modi undertook over 30 visits to the Northeast and his personal outreach put all the development activities on a fast track.

In the first term of the Modi government, the primary focus was not only to bring the Northeast closer to the rest of India, but actually to bring the rest of India closer to the Northeast.

The same priorities continue with the Modi 2.0 term with a targeted and streamlined approach, Singh said.

A key project under the action plan is setting up of a bamboo industri-

al park at Manderdisa in Dima Hasao district of Assam in an area of 75 hectares at a cost of Rs 50 crore.

In addition, 36 ongoing projects under various schemes like the Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) Scheme, special packages, schemes of the North Eastern Council (NEC) have been completed with approved cost of Rs 529.18 crore.

Works of two projects for Rs 89.63 crore got started and three projects for Rs 26.83 crore have been operationalised during this period.

Under North East State Road Improvement Project (NESRIP), sanctions have been accorded for release of Rs nine crore for road projects during 50 days since formation of the government.

Odisha urges Centre not to shift CWC office to Patna



BHUBANESWAR, AUG 4 (PTI): The Odisha government has urged the Centre to rescind its decision to shift the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) office to Patna, saying the move will jeopardise the state's interests.

State Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain conveyed Odisha's concerns in a letter to Union Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister Ram Vilas Paswan on Saturday.

"The recent decision to merge Bhubaneswar and Patna regions (of CWC) into a single entity and renaming it as Patna region with headquar-

ters at Patna will seriously jeopardise the interest of the people of Odisha," Swain said.

Noting that monitoring of scientific storage from Patna will be difficult, he said warehousing operations in Odisha will be hampered as a result of the proposed relocation.

The minister also pointed out that members of the Odisha Assembly, cutting across party lines, have raised their concerns over the issue in the House.

"The regional office of CWC at Bhubaneswar has been playing a vital role in storage and warehousing of various commodities including foodgrains and notified

commodities of the Food Corporation of India as well as the Odisha state Civil Supplies Corporation," Swain said.

Established in 1990, the Bhubaneswar regional office now has an operational capacity of 3.48 lakh MT and caters to the storage needs of 15 districts of the state, he said.

Swain said that the Bhubaneswar regional office has been making profit over the past five years.

"In this backdrop, I would like to request your (Paswan's) personal intervention for allowing the regional office at Bhubaneswar to continue as such in modification of the earlier decision of its merger with Patna region," he said.

From sky to sea, adventure sports gain traction in India

TRISHA MUKHERJEE

NEW DELHI, AUG 4 (PTI): Bitten by the adventure bug, an increasing number of well-heeled Indians are gliding through the air strung on parachutes, fighting river rapids on flimsy rafts, diving deep into the seas or plunging dizzying heights connected to nothing but an elastic cord.

Reports of rafting accidents from Rishikesh or even the recent video of a 39-year-old getting critically injured in Poland that was circulated widely did raise serious concerns about safety measures, but adventure junkies say the danger is built in.

As industry insiders stress on the levels of caution they take to ensure no accidents happen, sports enthusiasts say it is the excitement, thrill and sometimes even the fear associated with these activities that make them attractive.

Like Pune-based project manager Subhabrata Chattopadhyay, who has drawn up bucket list of adventure activities.

"These sports take you out of your comfort zone and are great stress busters. Though these activities are done in the supervision of experts, still there is a certain amount of risk involved and I quite enjoy the thrill," 31-year-old Chattopadhyay told PTI.

He has already checked paragliding, parasailing, waterfall rappelling, kayaking and bungee jumping off his list.

"Next up are scuba diving and sky diving," he added.

Chattopadhyay is among the thousands who are making India a booming adventure sports destination.

Adventure activities in India grew by 178 per cent from 2015 to 2018, according to a 2018 survey by on-line travel portal Thrillophilia.

The survey found that activities like parasailing, paragliding, trekking, hot air ballooning, heli-skiing, river rafting, scuba diving and snorkeling are gaining traction in the country.

However, all of this thrill, much like in the Poland accident, may take a fatal turn in the absence of required security measures and well-trained instructors. For instance, there have been several reports of boats capsizing while river rafting in Rishikesh, a must visit for many adventure enthusiasts.

In March this year, 55-year-old Lata Chand Dhanik from Gurgaon died after her boat carrying eight more people overturned. While the others were rescued, Dhanik fell unconscious, and was eventually declared brought dead at the hospital.

Industry players said safety is paramount and they spare no costs.

Their clients are in safe hands, assured Ganesh Gurjar, manager at the Rishikesh-based Red Chilli adventure.

All clients are briefed on dos and

don'ts for 20 minutes and also trained in paddling in case of the raft overturning or someone falling. "Our guards are CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation) certified, and ambulances are also available on call," Gurjar added.

Accidents, he said, often happen because of undisclosed information on the customers' part.

"Often people would turn up in an



inebriated state, or would not reveal that they suffer from heart or respiratory issues. In some situations, withholding such information can be dangerous," he said.

Rishikesh's popularity as a river rafting location can be attributed to its 10-month-long rafting season that starts in mid-September and continues till June.

Gurjar's company offers four rafting routes -- starting from Brahmapuri (9km), Shivpuri (16 km), Marine Drive (26 km), and Kaudiyala (35 km), which cost between Rs 800 and Rs 2,500.

Bungee jumping is another hot favourite.

After offering an "international experience in terms of safety standards" at Rishikesh for nine years, Jumpin Heights is opening a new bungee jumping segment in north Goa later this month.

