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HEADLINE 'LITTLE SHOP  
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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## 29 July launch for Measles Rubella vaccination campaign

**GANGTOK, 23 JUL (IPR):** The Department of Health Care, Human services and Family welfare, Government of Sikkim in line with Nationwide Measles and Rubella (MR) vaccination campaign (in phased manner) is going to launch Measles and Rubella vaccination campaign (MRVC) throughout the state from 29 Jul, 2019.

It will cover all children between the age of 9 months(+) to less than 15 years with a single shot injection of MR vaccine in Right upper arm irrespective of previous vaccination with any Measles containing Vaccine.

The approximate target beneficiary is 1,73,719. The vaccine and other logistics will be provided totally free of cost under universal



immunization program.

The campaign will initially cover all (government, government aided and private) schools followed by community based approach for left

out and non-school going children. In schools all children reading up to class 10 will be covered.

There will be a need based sweeping activity towards the end of the

campaign to cover the missed children. The tentative duration of school phase is 2weeks, community phase is 2weeks and sweeping activity is 1week. Marking of left

thumb nail of every beneficiary with indelible marker pen will be done following the vaccination and will be provided with MR vaccination certificate.

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## Docs donate Therapeutic ultrasound machine to District Hospital Namchi

**SUMMIT REPORT  
NAMCHI, 23 JUL:**

A therapeutic ultrasound machine was handed over to the Physiotherapy Department of District Hospital here today in the presence of Senior Consultant Surgeon, Dr SM Pradhan.

The machine, purchased from the balance amount of Doctor's Day contributions pooled in by the doctors, was donated for the convenience of patients here who had to otherwise travel to Jorethang for therapeutic ultrasound sessions since the district hospital did not have such a machine.



The doctors at Namchi Hospital, it is informed, thought that donating such a machine would be of great help especially to patients from underprivileged backgrounds who will no

longer have to make the journey to Jorethang for the procedure.

The machine cost Rs 25,300, and the credit, people here convey, goes to the doctors from South District.

## Make NOC from SLYA mandatory for sale of Lepcha land, SLYA urges DC

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

Sikkim Lepcha Youth Association [SLYA] has urged the DC East to include No Objection Certificate from the association as one of the requisites in sale of Lepcha land. SLYA submitted a memorandum to the DC East today where it raised concern over the increasing number of disputes related to Lepcha land.

The organization has also been receiving pe-



titions regarding such disputes and therefore has requested the DC to resume "the earlier practice of procuring NOC as one of the requisite document from the organisation or issuing an intimation letter to the

organisation before the registration of any Lepcha land transaction."

SLYA also expressed their deep appreciation and gratitude to DC East, Kapil Meena for his kind words of support and concern.

## Committee set up to examine Revised Pay Rules grievances

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

The State Government has constituted a three-member Grievance Redressal Committee to examine grievances related to State Government employees on the Sikkim Government Services [Revised Pay] Rules, 2018.

The committee is headed by Secretary, Land Revenue and Disaster Management, Ambika Pradhan as Chairperson and includes Principal Director, Finance Department, Aruni Chakraborty as Member and Additional Secretary, Department of Personnel, Basant Kumar Lama as Member Secretary.

## Kick-boxers impress in national tourney, 5 qualify for world c'ship



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

Kick-Boxers from Sikkim have returned from the WAKO India Senior National Kickboxing Championship held from 18 to 21 July at Rothak, Haryana, with a rich haul of 11 medals.

Sikkim won 5 gold medals, 4 silver and 2 bronze medals at the championship.

More significantly, all gold medallists from the State have also qualified to

represent the country at the upcoming WAKO World Kickboxing Championship to be held in November in Turkey and Bosnia.

A nine-member Sikkim Association of Kickboxing Organisations [SAKO], led by international kick-boxer, Phurba Sherpa, as the team's player-coach, had represented the State at this prestigious national championship.

Phurba Sherpa won gold in the 52 kg weight

category, Srijana Chettri in K1 52 kg weight category, Phur Khandu Sherpa won two gold medals in the 55 kg weight category in light contact and kick light, Mandira Karki won a gold in point fight and a silver medal in musical form, Vivek Rai a silver medal in K1 60 kg weight category, Phur Deeki Sherpa a silver medal and a bronze medal in 50 kg weight category in light contact

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## Young footballer Justinmani Rai to play in U-12 Singa Cup 2019

**REBYNA RANA  
GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

A product of Bhaichung Bhutia Football Residential School, Justinmani Rai, Gurugram, has been selected for U-12 Singa Cup, 2019, scheduled to be held in November 2019 at Singapore. He is the only player from the entire Northeast Region to get selected in U-12 category for the Singa Cup.

Singa Cup, is an international youth football tournament, held annually in November in Singapore. 12-year-old Justinmani Rai hails from Namchi, South Sikkim, and was a product of Namchi Public School. He started playing football actively at the age of 9



under the tutelage of the football coach of Namchi Public School, Allen Tshering Bhutia.

Speaking to SummitTIMES, Justinmani's

mother, Sushma Gurung Rai, informed that Justinmani took part in the winter football coaching camp organised by NPS during the winters of

2016-17 and 2017-18. In the ARCES [All Roman Catholic Educational Institute of Sikkim] football tournament he scored 17 goals helping his team to lift the cup.

It was also during the winter football coaching of that year, that former Indian football team captain, Bhaichung Bhutia visited the camp. Seeing his performance, Bhaichung Bhutia promised to sponsor Justinmani in the Bhaichung Bhutia Residential School.

Justinmani had to go to Shillong for the selection process on February, 2018, and got picked from about 5000 aspirants for the second selection process.

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**check out an experiment with some podcasting from Sikkim.**

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# FPAS thanks all who helped make Indian Football Awards ceremony such a grand success

## SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 23 JUL:

Football Players Association of Sikkim [FPAS] has thanked all for their support towards the grand success of the recent Football Players Association of India Indian Football Awards 2019 hosted by FPAS here at Paljor Stadium on Sunday. FPAS shared today that despite the inclement weather, the event made for a wonderful day for all.

"We witnessed a beautiful exhibition match between the Indian football stars and our Sikkim stars. We have celebrated the awards won by our Indian football stars and we have rejoiced in the felicitations given to our Sikkimese



stars," an FPAS press statement reads.

FPAS is confident that all the guests and stars have returned with happy memories of the Sikkim sojourn and that stakeholders here now

have a stronger sense of commitment towards the development of football.

"On this happy note, the FPAS extends its sincere gratitude and deep respect to the Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad for his bless-

ings and support to this event. We also thank the officials of Raj Bhawan for their support to the FPAS and to this event. FPAS is indebted to the Government of Sikkim and the Chief Minister Prem Singh Ta-

mang for totally backing us to make this event happen," the release adds.

"We extend our deep thanks to the CM and Government of Sikkim. We also thank the officials of the Chief Minis-

ter's Office for their co-operation and support," the statement reiterates.

The FPAS has also extended sincere gratitude towards FPAI for having given it the opportunity to host the event.

"We thank them for having faith in us and we hope that we have not disappointed them. We also thank the Indian football stars who have come from different parts of the country to make this event successful with their participation."

FPAS has also thanked co-sponsors and all who came forward to help it organize this mega event.

FPAS is truly grateful to all the football lovers who came here and made the event successful with their presence, it adds.

## West dist aims to vaccinate 42,000 children



### GYALSHING, 23 JUL [IPR]:

The second coordination meeting of the District Task Force for Immunization (DTFI) for Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccination campaign 2019 under District Hospital, Gyalshing, was held at the conference hall of District Administration Centre here today.

The meeting chaired by District Collector, West, Karma R Bonpo, and was also attended by CMO (West) Dr Tsheten Namgyal Bhutia, District Reproductive Child Health Officer, Dr Anusha Lama, Senior Welfare Officer, SK Alley, Child Development Project Officer, HB Shanker, Deputy Direc-

tor, Human Resource Development Department, KD Bhutia, Dy Director (HRDD), PL Limboo, and other officials.

The DC, describing the vaccination programme as beneficial and much needed for children, called for proper implementation of the programme and

maintained that higher priority should be given to remote and rural parts of West Sikkim where medical facilities do not reach easily.

The CMO informed that this was for the first time that MR vaccination is being initiated and everything has been planned and set for successful conduction of the programme in West Sikkim. He said that the task force is working hard to ensure that all the children are vaccinated.

Dr Anusha Lama pointed out that the campaign was part of the national mission to eradicate measles by 2020 and bringing the rubella menace under control by 2020. More than 42,000 children are projected to be included in the programme.

## 45 SDF families shift camp to SKM



### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 23 JUL:

Around 45 families left SDF and officially joined SKM in the presence of the party's state-level youth coordi-

nator, Sonam Pintso, the women's wing chief coordinator, Mingma Lamu Bhutia, Gangtok youth president, Tenzin Dorji, and here today, an SKM press release informs.

## Sikkim Mandarin sapling distribution at Omchung



### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 23 JUL:

Krishni Vigyan Kendra, West Sikkim, in collaboration with Horticulture and Cash Crop Development Department, West Sikkim organized a programme on organic management practices of Sikkim Mandarin cum Sapling Distribution at Omchung Village, Middle Gyalshing, today.

As per a press release, the program was coordinated by HDO, Bhanu Kumar Chettri and chaired by Ward Panchayat, Bishnu Thapa, Sr Scientist cum Head, TN Bhutia, KVK Gyalshing.

Around 40 progressive orchard owners of the ward were present in the programme, the re-

lease mentions.

JD, Karma Sherpa, informed about the various government schemes while Sr Scientist, TN Bhutia explained the main role and work of Krishni Vigyan Kendra and practices in Sikkim Mandarin production.

Soil sampling collection, reclamation of acidic soils cum soil fertility management, pest and disease management, were some of the topics covered.

The programme concluded with demonstration of orchard plantation, inspection of orchard field, distribution of sapling, organic manure, pesticides, distribution of Oregano based fungicide to the farmers.

## UP Bill to tackle 'anti-national activity' on campus, regularise admissions

### LUCKNOW, JUL 23 (PTI):

The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday tabled in the assembly a Bill seeking an undertaking from private universities that they will not allow their campuses to be used for anti-national activities. The Uttar Pradesh Private Universities Bill, 2019 lists several conditions for setting up such institutions, including following a transparent admission process and a common academic calendar prescribed by the state government.

If the Bill becomes law, private universities will award honorary degrees to people in public life only with the state government's approval.

The Bill demands an undertaking from the sponsors of private universities that their institution will not be involved in or permit anyone to cause or promote anti-national activities.

If any such activity takes place on the campus, it shall be considered a major violation of the conditions for setting up the university, the draft legislation warns.

The government may then take action according to the provisions under the Act or any other law in force, it says.

