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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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CM joins Karmapa's birthday celebrations at Rumtek

GANGTOK, 26 JUN (IPR): The 34th birthday of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje was celebrated in grand manner at Rumtek Monastery, Dharmachakra Centre, today.

Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang [Golay] was received by Goshir Gyaltsab Rimpoche and led to the grand living room of the Karmapa where the dignitaries offered their respects and prayers.

They then invited the portrait of the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje to the main shrine hall where the monks recited the long life prayer which was followed by the offering of Long life Mandala to the holy seat of the Karmapa.

Goshir Gyaltsab Rimpoche also addressed the event and offered a souvenir to the Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister, in his short speech, ex-



pressed gratitude on being made part of such a blessed occasion.

He thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his team in the Centre for having extended blanket per-

mission of the Karmapa to visit Sikkim.

He said that this has been a long pending dream of the party as well and said that credit goes to all the monks and individuals

who stayed on hunger strikes at BL House and at Jantar Mantar in Delhi pressing the demand. He applauded the passion of all the Sikkimese people who never stopped their faith and

hope of his visit to the state.

The Chief Minister also talked about his recent trip to Delhi where he called on all the important leaders of the country and said that he reiterated this stand yet again.

He said that all religions were the same and that the state should maintain its peace and unity by showing its bond and strength of togetherness. In conclusion, he thanked Goshir Gyaltsab Rimpoche for his presence and blessings.

Sangha MLA, Minister for Ecclesiastical Department Sonam Lama thanked the NDA government for granting permission to the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje to visit the state. He hoped that the long pending dream of the Sikkimese people is answered and the Karmapa's visit to his rightful seat at Rumtek becomes a reality at the earliest.

Minister HRDD, Kunga Nima Lepcha, expressed his happiness in being a part of such an auspicious occasion.

He said that in a place full of suffering, we have

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SUTA places 16 demands to improve NIRF ranking of SU

Wants Common Admission Test (CAT) centers across Sikkim

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUN:**

Sikkim University Teachers' Association (SUTA) has requested the University to begin Common Admission Test (CAT) centers across Sikkim especially in all colleges and district headquarters. The association has said that Sikkim University is yet to adopt a student friendly interdisciplinary admission process in its Admission policy and therefore should initiate CAT.

This was among the 16 demands in a memorandum that seeks to improve the NIRF ranking of Sikkim University. The memorandum has been submitted to Prof Avinash Khare, the Vice Chancellor who is the chairman of Academic Council and Executive Council that are the prime authorities of Sikkim University, a press release informs.

The items included in the memorandum but not limited to, are Low ranking in NIRE, Digital File Tracking System, Gender Neutral Language, increase allowances such as LTC, Housing, health and field visits, Campus Construction etc., are among other things.

SUTA has urged Sik-

kim University to comply with UGC guidelines on Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.PHIL./PH.D Degrees, Regulations, 2016 as well as fall in line with Section 22 of Statute in terms of formation of various committees in Sikkim University.

SUTA has asked Sikkim University to revoke such rules (CCS) that are not relevant to academia and implement the objects as spelt out in the Sikkim University Act, 2006 both in letter and spirit to promote interdisciplinary teaching and research as well as devise ways to improve the quality of human resource in the region.

In order to improve NIRF ranking, SUTA has requested the University to promote research aptitude among teachers by sponsoring to attend international and national conferences to bring forth quality publications rather than wasting their energy in file movements and in administrative activities.

Digital File Tracking system and leave application process would liberate the teachers from drudgery of running from pillar to post and concentrate on teaching and research. SUTA has also urged Sikkim University to bring gender neutral language and even third gender in Act,

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SDF to file FIR against Minister Kharel for having threatened Chamling



Party advises Govt to focus on work not propaganda

SAGAR CHHETRI

GANGTOK, 26 JUN:

Sikkim Democratic Front has strongly condemned the statement ascribed the Minister Sanjit Kharel against the SDF president, former Chief Minister Pawan Chamling. Mr Kharel is reported to have spoke about SKM having the ability to "wipe off" Mr Chamling if he wanted. His supporters insist that he meant wiping off Mr Chamling and SDF politically. That said, the SDF party has decided to file a FIR against the Minister of threatening the former CM in his speech.

Addressing a press conference here today, SDF spokesperson MK Subba alleged that not only SKM workers, but even SKM Ministers have started to support "political terrorism" in the State.

While strongly condemning the threatening speech of the Minister, he said that SDF has taken this issue seriously and will file an FIR for criminal intimidation to murder, breach of peace and criminal conspiracy

against the Mr Kharel.

Mr Subba stressed stated that no one was above the law and democracy and should be held accountable for such irresponsible comments.

He added that the golden age of democracy in Sikkim was the 25 years of SDF government led by Pawan Chamling. He added that the there was peace and security one month back in the State in the SDF government and that it has been replaced by violence and political terrorism of SKM especially at the grassroots level.

"There is no any change in the State and no roadmap and work despite one month of PS Golay taking charge as the sixth Chief Minister of Sikkim," he alleged.

He asserted that the people of Sikkim need to understand this trend and give justice to democracy in the State. He expressed hope that the Governor will take suo-motto cognition of the matter.

He also advised SKM not to mislead the people any further but to work on its pre-election promises instead. He mentioned

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Lum remains cut off

WANGCHUK BHUTIA

MANGAN, 26 JUN:

The road to Lum in Lower Dzongu, North Sikkim has been blocked near Teesta Stage V dam. There has been no vehicular traffic on this road for the past two days due to which transport of

essential commodities is being hampered.

The road formation at the entrance of NHPC dam was washed away on Tuesday and restoration work is yet to begin. People of Lum have requested the concerned authorities to look into the matter.

Users seek reformed SADA



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 JUN:

Sikkim Drug Users Forum organised a signature campaign, 'Support. Don't Punish' here at MG Marg on Wednesday as part of a global advocacy campaign calling for drug policies based on health and human rights.

"26th June marks the United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. Historically, this

date has been used by governments to showcase 'progress' in drug control in highly punitive terms. The Global Day of Action seeks to reclaim and shift that day's narrative," stated SDUF coordinator, Prashant Sharma.

Sikkim Drug Users Forum has expressed its belief in the newly formed Government here to reform the Sikkim Anti Drug Act in a way that it protects human rights and promotes well-being and public health.

check out an experiment with some podcasting from Sikkim.

Visit our website www.summittimes.com or find us on SoundCloud at <https://soundcloud.com/tshering-edem-506860426/stray-thoughts-01>

**National School of Drama
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आषाढ़ का एक दिन

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Music : Subhadeep Guha
Costume : Anil Kr. Manger
Props. Design : Buddhiman Rai
Direction : Bipin Kumar

**28 & 29 June 2019 at 5.30 p.m.
Manan Kendra, Gangtok**

Contact : 03592-201010
nadsstc@gmail.com
Website: www.sikkim.nsd.gov.in

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING

Minister promises progressive reforms to tackle substance abuse

GANGTOK, 26 JUN [IPR]: The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was observed here at Chintan Bhawan today.

Organised by the Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare Department, the day had Dr MK Sharma, the Social Justice Minister, as chief guest.

The programme was also attended by stakeholder departments like the Health, HRDD, Police, State Legal Services Authority and various NGOs.

The Minister, in his address, stated that the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking needs to be handled with sensitivity and not treated as a taboo in the society.

He reflected on his experiences when many



a times, drug abuse was treated as a heinous mistake and the abuser subjected to stigma even by near and dear ones. This causes the situation to become even graver than it actually is, the Minister

shared, as he called for active and non-discriminatory action from the society and friends and families of the victims which will encourage them to seek help and counseling and set their sights on the

path to recovery.

He stated that drug abuse was a vicious cycle and all conscious citizens need to come together to break this cycle.

The Minister acknowledged that one

needs to first understand the reasons for an individual to fall prey to this menace and effectively prevent it instead of focusing on various curative measures, as this is a completely prevent-

able matter.

He highlighted the importance of family, friends and the society in helping victims overcome this obstacle.

He commended the wonderful job that the NGOs are doing in helping rehabilitate and reform victims of drug abuse and trafficking and also acknowledged the sluggish pace of government mechanisms in this respect and resolved to bring in more progressive reforms and actions to completely curb this problem.

The Minister ended his address with commitment and utmost positivity that, with collective and careful efforts, the state shall successfully overcome this problem effectively and remove its existence right from the root.

Cipla dismisses employee protests as invalid

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUN:

The management of Kumrek-based Cipla Pharmaceutical in East Sikkim has countered that the stoppage of work by some employees constituted a violation of their terms of employment as well as the company's code of conduct. The company insists that the pen-down was invalid.

A section of employees at Cipla started the pen-down strike on Tuesday alleging that the unit has been conspiring

to let go of employees on the pretext of decrease in production at the unit.

Aggrieved employees allege that the future of around 400 employees at the unit was uncertain and began a pen-down strike in protest. They stated that the strike would continue until the management fulfills their demands and the company desists from using the rating system.

An official press release from Cipla issued today, in turn states: "We routinely conduct per-

formance-based reviews. This is a non-negotiable for us as the well-being of patients depends on our work. Any action taken is always in accordance with our company policy, which is transparent and fair to all. The quality and safety of our products is of paramount importance and our performance policy aims to ensure we have the right talent in place to serve our patients. The current developments therefore need to be viewed in the right context."