The project, supported by the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC), will involve a 55-metre-high bungee jump from cliffs over Mayem Lake.

The activity will set an individual back by Rs 3,550.

To keep accidental risks at bay, people above 40 years of age will not be allowed to undertake the jump. "Osteoporosis is common (with people above 40) and they are often not aware they may be suffering from it," Rahul Nigam, director and founder of Jumpin Heights, told PTI.

Other provisions include Red Cross cer-

tified staff in first aid, a permanent doctor on call, and regularly checked equipment.

"We retire the cords well before their standard term of life. We also put out a list of medical conditions which, if the jumper suffers from, we do not permit him/her to go ahead," Nigam said.

The final call, after all the security checks are done, lies with the company's experienced jump masters trained in New

Zealand (the birthplace of bungee jumping).

"They have the final discretion," he added. Despite the adrenaline rush he craves for, Delhi-based Waled Aadnan refuses to compromise on safety.

The 28-year-old risk analyst, who has done a bungee jump from Macau Tower, one of the highest in the world at 233 metres, said it was imperative for companies organising such activities to take safety measures but also important for individuals to do their own research.

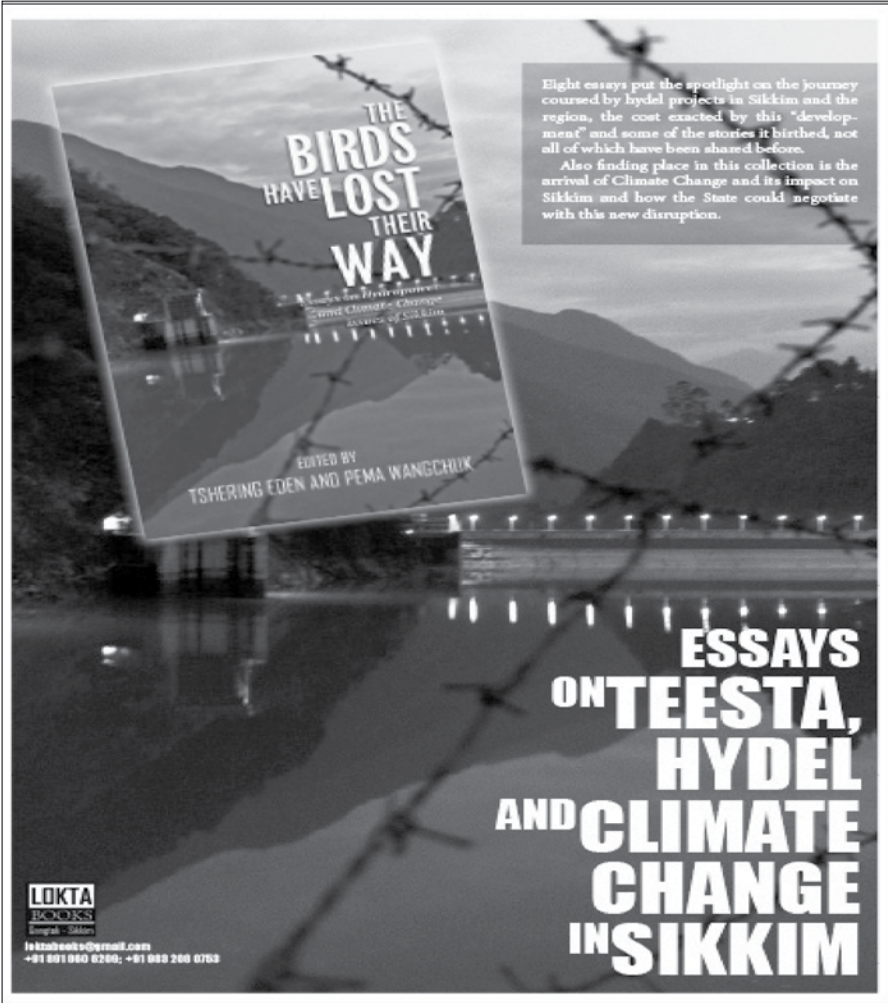
Aadnan, also a regular high altitude trekker, stressed on the need for regular health check ups to ensure high altitude acclimatisation. "Safety includes both being physically and mentally prepared for a trek yourself, as well as choosing the right combination of locations, seasons and companions to trek with," he said.

Hot air ballooning is another activity that is gaining popularity in India, albeit gradually.

Abhishek Agarwal of Tiger Balloon Safaris, which has been organising hot air balloon rides in Goa for four years, said the sport was yet to become mainstream because of exorbitant prices.

A ride that lasts an hour and a half costs anything between Rs 11,000 - 15,000, depending on the size of the balloon.

Licensed by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, it is in the company's mandate to employ only licensed pilots.



Saini is a raw talent with raw pace, has a bright future: Kohli



LAUDERHILL (USA), AUG 4 (PTI): Fast bowler Navdeep Saini's impressive spell in his India debut against the West Indies in the first T20 International here has earned praise from captain Virat Kohli who described him as a raw talent with a bright future.

The 26-year-old Saini claimed three wickets for 17 runs to star in India's four-wicket win against the Windies on Saturday. India restricted the West Indies to 95 for 9 before chasing down the target with 2.4 overs to spare.

"Yeah, Navdeep is from Delhi and he has come a long way. He plays the IPL as well and had a great season," Kohli said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

"He is a raw talent, has raw pace. He is one of them who can bowl 150 clicks and there are hardly any who bowl at that pace and he is fit. He is someone who can build a name for himself and he is hungry as well. Hopefully he builds on from here," he added.