## SSB marks Kargil anniv with weeklong observation



### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 23 JUL:

The 36th Battalion Sashastra Seema Bal stationed at Gyalshing, West Sikkim, is observing "Kargil Vijay Diwas" with a weeklong series of events which got underway 20 July.

The week is being observed at the battalion

headquarter and various out-posts stretched along the Indo-Nepal border, a press release informs.

As part of the events, videos on the Kargil War and the role of the Armed Forces have been screened for students and locals at the HQ at Yangtey.

On Monday, an awareness rally involving school children, youth and local residents was organized at Sakyong village to honour the martyrs of the Kargil War.

After the awareness rally, officers of the unit spoke about the Kargil War and the valor of the soldiers involved.

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### CHANGE OF NAME

I, SAMIR MOKTAN TAMANG, son of Lok Bahadur Tamang R/o Kazi Road, Gangtok, East Sikkim, solemnly declare that previously my name has been recorded as SAMIR MOKTAN. Vide affidavit No. A180151 I have changed my name from SAMIR TAMANG to SAMIR MOKTAN TAMANG for all purpose before the Oath Commissioner, East Sikkim, Gangtok on 25th day of June 2019.

### AFFIDAVIT

I Mrs Dadikim Sherpa wife of Naresh Sherpa (Army Ni, 3001787P, Rank-HAF(GD)). Resident of village Tadong, Tehsil – Gangtok, Dist- East Sikkim. as per affidavit my actual Date of Birth if 05/02/1982 for all future official purpose.

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### 29 July launch...

The objective of the campaign is to eliminate measles disease and control rubella disease by the year 2020. The target of the campaign is to cover 100% eligible beneficiary and the evaluated coverage needs to be more than 95%.

In India, more than 30 crore children have already been vaccinated safely during this campaign so far and this MR vaccine is already in use in Sikkim since May 2018 in routine immunization at 9–12 months (MR1) and 16–24 months (MR2) without any adverse report. There will be no house to house campaign activity like pulse polio as it is an injectable campaign.

The campaign is supported and will be monitored by developmental partners like World Health organization, UNICEF. The campaign will be also monitored by designated state and district officials to ensure the quality of the campaign.

The campaign will be carried out with the close cooperation and support from all the stakeholders viz. line departments Human Resource Development Department, Women and Child welfare Department, Department of Information and Public Relation, Rural Management and Development Department/PRI, Urban Development and Housing Development, Sports and Youth Affairs, Labour Department and NGOs in making the campaign a success.

Recognizing the importance of the role of the media in disseminating the correct information and benefits of MR vaccination, the health department, with support from partner organization, organized a media sensitization workshop at Gangtok on 23 Jul, 2019.

### Kick-boxers...

and kick light respectively, Mukesh Chettri won silver in 57 weight category in light contact and Pawan Subba won a bronze medal in 63 weight category in point fight.

For their outstanding performance in the championship, SAKO felicitated the state team here at Paljor Stadium on Tuesday afternoon.

Sikkim Olympic Association president, BK Roka, was present as chief guest and congratulated the team members on their impressive showing.

On the occasion, SAKO chief technical director and general secretary, Bidhan Ballav Subba, expressed satisfaction and happiness over the performance of the state team members.

He stated that the competition was very tough and still the Sikkim kick-boxers delivered a much better result than the expected. He stressed that this was the result of the joint effort of the entire SAKO team.

### Young footballer...

The final selection was held at Vedas International School, Sohna, Gurgaon, Haryana in March 2018. Fortunately, he got selected on 31 Mar, 2018.

It was there that he could really hone his skills and take it to the next level under the guidance of well qualified coaches, said Justinmani's mother.

He was part of the winning team of U-11 21st Netaji Subhash All India Football Tournament 2019, U-11 Diana Jones Football League, U-11 Delhi Youth League 2018–19 and U-11 Delhi Golden League 2018.

Justinmani's parents have thanked Bhaichung Bhutia, Allen Tamang Tshering Bhutia, Fr George D'Souza [Director of NPS], Fr Stanny Sequire [principal of NPS] and family members for helping him generously in his frequent trips.

He is not only a gifted footballer but also does well in academics and has won a medal in a Science Olympiad.

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

### URGENTLY REQUIRED:

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

### WANTED

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

### GENERAL INFORMATION

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

**Mr. Subash Lama**

**Proprietor**

**Hotel Parasol Residency,  
Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim**

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



# Workshop on POCSO Act for public prosecutors



## SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

Sikkim Judicial Academy held a two-day workshop on Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO Act) on 20 and 21 Jul, 2019. The participants on 20 Jul were Special Judge, POCSO Act, of all the districts while on 21 Jul, the participants were Public Prosecutors, Additional Public Prosecutors, Assistant Public Prosecutors and Advocates of Bar Association of Sikkim, Gangtok and Namchi Bar Association.

A press release informs that the object behind the workshop was to sensitize the Special Judges as well as the Counsels. It was also to have a better understanding of the psychol-

ogy of the victim child. This would thus equip the Special Judges as well as the Counsels to handle victims under the POCSO Act in a sensitive manner.

There were two sessions on both days; discussion on the POCSO Act in the first session followed by the second session on Child Psychology.

The resource person for the first session was Justice, Dr Shalini Joshi, Former Judge, Bombay High Court. She was invited as the resource person due to her vast knowledge in the subject matter.

The first session began with the resource person giving a brief background on the POCSO Act. It was explained that the POCSO Act ex-

pands the definition of sexual abuse inflicted upon a child. Now the act includes sexual harassment as well as pornography as an offence.

Justice Joshi discussed in detail the procedures to be followed during examination of the child victim. It was informed that the Special Judge has the power to grant interim compensation to a victim under the POCSO Rules being Rule 7 in particular. That compensation can be granted under Section 33 of the POCSO Act. Compensation can also be granted in cases where the victim does not support the case of the Prosecution. Several case laws were also discussed during the workshop.

The resource person for the second session was Senior Clinical Psychologist, Dr Sonam Ongmu Lasopa, New Multispeciality STNM Hospital, Sochaygang. Even here the doctor had been invited as resource person since she has firsthand experience of interactions with victims under the POCSO Act.

In this session, the doctor discussed in detail, ways to examine a child who is a victim of sexual assault. It was informed that the main objective was to create a safe environment for the child in order for the child to be able to disclose the unfortunate incident. Various details such as the types of questions which could be asked, body posture, etc. were discussed in detail.

## Patient with complicated heart condition successfully operated at CRH

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

Doctors at Central Referral Hospital (CRH) successfully operated on a 75-year-old patient with a complicated heart condition last week, a press release informs.

The patient came to the Emergency department of CRH with complaints of chest pain and had a history of repeated admissions for dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) and heart failure.

Dilated cardiomyopathy is a condition in which the heart's ability to pump blood is decreased because the heart's main pumping chamber, the left ventricle, is enlarged and weakened. In some cases, it prevents the heart from relaxing and filling with blood as it should. Heart failure is a chronic disease that needs lifelong management. Treatments can help you live longer and can even strengthen the heart in some. Heart attack is blockage of arteries that supply oxygen for contraction of the heart.

Echocardiography (ultrasound of the heart) was done for the patient and the findings of Echocardiogram showed that

his heart muscles were viable. Coronary angiogram (test to diagnose blockage) was done to assess the health of the vessels and it revealed a proximal left anterior descending coronary artery (LAD) and Right Coronary Artery (RCA) critical disease and distal left circumflex (LCX).

The patient was rushed to the Cath Lab at CRH and stenting of his left anterior descending artery (LAD) and right coronary artery (RCA) was done. The procedure was done through radial artery (hand artery) and the patient was mobile immediately.

"This was a very challenging case as the patient had severe heart dysfunction and requires special wire and techniques. The procedure was successful and now his heart has got a new life," the release states.

DM, Dr Saiful Haque, Consultant cardiologist, department of Cardiology, CRH has brought Radial Diagnostic Angiogram and Radial Angioplasty, the preferred, safe and effective intervention with minimal hospitalization and early ambulation for the first time to Sikkim, the release further mentions.

## MP submits written request to DG CSIR for CSIR NET Exam Centre



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

Lok Sabha MP, Indra Hang Subba along with VC, Prof Avinash Khare of Sikkim University met the Director General of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Dr Shekhar C Mande and sub-

mitted a written request for establishment of CSIR NET Examination Centre at Gangtok in Sikkim, a press release informs.

Dr Mande has agreed in principle to the request, it is informed. During the meeting, many issues were discussed regarding education.

## BJP supported panel emerges victorious in Calcutta HC Bar Assoc election

**KOLKATA, JUL 23 (PTI):**

A BJP-supported panel emerged victorious in the Calcutta High Court Bar Association election, results of which was declared on Tuesday.

Election officer Kanak Kumar Chatterjee declared that Ashok Kumar Dhandhanian was elected the president, while Dhiraj Trivedi won the post of secretary in the apolitical lawyers' body at the Calcutta High Court.

BJP's West Bengal Legal Cell convenor Partha Ghosh said that its panel won eight out of 15 posts for which elections were held.

He said the posts of secretary, vice president, one assistant secretary and five out of nine executive committee members were claimed

by BJP-supported lawyer candidates at the high court.

Dhandhanian who won the post of president is an independent, Ghosh said.

The Trinamool Congress, which held sway in the outgoing body, has won four executive member seats, apart from the post of treasurer.

From the BJP panel, Dhiraj Trivedi won as the secretary, Ajay Choubey was elected vice presi-

dent, while Aparna Banerjee won the post of one assistant secretary, Ghosh said. While Congress panel candidate Ritzu Ghosal won the other post of assistant secretary, TMC panel's Dwarikanath Mukhopadhyay emerged victorious in the treasurer's post, Ghosh said.

## Animal Husbandry and SYA exchange Secretaries

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

The departments of Animal Husbandry and Sports & Youth Affairs exchanged Secretaries today following transfers orders issued by the Department of Personnel.

Dr Kumar Bhandari, currently, Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Livestock, Fisheries and Veterinary Services Department, has been transferred and posted as the new Secretary at Sports & Youth Affairs Department, exchanging offices with Dr Ram Kumar Tamang who leaves SYA and will take charge as Principal Director-cum-Secretary, Animal Husbandry.

## HC quashes case against Cyclone Gaja-hit protestors; says was an act in desperation

**CHENNAI, JUL 23 (PTI):**

The Madras High Court has quashed the FIRs against over 90 people who protested against "tardy relief" in the aftermath of Gaja cyclone last year, saying it was an act in desperation by those deprived of basic necessities and cannot be treated as a routine criminal case. The court, however, refused to allow another batch of petitions seeking to quash the FIR registered against 52 other people charged with offences including assault of police personnel and causing damage to public property during the protest at a village in Nagapattinam district.