Plantation drive by Mani Trust at Yangyang

SUMMIT REPORT
KALIMPONG, 26 JUN:

Kalimpong based social organization Mani Trust's Sikkim State Branch conducted Environment Awareness & Plantation Programme at Government Secondary School, Karongthang in Yangyang, South Sikkim today with the students, teachers and villagers of the area.

The Trust is observing a month-long Environment Awareness and Community based Plantation Programme under its Let's Save Environment Mission since 05 Jun, 2019 on the occasion of World Environment Day. The programme aims to plant 20000 trees in all 4 Districts of Sikkim and 5 Districts

of North Bengal namely, Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Alipuduar and Coochbehar.

Today a program was organized at the Karongthang school premises which was attended by the Trust's Chairperson, Subash Mani Singh, Head Master of School, Tashila Bhutia, Mani Trust Sikkim State Convenor & Trustee, DB Thatal who is also the former MLA of Yangyang constituency amongst others.

Subash Mani Singh informed about the programmes of the Trust and highlighted the significance of environment conservation. He appealed to the students to preserve the biodiversity and contribute to pre-

serve the environment by planting tree saplings. He informed that the initiative will cover all the districts in the coming days.

The Trust's Sikkim State Convenor, DB Thatal expressed gratitude to the Trust for initiating the Trust's Programme in the State. Further he informed that the Trust will hold the next programme at Central Pendam in East District.

Meanwhile, the Head Master of the school Tashila Bhutia thanked the Trust for choosing the school for the plantation drive. Different varieties of plants were planted in school premises and saplings were distributed among students.

Landfill site to shift from Chandey to Ringdang



MANGAN, 26 JUN [IPR]: A meeting was conducted today at the chamber of District Collector, North with DFO(T), DE(UD&HD), SDM(D-zongu), Bazaar Sub-Inspector, MNP and others in order to identify an alternative Landfill Site for Chandey Dumping Area.

After the discussion it is found that, the project has already been tendered and will commence soon at Ringdang. Therefore, the nearby re-

maining area of the project at Ringdang will be used for dumping (Landfill) temporarily.

The Mangan Nagar Panchayat has assured to sanitize the particular dumping area time to time and put soil cover on the average of 50 vehicles, so that later on the land can be re-claimed.

The Urban Development & Housing Department assured to put (01) one protective wall after using certain fund of beautification of Mangan

Bazaar after obtaining approval from the competent authority.

Protection of the weak areas will be done by using DLRC fund before starting the dumping.

The User Agency shall apply for removal/falling of trees/poles from the proposed site.

In the meeting it was also decided that from the 01 Aug, 2019 dumping will be started at the proposed site and Chandey site will be stopped.

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KOLKATA OFFICE:

Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine – 2, 2nd floor. Kolkata – 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. 9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/ irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

SOCIAL JUSTICE, EMPOWERMENT AND WELFARE DEPARTMENT

INTEGRATED CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME

GANGTOK

No: 638/SJE&WD/ICPS/2019

Date: 25/06/2019

NOTICE

In continuation of previous employment notice vide No: 581/SJE&WD/ICPS/2019 dt: 17/05/2019, this is to inform all concerned that the last date of submission of application for the posts as mentioned in our employment notice has been extended further till 04/07/2019 (Thursday). The date of walk-in-interview shall be fixed and intimated to the applicants later on.

Interested person may visit our website for the above mentioned employment notice in www.sikkimsocialwelfare.gov.in

Sd/-

Additional Secretary-cum-Director, ICPS

SJE&WD

R.O. No.:61/IPR/PUB/Classi/19-20 Date: 25.06.19

International Day Against Drug Abuse observed in Mangan

SUMMIT REPORT
MANGAN, 26 JUN:

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was observed at Mangan Senior Secondary school conference Hall today. The programme was organized under the supervision of EPCS member, Nursesus Lepcha, in coordination with members and students of the school.

The programme was chaired by CMO(N), Dr DC Sharma as the chief guest accompanied by SHO-MPS, SBI Manger, Principal MSSS, BM Pradhan, students, teachers and NCC boys & girls.



Welcoming all, Principal of the school, in his address urged all to be better students and better citizens in society as they are the pillars of the Nation. CMO (N) explained what drug abuse is and its treatment.

SHO (Mangan PS), in his address shared the

role of Sikkim police, SADA and POCSSO.

EPCS member/organizer, in his address gave examples of success stories in the fight against drug abuse.

The programme also had skit on Drug Abuse by students and a cultural show.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

email us: news@summittimes.com

Memorial Prayer service



Memorial Prayer service to commemorate the life of Late Shri Tam Tshering Lepcha (Ex Panchayat President of Sichey) shall be held at his Residence in Lingding, Indira bypass, Below SDF party office Gangtok on 27 Jun, 2019 (Thursday).

All friends, relatives and well wishers are requested to join us in the Memorial Service at our residence. We would also take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who stood by us in the time of bereavement.

Mrs Kusum Moti Dong (wife): 8348154105
Dawamit Lepcha (sister): 7431096172
Sonamit Lepcha (sister): 9609032796
Zigdal Pinto Lepcha (brother): 8348039071
Sonam Sherpa (Brother inlaw): 9434144180
Tepem Tenso Lepcha (son): 9735144610
Mary Carolyn Dong (daughter): 9635727242
Sohn Tasho Lepcha (brother): 8972314600
Ps Zongmit Pakhrin: 9800373875

~ 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

PLOT FOR SALE:

Vacant plot measuring 0.38 Acres for sale at Amdo Golai, Deorali. Contact: 09717191985/097474651223

INTERESTED TO BECOME A YOGA TEACHER?

CRITERIA – Academic qualification of minimum higher secondary pass

Complete yoga syllabus will be provided by SYVC Gangtok absolutely free of cost. After one year of basic training and service (karma yoga)/ volunteering in the Centre, the candidate would be sent for Yoga Teacher Training Course at Shivananda Yoga Ashram. After TTC, the candidate would be appointed on part time basis at the Yoga Centre in Gangtok. College students can also apply. If required, food and accommodation would be provided.

Interested candidates may contact

: Deepa Yoga Centre at

Mob: +91 7432043719/ +91 8170953919.

LAND FOR SALE

A vacant plot measuring 0.38 Ha. (16552.80 sq – ft) is for sale at Amdo Golai (above the main road), Gangtok. For more information please contact – 9717191985/9474651223.

WANTED

HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER.

Contact: 9933443442/9800500696.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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

Mr. Subash Lama

Proprietor

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

BUILDING FOR SALE

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



SIKKIM STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY
DEVELOPMENT AREA, GANGTOK
EMPLOYMENT NOTICE



Application is invited from eligible local candidates for filling up a post of Driver on purely temporary basis in the establishment of Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Development Area, Gangtok.

Details are as under:-

| Sl. No. | Name of Post | No. of Posts | Pay in the Pay Matrix | Minimum Educational Qualification |
|---------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. | Driver | 01 | Rs.20,300/- Cell-01 Level-6 | Class VIII passed from any recognized Board/School |

Conditions of eligibility

- Should have attained the age of 18 years & should not have exceeded 40 years in terms of Notification No: M(3)/(55)/GEN/DOP/Pi-III DT: 03/07/2017.
- Candidates fulfilling the above criteria may apply for the post along with self attested supporting documents and 2(two) recent passport size photographs. Application received without supporting documents will be summarily rejected. Candidates are also required to mention their proper address and mobile /contact numbers in their applications.
- Other Requisites:-**
 - Candidate must be in possession of either Sikkim Subject Certificate or Certificate of Identification issued by the Competent Authority.
 - Candidate already in Government Service or in Public Sector undertaking or similar Organizations, whether in permanent or temporary capacity or as Work Charge employee, shall submit application along with "No Objection Certificate" from their present employer.
 - Candidate must possess valid employment card issued by D.O.P.A.R.T. Government of Sikkim.
 - Candidate must possess a valid Driving License issued by the concerned Authority of the Government of Sikkim.
 - ST/SC/OBC/MBC Certificate as the case may be.
 - Class VIII passed Mark-Sheet/Pass Certificate from any recognized Board/School.
- The application along with self attested copies of the documents mentioned above should reach the office of the Member Secretary, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Development Area, Gangtok on or before 24th July, 2019 (Wednesday) between 10:00 a.m. to 4: 00 p.m.
- Application received after the last date i.e. 24th July, 2019 (Wednesday) shall not be entertained on any ground.
- Names of Candidates found eligible on preliminarily scrutiny of their application will be displayed on the 'Notice Board' of the Office of Sikkim State Legal Services Authority on 31st July, 2019 (Wednesday) between 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.
- Candidates found eligible on preliminary scrutiny of the applications shall be issued admit cards on 31.07.2019 to 02.08.2019.
- Candidates found eligible on scrutiny of the application for the post of Driver will be required to appear for driving test and interview on 7th August, 2019 (Wednesday) and 9th August, 2019 (Friday) in the office of Sikkim SLSA, Development Area from 10:30 a.m. as per the list.
- Candidates are required to bring all documents in original when they appear for the driving test and viva-voce. No TA/DA shall be paid for appearing in the Interview/Viva-Voce.
- The State Legal Services Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application, with or without assigning any reason thereof.