India made a heavy weather of the modest run chase and Kohli conceded that his side should have finished the game in a better way. He, however, said the wicket made the run chase difficult. "Our bowling and fielding were right up there but the pitch wasn't great. With the rain around, you could not do much. They did well to start the game on time. "The bowlers were on top throughout, variations were superb. We would have liked to chase it four down, but we wanted to take risks and take the scoreboard moving. As the ball got older, strike rotation became key," the Indian captain said.

Asked about the second T20I to be played on Sunday at the same venue, Kohli said, "It's just about putting in solid performance and ensure the guys who play contribute in some way or the other."

West Indies captain Carlos Brathwaite said his side did not assess the conditions well and blamed the batting collapse for the loss. He, however, praised Keiron Pollard who top-scored with a 49 to take West Indies near the 100-run mark. "Kudos to Kieron coming back into the team. He showed his experience. Had we made 130, it would have been a different game. We battled ourselves out of the game," he said.

"We have to play positively. The message will continue to be to keep intent, but we need to have better shot selection and awareness. Sunil Narine's four overs very important. He showed his experience and brought us back into the game. It was a great bowling effort."

Rebuilding Man Utd face uncertain future

London, Aug 4 (AFP): Manchester United have missed out on the top four in four of the six seasons since Alex Ferguson stepped down and fans are coming to terms with their current status as Premier League also-rans.

Here, AFP Sport looks at whether Ole Gunnar Solskjaer can make United contenders again for the first time since their last Premier League title in 2012-13 or whether they are facing another season of turmoil and pain.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

It is difficult to know what to expect from Solskjaer's United, who enjoyed a purple patch after the Norwegian replaced Jose Mourinho but slumped alarmingly towards the end of last season. At one stage they looked likely to finish in the top four but there was the suspicion they were getting the rub of the green and so it proved.

Their campaign ended with a whimper as they drew 1-1 at relegated Huddersfield and then



were beaten 2-0 at home on the final day by Cardiff, who were also heading out of the Premier League.

A gap of 32 points to champions Manchester City was embarrassing and many questioned whether the club had been too hasty in appointing the relatively inexperienced Solskjaer

to the full-time manager's post. United will not have Champions League football to paper over the cracks during the coming season, with Thursday nights in the Europa League ringed in the calendar instead.

The club have had a positive pre-season but there are still lingering issues that need to be

addressed -- Paul Pogba's future is still in doubt and Solskjaer has to wrestle with the conundrum of an under-performing Alexis Sanchez.

United had problems at both ends of the pitch last season -- scoring 30 goals fewer than City in the Premier League and conceding 54 goals, the most they had conceded

in a league season since 1978-79. The 20-time champions desperately need a positive start to rebuild confidence that they can challenge at the sharp end of the Premier League.

Anything less and the knives could be out for Solskjaer.

NEW FACES:

After a leaky defence

played a key role in United's struggles last season, Solskjaer made it clear he wanted Leicester's Harry Maguire to plug the holes.

The England centre-back is reportedly on the verge of becoming the world's most expensive defender, with United said to have agreed an £80 million fee to land Maguire.

But have they signed enough faces to boost a squad that looked short of class compared with Manchester City and Liverpool last season? Highly rated right-back Aaron Wan-Bissaka has joined from Crystal Palace, with Solskjaer describing the 21-year-old as "one of the best upcoming defenders in the Premier League".

Winger Daniel James was bought from Championship club Swansea to add thrust on the flanks.

United have also been linked with a swoop for Juventus forward Paulo Dybala, but the Argentine is said to be unsure about joining a team outside the

Champions League.

Romelu Lukaku could be on the way out of Old Trafford, with Juventus and Inter Milan both keen on the Belgium striker according to reports.

KEY MAN:

This is the season when Marcus Rashford will have to step up and show emphatically that he deserves to wear the number 10 shirt at Manchester United.

Still only 21, Rashford scored 17 goals in 54 appearances last season for club and country but will have to boost those numbers if he is to be the undisputed leader of United's attack.

Rashford signed a new four-year deal to remain at Old Trafford last month, saying it was "a privilege" every time he wore the shirt.

He has scored some sublime goals for the club but with a shortage of goal threat from elsewhere, Solskjaer will want to see him take his tally to 20-plus goals this season and become more of a poacher.

J&K age-group trials postponed due to security issues, mentor Pathan and aspirants leave for home



NEW DELHI, AUG 4 (PTI): Former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan, who is the mentor of Jammu & Kashmir state teams, along with age-group aspirants left for their respective homes after ongoing U-16 and U-19 trials in Srinagar have been postponed due to prevailing security situation in the valley.

The state administration has issued an advisory for all tourists and Amarnath Yatris to leave the valley due to a potential terror threat.

Pathan was in Srinagar to oversee the trials for the U-16 (Vijay Merchant Trophy) and U-19 (Cooch Behar Tro-

phy) and prune the list of probables. "We have for the time being postponed the second phase of junior team trials. We had the first phase from June to July. This was the second phase. However since there has been a government advisory, I had a meeting with Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) CEO Mr Bukhari and administrator Justice Prasad. Accordingly, it was decided that boys need to be sent back home," Pathan told PTI on Sunday.

Pathan left Srinagar only after all the boys, from other regions like Jammu reached home.

"I myself personal-

ly ensured, at least for a few boys, that they can reach their homes safely. I can understand that their parents were tensed and rightly so. I called up some of them to confirm that they have indeed reached their homes. Now that everyone has left, I left today," said Pathan.