Granting relief to 92 people, Justice N Anand Venkatesh quashed the proceedings pending before a lower court in Vedaranyam against them for staging demonstration at Thalaigayir village on November 18, 2018, days after the cyclone hit the region leaving a trail of destruction.

They staged the agitation against the alleged failure on part of the Tamil Nadu government to provide relief material in time. The judge said the protest happened on the spur of the moment when people deprived of their basic necessities lost their sense of balance and acted out of desperation.

Noting that there was no material to show any pre-meditation or criminal intent on part of the agitators, he said this was an extraordinary case where the court cannot deal with it like a routine criminal matter. Making the petitioners face criminal prosecution for one solitary incident that took place under an extreme situation would amount to abuse of process of the court, he said.

"In view of the findings, this court is inclined to interfere with the proceedings in two cases pending before the lower court and they are hereby quashed," the judge said. He rejected the prayer of other batch of petitioners, saying the court should not unwittingly bring down the morale of the police force by making them think it had leaned in favour of the accused in spite of sufficient material available against them to proceed further.

## Winners of Glam Miss Sikkim and Glam Miss Teen Sikkim thank organizers



**SAGAR CHETTRI**

**GANGTOK, 23 JUL:**

Winners of Glam Miss Sikkim and Glam Miss Teen Sikkim 2019 have thanked the beauty pageant for helping them with their overall personality development and providing a learning experience.

The grand finale of Glam Miss Sikkim and Glam Miss Teen Sikkim 2019, which was organised by Siana Glam World, was held on 20 July at Manan Kendra. The event had Forest Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia as chief guest, former India football team skipper, Bhaichung Bhutia as celebrity guest and T Lachungpa as guest of honour.

Out of 90 contestants in the auditions, 30 were shortlisted for the grand finale. It is informed that contestants were groomed by Pooja Singh while Amjad Khan Pathan was the show director. The grand finale had a panel of four judges.

Pema Choden Bhutia was crowned Glam Miss Sikkim 2019, while Bindiya Devi Dhamala became the first runner-up and Chimi Uden was the second runner-up. Likewise, Tanushree Thapa was crowned Glam Miss Teen

Sikkim 2019 and Roshna Gurung was the first runner-up and Anjali Luitel was second runner-up.

Likewise, Chimi Uden also won the subtitle of Miss Congeniality, Roshna Gurung won the subtitle of the Beauty with a Purpose, Tanushree Thapa won the subtitle of Miss Fitness and Anjali Luitel in Glam Miss Teen Sikkim and Trishna Limboo in Glam Miss Sikkim won the subtitle of Viewer's Choice.

Sharing their experiences in the pageant in a press conference here today, 18-year-old Pema Choden Bhutia of Sivik-Nampong in Lingdok, East Sikkim expressed her immense happiness on winning the title. She stated that it was her dream to participate in the beauty pageant.

Pema is presently pursuing B Tech from Reva University in Bengaluru and expressed her desire to take up modelling and studies side by side. She also expressed happiness on getting direct entry to Glam Anand Super Model India 2019.

Likewise, Glam Miss Sikkim first runner-up 22-year-old Bindiya Devi Dhamala of Singtam, East Sikkim and second runner-up 20-year-old

Chimi Uden of Gangtok said that the whole journey of the contest was a learning experience.

"The show was a good experience and helped us to find better versions of ourselves. We thanked the organisers for providing such opportunities and exposure to present ourselves," they said.

18-year-old Glam Miss Teen Sikkim 2019, Tanushree Thapa of Sichey, Gangtok expressed that the contest has helped in the overall personality development and she has learnt more about pageantry and the glamour world. She added that it was a great exposure and opportunity to exhibit one's talents as well. She has also got direct entry in the upcoming Miss Teen India 2019.

Likewise, Glam Miss Teen Sikkim first runner-up 17-year-old Roshna Gurung of Gangtok and second runner-up 15-year-old Anjali Luitel of Pakyong stated that the event was a learning experience and has motivated them to go ahead in this field.

"It was a learning experience and helped us to know more about ourselves and our potential," they added.

## Centre undertakes mega review of VIP security; Lalu, Akhilesh lose cover

**NEW DELHI, JUL 23**

**(PTI):** The Centre has removed the VIP security cover of several politicians and lawmakers, including RJD boss Lalu Prasad and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, while it has scaled down the protection category of many others after reviewing over 130 cases, official sources said Tuesday.

This is the first full-scale review of VIP protectees by the Union home ministry after the Modi 2.0 government took charge.

Sources said the top level 'Z+' category NSG cover of former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav, 'Z' cover of former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad, BJP MP and former minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy, former BJP members Kirti Azad and Shatrughan Sinha, newly-appointed Himachal Pradesh Governor Kalraj Mishra, former Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar, two granddaughters and a grandson of former President Pranab Mukherjee, daughter and grandson of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has been taken off from the central list or has been removed.

These VIPs were being secured by the armed commandos of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) like the CRPF, CISF, the elite counter-terror force NSG and

the Delhi Police. Others whose security has been withdrawn include minister in Uttar Pradesh government Suresh Rana, Member of Parliament from Bihar's Vaishali seat Veena Devi, ex-MP from the state Uday Singh, Uttar Pradesh minister Brajesh Pathak, BJP politician Anupam Hazra, ISRO Chairman K Sivan, former scientific adviser R Chidambaram and Congress leader Deependra Hooda.

BJP Rajya Sabha MP O P Mathur; Acharya Pramod Krishnam, who unsuccessfully contested from the Lucknow parliamentary seat on a Congress ticket; RSS leader Indresh Kumar; former BJP MP Udit Raj; and sitting BJP MP from Etawah Ram Shankar Katheria have also been taken off from the protection list of central security forces.

The cover of Uttar Pradesh Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma, Congress leader Avtar Singh Bhadana, Punjab minister Rana Gurmit Sodhi, ex-Bihar MP Sabir Ali, Congress MP from Punjab, Pratap Singh Bajwa, VC of Manipur University Adya Prasad Pandey, space scientist T K Alex and few others have also been taken off the central list, according to latest orders issued by the Union home ministry.

Separately, the security provided by the

CAPF commandos to BSP MP Satish Chandra Mishra, former Jharkhand CM Babulal Marandi, BJP MLA from Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Som, Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan's MP son Chirag Paswan, ex-MP Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav and former CRPF Directors General (DG) K Vijay Kumar and Prakash Mishra has been scaled down.

The security categorisation of Abhijeet Mukherjee, MP son of ex-President Pranab Mukherjee, Congress leader Anand Sharma, Raj Babbar, Digvijay Singh, A K Antony, Manish Tewari, Loktantrik Janata Dal Party leader Sharad Yadav, CPI (M) leader Sitaram Yechury, former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's foster daughter Namita Kaul Bhattacharya and former BJP leader Yashwant Sinha has also been downgraded.

Former Congress MP Ravneet Singh Bittu, ex-Punjab minister Bikram Singh Majithia, NIA Inspector General G P Singh, Madhya Pradesh CM Kamal Nath and Additional Sessions Judge in Delhi O P Saini are among others whose security categorisation has been downgraded under different heads.

Some of those who have been removed from the central list will be taken care off by the police units of various state governments, they said.

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## Suicidal Still

*When will the numbers become too many to ignore?*

Suicides might not make it to headlines as often as they used to, but that is more because this newspaper has come to terms with the fact that mere reportage was serving no constructive purpose anymore. A news-report on a suicide was never about just informing people about another self-inflicted death, it was more importantly about flagging a concern about the frequency with which such fatalities were occurring. So no, fewer news reports do not mean that lives are not being lost to this distressing phenomenon. Teenagers, middle-aged women, mid-career professionals, senior citizens continue to take their own lives.

A sixteen year old committing suicide should be an aberration. In fact, it should never happen, and even if it does, it should be such a rarity that the entire state goes into mourning, wracked by guilt for having allowed a teenager to slip into such deep levels of depression that she ended up taking her own life. Unfortunately, such news does not even shock any more, with even newspapers reporting it in passing, pulling sanitised details from police records, reporting about a suicide, but not about the life that was lost or the situations which led that final moment when a child tied a noose with a nylon rope, hung herself and then suffocated to death.

Just as it is worrying to learn that the psychological distress can overcome the exuberance of youth to such an extent, it is also disconcerting to learn that even the obvious maturity of age has failed to overcome the trauma of mental distress, as must have been the case with the many grandparents Sikkim has lost to suicide.

Too many people are succumbing to suicide, a problem which grips all age groups, social strata and locations in the State. Suicides are always a worry and even more so when it claims lives so young. The phenomenon is so routine nowadays that most readers probably don't even read the reports any more. It is also troubling to learn that the society at large has become so injured to this condition without even having tried to understand or address the problem.

It is obvious that depression is a common ailment among suicide victims, but what cannot escape notice is the fact that one does not even associate such problems as depression and stress with the teen years [at least not of an intensity that would lead to suicide]. Yet, a disturbing number of Sikkim's young have taken their own lives. There might be even more who have survived a suicide attempt. While one can theorise endlessly on why the present day youth is so troubled, it is urgent to start caring for them. Urban pressures, peer pressures, hormonal pressures, academic pressure - these are only some of the tensions which one goes through growing up. Until newspapers started reporting about suicides and the police started documenting such unnatural deaths more diligently, Sikkim lived in an idyll believing that suicides could not happen in the relaxed environs of the hill state. That idyll now stands shattered, not because suicides have started happening only now, but because now we are learning about it regularly. So, let us not go complaining that the times have changed or that the past was better; suicides were always happening... accept it. And now, let's start addressing the problem. Begin with having experts sensitising teachers and community groups on recognising and handling such psychiatric symptoms as stress, depression and trauma in school-going children. Yes, some efforts were made towards this end some years ago, but the effort was not as well coordinated as it should have been, and worse still, has not even been sustained. Since no concerted effort has yet been launched to address suicides, an initiative should now begin which cushions the young better.

While psychiatry might be an iffy science for most, it has been proven that if symptoms are recognised in time there are options to address every psychiatric ailment. Let us accept the fact that the younger generation is growing in conditions much different from earlier times. They need special care and understanding. As teachers, parents and elders, we have to change our approach towards addressing juvenile issues. Also, as the generation at decision-making levels, we should also approach the problems of senior citizens with more empathy. Why do people, especially such young people and such senior citizens, commit suicide? Sikkim needs to engage itself more closely to identify the triggers, address them and save more lives.

There is nothing new that has been said here, but hopefully, there will be some new initiatives soon.



## World Bank ruling against Pakistan shows global economic governance is broken

KYLA TIENHAARA  
*theconversation.com*

It's been a rough month for Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan.