MEMBER SECRETARY

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority
Development Area, Gangtok

RO No: 58/IPR/Pub/Classi/19-20 Date: 24/06/19

Repairs for Now

But long-term needs solutions

The skies have been opening up after sun-down of late, and any drive along NH-10 in Gangtok after it has rained introduces one to new potholes, routine sinks and the occasional bag of sand with a red flag stuck to it to mark a potential hazard on the roads. These are usually repaired in time for the morning rush and hence a majority of Gangtokians don't even know of what a steady shower at night does to the roads here. Reports are also coming in of even the early monsoon rains cleaving away retaining walls and cleaving away slopes.

The monsoon has been erratic thus far, its lashings varying in intensity over parts of Sikkim, as over the rest of the country. And yet, even this fits-and-starts season of downpours has been strong enough to convert culverts into raging rapids and jhoras into torrents bringing down boulders, washing away bridges, sweeping away road formations and catching the concerned agencies wrong-footed, yet again. The monsoon remains moody, but its impact on daily life in Sikkim remains consistent in its ability to impose disruptions. The fragility of Sikkim's mountains contribute to the instability of the roads as does the precariousness of the buildings here, but the most substantial role in the annual ritual of road-blocks is played by the continuing prioritizing of repairs over solutions and the triumph of ignorance over science.

Deploying bull-dozers to clear out debris and investing tonnes of stones and crores of rupees in erecting retaining walls are at best, short-term measures for immediate relief. Unfortunately, these have been the only engineering skills applied to the annual assault of slush and debris that roads here come under. Much more refined science should have been applied to fortify Sikkim's roads by now and the level of preparedness should have evolved into a multidisciplinary exercise. The problem is obviously not only in the intensity of the monsoons or the vehicular stress on the roads. Worsening the situation is the degradation of the catchment areas, the weakening of the jhoras and streams [through quarrying and encroachments, for example], the obvious seismic activity [which, it appears, no one bothers to keep track of or share information on], and, of course, the still only sketchily understood reasons behind load limits for different roads. Those responsible for the care of roads have to realize that roads can be tended properly only if all these aspects are factored in and the reasons behind at least the traditional trouble-spots understood better.

Solutions will have to then be devised through interventions in all fields and not just by throwing more stones and more crores into repairs. Even the technology deployed for repairs appears to be as archaic, if not older, than the vintage of the roads themselves.

The alternate highway sanctioned for Sikkim will be helpful, but one must keep in mind that even this alternative will snake through the same hill, and will be managed by the same agencies, ergo, will be beset by the same problems and limitations. Repairs are necessary, but for the long run, customized solutions are required.

WRITE US:

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

Combating disinformation in Indonesia

TREVILIANA EKA PUTRI & DEWA AYU DIAH ANGENDARI
theconversation.com

Last month, the Indonesian government temporarily blocked access to social media for three days following violent post-election protests in the capital. The government claimed the move aimed to stop the spread of disinformation that could worsen the violence.

Some agree with the government; some don't. Some experts have argued that the move hurt people's rights to express themselves and to get information.

Aside from threatening freedom of speech, the move is proven ineffective. Social media ban in Sri Lanka after terrorist attacks in April triggered public uncertainty, doubt, fear and potential economic loss. In Indonesia, during the ban, people can still distribute hoaxes via Virtual Private Networks (VPN) to get around the system.

Therefore, we would like to argue for a better approach to tackle disinformation in the form of digital literacy movements. This would involve collaboration between the government, social media platforms and the public.

DIGITAL LITERACY FOR ALL

Digital literacy is the ability of an individual to access, understand, create, communicate, and evaluate information through digital technologies. It includes both knowledge and practical skills. A digital literate citizen not only can find information but also fact-check the content before sharing it to others.

The latest research shows Indonesia mostly provides digital literacy education at the university level. This is not enough as many internet active users are not in universities.

Data from Research, Technology and Higher Education Ministry show that the total number of university students in Indonesia is around 6.9 million people or only 5% from the total internet users in the country.

The government should initiate a nationwide digital literacy targeting all internet users. It is a massive job and therefore requires collaborations with social media platforms as well as the public.

The government has started this collaboration by inventing Siberkreasi. It is a community-driven digital literacy movement supported by the Communication and Information Ministry. The main goal of this project is to empower every individual so they can find and check information on various digital platforms.

The government should also issue a robust policy to involve schools to teach digital literacy. Countries like Finland, Canada and Australia have included digital literacy in its national school curriculum.

INVOLVING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Social media platforms should do more in preventing and controlling the spread of disinformation on their platforms.

The latest research shows that hoaxes and disinformation in Indonesia are mostly found in Facebook (82.5%), WhatsApp (56.55%), Line (11.37%), and Twitter (10.38%).

Those numbers show the critical role of social media platforms in facilitating the spread of disinformation among citizens.

However, we see that social media companies in Indonesia have not done enough. Platforms must collaborate with the government to prevent the spread of false information.

Globally, governments around the world have tried to regulate social media platforms to mitigate the negative effects of social media.

In German, a policy known as 2017 Network Enforcement Act (NetzDG) orders social media platforms to take down illegal contents (including hate speeches and hoaxes) on their platforms. Under this regulation, platforms must take down such contents within 24 hours after a report has been issued. If not, they face hefty fines of up to €50 million (US\$56 million).

Meanwhile in France, under its Fake News Law, social media platforms must publish its algorithmic transparency and establish a new feature in their platforms that enable social media users to flag disinformation content.

Although it might not be feasible to follow every country's, Indonesian government may need to take a more significant step to combat the spread of disinformation by enforcing regulations for social media platforms to protect the public from the spread of disinformation.

ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES

The government should also work together with local communities and NGOs to spread digital literacy campaigns to the grass root level.

An example of citizen-led initiative is the Indonesian Anti-Slander Society or Mafindo in short. It focuses on combating the spread of fake news. It has initiated collaborative fact-checking with 25 local media. The collaboration helps the public debunk hoaxes and fake news during the Indonesia's presidential election in April this year.

Through collaborations, the government can optimise its digital literacy movement at the grass-roots level. With the help of local communities, the government can share measures to prevent and mitigate the spread of disinformation.

We see a dire need for collaborations among important stakeholders in Indonesia to tackle the problems of disinformation in Indonesia.

Collaborations between the government, communities, and social media platforms are essential to establish a successful national digital literacy movement. Each actor must play its part accordingly to combat the spread of hoaxes and disinformation.

[Treviliana Eka Putri is Lecturer at Department of International Relations, Researcher at Center for Digital Society, Universitas Gadjah Mada; Dewa Ayu Diah Angendari is Lecturer at Department of Communication Science; Researcher at Center for Digital Society, Universitas Gadjah Mada]



Government-imposed internet blackouts are a power move to suppress dissent

HEIDI J. S. TWOREK
theconversation.com

The rise of blockchain and Bitcoin has prompted some to predict a decentralized internet. But for now, the internet has choke points where the flow of information can be blocked. This makes it surprisingly simple for leaders to cut off their populations from communications.

These blackouts are generally justified by national security, sovereignty or safety. In reality, the blackouts block out critical debate. Even as we debate the downsides of social media and messaging apps, democracies should be careful that those debates do not play into dictators' hands.

SUDANESE PROTESTS

There have been more than 400 government-imposed internet blackouts since 2011. The latest example is Sudan, where the ruler of 30 years, Omar al-Bashir, was removed in a military coup in April 2019.

The Sudanese Professional Association had helped to organize protests and co-ordinated over Facebook. Protests continued after Bashir's removal, as the country is now ruled by a Transitional Military Council. At least 100 protesters were killed at the military's headquarters in early June. The Transitional Military Council then shut down the internet, citing "national security."

Not coincidentally, this has made organizing harder for opponents of

military rule. Currently, journalists like Zeinab Mohammed Salih are texting their reports to the BBC.

One lawyer, Abdel-Adheem Hassan, has just won a suit requiring a telecommunications operator to restore internet access. This only applies to Hassan himself, however, who is now fighting to restore internet access for other Sudanese citizens.

PREVIOUS BLACKOUTS

Sudan is one of many warning cases where authoritarian or authoritarian-leaning regimes have shut down the Internet, or parts of it. Turkey has blocked Wikipedia since 2017. In May 2019, the Wikimedia Foundation filed a suit against Turkey at the European Court of Human Rights for violating the right to freedom of expression.

It is healthy and constructive that countries are debating how to regulate the internet giants. A few platforms like Facebook, Google and Facebook-owned WhatsApp dominate global internet use (except in China). Large-scale quantitative analysis shows that fringe social media sites like Gab spread Islamophobia by linking to Twitter and to conspiracy theory videos on YouTube.

An independent report commissioned by Facebook found evidence that the rapid spread of Facebook messages stoked genocidal violence against the Rohingya in Myanmar. It is critical that we debate policies to prevent social media ecosystems be-

ing weaponized for violent aims.

RHETORIC OF CONTROL

At the same time, rhetoric about controlling the internet can be dangerous. Although they argue for different policies, France and Russia use strikingly similar vocabulary of "sovereignty." French President Emmanuel Macron wondered in March 2019 "who can claim to be sovereign on their own, in the face of the digital giants?" Just a month before, the Russian parliament had passed the first reading of a "sovereign Internet" bill to "ensure the reliable operation of the Russian segment of the internet in the event of disconnection from the global infrastructure of the World Wide Web."