He agreed that due to the current situation, the training schedule got hampered but expected that things will be back on track in no time.

"We have got an elaborate blue print ready. We wanted to have a heads up in our preparations and that's why we started the camp

as early as June so that when this camp starts, we can shortlist the boys easily. Also our boys will be playing an All-India pre-season tournament and I will monitor their performance," the 34-year-old said.

While he remains hopeful that camp will resume in a few days time after the current security issue is taken care of, he also didn't rule out the option of training in any other state.

"If a situation demands, there could be a contingency plan where JKCA can use the training facilities of any other state association," said Pathan.

Pakistan tennis chief promises India full-proof security ahead of Davis Cup tie

AMANPREET SINGH

NEW DELHI, AUG 4 (PTI):

Seeking to allay fears on Indian team's security during the Davis Cup tie, Pakistan Tennis Federation President Salim Saifullah Khan assured that the contest will be held in safe and secure environment, promising "impressive hospitality" to the visitors.

The PTF chief also said they plan to invite India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi to watch the contest, scheduled for September 14-15, and promised a memorable hospitality to the visiting team and fans.

"We are eagerly waiting for the Indian team. There will be good arrangements for Indian fans and the players. We will host the tie in a very safe and secure atmosphere," Salim Saifullah told PTI in an exclusive interview. "There is a lot of excitement in Pakistan for this tie. Everyone is happy. It's better if we spray tennis balls at each other and not bombs. I am confident that the Indian team will be impressed with Pakistan's hospitality."

An Indian tennis team is set to travel to Pakistan for the first time in 55 years. The last time Pakistan hosted India was way back in 1964 when the visitors won 4-0 in Lahore. When reminded that there are apprehensions regarding players' safety in Pakistan, Salim assured that nothing untoward will happen.

"The ITF consultants were here for three days and they inspected everything. Islamabad is not a big city like Delhi, Lahore and Mumbai. The population here is below two million.

"All the set up will be declared a red zone because the Parliament, Presidency and the PM (residence) are also there. I am sure nothing untoward will happen

and the Indian players would be comfortable," he said. "When ITF allowed us to host ties, it was based on the fact that there is a consistent campaign against terrorists and terrorism by the government. There is a lot of difference between the 2010 incident and 2019. We have improved a lot," he added.

Salim said the two nations are similar and the people too are same -- a view a lot of the commoners share in both the countries. "The Indian players have visited here for the ITF Futures tournaments as well. And when Indians come here, it's difficult to separate them from Pakistanis because we look the same. The clothes are the same, the food is also the same. We always advise them to stay in specific hotels. Nothing has happened so far and Inshallah, nothing will happen," he hoped.

The soft-spoken Salim is a staunch supporter of sports diplomacy, which he felt can be used to normalise the relations between the two nations.

"Our Prime Minister and the government have been trying that a dialogue happens and solutions (to problems between two countries) are explored. People in Pakistan crave to go to India and people in India also want to visit Pakistan. I hope these visits start.

"It will help the sport. India is our next-door neighbour and our players can go there at a very little expense to train and compete with your players.

"It's a beginning, let's see. Our player Aisam and Bopanna had reached the US Open final in 2013 and I had watched their semifinal in New York. I hope the situation improves.

"We are planning to invite Prime Minister

Narendra Modi to come and watch the tie in Islamabad."

When asked what it means for Pakistan to host India after more than five decades, Salim said, "It was God's blessing that first time an Indian tennis team is coming to Islamabad."

"One team had come to Lahore after independence (1964). We feel it's a good opportunity for the two countries to show maturity. We should not mix politics and sports.

"Rather if sports and sports diplomacy is used to make the situation better, nothing like it. There is a lot of hype here. Inshallah, it will be a well-arranged and well-contested tie."

In the court though, it is highly unlikely that the Indian team will be troubled by the home side, which does not have many quality singles players.

Veteran Aqeel Khan has been their crusader for long, the number one player for almost two decades. "I really regret that we do not have many good singles players. Our youngsters are still not able to beat Aqeel. There are many factors that game did not grow and a big one was that Pakistan was not allowed to host Davis Cup for 12 years. It affects.

"People may not go and watch Aisam play outside but when he plays in Pakistan, people do come. Tennis over the years has not got the patronage from the government and sponsors, unlike India.

"You have a lot of funds for sports, but for us, it's still an issue. Nothing can happen without funds. But we are trying. It's an uphill task. I hope this tie helps generate more interest and enthusiasm and we will produce more Aqeel Khans and Aisams."

Pope prays for victims of 3 US mass shootings in a week



VATICAN CITY, AUG 4 (AP): Pope Francis is offering prayers for the dead and the injured in three US mass shootings this week.

Francis told a crowd gathered in St Peter's Square for the weekly Angelus blessing Sunday that "I am spiritually close to the victims of

the episodes of violence that have bloodied Texas, California and Ohio, in the United States, striking defenseless people." He appealed to the faithful "to join my prayer for the people who lost their lives, the injured and their family members."

Nine people in Ohio have been

killed in the second mass shooting in the United States in less than 24 hours, following the shooting deaths of 20 people Saturday at a Texas shopping area. Just days before, on July 28, a gunman killed three people at a food festival in California.

30 killed in two separate mass shootings in US

SEEMA HAKHU KACHRU
WASHINGTON/HOUSTON, Aug 4 (PTI): At least 30 people were killed and several others injured in two separate mass shootings within 24 hours in the United States, the latest in a string of mass shootings in America.