It started off with the International Monetary Fund approving a US\$6 billion dollar loan to the country. The strict conditions on the loan meant that instead of expanding the welfare state, Khan's government had to impose "shock therapy" austerity measures.

Unsurprisingly, this resulted in nationwide strikes.

Then, less than two weeks later, a secretive World Bank tribunal ordered Pakistan to pay a mining company US\$5.8 billion dollars — nearly as much as the IMF loan — to resolve an eight year-long dispute.

Why would an arm of the development pillar of the Bretton Woods system require a country in crisis to do something that would completely undermine the actions of the financial stability tenets of that same system?

What does it say about the state of global economic governance? Is it broken?

### PROTECTING CORPORATE PROFITS

The International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes was established in 1966 as part of the World Bank Group. The centre oversees arbitrations between foreign companies and states in a process known as the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS).

ISDS is hugely controversial for a variety of reasons ranging from the secrecy of the hearings to the substantial costs associated with defending a claim and the ability of corporations to challenge health and environmental measures.

The case that cost Pakistan \$5.8 billion did not revolve around such measures but rather the de-

cision of a provincial government to backtrack on a sweetheart deal that had been offered to a mining firm, allegedly the result of corruption. Leaving the merits of the case to one side — it is difficult to assess the tribunal's reasoning when the award isn't public, after all — let's take a closer look at the payout.

According to the mining company — Tethyan Copper, partially owned by Canada's Barrick Gold — it spent US\$220 million on exploration activities before things went south. One might argue that a fair outcome, if the government was solely to blame, would be for the award to cover these sunk costs. Instead it was more than 25 times that amount. That is because the tribunal chose to award the company "lost future profits" from the project.

### NO CRYSTAL BALLS

Arbitrators don't have crystal balls. They don't know what the value of a mineral will be in a year, let alone 30 years. And they are lawyers, not market analysts. So how do they decide how much profit a firm would have made in a hypothetical alternative future?

The answer is, partially, that they rely on "experts" brought in by each of the parties to the dispute. These experts provide a best guess for what they think a project is worth. International law scholar Robert Howse calls this "junk science."

Unsurprisingly, the state's expert often provides a low-ball estimate for the value of a project and the investor's expert gives an inflated value. Faced with this discrepancy, arbitrators will often choose to go down the middle and pick an arbitrary value. Tethyan Copper had originally sought more than US\$11 billion in damages, suggesting that the tribunal in this case may have taken this approach.

When it comes to the calculation of damages, there are very few constraints on arbitrators. As noted in one award, a tribunal generally has the freedom to "arrive at a figure with which it is comfortable in all the circumstances of the case."

Did the arbitrators in this case consider that the owners of Tethyan Copper — Antofagasta of Chile and Barrick Gold — had long ago written off the project and continued to be very profitable firms? Did they consider the records of these companies in terms of alleged corruption and human rights abuses in other countries?

Did they consider that US\$5.8 billion is one eighth of Pakistan's total government budget for 2019/20? Did they consider that the country is facing an economic crisis? It seems the answer may have been "no" on all counts though, again, we are left guessing about the tribunal's justifications for its award.

### A WAY OUT

An international process is currently underway to come up with reforms to ISDS, and excessive damages awards have been identified as an area of concern for states. A number of countries, most recently South Korea, have come to the wise decision that the best way forward is to opt out of ISDS altogether.

In practice, this means individual states terminating the thousands of investment treaties that provide access to arbitration, which can be a difficult and time-consuming process. A preferable approach would be for states to co-ordinate their efforts, for example through a multilateral exit agreement.

Abolishing ISDS won't solve all of the problems of global economic governance. But it seems a very good place to start.

*[the writer is Canada Research Chair in Economy and Environment, Queen's University, Ontario]*

## Prime Minister Boris Johnson: the jester will take the throne

MATTHEW FLINDERS  
*theconversation.com*

Heavy is the head that wears the crown, to paraphrase Shakespeare. Heavy because power brings with it responsibilities that are not to be taken lightly - jaunty laughter, bluff and bluster will quickly fall upon the rocks of political reality. Britain is doomed. It has allowed the court jester to take the throne.

Too harsh? I think not. Too partisan? Not at all.

The tragedy of this tale is that the idea of Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the opposition, walking into Number 10 also fills me with a sense of doom and gloom.

There is a common assumption that, one way or another, Boris Johnson's promotion will lead to an early general election, in which case the great British public will enjoy a simple choice - chaos with a blond bouffant, or disaster in cycling clips. Just mark your ballot with a grubby little pencil that's tied to an even grubbier piece of string. Why do I sense that large numbers of people won't bother to engage with such a dismal decision?

Heavy are the heads of the party members who voted for the jester. Heavy because it is they who must take some responsibility. Charisma, celebrity stardust and Churchillian quips are not enough, and when all goes wrong (note "when" not "if") it will be to the Conservative party that the nation turns and asks: "What have you done?"

Can there ever have been a man more ill-suited to high public office? Take this insider verdict, for example: "That he's a habitual liar, a cheat, a conspirator with a criminal pal to have an offending journalist's ribs broken, a cruel betrayer of the women he seduces, a politician who connived in a bid for a court order to

sensible member.

### FAUSTIAN PACT

The ministerial ladder has always been smothered in grease - and it has generally been the prime minister doing the smothering. Ministerial wannabees suggest that the extra risk that comes with Johnson was "priced in" to their decision to support him.



suppress mention of a daughter he fathered, a do-nothing mayor of London and the worst foreign secretary in living memory."

Too harsh? I think not. Too partisan? Not at all. This is, in fact, the view of a former Conservative MP - Matthew Parris.

Heavy are the heads that held their tongues and lined up behind the jester: "Ministerial-itis" - as Gerald Kaufman famously explained - is a particularly dangerous disease. The desire for advancement among backbenchers can corrupt even the most

Wake up, you fools, from your sleepy slumber! Bargaining with Boris is a Faustian pact you can only ever lose.

Heavy are the heads that held the jester's hand and led him to the throne. You held him back, shut his mouth and tamed his hair. You knew that the biggest threat to Boris was Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson and you saved him from himself. He waved a kipper as you sold a kipper; and it's the British public who will now pay the price.

Democratic politics really is the slow boring of hard wood. It is dull

The truth is that the jester has ridden on many backs on his way to the throne. But the ride is now over. He's achieved his ambition. From now on he will live or die on the basis of his own political skill and cunning. The only good thing about prime minister Johnson is that he has nowhere to hide. The ice is very thin beneath the throne and leadership can be a very lonely business.

*[the writer is Founding Director of the Sir Bernard Crick Centre for the Public Understanding of Politics, University of Sheffield]*



# Bengal govt lawyers end boycott of Calcutta HC judge



**KOLKATA, JUL 23 (PTI):** West Bengal government-empanelled lawyers at Calcutta High Court on Tuesday lifted a boycott of Justice Samapti Chattopadhyay's court, within a day of taking such a decision.

Additional government pleader Bhaskar Baishya said they have decided to attend the court of Justice Samapti Chattopadhyay from Wednesday.

"The issues over which the decision of not attending Justice Chattopadhyay's court has been

amicably resolved and we will attend her court and plead cases as usual," Baishya said.

State-empanelled lawyers at the high court Monday told Justice Chattopadhyay that henceforth they will not attend her court.

An indignant Justice Chattopadhyay had later asked whether the West Bengal government-empanelled lawyers mean to say that she is doing injustice to her chair.

"Determination (assignment of cases) is given to me by the Chief Jus-

ice and not by the government lawyers. Give respect to the chair," she said while hearing a case challenging a confidence vote at Bongaon Municipality.

State-empanelled lawyers did not appear before the court of Justice Chattopadhyay during the hearing of the Bongaon municipality case or any other matter on Monday.

"The way the judge is heckling government lawyers during hearing of various cases, it is not possible for us to attend

her court," Baishya, also the chairman of Trinamool Congress Lawyers' Cell, had said outside the courtroom.

Justice Chattopadhyay, who holds the determination of Municipal Affairs, had made some caustic comments against the state government last week over conducting of confidence votes in some civic bodies.

During the hearing of a petition on July 15, Justice Chattopadhyay had observed that it is unfortunate that water

bodies are being filled up randomly, with the government doing nothing about it.

Everybody seems to know what is happening around, except the government, she had said.

Justice Chattopadhyay was also involved in a verbal exchange with senior counsel and TMC MP Kalyan Bandopadhyay on Thursday when the Bongaon Municipality matter was mentioned before her court.

During a hearing on Friday, Justice Chattopadhyay had questioned the TMC chairman of Bongaon Municipality as to why he was trying to hold on to his chair when the majority of the councillors do not want him to continue in the post.

Justice Chattopadhyay had on July 19 stayed a meeting for holding a vote of confidence in the chairman of Halisahar Municipality on a plea by a councillor that the provision is being misused by the Trinamool Congress' head of the civic body to get protection.

## Mamata writes to Modi to reverse corporatisation of ordnance factories



**KOLKATA, JUL 23 (PTI):** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to stall and reverse the process of corporatising ordnance factories in the interest of national security and the country's defence.

Her missive comes in the backdrop of the Centre's bid to corporatise all the ordnance factories of the country, including the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), which has its head quarters in Kolkata.

The OFB with its 41 factories, nine training institutes across the country and about 1.6 lakh officers and employees has often been called the fourth pillar of the Indian Defence apparatus which produces a vast range of arms and equipment for the armed forces, she wrote.

"I am shocked and surprised to know that this vital pillar of the country's defence and this key industrial initiative for our land is now

being contemplated to be subjected to a sudden exercise of degovernmentalisation, for which there has been not even an iota of stakeholders' consultations uptill now", she said.

Describing the reported step as an "extremely sensitive and urgent issue", Banerjee also spoke of the importance of the OFB, which manufactures arms and munitions for the country's armed forces.

"I have been receiving reports regarding a decision that the Government of India has apparently been taking to corporatise all the Ordnance Factories including the Ordnance Factory Board, with its Head Quarters in Kolkata. Its has also been suggested that this will finally lead to privatisation of these great national assets," Banerjee wrote.

The West Bengal government has not received any "inkling" of "discourses" that have led to such "inexplicable initiatives" by the Government of India, Banerjee wrote

in her letter. "I would, therefore request you to kindly stall and reverse this process of corporatisation and privatisation in the greatest interest of the national security and defence of our country," she stated.

Banerjee, a strong critic on BJP, said the country's industrial policy has gradually been made more and more friendly to the private players in the market. But there are some core and strategic areas where the state is yet to "abdicate its paramount role". "I urge you to kindly keep that role of national custodianship unaffected in future too," she wrote.

Various committees constituted by the ministry of defence (MoD) have suggested the corporatisation of the OFB to enable it to function under its own board of directors.