The rhetoric of "fake news" and "false news" has justified internet restrictions too. After bombs in churches on Easter Sunday killed over 250 people, Sri Lanka limited access to social media and messaging apps. The government claimed that "false news reports were spreading through social media."

In reality, Sri Lankan authorities had failed to act on credible intelligence about impending attacks. Those mistakes had little or nothing to do with social media.

ORGANIZING REVOLUTION

Many leaders implementing shutdowns may believe the widespread narrative that social media caused the Arab Spring. They seem to fear

that internet organizing can translate into offline regime change. The empirical research presents a far more mixed picture about the effects of Facebook and Twitter during the Arab Spring.

More worryingly, Jan Rydzak of Stanford's Global Digital Policy Incubator has argued that shutdowns "seemed to encourage a tactical shift to strategies that are less orderly, more chaotic and more violent."

It was possible to organize protests long before the internet. The fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is an excellent, comparatively recent example. Transnational protests and regime change happened even in restricted media environments with no new communications medium sparking change.

Blackouts have enormous social, legal, ethical, and political implications. Rhetoric about national internet sovereignty can be dangerous because it can enable authoritarian governments to cut off access to crucial communications tools. Those tools have been abused, but they can also be used by those fighting for democratic and human rights.

As we discuss how to mitigate the harms of social media and messaging apps, let's remember that our rhetoric matters.

[The writer is Assistant Professor of International History, University of British Columbia]

Cong demands CM clarification on BJD support to Vaishnav



BHUBANESWAR, JUN 26 (PTI): Odisha Assembly Wednesday was adjourned several times as the opposition Congress members created a ruckus demanding a clarification from Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on ruling BJD's support to BJP nominee Ashwini Vaishnav for the Rajya Sabha elections.

The issue was raised by Congress Legislature Party leader Narasingha Mishra who accused Vaishnav, a former IAS officer, of being hand in glove with the mining mafia as well as a beneficiary of discretionary quota (DQ) scam in Odisha.

Vaishnav, who was in the assembly premises to enquire about his candidature for the Rajya Sabha polls, said, "I have nothing to hide. I will tell many things. But let the election process be over."

Asked about the vigilance probe against him

in the DQ scam as alleged by the Congress, Vaishnav said, "Let there be a probe into all the allegations. I am insisting on investigation because the allegations are false."

Inside the House, Mishra asked how Vaishnav's candidature will help protect the interest of the state.

He said Vaishnav was among the 1197 persons who were benefited in the DQ scam - "illegal" allotment of land to influential persons in the state.

A task force headed by former IAS officer Taradutta investigated the DQ scam and made some recommendations to the government which, in turn, directed the vigilance in 2017 to take action based on the recommendations.

"Will the chief minister inform this House that the vigilance has exonerated Vaishnav in the DQ case?" Mishra asked

adding that the CM always talks of transparency and zero tolerance towards corruption.

Mishra claimed he has documents to show how many mining scams Vaishnav is involved.

He said, "Shah Commission report will speak for itself. CBI investigation was proposed. Why the NDA government did not order a CBI investigation into mining scam in last 5 years?"

The MB Shah Commission that enquired the illegal mining cases of Odisha had recommended CBI probe into it in 2014.

The Congress veteran also criticised the BJP for making Vaishnav its candidate. "The BJP has no moral right to claim to be the opposition party in Odisha because it is hand in glove with the BJD," Mishra said.

Another Congress member Santosh Singh Saluja also at-

tacked the BJP over the mining scam.

While demanding a ruling from the Chair on the chief minister's clarification over the matter, Congress members led by Tara Prasad Bahinipati rushed to well of the House and shouted anti-government and anti-speaker slogans.

They too gave slogan on BJD-BJP nexus.

Unable to run the House, Speaker S N Patro adjourned the proceeding at least for five times before holding an all-party meeting to end the deadlock.

The ruling BJD last week announced Amar Patnaik and Sasmit Patra as its candidates for the Rajya Sabha by-polls in Odisha and said it will support BJP nominee Ashwini Vaishnav for the third seat.

Vaishnav was a private secretary to former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Kamakhya Temple doors open for devotees after 4 days

GUWAHATI, JUN 26 (PTI): The doors of Kamakhya Temple atop the Nilachal Hill here opened for devotees on Wednesday after four days with devotees from different parts of the country visiting the temple on the occasion of the Ambubachi Mela.

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal was one of the first devotees to offer prayers to the Goddess after the doors of the famed Shakti peeth opened this morning.

Sonowal later tweeted he had prayed for the development and well-being of all on the auspicious end of the Ambubachi Mela.

The chief minister said he hoped "Maa Kamakhya's divine blessings bring happiness and peace in everyone's life."

The annual four-day Ambubachi mela began on June 22 with the ceremonial closing of the temple doors.

The mela is promoted as an integral part of the religious tourism initiative by Assam Tourism department.

The state government made elaborate arrangements to ensure the smooth flow of devotees to and from the temple during the festival, including ferry services by ASTC, health camps, cleanliness measures, security and surveillance, lodging arrangements and cultural events.

TMC, BJP members exchange heated words in LS

NEW DELHI, JUN 26 (PTI): Members of the TMC and BJP on Wednesday exchanged heated words in the Lok Sabha after Locket Chatterjee of the saffron party raised the issue of political violence in West Bengal.

Speaking during the Zero Hour, Chatterjee launched an attack on the West Bengal government over the law and order situation in the state.

She claimed over 100 BJP workers have been killed in political

violence after civic body polls and 15 after the Lok Sabha polls. Chatterjee also blamed West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for the political violence which prompted TMC members to launch a counter attack.

TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee and his fellow party MP tried to counter it.

BJP MP from Madhya Pradesh Guman Singh Damor accused the Congress in the state of targeting his party workers.

Damor said the state

government should be dismissed if it cannot handle the law and order situation in Madhya Pradesh.

Geeta Koda of the Congress raised the issue of mob lynching in Jharkhand. Questioning the law and order situation in the state, she said Jharkhand witnessed four cases of mob lynching alone this year.

She also demanded justice for the youth killed in the lynching incident.

1.02 lakh more excluded from draft NRC in Assam



GUWAHATI, JUN 26 (PTI): Over one lakh people were Wednesday excluded from the draft National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam after they were found ineligible, adding to the 40 lakh names left out of the list published on July 30 last year.

According to a statement issued by the state coordinator of NRC, 1,02,462 persons were declared ineligible during the process of verification carried out by the Local Registrars of Citizens Registration (LRCRs).

The list is being updated for the first time since 1951 to identify illegal migration into Assam. The NRC is being updated under the monitoring of the Supreme Court and the final list is scheduled to be released on July 31.

The additional exclusion list includes persons who were found ineligible on grounds of being DF (declared foreigner) or DV (doubtful voter) or PFT (persons with cases pending at foreigners' tribunals), the statement said.


The details of those excluded have been made available on NRC's website and they will also be informed through letters. Besides, the exclusion list has also been put up at NRC Seva Kendras (NSK), offices of the Deputy Commissioners, Sub Divisional Officers (Civil) and Circle Officers.

Those excluded will be eligible to file claims, for which hearings will start from July 5.

The names of persons who were found to be ineligible while appearing as witnesses in hearings held for disposals of claims and objections were also a part of the exclusion list.

The exclusion list, however, does not contain the results of claimants and objectees appearing for hearings held for disposal of claims and objections during the period from February 15 to June 26.

About 3.29 crore persons had applied for inclusion of names in the NRC and 2.9 crore were found to be eligible.



RURAL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

Gangtok - 737101

No: 287/RM&DD/MGNREGA

Dated: 21/06/2019

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed quotation of rates are invited from interested firms having valid MGNREGA empanelment with RM&DD, Government of Sikkim for supply of the following materials for MGNREGA works for the financial year 2019-20 to be supplied to the following Block Administrative Centres:

1) Jorethang 2) Sumbuk 3) Namchi 4) Namthang 5) Ravangla 6) Temi Tarku 7) Sikkip 8) Yangang 9) Gangtok 10) Ranka 11) Regu 12) Rhenock 13) Parakha 14) Pakyong 15) Martam 16) Duga 17) Khamdong 18) Rakdong-Tintek 19) Passingdong 20) Kabi Tingda 21) Mangan 22) Chungthang 23) Chongrang 24) Chumbong 25) Daramdin 26) Gyalshing 27) Hee-Martam 28) Kaluk 29) Mangalbarey 30) Soreng 31) Dentam 32) Yuksom.