Ten people, including the shooter, were killed and at least 16 others injured on early Sunday in Dayton's Oregon district, a historic neighbourhood known for its nightclubs, bars, art galleries and shops.

"The shooter is deceased. There are 9 others also deceased. At least 16 others went to area hospitals with injuries," Dayton police said.

The incident took place hours after a 21-year-old gunman armed with an assault rifle opened fire at a crowded Walmart store in the southern border town of El Paso in Texas, killing 20 people and wounding 26 others.

"The ages and genders of all these people injured and killed are numerous in the age groups," El Paso Police Chief Greg Allen said. "The situation, needless to say, is a horrific one."

For several minutes on Saturday morning, the packed Walmart store, where shoppers were busy buying back to school stuff for their kids, filled with gun smoke and the echo of gunfire. Footage shot on mobiles appeared to show multiple bodies lying on the ground in the store's parking lot. Twenty peo-



ple were killed and 26 others injured in the shooting in El Paso, said Texas Gov. Greg Abbott.

"Texas grieves for the people of El Paso," Abbott told reporters. "On a day that would have been a normal day for someone to leisurely go shopping, turned into one of the most deadly days in the history of Texas."

President Donald Trump condemned the El Paso attack as an "act of cowardice" and said there could be no justification for the killing of innocent people.

"I stand with everyone in this Country to

condemn today's hateful act. There are no reasons or excuses that will ever justify killing innocent people. Melania and I send our heartfelt thoughts and prayers to the great people of Texas," Trump tweeted.

Marcelo Ebrard, the secretary of foreign affairs of Mexico, said six Mexican nationals were among the El Paso injured.

Victor Guerrero, a spokesman for Del Sol Medical Center, said the hospital was treating 11 El Paso victims. Nine were in critical but stable condition and two

were stable, he said. Patient ages ranged from 35 to 82. The University Medical Centre of El Paso received 13 patients, according to Ryan Mielke, the hospital's spokesman. He said two minors, including a two-year-old, were stabilized and transferred to El Paso Children's Hospital.

Mielke said the victims' conditions ranged from minor injury to fatal.

The authorities identified the El Paso gunman as Patrick Crusius from an affluent Dallas suburb. He was taken into custody after he surrendered

to the police outside the Walmart store. The authorities said they were investigating a manifesto to Crusius, who is white, may have posted before the shooting, which described an attack in response to "the Hispanic invasion of Texas."

The manifesto is filled with white nationalist language and racist hatred toward immigrants and Latinos, blaming immigrant Americans for taking away jobs.

Citing a source familiar with the investigative process, the CNN said the FBI has opened a domes-

tic terrorism investigation into the shooting to be worked concurrent to the state investigation, with Texas authorities taking the lead.

The FBI, the source indicated, is surging resources from neighbouring satellite offices in Texas and assets are on standby to assist should the state request.

A Twitter account that appeared to belong to Crusius was shut down Saturday evening. Tweets on the account had praised Trump and, in particular, his effort to build a wall along the US-Mexico border. The

FBI is asking witnesses who took photos or videos during the shooting to submit their unedited media to them for examination.

The El Paso attack was the second fatal shooting in less than a week at a Walmart store in the US. Two people were shot and killed at a Walmart store in Southaven, Mississippi, south of Memphis on Tuesday.

"I can't believe I'm sending a note like this twice in one week," Walmart CEO Doug McMillon said in a message posted on Instagram. "My heart aches for the community in El Paso, espe-

cially for the associates and customers at store 2201 and the families of the victims of today's tragedy."

The gunfire that tore through a Walmart jammed with back-to-school shoppers on Saturday marked another bleak milestone in a nation pocked by gun violence: the 250th mass shooting of 2019.

And the rampage in El Paso notched an even darker statistic: It occurred on the 215th day of the year, meaning there have been more mass shootings than days so far this year.

The massacre at the Ohio and Walmart near the Cielo Vista Mall became the nation's latest mass shooting as defined by the Gun Violence Archive, a not-for-profit organization that provides online public access to information about gun-related violence.

The archive categorizes mass shootings as incidents in which four or more people were shot or killed, not including the shooters. So far this year, 522 people have died in mass shootings and 2,040 injured, according to the data.

El Paso has long been both a cultural and political symbol of Hispanic Texas. The city has had a binational feel because of its proximity and ties to its sister city in Mexico, Ciudad Juarez, and has been in the national spotlight for months. Thousands of Central American families have flooded the city and surrounding areas seeking asylum.

6.3-magnitude quake hits northeastern Japan, no tsunami threat

TOKYO, AUG 4 (AFP): A strong 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck in the Pacific off Fukushima, northeastern Japan, on Sunday, but there was no tsunami threat, US and Japanese authorities said. The quake jolted large areas in the region at 7:23 pm (1023 GMT) with its epicentre located 54 kilometres (34 miles) east of Namie, eastern Fukushima, according to the US Geological Survey said. The quake was also felt in Tokyo.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said there were no worries about tsunami damage.

The weather agency issued an emergency warning when the quake hit, but there was no immediate report of injuries or damage.

Shinkansen bullet train services were temporarily suspended in the region, public broadcaster NHK said.

No abnormality was detected at nuclear plants in the region, including the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, NHK said.

More than 18,000 were killed after a 9.0-magnitude earthquake triggered a massive tsunami on March 11, 2011, leading to the meltdown of reactors at the Fukushima plant.