Employees of the Ordnance Factory at Tiruchirapalli (OFT) staged a protest against the Centre's decision at Trichy on Monday.

## First meet of committee on Assam Assembly seats reservation on Wednesday

**NEW DELHI, JUL 23 (PTI):** The first meeting of a reconstituted high-level committee, set up to assess the quantum of seats to be reserved in the Assam Assembly and local bodies for the Assamese people, will be held here on Wednesday, officials said.

The committee, headed by former Gauhati High Court judge Justice (retd) Biplab Kumar Sarma, was set up under Clause 6 of the 1985 Assam Accord. The first meeting of the committee will be held at North Block in the Home Ministry on Wednesday, an official said.

The committee will examine the effectiveness of actions taken since 1985 to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord and hold discussions with various stakeholders, including social organisations, legal and constitutional experts, eminent persons from the field of art, culture and literature, conservationists, economists, linguists and sociologists.

The new committee



will recommend the appropriate level of reservations in employment under the government of Assam for the Assamese people and suggest any other measures as may be necessary to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social and linguistic identity and the heritage of the people.

The committee will submit its report within six months.

The members of the committee are Ramesh Borpatragohain, Advocate General, Assam; Niloy Dutta, Advocate General, Arunachal

Pradesh; Subhash Das, IAS (retd); Pallav Bhattacharya, IPS (retd); Sriashidhar Dutta, professor (retd); Sumanta Chaliha, author; Jaikanta Sharma, professor and columnist; and Wasbir Hussain, senior journalist.

Other members are Samujjal Bhattacharya, chief adviser, All Assam Students Union (AASU); Dipanka Kumar Nath, president, AASU; and Lurinjyoti Gogoi, general secretary, AASU.

Joint Secretary (North East) in the Ministry of Home Affairs will be the member secretary.

## CBI did not examine Himanta Biswa Sarma in Saradha scam: Rajeev Kumar to HC

**KOLKATA, JUL 23 (PTI):** Former Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar told the Calcutta High Court on Tuesday that the CBI has not examined Assam Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma though his name has cropped up in the Saradha chitfund scam case.

Kumar's counsel Milan Mukherjee submitted before Justice Madhumati Mitra that the IPS officer has, on the other hand, been singled out among 121 officers of the West Bengal government-formed Special Investigation Team (SIT).

Mukherjee submitted that Sarma has not been examined by the CBI despite his name having cropped up in the probe

by the SIT five years back when the scam was unearthed in 2013.

Mukherjee accused the CBI of malafide intention to malign his client by picking him for questioning among the 121 officers of the SIT.

Kumar, who was the commissioner of Bidhanagar Police when the scam broke out, looked after the day to day operations of the SIT. Kumar has moved the high court seeking quashing of a CBI notice to him in May for appearing before it for assisting in probing the multi-crore Saradha chitfund scam.

Hearing in the matter was adjourned till Thursday when it will be taken up again.

## Intention of govt is to move away from parliamentary democracy: TMC

**NEW DELHI, JUL 23 (PTI):** The Trinamool Congress said on Tuesday that the current Parliament session has shown the intention of the government was to move away from parliamentary democracy to a presidential form of government.

TMC Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien has also alleged that the government used its "brute majority" in Lok Sabha to bulldoze the "faulty RTI Bill".

"Judging by what one has seen in the last one month in Parliament. Intentions apparent : they want to move from a parliamentary democracy to a presidential form of government. We will fight for our Constitution," he tweeted.

He also said that in Rajya Sabha 12 Bills had been passed with "zero scrutiny".

"With every passing day, rule after rule, convention after convention, is blatantly broken in Parliament," he said.

Lok Sabha on Monday passed the Bill amending the Right To Information Act, amid objections by the Opposition which alleged that it was an attempt to undermine the law and make the transparency panel a "toothless tiger". The Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2019, seeks to give the government powers to fix salaries, tenures and other terms and conditions of employment of information commissioners.

## Mizoram assembly may become paperless within this year

**AIZAWL, JUL 23 (PTI):** The functioning of the Mizoram Assembly may become paperless through the National E-Vidhan Application (NeVA) within this year, a senior central government official said here on Tuesday.

Paperless Assembly or e-Assembly is a concept involving electronic means to facilitate all the works of the legislature. It is being done under the supervision of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

The ministry's NeVA Coordinator Arpit Ty-

agi said the expenses for implementing NeVA would be funded by the Centre and the state government on 90:10 sharing basis.

Digitisation would reduce the use of huge quantity of paper and help in transparency of the proceedings of the legislature, Tyagi said.

The NeVA "addresses day to day functioning of a House covering list of businesses, notices, bulletins, starred or unstarred questions and replies by the departments, proceedings, etc," he told reporters in the assembly

secretariat here.

It enables automation of entire law making process, tracking of decisions and documents, sharing of information, the official said. Accredited journalists would also be able to access the portal through mobile application, he said.

NeVA aims to bring all the legislatures of the country together, in one platform, thereby creating a massive data depository, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal had informed the Lok Sabha on December 18 last year.

## Guwahati wants to host one of India's World Cup qualifiers, might get opener

**NEW DELHI, JULY 23 (PTI):** Guwahati is set to host India's first qualifying match for the 2022 FIFA World Cup against Oman on September 5 after the Assam Football Association (AFA) expressed interest "considering the popularity" of the sport in the region.

The Indra Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Sarusajai, on the outskirts of the state capital, could get to host the game.

"We have got in touch with the All India Football Federation requesting them to give us one of the World Cup qualifying matches and they considered it. There is a chance we might get the September 5 game," AFA general secretary Hemen

Brahma told PTI.

The Assam Football Association has received a "positive" feedback from the apex body.

"The AIFF has received a proposal from Assam but nothing has been finalised yet," a source close to the governing body said.

Officials from the Asian Football Confederations (AFC) will inspect the venues, including the one in Guwahati, before arriving at a decision.

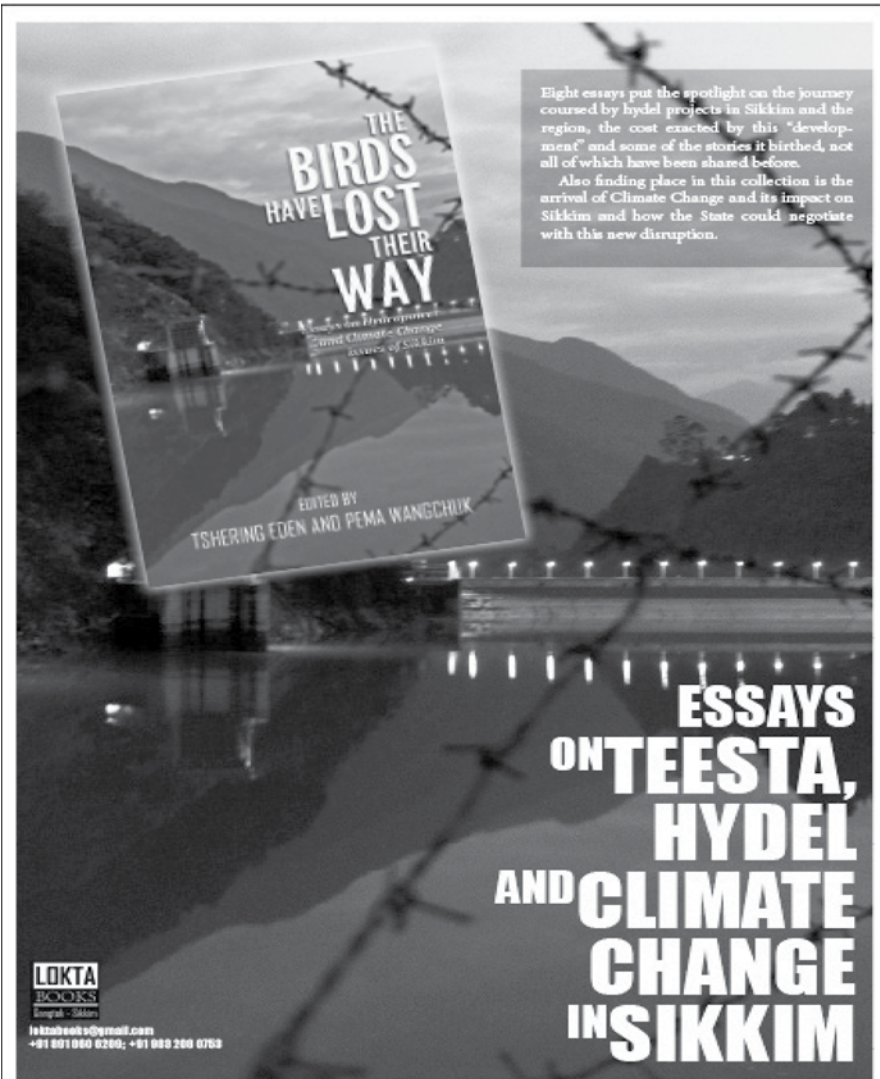
The Indian football team was last week handed a comparatively easy draw for the 2022 World Cup second round Asian qualifiers, and was clubbed with Qatar, Oman, Afghanistan and Bangladesh in Group E.

The 40 Asian countries were divided into eight groups of five teams each in the draw held at the Asian Football Confederation headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

Teams in each group will play home-and-away round-robin matches starting from September 5. Besides Guwahati, the Mumbai Football Arena and the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata have emerged as the likely venues to host the home matches of the qualifying campaign.

While they made the last Asian Cup, India endured a disastrous World Cup qualifying campaign for the 2018 edition, including suffering a loss to tiny pacific nation Guam.

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# Narine, Pollard recalled for first T20 Internationals against India

**ST JOHN’S (ANTIGUA), JUL 23 (PTI):** The veteran duo of Sunil Narine and Kieron Pollard were Tuesday recalled to a 14-member West Indies squad for the first two games of the three-match T20 International series against India, beginning August 3 at Florida in the United States.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Anthony Bramble is the only uncapped player in the squad selected for the first two T20Is to be played on August 3 and 4 at the Broward County Stadium, Lauderhill, Florida.

The selection panel could make changes to the squad for the third T20I on August 6 at the Guyana National Stadium, the West Indies Cricket Board said.

The squad, to be led by captain Carlos Brathwaite, also includes all-rounder Andre Russell subject to passing a fitness assessment prior to the series. Russell had made an early exit from the World Cup to undergo an operation on his troublesome left knee.

Interim chairman of the selection panel Robert Haynes said veteran opener Chris Gayle had notified that he was unavailable for the series due to playing commitments at the GT20 in Canada. This has given the opportunity for left-handed compatriot John Campbell to fill the slot.