LIST OF ITEMS

| Sl.No. | ITEM | SPECIFICATION | UNIT |
|--------|--|--|------------|
| 1 | Cement | 50 kg Birla Gold, Ambuja, Birla Samrat, Ultratech, Star, Lafarge, ACC, Pendent | per bag |
| 2 | TMT Rod (6mm to 18mm) | Durgapur or equivalent | per kg |
| 3 | Angle Iron (various sizes) | Durgapur or equivalent | per kg |
| 4 | Plywood Waterproof (Sizes 6mm to 32 mm) & non-waterproof | Waterproof / Local | per sq ft |
| 5 | Nail (various sizes) | ISO certified | per kg |
| 6 | Chinese Nail | - | per kg |
| 7 | Sand | - | per cft |
| 8 | Stones | - | per cft |
| 9 | Signboard (3x4) | Angle iron | per piece |
| 10 | First Aid Box | Box consisting of Dettol, Gauge, Bandage, Cotton, files of Paracetamal, Maftal Spas, Enteroquin tablets etc. | per piece |
| 11 | Hammer (Big & Small) | ISO certified | per piece |
| 12 | Kata | ISO certified | per piece |
| 13 | Ramba - Big & Small | ISO certified | per piece |
| 14 | Doko per piece | Local made | per piece |
| 15 | Namlo per piece | Local made | per piece |
| 16 | Farua | ISO certified | per piece |
| 17 | Karai | ISO certified | per piece |
| 18 | Karni | ISO certified | per piece |
| 19 | Belcha | ISO certified | per piece |
| 20 | Sickle | ISO certified | per piece |
| 21 | Chino | ISO certified | per piece |
| 22 | Chisel | ISO certified | per piece |
| 23 | Raite (File) | ISO certified | per piece |
| 24 | Saw medium size | ISO certified | per piece |
| 25 | Bucket | Unbreakable plastic 10ltrs ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per piece |
| 26 | Jug | Unbreakable plastic | per piece |
| 27 | Mug | Unbreakable plastic | per piece |
| 28 | Line Suta | - | per roll |
| 29 | Measuring Tape 50 feet | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per piece |
| 30 | Belcha Dori | - | per kg |
| 31 | Jute rope | - | per kg |
| 32 | Bending Wire | ISO certified | per kg |
| 33 | GI Wire | ISO certified | per kg |
| 34 | GI Wire Mesh | ISO certified | per ft |
| 35 | Barbed Wire | ISO certified | per kg |
| 36 | Wire cutter | ISO certified | per piece |
| 37 | Giti Martol | ISO certified | per piece |
| 38 | Raj Martol | ISO certified | per piece |
| 39 | Jamara Martol | ISO certified | per piece |
| 40 | Pliers | ISO certified | per piece |
| 41 | Polypipe 1/2 inch | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per kg |
| 42 | Polypipe 1/2 flexible | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per kg |
| 43 | GI Pipe (20 ft various sizes) | Tata Brand or equivalent | per piece |
| 44 | GI fittings (Sizes 15 mm to 32 mm dia.) | Union, Socket, Tee, Elbow, Short piece, Plug ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per piece |
| 45 | PVC Pipe (20 ft various sizes) | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per piece |
| 46 | PVC fittings (Sizes 15 mm to 32 mm dia.) | Union, Socket, Tee, Elbow, Short piece, Plug ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per piece |
| 47 | Hacksaw Blade (single & double) | ISO certified | per piece |
| 48 | Hacksaw Frame | ISO certified | per piece |
| 49 | Plain sheet (various sizes) | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per sqft |
| 50 | Sand Net | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per metre |
| 51 | PVC tank/drum | Capacity of 100 Ltrs | per piece |
| 52 | Plastic Tarpaulin 24'x18' | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per piece |
| 53 | Hume Pipe (various sizes) | ISO certified (brand to be specified by the bidder) | per piece |
| 54 | GCI Sheet (0.35, 0.4, 0.5 mm) | ISO certified (various sizes) | per foot |
| 55 | Bricks | first class | per piece |
| 56 | MS Pipe (Various sizes) | - | per piece |
| 57 | Dhibri Nail | - | per kg |
| 58 | GI Washer | - | per packet |
| 59 | Bitumen Washer | - | per packet |
| 60 | Enamel Paint (yellow, white & black) for signboard | Asian Paints | per litre |
| 61 | Paint Brush (Various sizes) | - | per piece |
| 62 | Rate of Transportation for Cement, Rod, Bricks, Sand & Stone | Cement - per bag Sand/Stone - per cft Rod - per Qtl Brick - per piece | per km |
| 63 | Stone chips | Machine crushed | cft |
| 64 | Local wood | Local | cft |

TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. Materials to be supplied should be as per the standard size and norms/specifications of Govt. of Sikkim issued from time to time.

2. The supply is subject to various laboratories test in the State.

3. Firms shall ensure that ordered materials will be supplied within the stipulated time, failing which they will be liable to pay the liquidity damage of an equal amount of the damaged caused to the Department. The intending supplier should be prepared to supply all the items in the worksite and the transportation cost shall be paid as per the prevailing notification of the SNT Division of Transport Department.

4. Firms should have dealership certificate of all or any of the above specified brands of cement.

5. The empanelled firm or cooperative should preferably register with STCS/SIMFED.

6. The quotation received without empanelment document will not be accepted.

7. All firms previously empanelled under MGNREGA before 29.3.2016 may kindly contact the Sr. AO-MGNREGA before submission of tender forms since the guidelines for empanelment under MGNREGA has been revised as per notification no. 01/5/Adm/MGNREGA/RM&DD, dated 29.3.2016.

8. The rate being quoted shall be EXCLUSIVE of any TAXES and should be duly signed by the proprietor of the firm.

9. The quotation must be quoted by the empanelled supplier and Cooperative Society preferably based within the administrative jurisdiction of concerned BAC only. The intending suppliers should enclose copies of valid trade license and other tax clearances along with the quotations. At the time of approval of rates the DPC shall compare the quoted rates with the rates obtained from STCS with due regard to the prevailing market rates.

10. The quotation should accompany with Xerox attested copies of valid empanelment certificate issued by Rural Management and Development Department, Govt of Sikkim for the supplier and firms and a copy of certified registration of cooperative society from concerned department for the cooperative societies and Trade license and clearance certificate of GST and Professional Tax by both the supplier/firms and cooperative societies.

11. The Cooperative Society registered in the concerned block who is experienced in supply works only are eligible for quoting the rate. However the society should submit bank statements for last 3 years (25-30 lakhs transaction). Only on vetting of financial capability of cooperative Society, rates quoted would be accepted.

12. In case of failure in regular supply or not matching up of the quality standard as laid down by the Department, the supply order would be cancelled immediately.

13. The empanelled supplier or MPSC quoting the quotation must also have the store facility and transportation facility within the concerned block.

14. In failure of compliance of the above mentioned terms & conditions for the supply of materials under MGNREGA, the tender committee can summarily reject the quotation at the time of scrutiny.

15. The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject the quotations without assigning any reason thereof.

16. The Authorities shall draw an agreement with the selected supplier.

17. The quotation should be addressed to the BDO/ Programme Officer of the respective BAC and should reach them by 8/7/2019 and will be opened on 9/7/2019 at 2 pm in the presence of the committee formed for the purpose in the chamber of the concerned BDO cum PO.

NOTE: For further details and clarification, if any, concerned BDO may be contacted.

R.O. No. 56/IPR/PUB/Classi/19-20

Date: 21.06.2019

Sd/-

Joint Secretary (MGNREGA)

RM&DD, GANGTOK

We have not stuck to our batting mantra in last two games: Morgan

LONDON, JUNE 26 (PTI): England captain Eoin Morgan feels not sticking to their “batting mantra” has cost them back-to-back defeats against Sri Lanka and Australia in the World Cup, making the road to semifinals much tougher for the pre-tournament favourites.

England had not lost back-to-back ODIs on home soil since 2015, yet they followed a loss to Sri Lanka at Headingley, where they failed to chase down 233, with a 64-run reverse against their oldest rivals at Lord’s. It was once again an unsuccessful chase that proved their undoing as Australia’s 285/7 was more than enough when left-arm seamers Jason Behrendorff and Mitchell Starc took nine wickets between them.

“Both this game and the last, we struggled with the basics of what we call our batting mantra,” said the England captain after the loss here on Tuesday.

“Strong intent, building partnerships, and doing it in our own way we haven’t done those for long enough periods of the game in order to either chase down 230 or chase down 280, and that’s disappointing.

“Our mantra is always evolving if you’ve watched the last two years of the way we’ve played, it has evolved a lot.” Starc and Behrendorff ripped through England’s deep batting line-up while the home team’s pacers failed to find the right length on a helping pitch after Morgan opted to field.

“Early on they bowled well. Being 20/3 obviously creates a bigger challenge, especially chasing 280. To make those inroads I thought they bowled well. Normally when we lose games of cricket, we go back to what we do well. We’ll still strive to do that for Sunday’s game against India.”

England’s chances of reaching the semi-finals have taken a hit in the last two matches but their path to qualification is still in their own hands with victories in their final two group games guaranteeing a knockout spot. Those contests are against two sides also currently ensconced in the top four India and New Zealand and Morgan is hoping to set an example that his squad can follow.

“They (hopes of reaching the semi-finals) are still strong. The chances are in our hands. Everything is within our control. We just need to produce a performance worthy of winning either one or both of the next two games.

“Ideally, I’d like to lead from the front. I think majority of the captains have success with a team when they lead from the front. Contributions from myself over the next two games might have an impact on the changing room, so hopefully I can make a difference.

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All eyes on Dhoni’s approach as India take on depleted West Indies

KUSHAN SARKAR

MANCHESTER, JUN 26 (PTI): Mahendra Singh Dhoni’s batting approach and position in the middle order will be the team management’s primary concern when India take on an ousted-yet-dangerous West Indies in the sixth league phase encounter of the World Cup here Thursday.

As the league phase hits the home stretch, India will look to ensure a smooth passage into the semi-finals with yet another victory.

But it could be easier said than done against a West Indies side, which might play party poopers with nothing to lose in their remaining few games.