Japan sits at the junction of four tectonic plates and experiences a number of relatively violent quakes every year.

Iran seizes third foreign ship in less than month

TEHRAN, AUG 4 (AFP): Iran has seized a foreign tanker in the Gulf, state media said Sunday, in what would be the third such seizure in a month amid heightened tensions with its foe the United States. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps "seized this ship around Farsi Island which was carrying around 700,000 litres of smuggled fuel", said a Guards statement quoted by the official news agency IRNA. Seven foreign crew were arrested in the operation carried out on Wednesday night, said Fars news agency, which is considered close to the Guards. Tensions between arch-enemies Iran and the US have soared this year after Washington stepped up its campaign of "maximum pressure" against Tehran.

Ships have been attacked, drones downed and oil tankers seized since May, a year after the United States withdrew from a landmark nuclear deal between Iran and world powers and began reimposing biting sanctions against the country.

At the height of the crisis, US President Donald Trump called off air strikes against Iran at the last minute in June after the Islamic republic's forces shot down a US drone. The seizure of the latest tanker would be the third by Iran in less than a month in Gulf waters -- a conduit for much of the world's crude oil. On July 18, the Guards said they had detained the Panama-flagged for MT Riah for alleged fuel smuggling.

And a day later, they announced they had impounded the British-flagged Stena Impero in the Strait of Hormuz for breaking "international maritime rules".

The identity of the latest vessel seized and the nationality of its crew had not yet been revealed on Sunday. The Guards said their boats had been patrolling the Gulf



to control traffic and detect illicit trade when they seized the tanker.

"The ship was transferred to Bushehr and its smuggled fuel was handed over" to the authorities in coordination with judicial authorities, said a statement. Fars quoted Brigadier General Ramezan Zirahi, a commander of the Guards who carried out the seizure, as saying the tanker had been en route to deliver fuel to Gulf Arab states.

The reports came after an Iranian general said the chances of a conflict breaking out in the Gulf region had decreased.

"At first glance, it may seem that the situation in the Persian Gulf is heading towards a military conflict but when studying the situation more deeply, we see that chances for such a conflict become less probable," said Brigadier General Ahmadreza Pourastan.

"All countries which have interests in the region are by no means willing to see a new crisis in the Middle East," he said, quoted by Mehr news agency.

"The Persian Gulf is like a tinderbox and explosion of the first firecracker can lead to a huge disaster." On the diplomatic front, officials in Iran said Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif had been hit with US sanctions after turning down an invitation to meet Trump

in Washington. The New Yorker magazine reported on Friday that Republican Senator Rand Paul met Zarif in the US on July 15 and had Trump's blessing when he extended an invitation to the Iranian minister to go to the White House.

Officials in Iran confirmed the report and heaped scorn on the Trump administration for claiming to want dialogue with Iran while slapping sanctions on its top diplomat. The sanctions announced on Wednesday are aimed at freezing any of Zarif's assets in the United States or controlled by US entities, as well as squeeze his ability to function as a globe-trotting diplomat. "For a government to constantly claim (to favour) negotiations and afterwards sanction the foreign minister... if this is not ridiculous, then what is it?" said foreign ministry spokesman Ali Rabiei.

Rear Admiral Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said the invitation and sanctions amounted to a failure of US diplomacy.

"Imposing sanctions on the honourable foreign minister of Iran after the refusal of Trump's proposal for face-to-face talks with him showed the 'maximum pressure' train has stopped at the 'failure station'," he said, quoted by ISNA news agency.

Imran Khan convenes NSC meeting



ISLAMABAD, AUG 4 (PTI): Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan convened a meeting of the National Security Committee on Sunday to discuss issues pertaining to national security in the wake of developments in the region.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan announced this in a se-

ries of tweets on Sunday. She said that the political leadership of Pakistan needs to come on the same page and "send a message of unity and solidarity".

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Sunday asked Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Secretary General Dr. Yousuf Ahmed Al-Othaimeneh to take notice of the situa-

tion in Kashmir, state-run Radio Pakistan reported.

Secretary General of OIC assured the Foreign Minister for taking notice on situation and to extend full cooperation.

Earlier Sunday, chairing an emergency consultative meeting at the Foreign Office in Islamabad, Qureshi alleged that Indian "designs are an attempt to disrupt the regional peace."

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K-Pop star Jinu to make his solo debut

Jinu (Kim Jin-woo) from K-pop boy band WINNER is making his solo debut very soon!

Yesterday, the K-pop star's parent company, YG Entertainment, wiped their Instagram clean and posted a series of six posts to tease fans about Jinu's upcoming project.

Featuring a collage of eight photos, from Jinu's distinctive shadow, to a type-writer and an iPhone, each individual image hinted at the singer's inspiration for

his new music. YG Entertainment also confirmed through a press release that the 27-year-old singer would be making his solo debut later in the day.

To add to the excitement, a concept video featuring the artist was also uploaded to YG Entertainment and WINNER's social media pages.

In it, Jinu gazes soulfully at the camera and seems to be playing with lights, while the teaser poster is overlaid on the video. The video ends by promising an August release.



Akshay Kumar Believes In '70 Per Cent Luck And 30 Per Cent Hard Work'

Superstar Akshay Kumar has seen both good and bad phases in his career and he believes it is important to learn from such experiences as nothing is permanent in life. The actor said he has seen people write an obituary of his career after a string of flops but he has always made a strong comeback.