Left-handed opener John Campbell and left-arm spinner Khary Pierre have also been included alongside a number of regulars, as the interim selection panel seeks to explore options with the ICC T20 World Cup looming next year in Australia.

“This squad is an excellent balance of experience and youth. It is not just about the present -- the India Tour of the West Indies -- but we are also looking at the T20 World Cup coming up next year and it is important that we find the right combination of players and the right formula for defending our title,” said Haynes.

“We have to make sure that we put certain things in place now, so



that when it comes to picking the squad for the T20 World Cup, it becomes easier, so we are giving more players the opportunity to play and get the exposure.”

Haynes said he expects the T20I series to be a keenly contested one.

“Most of the players that we have selected have played in the IPL and they know all of the Indian players well. We will have the edge for sure because we are playing at home. At the end of the day however, it is important that the players go out there and play to win, not just to compete, and I think we have the right balance to do so.”

Mystery spinner Narine last played in



a T20I for West Indies against England almost two years ago at Chester-le-Street and batting all-rounder Pollard appeared last November on the Tour of India.

“We felt that players like Narine and Pollard, who have played well in T20 leagues around the world, once they are fit and mentally ready to play, we must give them the opportunity to represent the West Indies again,” said Haynes.

The 28-year-old Bramble will provide wicket keeping back-up to Nicholas Pooran despite not having played an official T20 in close to three years. He did, however, captain West Indies ‘B’ at last year’s Canada GLT20 and was picked up by Guyana

Amazon Warriors in the CPL draft in May.

“Though Nicholas Pooran will be the first-choice wicketkeeper, we needed to have someone to deputise in case something unexpected happens and he (Bramble) is the perfect choice,” said Haynes.

India play three ODIs and two Tests against the West Indies after the T20Is.

West Indies Squad for first two T20 Internationals: Carlos Brathwaite (capt), Sunil Narine, Kemo Paul, Khary Pierre, Kieron Pollard, Nicholas Pooran (wk), Rovman Powell, Andre Russell, Oshane Thomas, Anthony Bramble (wk), John Campbell, Sheldon Cottrell, Shimron Hetmyer, Evin Lewis.

# Chance for Anderson to regain top spot

**DUBAI, JUL 23 (PTI):** England’s pace spearhead James Anderson will be eager to work his way back to the top of the ICC Test Bowlers’ Rankings when his side takes on Ireland in their one-off Test at Lord’s starting Wednesday.

Anderson, who was overtaken by South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada (ranked third) in November last year and subsequently by the present No. 1 Pat Cummins of Australia, is ranked second and has a chance to bridge the 16-point gap in the Lord’s Test.

He will then feature in a potential direct contest with Cummins in the five-macth Ashes series starting August 1.

India’s Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin also featured in the bowler’s top 10 holding the sixth and tenth spot respectively.

India skipper Virat Kohli continued to maintain his number one position in the batsmen’s rankings. New Zealand’s Kane Williamson grabbed the second spot while



Cheteshwar Pujara came in third. In the all-rounders’ list, Jadeja was the best-ranked Indian.

The left-arm spinner sits behind West Indies’ Jason Holder and Shakib Al Hasan of Bangladesh

at the third spot.

In the team rankings, India remain in the first place followed by New Zealand (2) and South Africa (3) with England (4) and Australia (5) rounding up the top five.

## World Cup final best and worst day of my cricketing career: Guptill

**AUCKLAND, JUL 23 (PTI):** A week after New Zealand’s heartbreaking World Cup loss, a gutted Martin Guptill on Tuesday said the summit clash against England at the Lord’s was both the “best and worst day” of his cricketing career.

Hosts England lifted their maiden World Cup owing to a superior boundary count after Guptill was run-out off the last ball of the Super Over.

“Hard to believe it’s been a week since that incredible Final at Lords. I think it was both the best and worst day of my

cricketing life! So many different emotions, but mainly proud to represent New Zealand and play for the Black Caps alongside a great group of mates. Thank you to everyone for all your support, it has been amazing,” Guptill wrote on his Instagram page.

He also posted a picture of himself being consoled by his team-mates and English player Chris Woakes after the last ball of the game.

Guptill was involved the one of the turning point’s of the final at Lord’s. It was his throw from the deep that raced

to the boundary ropes after being deflected of a diving Ben Stokes’ bat in the last over of English innings.

The swashbuckling batsman, who was the highest run-getter in the 2015 edition, struggled with the bat this World Cup. However, the 32-year-old compensated with his brilliant fielding throughout the tournament. In the semifinal against India, he effected the vital run-out of Mahendra Singh Dhoni that tilted the match drastically in New Zealand’s favour.

## Pak ready to release doctor who helped CIA track Osama in exchange of jailed neuroscientist

**WASHINGTON, JUL 23 (PTI):** Prime Minister Imran Khan has offered to release jailed Pakistani surgeon Shakeel Afridi, who helped the CIA track down al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden, in exchange of neuroscientist Aafia Siddiqui serving an 86-year US prison sentence after her 2010 conviction in shooting at FBI agents and American soldiers in Afghanistan.

Khan, who is visiting Washington on his maiden official trip, in an interview to Fox News appeared reluctant to give any commitment on the release of Pakistani doctor Afridi. He said that the release of Afridi is an “emotive issue” for the country as in Pakistan he is considered a spy for the US.

He, however, said he would be willing to consider releasing Afridi in exchange for Pakistani neuroscientist Aafia.

So, we could negotiate some sort of swap, Khan said, adding that this was not talked about during his meeting with President Donald Trump in the White House.

The negotiations for swap of Afridi and Siddiqui could take place in the future, he said. We

can negotiate. I mean, no negotiations have started, Khan told US President Donald Trump’s favourite news channel.

Afridi, a 57-year-old former surgeon of Khyber Agency, had run a false vaccination campaign in the Pakistani garrison city of Abbottabad to help the CIA track down Osama, who was then killed in a covert US raid on May 2, 2011. Afridi was arrested from Peshawar later that year.

Initially, he was accused of organising a fake immunisation campaign for the CIA to confirm presence of Osama but later awarded 33 years sentence on multiple charges of anti-state activities, including extending support to militant outfits. His sentence was later reduced to 23 years.

The US has been demanding Pakistan to release Afridi.

The issue of Afridi’s release is reportedly one of the major obstacles to the improvement of ties between the US and Pakistan. The US State Department has previously said that Afridi has been unjustly imprisoned in Pakistan and Washington has clearly communicat-

ed its position to Islamabad in his case, both in public and in private.

Pakistani neuroscientist Aafia, who was convicted in 2010 on charges of attempted murder and assault of US personnel, is serving an 86-year sentence at the Federal Medical Centre, Carswell in Fort Worth, Texas.

A court in New York sentenced Aafia, an MIT graduate, on September 23, 2010.

The sympathisers of the 47-year-old claim that she was arrested in Pakistan and handed over to intelligence agencies who then transferred her into US custody. Both US and Pakistani officials, however, say that she was arrested in Afghanistan.

Aafia allegedly went missing for five years before she was discovered in Afghanistan. It is said that she snatched a gun during interrogation in Ghazni and tried to shoot a US soldier. She has also been accused of working for Al Qaeda.

During his election campaign, Khan had said if elected he would make efforts to repatriate Aafia and other Pakistani prisoners serving jail term in foreign countries.

## FM rules out rollback of duty on newsprint

**NEW DELHI, JUL 23 (PTI):** Rejecting demands for rollback of import duty on the paper used for printing newspapers, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said 10 per cent customs duty on imported newsprint was a move to provide a level playing field for domestic manufacturers. Replying to the debate on Finance Bill 2019, which contained the tax proposal, in the Rajya Sabha, she said domestic newsprint manufacturers were finding it difficult to find buyers because the same was being imported.

“Basic Customs Duty on newsprint has been increased to provide a level playing field to domestic manufacturers. There is a capacity in this country to produce newsprint. But unfortunately, they are not able to get buyers because most of the newsprint is imported,” she said.

In the last few months, there has been a drastic fall in price overseas from USD 700 per tonne to USD 500 per tonne, she said, adding that kind of fall in global newsprint prices has affected the Indian manufacturers so badly that they are not able to find takers for their product.

“So if we are talking of Make in India but allowing indirectly to import, it does not make sense at all. I am sure the member appreciate this point that when we are trying to make Indian industry survive this kind of onslaught, this is inevitable,” she said. Sitharaman was responding

to YSR-Congress leader V Vijayasai Reddy, who during the debate stated that the duty would adversely impact small newspapers at a time when advertising revenue was also depleting. “You cannot allow fall in international price adversely affecting when we have capacities. If we did not have capacities, I can fully understand. I want members to please appreciate,” the minister said.

“I also want to say newsprint attracted basic customs duty even before 2009. We are not the first ones to put it here,” she added. Earlier this month, the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) asked the government to withdraw the 10 per cent customs duty imposed on newsprint, the uncoated paper used for printing of newspapers, and lightweight coated papers used for magazines.

“Publishers of newspapers and magazines are already reeling under severe financial pressure due to many factors like lower advertisement revenues, higher costs and digital onslaught from technological giants. Small and medium newspapers will go into deeper losses and many of them will be forced to close down,” it had said.

India’s newsprint consumption is around 2.5 million tonnes per annum while the domestic industry’s manufacturing capacity is only 1 million tonnes. Also, there are no domestic manufacturers of uncoated and lightweight coated paper.

## China lashes ‘clown’ Horton for Sun podium protest



**SHANGHAI, JUL 23 (AFP):** Australian swimmer Mack Horton was slammed as “arrogant” and “rude” by Chinese media as his feud with China’s Sun Yang accelerated at the world championships.

After Horton snubbed Sun for a photo-call on the podium, as a doping controversy rages around the Chinese star, the China Daily said the Aussie “humiliated himself with his antics”.

“Needless to say such moves are rather rude and lack the most basic manners,” it said.

“Not joining Sun on the podium was not a protest, but an insult.” Horton was warned by world body FINA for refusing to join Sun on the rostrum after Sunday’s 400 metres freestyle medals ceremony, while he also received death threats on Instagram.

The 23-year-old previously clashed with Sun at the 2016 Rio Olympics, where he called him a “drug cheat” before pipping him to 400m gold.

Sun, who served a three-month suspension in 2014, is again under a doping cloud after a leaked FINA doping panel report alleged he smashed vials containing blood samples with a hammer after being tested last year. He has protested his innocence in both cases.

The People’s Daily, the official mouthpiece of the ruling Communist Party, accused Horton of “exaggerated and arrogant words and deeds”. “(These) deeds are offensive to the opponent, to FINA, and to rules and morality,” it said on Weibo, China’s equivalent of Twitter.

CCTV, the state broadcaster, branded Horton “a clown”. The latest spat

between Horton and Sun was widely carried in Chinese media, although there was scant mention of the latest doping controversy surrounding the Chinese star.