In fact, West Indies’ unpredictability and the former India captain’s repeated failure during the important second Powerplay overs leaves skipper Virat Kohli with a few points to ponder.

Dhoni’s painfully slow approach against the Afghanistan yielded 28 off 52 balls and he was roundly criticised. Even the normally restrained Sachin Tendulkar questioned the approach.

“There was no positive intent,” the usually reticent Tendulkar’s observation on a TV channel has been spot on.

The Indian team management knows that only too well but with



four group matches left, the only option they have right now is to alter Dhoni’s batting position, possibly giving a few more deliveries to Jadhav, who can be innovative in his shot selection.

Hardik Pandya is being used as a floater but the Afghanistan match showed that if he doesn’t get support from the other end, there is too much pressure on him to hit every delivery for a six.

Kohli and coach Ravi Shastri till now have not been too keen to use Rishabh Pant’s fire-

power. Pant can come in only if the team management considers the idea of Vijay Shankar being disposable.

The West Indies is a team loaded with fast bowlers so it could be a bit easier for Dhoni to rotate strike as he hasn’t been comfortable against the slow bowlers. Afghanistan exposed it thoroughly during the last game.

There have been arguments and counter-arguments about Dhoni’s batting approach in the IPL compared to his style

when playing 50-over cricket for India.

Dhoni, during Chennai Super Kings various chases, would invariably target one of the inexperienced Indian domestic bowlers while playing safe cricket against the bigger international names. Against a Kagiso Rabada or a Jofra Archer, he didn’t take any risks before hitting the others in successful run-chases. A strategy needs to be worked around Dhoni’s skill sets here too to place him at a position on which he can bat freely.

With his inputs and electric glove work behind the stumps an absolute necessity, this will require some tactical brainstorming by the captain and the coach.

The West Indies, on the other hand, will look to finish on a high after being knocked out despite a great start against Pakistan. Andre Russell being ruled out due to a hamstring injury has been another big blow.

However, the team, especially the fast bowling department, has shown tremendous potential

including the young bumper-happy fast bowling duo of Sheldon Cottrell and Oshane Thomas.

With Kohli and his deputy Rohit Sharma being superb horizontal bat players, it promises to be a mouth-watering contest if they employ the short-ball tactic.

For the ‘Universe Boss’ Chris Gayle, a smashing match-winning innings is due and Kohli will be praying that it doesn’t come against his team. Jasprit Bumrah’s opening spell against Gayle may set the

tone while the talented duo of Shai Hope and Shimron Hetmyer will be asked a few questions by Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal.

Against New Zealand, Carlos Brathwaite played an amazing innings and took the Windies to the brink of a miraculous victory. However, Brathwaite has never been comfortable against the slow bowlers as he loves the length deliveries on the slot.

In all, it could be a tougher test for India than Afghanistan but the ‘Men In Blue’ remain favourites to win the contest considering their recent form.

Squads:
India: Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul, Vijay Shankar, Hardik Pandya, Mahendra Singh Dhoni (wk), Kedar Jadhav, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Ravindra Jadeja, Dinesh Karthik, Rishabh Pant.

West Indies: Jason Holder (captain), Chris Gayle, Shai Hope, Shimron Hetmyer, Carlos Brathwaite, Sheldon Cottrell, Oshane Thomas, Kemar Roach, Ashley Nurse, Nicholas Pooran, Sunil Ambris, Evin Lewis, Shannon Gabriel, Darren Bravo, Fabian Allen.

Match Starts: 3pm (IST).

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SUTA places...

Statue and Ordinance at the earliest without any delay. Allowances such as travel, housing, health as well as reimbursement of externals are not in conformity with contemporary realities and 7th CPC recommendations.

SUTA has also expressed concern regarding pending Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) applications and implementation of PhD increments of teachers. It is also “seriously worried about the status and slowness of Campus construction with regards to various status of the applications, DPR and fund allocation.”

Users seek...

that recently the State government enhanced the daily wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers but nothing for unskilled workers.

While mentioning that MGNREGA job card holders fall under unskilled category, he stated that SKM promised to enhance daily wages of MGNREGA workers to Rs 300 per day in its election manifesto but has not done so yet.

Likewise, SDF spokesperson, JB Darnal, alleged that Confidential Assistant to the CM, Bikash Basnet made derogatory remarks against the Scheduled Caste community in a recent speech. On the same, he stated that the party would take up this matter legally by filing a case against Mr Basnet under laws for prevention of atrocities against SC community and also demand his removal.

CM joins...

amongst us the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje who is not only an embodiment of dharma all across the globe but also a fountain of purity and divinity.

He also thanked all the Dharma Gurus for spreading the message of peace and hoped that the state will be blessed very soon with the Karmapa’s visit.

Earlier, the introductory speech was delivered by Drupon Dechen Rinpoche followed by speeches by Tibetan Cabinet, CTA, Gangtok Tibetan Settlement Officer, Kungoe Mingyur Youdon; and messages from the Tibetan Parliament in Exile read in Tibetan by Kungoe Kunga Sotop and in English by Acharya Rinchen. The afternoon session had Tibetan Opera, 5th Chapter of the life of His Holiness the 15th Gyalwang Karmapa by the Rumtek Lhamo Tsokpa, a poem dedicated to His Holiness the 17th Karmapa was presented by Professor Bherey Jigme, ex-Tibetan Parliamentarian and Karmae Dharma Chakra Centre School children sang birthday song followed by cake cutting ceremony and cultural programmes.

Over 6.84 lakh vacant posts in central government departments: Govt

NEW DELHI, JUN 26 (PTI): Amid chorus over lack of jobs, the government Wednesday said over 6.84 lakh posts were vacant in different departments under it.

Of the total sanctioned strength of 38.02 lakh, 31.18 lakh were filled as on March 1, 2018, leaving 6.84 lakh posts vacant, according to a written reply by Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh.

“Vacancies in central government are caused due to retirement, death, promotion, et cetera and the posts falling vacant are required to be filled as per recruitment rules by ministries, departments or organisations concerned,” he said. The filling up of vacant posts is a continuous process depending on vacancies arising across ministries or departments during the year and action calendar of the recruiting agency, Singh said.

In another reply, he said the Staff Selection Commission has planned to conduct examinations to fill up the 1,03,266 vacancies reported by various ministries during the years 2019 and 2020.

Railway Board has notified five centralised employment notifications in 2018-19 for new and future vacancies likely to arise in two years, covering 1,56,138 vacancies, the minister said.

Top players fume at Haryana govt over ‘prize money cut’

CHANDIGARH, JUN 26 (PTI): Top wrestlers Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat and Yogeshwar Dutt Wednesday slammed the Haryana government for “cut in prize money” due to them for winning international medals, an allegation denied by the state sports minister.

The Haryana government was already facing flak for scrapping an award function which was to be held on Monday at Panchkula to give away cash prizes worth Rs 90 crore to about 3,000 sportspersons who have won medals in national and international competitions.

Instead of rewarding the sportspersons in public, the state government decided to transfer the cash prize directly into their accounts. Some of the players, however, claimed that they got reduced amount in their accounts. State Sports Minister Anil Vij, however, said that there was no cut in prize money.

“Haryana youth gave medals to the country. Haryana may be a small state, but it has made entire country proud on numerous occasions. Their (players’) morale should not be lowered by cut in prize money. My request to Haryana government is to reconsider this,” Asian champion Punia tweeted.

Punia reminded the Haryana government that financial incentive was not the sole concern for a player, but they also



expect the government to stand behind them.

“When you promise rewards to players, at that time it is not the promise of financial incentives you make to them, but of standing solidly behind them. If you cannot stand on your promise, then in future what expectation a player can have from you,” he wrote.

Phogat, a gold winner in 2018 Asian Games, was more vocal, asking the Haryana government to take back their prize money.

“I request the Haryana government that they should take back their prize money...don’t insult players by using them for your politics,” she tweeted.

“On one hand our Prime Minister says that country will move ahead if we make progress in sports. And on the other hand is Haryana government which is doing politics in sports and leaving

no opportunity to finish the sports,” she alleged.

2012 Olympics bronze medallist Dutt said the “cut in prize money of players is quite unfortunate”.

“They should be told the reason behind the prize cut,” he tweeted.

Dutt also said that “players bring laurels and make the state and country proud and their morale should be increased so that they can win more medals in future”.

On the allegations of cut in prize money, Vij said, “Haryana gives highest reward money to its players. There has been no cut in prize money. In the citation letter which we have sent to the players, we have mentioned that in case of any discrepancy, they can clarify it from our department.”

Vij had earlier explained the reason behind cancelling the award function.

“Nearly 3,000 players were to be honoured and it was not possible to do so in a day. Therefore, we felt rather than postponing the event, it was more appropriate to deposit money into their bank accounts,” he had said.

Athletes who have won medals at Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and Asian Para Games during the years 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 were to be honoured in the function at Panchkula. The sportspersons of senior and junior categories, who could not be honoured previously due to certain reasons, were also to be honoured at the function.

Last August, the Haryana government had cancelled a function to felicitate the state’s Commonwealth Games medal winners following a possibility of boycott by top athletes over a proposed cut in prize money.

Australia warns of 'collateral damage' from Trump-Xi trade war

SYDNEY, JUN 26 (AFP):

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Wednesday warned that "collateral damage" from trade spats between China and the United States were hurting smaller countries and threatening the global economy.