"I have been through this phase three times. So I wouldn't be surprised if I go through it again. The best way is to keep working hard. When I had delivered 14-15 flop films, everyone said "Gaya gaya" and then after giving hit films, I heard them saying, "Aa gaya aa gaya". I remember these words."

"It is part of life and this happens to everybody, be it in personal or professional life. Basically, you have to take it all in your stride, be bold and face the next day," Akshay said in a group interview.

The 51-year-old actor is currently one of the most bankable stars in Bollywood, courtesy his back-to-back hits like Toilet: Ek Prem Katha, Gold and Kesari. His ardent fans have given him the sobriquet 'Guarantee Kumar', owing to his recent performance at the box office, but Akshay believes a person's success is a result of good combination of hard-work and luck. "Audience is very bold today and they don't care, they say what they feel is correct. I am glad the audience calls me that ('Guarantee Kumar'). But there is no guarantee of anything. There are times when I see a film and feel it will do wonders at the box office but then it doesn't work at all. So you don't know what will work, till it releases."

"After 30 years, I have realised that films work not just due to hard work, it is definitely needed, but you do need luck and it does make a lot of difference. I believe 70 per cent in luck and 30 per cent hard work," he added. The actor is currently promoting his next release Mission Mangal, which is set to

hit the theatres on the Independence Day.

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

Akshay said of late, the efforts of India's premiere space agency have started getting recognised by everyone and he believes a part of the credit should go to the current government.

"I was reading an article in which it was written that earlier two to three per cent of the budget was given to space and science. Now it is 18 per cent. This government is going to focus on space science and all. So we see something like Chandrayan 2. "ISRO is there for 50 years but it has become very famous of late because we used to not talk about it earlier," he added. Citing the example of Union minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who previously was the Defence Minister and is currently the Finance Minister of the country, Akshay said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is walking the talk when it comes to gender equality.

"There was a perception that only men can be a scientist or engineer but I believe a woman can be an equally good scientist or engineer. Things are changing in India so much today. In our country, we have a woman holding an important portfolio like finance or defence ministry."

Mission Mangal may have a niche topic at the centre but Akshay said the film also has a commercial aspect which helps in making it appealing to the masses. "I have not made a documentary film. I have made a commercial cinema where there are elements of laughter, fun, emotions and two-three songs. When I made Toilet: Ek Prem Katha, I did add commercial elements to make it more appealing. You have to bring such stories on the big screen but in a commercial way," he said.

Parineeti Chopra starts filming 'The Girl on the Train' Hindi adaptation

MUMBAI, AUG 4 (PTI):

Parineeti Chopra on Sunday started shooting for the Hindi remake of Hollywood blockbuster "The Girl on the Train". The film, to be directed by Ribhu Dasgupta, is an official remake of the 2016 thriller featuring Emily Blunt.

Dasgupta made the announcement on Twitter.

"Hopping on to a train ride today with @Parineeti-

Chopra," he wrote.

In the movie, Parineeti will play an alcoholic divorcee, who becomes involved in a missing person's investigation.

It is produced by Reliance Entertainment. Set in the UK, the film will also feature Aditi Rao Hydari, Kirti Kulhari and Avinash Tiwari.

The makers are eyeing a 2020 release.

Aamir and SRK were keen to do 'Saare Jahan Se Aacha'



MUMBAI, AUG 4 (PTI): Superstars Aamir Khan and Shah Rukh Khan both loved the idea of "Saare Jahan Se Aacha" and wanted to do the film, a source close to the production said.

"Saare Jahan Se Aacha" is based on astronaut Rakesh Sharma's life and writer Anjum Rajabali has penned the story of the film. "In each of these cases, the script was happily embraced by the star and it remained with the star as a matter of commitment. They were committed and keen to do it," the source said.

The insider further said that it is a big film and hence it's taking a lot of time to come together.

"It is happening, it is a big project and it does take a little bit of time as a lot of factors need to be balanced out for it to become possible. We are trying to put everything together."

Speculations were rife that the makers have approached Vicky Kaushal and Ranbir Kapoor for the lead role, but there is no official confirmation yet.

"The film is in the process (of casting) so it becomes difficult to speak about anything. It is not the right time to talk about it as we are in the process of casting," the source said.

Amitabh Bachchan begins shooting for 'Kaun Banega Crorepati' season 11

MUMBAI, AUG 4 (PTI): Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has started filming the 11th season of popular reality game show "Kaun Banega Crorepati".

The 76-year-old actor on Saturday took to Twitter to share the news.

"It has begun... another 'KBC' ... 19 years since it started... 11 seasons... and the love of all the viewers," Bachchan tweeted along with some photographs from the sets. The "Badla" star wrote

on his blog recounting the "the signature tune" of the show, which has been airing since 2000.

"... And the tech rehearsals come alive and the palpitation for the morrow and the first episode for this year and its apprehensions and uncertainties... But shall try to give it a best knock..." he wrote.

"KBC", based on the UK programme "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?", is scheduled to start airing this month.

K-POP GLITZ: It was a glitzy night at the Olympic Gymnastics Arena in Seoul on the night of 31 July as some of the biggest names in K-pop today, like Kim Jae-Hwan in pic above, rocked up the 2019 M2 X Genie Music Awards red carpet.

Zico's Crew, FANXY CHILD tease brand new single and music video



In a world of K-pop groups managed by singular entertainment companies, 26-year-old rapper and producer, Zico is shaking things up with his hip-hop crew, FANXY CHILD. In July, the Block B member deleted everything in his Instagram feed to introduce an upcoming project by FANXY CHILD and just recently the release date was announced.