FINA cleared Sun to take part in the world championships but the World Anti-Doping Agency appealed the decision at the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The China Daily noted the case against him, but said that Horton and others accusing Sun “should go back to read the statement of FINA, which clearly said that ‘Mr. Sun Yang did not commit an anti-doping rule violation’”.

Reaction by users of Weibo, China’s Twitter-like social media platform, was vitriolic.

“Seriously deal with Horton!” thundered one, while another branded him “scum”.



# Boris Johnson seen as clear favourite to succeed Theresa May as UK PM



**LONDON, JUL 23 (PTI):** Britain's former foreign secretary Boris Johnson is seen as the clear favourite to become the new Prime Minister when the result of the Conservative Party elections to succeed Theresa May will be announced on Tuesday, according to media reports.

Britain's prime ministerial race concluded its final phase as voting closed on Monday evening for counting to begin before May's successor is unveiled.

The frontrunner throughout the contest has been the 55-year-old ex-London mayor as the Conservative Party's over 160,000 members ACROSS the UK filed in their postal votes to decide between him and the current foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt.

Johnson is seen as the clear favourite although

a number of senior figures have said they will not serve under him, the BBC reported.

The outcome of the ballot of about 160,000 Tory members will be revealed at 11.45 am (1615 IST) in London, it said.

In terms of timeline, May will carry on as caretaker prime minister for a few days still as she is set to address her final Prime Minister's Questions session in the House of Commons on Wednesday after which she will head to Buckingham Palace to formally offer her resignation to Queen Elizabeth II. The 93-year-old monarch will then meet the newly-elected Conservative Party leader and invite him to form a new government. The new prime minister then traditionally makes a statement on the steps of 10 Downing Street before taking offi-

cial charge before Parliament's summer recess is set to kick off from Friday until early September.

In one of final major prime ministerial acts, May is chairing the government's emergency Cobra meeting on Monday after a British-flagged tanker was seized by Iran in the Gulf last week.

She will receive updates from ministers and officials on the crisis since the vessel and its crew, including Indian nationals, was seized.

It will be one of the first big international issue to address for any new prime minister as well. With just hours to go before the vote closes, Johnson used his weekly newspaper column in the 'Daily Telegraph' to compare the Brexit negotiations and meeting the October 31 deadline for Britain to leave the Eu-

ropean Union (EU) with the same "can-do spirit" behind putting a man on the moon 50 years ago.

He called for optimism in the approach to resolving the controversial Irish backstop issue, the controversial insurance policy insisted upon by the EU but seen as a means of keeping the UK tied to European rules even after Brexit.

The conundrum had resulted in May losing repeated parliamentary votes over her Brexit agreement, ultimately leading to her forced departure as British prime minister. "If they could use hand-knitted computer code to make a frictionless re-entry to Earth's atmosphere in 1969, we can solve the problem of frictionless trade at the Northern Irish border," writes Johnson.

"It is time this country recovered some of

its can-do spirit. We can come out of the EU on October 31, and yes, we certainly have the technology to do so. What we need now is the will and the drive," he said.

He has come under severe criticism from leading politicians, including former Prime Minister Tony Blair from the Opposition Labour Party, who warned against the prospect of a chaotic no-deal Brexit something Johnson has refused to rule out on several occasions.

Blair writes in 'The Times' to warn that "crashing out without public endorsement would be a gargantuan risk" and "no one knows with certainty the impact of no-deal".

"It could be merely very difficult or it could be catastrophic," he said.

Meanwhile, senior UK Cabinet members Chancellor Philip Hammond and justice secretary David Gauke have declared their intention to resign if Johnson is the one elected as party leader and Prime Minister, in line with their firm opposition to a no-deal Brexit.

A number of other Cabinet members are set to follow suit in the event that Johnson wins race over similar Brexit-related concerns with Foreign Office minister Alan Duncan stepping down even before the new leader is even announced in opposition to the prospect of Johnson as the next Prime Minister.

# Iran to meet with nuclear partners amid tanker crisis



**TEHRAN, JUL 23 (AFP):** Iran said Tuesday it will attend an urgent meeting with countries still party to the troubled nuclear deal, as it declared itself the "guardian of security" in the Gulf amid a tanker crisis.

The planned July 28 meeting is aimed at salvaging the hard-won deal, on life-support since the United States withdrew from it last year and reimposed biting sanctions against Iran.

Amid rising hostilities with the United States, Iran's Revolutionary Guards seized a tanker sailing under the flag of US ally Britain on Friday.

State television aired new footage of the crew aboard the Stena Impero tanker which Iran has impounded at the port of Bandar Abbas for allegedly breaking "international maritime rules".

In the video, the crew made up of 18 Indians, three Russians, a Latvian and a Filipino are seen sitting around a table on the ship and seemingly going about their daily routines.

The seizure of the Swedish-owned vessel has been seen as a tit-for-tat move after British authorities detained an Iranian oil tanker on July 4 in the Mediterranean on suspicion it was shipping oil to Syria in breach of EU sanctions.

"Throughout history, Iran has been and will be the main guardian of security and free navigation" in the Gulf, President Hassan Rouhani said late Monday in a meeting with visiting Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi.

"There is still no adequate and lasting stability and security in the region," he added, emphasising that Tehran was not seeking to stoke tensions.

Since the United States began reimposing sanctions on Iran, tensions have mounted with drones shot down and oil tankers mysteriously attacked in the sensitive waters of the oil-rich Gulf.

US President Donald Trump called off air strikes against Iran at the last minute in June after the Islamic republic downed a US drone.

Iran also said Monday it had arrested 17 suspects and sentenced some to death after dismantling a CIA spy network, which was dismissed by Trump as "totally false".

The standoff has seen the price of oil spike, with Brent North Sea crude up 32 cents at USD 63.58 per barrel on Tuesday and West Texas Intermediate

23 cents higher at USD 56.45.

The nuclear deal meeting was requested by the European parties to discuss the "new situation", Iran said, referring to its reduced nuclear commitments under the deal in response to the US withdrawal.

"It was agreed to convene an extraordinary meeting of the JCPOA joint commission in Vienna on July 28," Iran's foreign ministry said, using the acronym for the deal's formal name, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The meeting would be held at the level of deputy ministers and political directors, it said in an English-language statement.

Tehran has already given up complying with some of the deal's limits on its nuclear programme in retaliation to the US withdrawal and what it sees as failure by remaining parties to help it circumvent sanctions.

Iran's deputy foreign minister Abbas Araghchi has left for France to deliver a "written message" from President Rouhani to his counterpart Emmanuel Macron, the ministry's spokesman tweeted on Tuesday, without elaborating.

Macron's top diplomatic adviser Emmanuel Bonne visited Iran on July 9 to "piece together a deescalation" strategy and met top Iranian officials.

The landmark 2015 deal had put curbs on Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief.

Yet more than a year after Trump unilaterally withdrew from it Iran said on May 8 it would disregard certain limits the deal set on its nuclear programme as it as was not receiving the accord's economic benefits.

Iran has threatened to take further measures if the remaining parties to the deal -- Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia -- would not help it circumvent US sanctions, especially to sell its oil.

It has since exceeded limits the deal had set on its enriched uranium and heavy water stockpiles, as well as passing a cap the deal had imposed on its uranium enrichment.

The 4.5 per cent enrichment level it reached is well below the more than 90 percent required for a nuclear warhead.

Iran has yet to specify what further steps it may take, and has repeatedly emphasised its actions can be reversed "within hours" if European partners deliver on their commitments.

## ISI info helped CIA track down Osama: Imran Khan

BY LALIT K JHA

**WASHINGTON, JUL 23 (PTI):** Pakistan's powerful spy agency ISI provided information to the CIA which helped the US track down and kill al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden, Prime Minister Imran Khan said Monday in a significant revelation as Islamabad had so far denied having any knowledge of the terror chief until he was shot dead in 2011. Khan, who is visiting Washington on his maiden official trip, revealed this during an interview with Fox News when he was asked whether his country would release jailed Pakistani surgeon Shakeel Afridi who helped the CIA track down Osama.

Khan's statement is significant because Pakistan had so far denied that it had any information about the hideout of Osama before he was killed in a covert raid by a US Navy SEAL team in Abbottabad, a garrison town north of Islamabad, on May 2, 2011. "It was ISI that gave the information which led to the location of Osama bin Laden. If you ask CIA it was ISI which gave the initial location through the phone connection," Khan said. Responding to questions, Khan was reluctant to give any commitment on the release of Pakistani doctor Afridi. US President Donald Trump is seeking his release.

## Imran welcomes Trump's offer of mediation on Kashmir, says it won't be resolved bilaterally



BY LALIT K JHA

**WASHINGTON, JUL 23 (PTI):** Buoyed by US President Donald Trump's offer of mediation on Kashmir, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday said that the contentious issue between the two South Asian neighbours can never be resolved bilaterally. Khan's statement came hours after Trump offered to be the "mediator" between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue as the two leaders met at the White House where they discussed a host of issues, including the Afghan peace process.

The Indian government has denied Trump's astonishing claim that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had asked him to mediate.

Khan, who is on a three-day official visit to the US, welcomed Trump's offer of mediation.

"Bilaterally there will never be (a resolution of the Kashmir dispute)," Khan told Fox News, the favourite channel of

president Trump.

"There was one point when there was General (Pervez) Musharraf and Prime Minister (Atal Bihari) Vajpayee of India when we did get close to the resolution of the Kashmiri issue. But since then we are poles apart and I really feel that India should come on the table; US could play a big part. President Trump certainly can play a big part," Khan said hours after he met Trump at his Oval Office for the first time at the White House.

"We are talking about 1.3 billion people on this earth. Imagine the dividends of peace if somehow that issue could be resolved," Khan said when the Fox news anchor read out the Indian statement that it has been India's consistent position that all outstanding issues with Pakistan are discussed only bilaterally.

"Any engagement with Pakistan would require an end to cross border terrorism. The Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration

provide the basis to resolve all issues between India and Pakistan bilaterally," India said on Monday, refuting that Prime Minister Modi ever asked for US mediation on Kashmir.

Khan welcomed Trump's remarks, saying "President, I can tell you that, right now, you would have the prayers of over a billion people if you can mediate and resolve this issue".

Responding to another question, Khan said Pakistan will give up its nuclear weapons if India did so.

"Yes, because nuclear war is not an option. Between Pakistan and India, the idea of nuclear war is actually self-destruction because we have two-and-a-half thousand-mile border.