In an usually public warning to allies in Washington, Morrison said the "world's most important bilateral relationship -- the US-China relationship" had become "strained". "Trade tensions have escalated. The collateral damage is spreading. The global trading system is under real pressure. Global growth projections are being wound back," he said, speaking in Sydney.

"The impact of any further deterioration of the relationship will not be limited to these two major powers," he added.

His comments come on the eve of a G20 summit in Osaka, Japan, that will be overshadowed by talks between Chinese President Xi Jinping and US counterpart Donald Trump aimed at easing tensions between the world's two



largest economic powers.

Decades of cautious engagement between China and the United States have been cast aside in the Trump-Xi era, replaced by two geopolitical behemoths openly tussling for economic, diplomatic and military influence.

In Australia, that has caused a dramatic erosion in confidence about both Washington's and Beijing's willingness to act responsibly in the world. According to a

poll released by respected Sydney think tank the Lowy Institute on Wednesday, only 32 percent of Australians say they trust China -- a 20 point fall versus 2018.

Just 25 percent of respondents said they had confidence in Trump.

Morrison's conservative government was re-elected in May, largely on promises of continuing the Australian economy's almost 28 years of near-continuous growth. But that growth is

starting to falter, and with a downturn looming, his government has played up the negative impact of an external shock from US-China tensions. Economists say that is more of a risk for the future, blaming current woes on structural weaknesses at home.

Morrison is a vocal supporter of Trump and is expected to hold a meeting with the US leader on the sidelines of the G20 summit, where China's growing influ-

ence in the South Pacific is sure to come up.

Australia is reportedly planning to build a new deep-water port on its northern coast able to accommodate US Marine deployments as part of efforts to counter China's presence in the region.

The two men may also discuss a presidential visit. Since coming to office in early 2017 Trump has yet to visit Australia -- a major military and intelligence partner.

Two-day Udyam Samaagam to celebrate and network Sikkim MSMEs

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 JUN:

Udyam Samaagam 2019, a two-day event aimed at "Exploring Exports for Heritage Industries in Sikkim," is scheduled to be held on 27 and 28 June at Sikkim Science Centre, Marchak in East Sikkim.

Organised by the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises [MSME] - Development Institute, Guwahati & Gangtok, in association with the Department of Science & Technology and Climate Change, the event will be inaugurated by DST Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia on Thursday morning.

Addressing a press conference here today, Secretary, Department of Science & Technology and Climate Change, KC Lepcha, informed that the main objective of the event is to generate awareness among youth and entrepreneurs of Sikkim about avenues and opportunities available to them and to highlight the production and post-production processes in different areas and linkages with different agencies and ministries.

He stated that the event will focus on ag-



riculture, horticulture, tourism and micro-based industries and other income generating sectors and service sector.

He informed that exhibition of local products, awareness programmes for youth and students along with other programmes will feature prominently. The programme will have faculty members and resource persons.

MSME Development Institute Director, M Sreenivasulu mentioned that the objective of the event was to bring all MSME related entrepreneurs and stakeholders together on the same platform to exchange ideas.

He stated that MSME was the largest employment generator institute and that there were many opportunities available

in Sikkim in different sectors. It was to explore these untapped opportunities that the event has been planned to, he said.

The other objective of the programme is to showcase commercially viable technologies by National Institutions on Export related agencies, machineries, value added products etc, to create awareness on UAM, GeM and GST registration procedure and facilitate on-spot registrations and provide awareness on various promotional schemes and incentives of central and state governments for development of MSMEs.

The organisers have invited youths, students and entrepreneurs of the State to take the full benefit of such event in the State.

North Korea says it won't surrender to US-led sanctions

SEOUL, JUN 26 (AP): North Korea said Wednesday it won't surrender to U.S.-led sanctions and accused Washington of trying to "bring us to our knees."

The statement is yet another reminder that North Korea keeps mistrust of the U.S. though its leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump recently exchanged letters.

Their second summit in Hanoi in February ended without any agreement due to disputes over the extent of sanctions relief North Korea should win in return for a limited denuclearization step.

The North's Foreign Ministry said it "will not hesitate to pull a muscle-flexing trigger in order to defend ourselves" if anyone dares to trample over its sovereignty.

It accused the U.S. of maintaining hostility toward North Korea. It cited recent U.S. reports on alleged human trafficking and religious crackdowns in North Korea, and comments by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that some 80-plus percent of the North Korean economy is sanctioned.

Pompeo "let loose a sophistry as if the sanctions are rendering the bilateral talks possible," said the statement, carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.

The statement said all these developments show the "wild dream of the U.S. to bring us to our knees by means of sanctions and pressure has not changed at all but grows even more undisguised."

It said North Korea is "not a country that will surrender to the U.S. sanctions."

Cocaine production hit new record in 2017: UN report

VIENNA, JUN 26 (AFP):

Global cocaine production reached an all-time high in 2017, breaking the previous year's record by 25 percent, the UN drugs and crime agency said Wednesday in its annual report after it ran surveys in India and Nigeria.

New remote fields and criminal gangs boosted production in the world's top supplier, despite efforts to steer rural communities away from coca cultivation following a peace deal with FARC rebels.

"Of course it's bad news every time. It's bad news for the producing countries... What is happening in Columbia is worrisome," said Angela Me, chief of research of the Vienna-based United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The report said the jump in production "was mainly driven by increases in cocaine manufacture in Colombia, which produced an estimated 70 per cent of the world's cocaine".

In the decade to 2017,

there was a 50 percent increase in manufacture, reaching a record 1,976 tons two years ago, according to the report, which bases its figures on national monitoring systems.

Over the same 10-year period, the amount of cocaine seized worldwide rose by 74 percent.

In 2017, authorities across the globe intercepted a record quantity of the drug: in all 1,275 tons were seized, up 13 percent year-on-year.

"This suggests that law enforcement efforts have become more effective and that strengthened international cooperation may be helping to increase interception rates," the report said.

Almost 90 percent of seizures were in the Americas, with Colombia alone intercepting 38 percent of the global total in 2017.

Cocaine production in some central areas of Colombia dropped following the 2016 peace deal with the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, as farmers were offered

alternatives to growing coca bush.

But the report said Colombia has since seen more coca cultivation, with new fields -- often far away from major cities -- being planted and criminal groups moving into areas previously controlled by the rebels.

The report gave 2018 figures for global opium production, which had soared to a record in 2017.

It said drought in Afghanistan had helped spur a drop in output by 25 percent to some 7,790 tons in 2018, adding that previous years' overproduction had likely also knocked prices.

UNODC also sharply hiked its estimates of how many people suffer from drug use disorders and need treatment, after it ran surveys in populous India and Nigeria.

Globally some 35 million people were affected in 2017, some 4.5 million people more than previously estimated, UNODC said.

"A lot more people need treatment than we previously thought... Six

out of seven don't receive the treatment they need," Me said, adding the organisation could revise its numbers again were it given access to data from China.

North America's opioid crisis also reached new heights in 2017 with more than 47,000 opioid overdose deaths in the United States, the report said.

UNODC estimates that there were 53.4 million opioid users worldwide in 2017, up 56 percent from the 2016 estimate due to the surveys from India and Nigeria.

While fentanyl and its analogues remained the key problem in North America, tramadol is besetting West, Central and North Africa.

Global seizures of the synthetic opioid surged from less than 10 kilogrammes in 2010 to almost nine tons in 2013 and a record 125 tons in 2017.

Cannabis remains the most widely used drug worldwide with an estimated 188 million people using it, the report said.

ESCAPING TASHILING:

When the Chief Minister appealed to the babus to respect the 10 to 4:30 working hours in government offices, he must not have envisioned a lock-and-key regime otherwise he would have himself cracked the whip and issued a stern order and not made an appeal. Much as one hopes the work culture in government offices improved in the State, it would have been nice if this came about with a sense of responsibility and not through infantilization. But that is what is happening up at Tashiling Secretariat where the main gate out of the complex gets locked sometime in the afternoon to stop those leaving office early, well, from leaving the office before 4:30. Of course, this keeps back only those with vehicles in the compound. Eventually, when the gate opens at 4:30, the departure begins with a traffic jam like this one taken at 4:56PM on Thursday, 26 June. It might have been a better idea to undertake surprise checks and then take disciplinary action against truancy. The present approach is just too juvenile to lead to any durable improvements and will only breed resentment.



Rotary Club provides e-learning facility to Penlong School

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 JUN:

Government Second-Gary School, Penlong, East Sikkim was today handed over the e-learning facility by Rotary Club of Gangtok, a press release informs.

Past President of Rotary Club of Gangtok, Dr Renu Verma informed that the e-learning module has a projector and a software which has the lessons of CBSE syllabus in Science, Mathematics and many other subjects for classes I to X. Language of instruction is both English and Hindi and lessons are presented audio-visually in very interesting manner.

Head Master of the school, Ranu Rai thanked the members of Rotary Club of Gangtok for their continuing support for the betterment of the school and expressed his hope that the e-learning facility will help students to understand their lessons better and they take



more interest in their studies. He also thanked Sikkim Mundra family for their generosity.

The facility has been sponsored by Rotary Club of Gangtok and Sikkim, Mundra family and the important factor is that the School has also contributed towards the cost of the facility so as to bring in a sense of belonging, the release mentions.