FANXY CHILD, which consists of some of the top names in South Korea's hip-hop and R&B scenes, is set to drop their special single album titled "Y" on 9 August, 6pm KST. The crew is made up of popular crooners, Dean and Crush, DJ Millic as well as rappers, Penomoco and Zico himself. They were formed by Zico in 2016.

Think of them as the Avengers of the alter-

native hip-hop scene in South Korea — every artist in the crew comes from different music labels. All five members of FANXY CHILD dropped the teaser trailer to their upcoming single album release and it looks to be a cinematic experience for fans.

Just like a movie trailer, the teaser came complete with a poster and a moody shot of the whole crew, looking cooler than ever, standing in a row on an empty road.

On top of that, the FANXY CHILD crew announced a concert where they will be performing their upcoming single, along with other songs that they have released together. Aptly called the "Y" Concert, it is scheduled to be held in Seoul the weekend the single is officially released.

ARIES: Your period of introspection is over, Aries. It's time to open up to your partner and loved ones. If there's anything your time apart has taught you, it's the importance of certain bonds. Give yourself the permission to be expressive. Allow your most authentic self to be seen and heard. Yes, even if it makes you feel vulnerable. Start over on a clean slate.
Tip: Let your most authentic self be seen and heard.
TAURUS: Sometimes, things fit seamlessly. Other times, you have to mend the cracks to find a synergy. This phase of your life calls for a greater degree of self-nurture. The more you work on releasing old traumas, the more space you will make for the light to enter. Be sure to spend a lot of time outdoors. Let your bare feet connect with Mother Earth. This simple exercise will not only help you to stay grounded, but also transmute the heavy energies.
Tip: Let the journey of self-healing begin today.
GEMINI: "I am the star of my own movie. I am also the writer and director. I create wonderful roles for myself in my work environment." A Louise Hay affirmation to help you awaken to your infinite power. You are now

in the process of rewriting the script both personally and professionally. Make your larger-than-life dreams a reality. Be prepared to take the kind of risks that entails.

Tip: This chapter of your life requires you to be the most courageous version of yourself.

CANCER: We are responsible for the life we curate. If the energy that surrounds us is that of joy and celebration, we are the reason for it. If we are weighed down by fear and limitation, it is our actions (or lack thereof) that have led us to this point. Today, the Universe is bringing your attention to that one fear that has been keeping you from living your highest potential. Can you imagine the doors you will open up once you start being honest with yourself?
Tip: Break free from the shackles of your own limitations.

LEO: It's all fun and games until your interaction is limited to text messages. What happens when you share space, Leo? Do they integrate you into their circle? Do they make you feel shunned and unwanted? You know exactly what you need to do if you answered the aforementioned question with a positive. Clichéd as it is, you're being asked to priori-

tise self-care. There's a good chance you are looking for love in all the wrong places.

Tip: Be your own source of joy, creativity and happiness.

VIRGO: In a world that looks down on singledom, you revel in your solo status. No, you're not shunning togetherness. You're simply refusing to settle for anything less than magic. You do you, Virgo. Everybody will just have to get on board with it. What the Universe wants you to focus on: curating a life that sparks joy and satisfies you on a soul level.
Tip: How lucky you are to wake up to yourself.

LIBRA: What's keeping you from having 'the conversation', Libra? Is your fear of confrontation coming in the way again? This phase of your life requires you to be bold and take action. If you're feeling unsure of how to broach the subject, turn to nonviolent communication. This way, you can safely express how you feel without making the other person feel cornered or attacked in any way.
Tip: When in doubt, resort to nonviolent communication.

SCORPIO: The message is crystal clear, Scorpio. If they wanted to be a part of your

life, they would have done what it takes. If they chose to walk away, take it as a sign that they need space. But don't make the mistake of thinking this has anything to do with you. They are dealing with their own burdens. Surrender to the larger plan. Channel all your energy into building a beautiful life for yourself.
Tip: Fight for people who fight to keep you in their life.

SAGITTARIUS: What's the rush to get to the finish line? Everything is as it should be. Be grateful for the magic you are experiencing in this moment. If and when you feel like you desire more from this partnership, find a safe way to express your expectations. You may or may not be able to manifest the big changes immediately, but you can start working towards them—starting today.

Tip: Be grateful for the love you experiencing in this moment.

CAPRICORN: Your revelations this week: spending time by yourself can be deeply nourishing. Not all of us have the privilege to run off into the wilderness. If you're confined to an urban jungle, find a sacred space amidst the chaos where you can unwind. The simple

ritual of sipping on rose and Oolong tea, and free writing/colouring your thoughts, can be deeply cathartic. Capricorn, choose a medium you resonate with.

Tip: Prioritise solo time.

AQUARIUS: That Woodstock vibe is contagious, Aquarius. It's making everybody don flowers in their hair and freestyle their way into your circle. But polyamory may or may not be for everyone. You don't want to get caught in a trap of unrealistic expectations. Word for the wise: set your boundaries from the beginning.

Tip: Even free love needs certain boundaries.
PISCES: No force in the world can stop you once you awaken to your own power and potential. Remember who you are, Pisces. Remember why you came here in the first place. You're going to need an insane amount of faith in yourself when the Universe forces you to make drastic changes. Don't look at this as a bad thing though. A cosmic cleanse is necessary to make place for a new chapter in your life.

Tip: Drastic changes threaten to pull the rug beneath your feet.