"I think there's a realisation in the sub-continent that and (if) there was some incident happened last February and we again had tensions at the border... So, there's a realisation and that's why I asked, president Trump that if he







**ERRANDS FOR EMMA!** The actress, Emma Roberts does her grocery shopping in a fun, summery ensemble in LA.

## Stuntman injury halts production on 'Fast & Furious 9'

**LONDON, JUL 23 (PTI):** A stuntman was severely injured on the sets of "Fast and Furious 9" after which the production on the film was halted.

The crew member has been admitted to a hospital. He received severe head injuries after a fall at the Warner Bros studios in Leavesden, Hertfordshire, where the film was being shot.

A spokesperson for Universal Studios confirmed the news to The Hollywood Reporter.

"We had an injury on the set of Fast 9 today in Leavesden with one of our stuntmen. We have halted production for the day to focus on this situation," the representative said.

The authorities said the injured man was taken to a hospital through an air ambulance.

"An ambulance, three ambulance officer vehicles and Essex and Herts Air Ambulance were called to Leavesden Studios shortly before midday today (July 22), following reports of a man injured in a fall. One patient with a

serious head injury was transported to the Royal London Hospital by air ambulance," they said.

The shooting on the new film, which has a release date of May 2020, started last month.



Vin Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez, Jordana Brewster, Tyrese Gibson, Nathalie Emmanuel, and Chris "Ludacris" Bridges are returning to the action series, with new entrant John Cena.

Justin Lin, who was at the helm of franchise's third, fourth, fifth and sixth installments, is directing the new film.

## Amit Aggarwal opens India Couture Week 2019, Kiara Advani turns his muse

New Delhi, Jul 23 (PTI): The 12th edition of the FDCI India Couture Week (ICW) kick-started with celebrity-favourite fashion designer Amit Aggarwal showcasing his latest collection "Lumen", inspired by human and plant anatomy.

The designer, who is known for engineering innovative designs through his signature recycled polymer structures, on Monday presented a huge range, comprising of modern-yet-traditional silhouettes crafted on weightless gossamer tulle lace and organza. To bio-mimic the details of the human and plant anatomy, Amit opted for his popular hand done three-dimensional embroidery.

Talking about his couture collection Amit told PTI, "As a brand, we are in the continuous flow of creating. Every time inspiration comes to us, the process begins. It's like a philosophy that goes through our clothing."

"There are recurring themes that come back in our designs while keeping in mind the factor of being environmentally sustainable. That is something that has always been an integral part of my design sensibility," he added. The womenswear collection featured traditional Indian silhouettes blended with western ideologies of couture.

Sculpted Edwardian bustles were used to give an edge to the quintessential bridal lehenga, while the brand's

signature sarees were reinvented with dramatically structured trails.

The ensembles were enhanced by sheer drapes and layers creating an illusion of colour through a play of light.

For his one-year-old menswear range, Amit brought forth sharp tailor-

glamour and creativity, a minor sound glitch in middle of the proceedings surprised the attendees.

Things, however, were back to normal in a few minutes and led the guests to the surprise of the night -- Bollywood actor Kiara Advani. Kiara, who is riding



ing in classic styles with a touch of layering. Ceremonial Indian silhouettes are revived with three-dimensional hand embroidery fabricated in modern industrial materials, as well as Jacquard, silk and handwoven geometric textiles.

Amit said his menswear range was for "the traditional Indian man that has evolved and started accepting newer and innovative forms of clothing."

While the show was high on glitz,

high on the success of her last release "Kabir Singh", looked fierce yet graceful in a red ensemble by Amit.

She completed her look with a stunning emerald neckpiece.

The off-site show, which is one of the first of the two opening shows at ICW this year, was curated in a condominium complex in Mehrauli here and had who's who of fashion industry in attendance.

India Couture Week 2019 runs till July 28.

## Adam Sandler to topline new Halloween comedy for Netflix

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 23 (PTI):** Adam Sandler will be leading an impressive cast of actors for Netflix's upcoming Halloween comedy.

The untitled movie, written by the 52-year-old actor in collaboration with Tim Herlihy, will be directed by Steve Brill, the streaming giant said in a statement. The film will feature Sandler's "Grown Ups" co-stars Kevin James, Maya Rudolph, Steve Buscemi and Rob Schneider.

Julie Bowen, Ray Liotta and Michael Chiklis will also star alongside Kenan Thompson, China Anne McClain, Paris Berelc, Tim Meadows,

Colin Quinn, June Squibb, Shaquille O'Neal, Karan Brar, Noah Schnapp, Mikey Day, Melissa Villaseor, Kym Whitley, Lavell Crawford, Betsy Sodaro, George Wallace, Blake Clark.

"Despite his devotion to his hometown of Salem, Massachusetts (and its legendary Halloween celebration), Hubie Dubois is a figure of mockery for kids and adults alike. But this year, something really is going bump in the night, and it's up to Hubie to save Halloween," the official logline of the show read.

The comedy will be produced by Happy Madison Productions.

## Cole Sprouse and Lili Reinhart split: Reports



**LOS ANGELES, JUL 23 (PTI):** "Riverdale" stars Cole Sprouse and Lili Reinhart have parted ways after two years of dating.

According to People magazine, the former couple were spotted hanging out with a different set of people at Entertainment Weekly's Comic-Con party in San Diego.

Although during the panel of

"Riverdale" at the Comic-Con they sat next to each other.

The actors, who play a couple on the CW's spin-off of the Archie comics, sparked romance rumours in May 2017.

They confirmed their relationship in 2018 when they posed together on the red carpet of the 2018 Met Gala.

## Jonathan Groff to headline 'Little Shop of Horrors' revival



**NEW YORK, JUL 23 (PTI):** "Mindhunter" star Jonathan Groff will star in the Off Broadway revival of "Little Shop of Horrors".

The beloved musical was originally developed by legendary collaborators Howard Ashman and Alan Menken.

The revival, to be directed by Michael Mayer, will also feature Tammy Blanchard and Christian Borle. The story is about a large, bloodsucking, flesh-eating plant.

It will begin preview performances starting September 17, with an official opening October 17 at Westside Theatre.

According to Entertainment Weekly, Groff will portray Seymour, a down-on-his-luck florist who starts feeding the fast-growing plant. Blanchard will play Audrey, Seymour's coworker and love interest, while Borle will essay the role of her abusive, sadistic boyfriend, Orin. Additional cast members will be announced in the near future.

The production will feature choreography by Ellenore Scott; set design by Julian Crouch; lighting by Bradley King; costumes by Tom Broecker; sound design by Jessica Paz (Hedestown); and puppets by Nicholas Mahon. The show, which is based on a 1960 film, opened Off Broadway in 1982 and ran for five years. It was also adapted to into a feature film 1986 and a Broadway production in 2003.

**ARIES:** "If you are depressed, you're living in the past, if you're anxious, you are living in the future, if you are at peace, you are living in the present." Realise the depth of this seemingly simplistic quote. What was Lao Tzu getting at when he shared this wisdom? The understanding that we create our suffering—often by projecting things that have no basis in reality onto the blank canvas of our tomorrow. Take a deep breath and come back to the present. Learn to stay centred. Tip: Peace comes from living in the present. **TAURUS:** We are responsible for the life we curate for ourselves, Taurus. If the energy that surrounds us is that 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 lead us to this point. This week, the Universe is giving you a chance to rewrite the story—and it can only be done by breaking away from the toxic patterns that have been holding you back. Tip: This is the week to rewrite the script. **GEMINI:** How can you make space for the new when you haven't let go of the

old? Gemini, sometimes you have to say goodbye to the good memories too. Recognise the gifts that are being offered to you in this moment and stop viewing them from the lens of your past. Emotional overwhelm may be a theme for some. Tip: Find a safe way to 'release' your emotions. **CANCER:** We are not here to wage wars. We are here to spread the message of love, compassion and oneness. Be aware of where you are operating from. When used as weapons, your words can cause great harm. Change your approach, Cancer. Meet the other halfway. Understand where they are coming from. This could be the secret to making space for relationships where both parties feel loved and nurtured. Tip: Vibrate at a frequency of love and compassion. **LEO:** Commitment with a capital 'C', Leo. If you like it, then put a ring on it, adopt a litter of kittens with it, and write the script of your own happily-ever-after. If you've been in the 'may be' and 'let's see' zone with somebody, trust that your partner will make their intentions clear. Don't let your skeptic side get the better of you, espe-

cially now that your life has the potential to look like a motion picture—complete with impromptu dance sequences, of course! Tip: Commitment with a capital 'C' is on the cards. **VIRGO:** Here's the thing about suppressed emotions: they cause us more harm than they cause the other person. Let this be a turning point, Virgo. The point where you let go of the pain and bitterness. Looking at your situation from a higher perspective will do the trick. From now on, resolve to make space for relationships were both parties bring their best selves to the table. Tip: Find a safe way to release the suppressed emotions. **LIBRA:** The week starts off with a minor inconvenience. Don't get caught up in your own drama, especially when there is so much good in your life. Go back to that gratitude list, Libra. Give thanks for the good things that you have in the present and the good things that are yet to come. PS: trust that you will find a resolution to the conflict soon enough. Tip: Focus on the blessing that are pouring into your life.

**SCORPIO:** Hallmark of an adult relationship: the realisation that perfection is but an illusion. But that doesn't mean that it isn't amazing—in every single way. Make your partner feel loved and appreciated, Scorpio. Make them feel celebrated for who they are rather than who you want them to be. Acceptance is a gift that promises to transform the most complex relationships. Tip: We're perfectly imperfect—and that's what makes us beautiful. **SAGITTARIUS:** You know what's overrated? Playing games, Sagittarius, especially with the one you love. Understand that every action you take has a karmic repercussion. What this phase of your life calls for: openness. Come as you are, wild one. You'll find that your vulnerability makes space for a greater degree of harmony in your relationships. Tip: Express your true feelings. **CAPRICORN:** If you've been looking for a sign to end things, this is it. You matter, Capricorn, and so do your emotions. You don't need anybody else to make you feel validated. Elimination is a big theme for you today. What are

the relationships that are causing more harm than good? Where do you feel a lack of reciprocation? Tip: A cosmic clean up is order today. **AQUARIUS:** Change the social scene, Aquarius. Open yourself to possibilities, through travel or otherwise. Meeting new people has always been big on your agenda. Some of you may find yourself lusting after somebody who isn't your usual type. Is there a possibility to start a romance here? You'll never know until you give yourself the chance to explore this connection. Tip: When you find yourself lusting after somebody who isn't your usual type, you've got your stars to blame! **PISCES:** Commitment is not merely about exchanging vows or finding a way to live together for the rest of your lives. It's about committing to a life of transformation, reminding each other of the importance of rising above the murky waters like a lotus. Where are you in your journey, Pisces? Are you with somebody who holds your hand through hail and storm? Send a prayer of gratitude into the cosmos.