Present on the day

were Navay Shotak GPU Zilla Panchayat, Chung L Bhutia, along with Panchayat President, Tashi Doma Bhutia, Panchayat Vice President, Damber Kumari Chettri, Madan Thapa, Deputy Director from Human Resource Development Department, Past District Governor, Dr Yogesh Verma and members of Rotary Club of Gangtok and teachers of the School.

Sikkim squad excels at Chess tourney in Darj, take top-3 positions



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 JUN:

Sikkim Chess Association [SCA] players have excelled once again, this time at the 1st Age Group & Deshraj Mittal Memorial Open Chess Tournament-2019 held on 22 and 23 June in Darjeeling.

Sikkim's Rahul Gurung emerged as the champion of the tournament, while Rohit Gurung and Thendup

Tamang stood on the second and third places in the tournament.

Likewise, another Sikkim player, Pushpa Gurung, finished on the 18th position. Sikkim players won another 10 prizes in age-group categories.

This rapid chess tournament was organised by Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Chess Association.

A total of 150 players

from Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Siliguri, Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar and Kolkata participated in the tournament as did a 30-member SCA team.

SCA general secretary, Mahendra Dhakal, who is also an international arbiter from Sikkim, was felicitated by organisers for his tireless efforts towards the promotion and development of chess in the hill region.



SUN GAZING! The model, Emily Ratajkowski is picture perfect in front of a field of flowers in France.

‘Bond 25’ reveals first look from Jamaica sets

LOS ANGELES, JUN 26 (PTI): The makers of “Bond 25” have given a sneak peek into the new 007 film with its star Daniel Craig and director Cary Fukunaga filming on the Jamaica sets amid reports of delays.

The footage comes days after Craig hit the gym to prep for the movie after sustaining an injury on the sets in Jamaica.

Both Fukunaga and the film’s antagonist Rami Malek have denied that there were any hiccups during the production.

The minute-long video, which was posted on the official 007.com on Tuesday, was a blend of the film shots and behind-the-scenes rushes set to the tune of 2015 Caribbean song “Boom Shot Dis”.

Titled “On Set With Bond 25: Jamaica”, the clip also shows actors Jeffery Wright, who re-

prises his role as Felix Leiter in the film and Lashana Lynch will be seen playing Nomi.

“Check out a behind the scenes look at our recent Caribbean

Bond 25 filming that shows director Cary Fukunaga at work and Daniel Craig (James Bond 007), Jeffrey Wright (Felix Leiter) and Lashana Lynch (Nomi) on set!” read the video description.

Leiter first starred in Bond universe’s “Casino Royale” (2006), which was also Craig’s debut as Agent 007. Two years, he also followed up his role in “Quantum of Solace”.

Lynch was last seen in MCU blockbuster “Captain Marvel”.

Craig’s fifth and final outing as the British MI6 agent, “Bond 25” is set to bow on April 8, 2020.



‘Spider-Man: Far From Home’ to now release in India on July 4

MUMBAI, JUN 25 (PTI): “Spider-Man: Far From Home” will now hit the theatres in India on July 4, Sony Pictures Entertainment India announced on Tuesday.

The film, which was earlier scheduled to be released on July 5, will open a day early across the country in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

“Spider-Man is the most loved superhero in India. And with such unprecedented anticipation and hype around ‘Spider-Man: Far From Home’, we have decided to release it a day prior on Thursday, 4th July,” Vivek Krishnani, Managing Director, Sony Pictures Entertainment India said in a statement. Featuring Tom Holland as the titular superhero, “Spider-Man: Far From Home” is directed by Jon Watts.

The film, which is Holland’s second stand-alone as the Marvel superhero, is set post the events of “Avengers: Endgame”. It also features Samuel L Jackson, Zendaya, Cobie Smulders, Jon Favreau, and Jake Gyllenhaal.

Advance bookings for “Spider-Man: Far From Home” will open in India from June 30.

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Tributes to Michael Jackson flow on 10th death anniversary



LOS ANGELES, JUN 25 (AP): Michael Jackson’s estate paid tribute to his artistry and charity Tuesday as fans make final preparations for gatherings to celebrate his memory on the 10th anniversary of the King of Pop’s death.

“Ten years ago today, the world lost a gifted artist and extraordinary humanitarian,” the Jackson estate said in a statement to The Associated Press.

“A decade later, Michael Jackson is still with us, his influence embedded in dance, fashion, art and music of the moment. He is more important than ever.”

The estate called on fans to honor Jackson’s memory by engaging in charitable acts “whether it’s planting a tree, volunteering at a shelter, cleaning up a public space or helping someone who is lost find their way. ... This is how we honor Michael,” the statement read.

Fans plan to gather at Jackson’s last home in the Holmby Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles, where the singer received a fatal dose of the anesthetic propofol on the afternoon of June 25, 2019. He was declared dead at a hospital at age 50.

They also plan a vigil at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California, where Jackson was laid to rest two months later.

Some planned to gather around Jackson’s star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The anniversary comes a few months after the HBO documentary “Leaving Neverland” brought back child molestation allegations against Jackson and threatened to upend an image that had been largely rehabilitated since his death. Jackson’s estate and his fami-

ly have vehemently denied the stories told by two men in the documentary.

One group of fans planned a Hollywood rally Tuesday to declare his innocence. He was acquitted of the sexual abuse of a different boy in a 2005 trial.

Co-executors John Branca and John McClain, both major figures in Jackson’s career when he was alive, have taken his badly debt-ridden estate and grossed over USD 1.3 billion through various Jackson-related projects in the past decade, including the film “This Is It,” a pair of Cirque du Soleil shows and the sale of Jackson assets that included The Beatles catalog.

Jackson left everything to his mother, his children and charity in his will.

The singer’s father, Joe, died last year and is buried in the same cemetery as his son, but Michael’s 89-year-old mother, five brothers, three sisters and three kids remain alive and well 10 years later.

The death of Jackson was a massive cultural phenomenon, bringing an outpouring of public affection and revival of his songs and largely erasing the taint that remained after his criminal trial, despite his acquittal.

It was one of the earliest instances of the mass mourning on social media that would soon become common, and a massive worldwide audience both on TV and online watched his July 27, 2009 public memorial that included touching tributes from family members including daughter Paris and performances from Stevie Wonder, Mariah Carey and Lionel Richie.

‘Fast & Furious 9’ filming begins



LOS ANGELES, JUN 26 (PTI):

The shooting of “Fast & Furious” is underway, Hollywood star Vin Diesel has announced. The 51-year-old actor, who reprises his role as Dom in the action film franchise, took to Instagram to share the news on Monday. “First day completed! Blessed beyond words. #Fast9 2020,” Diesel captioned the video. In the clip, he can be seen with co-star Michelle Rodriguez, who plays his wife Letty in the films.

“Can you believe it, Letty? Can you believe it? We just completed our first day and

it feels like a miracle,” Diesel said in the video.

“Game of Thrones” star Nathalie Emmanuel, who is returning as hacker Ramsey from “Furious 7”, also took to social media to mark the beginning of day one.

“Day one of shooting Fast and Furious 9 today... The team is back together,” she wrote on Twitter.

Other returning cast members include Jordana Brewster, Tyrese Gibson and Chris “Ludacris” Bridges, along with latest addition WWE wrestler-turned-actor John Cena.

George RR Martin lobbies for ‘Chernobyl’ at Emmys

LOS ANGELES, JUN 26 (PTI): “Game of Thrones” creator George RR Martin has praised “Chernobyl”, calling the HBO series “exciting”, which deserves to dominate Emmy awards this year. Martin also gave a special mention to veteran actor Jared Harris, who plays Valery Legasov, a scientist who is instrumental in leading the efforts to clean up the April 1986 nuclear plant disaster in USSR.

“Binge-watched @HBO’s CHERNOBYL. Terrifying, exciting, heartbreaking. If this one does not win a truckload of Emmys, there is no justice in Hollywood.

“And special shout out to the talented @JaredHarris for his amazing performance...” the author tweeted on Tuesday. Earlier this month, “Chernobyl” was the highest rated IMDb TV show.

It is a retelling of the massive explosion of the nuclear power plant in the Ukraine on April 26, 1986 and its aftermath. The explosion released radioactive material across Belarus, Russia and Ukraine and as far as Scandinavia and western Europe.

This year will be the final run for Martin’s “GoT” at the Emmys as the show is expected to get nominated in the Outstanding Drama Series, among others.

The show, on which the writer served as executive producer, already has three Emmys in its kitty.

If nominated, the five-part “Chernobyl” would be vying for an Outstanding Limited Series Emmy.

ARIES: There’s no such thing as TMI for you today, Aries. With the moon in your sign, you’re in your live-out-loud element. Don’t feel bad about being so...overt. Your bold authenticity will actually create a safe space in which others can open up. Own your past, Ram! Those “embarrassing” mishaps birthed golden lessons that you can pass on to others who are struggling with the same issues.

TAURUS: You’re in an emo groove today, Taurus, so just go with it. This is one of those days when you’d benefit from setting aside that intense work ethic so you can bond with the people in your environment. Power down your laptop and go have lunch with a colleague. You could even have a chance to pass along some of your sage wisdom to someone who is struggling with an issue you’ve overcome. Reach up to mentors too, especially a powerful woman who’s been in your corner in the past.

GEMINI: Lighten up about love today, Gemini. With the moon in your “the more the merrier” eleventh house, you could turn

that table for two into a table for six or eight. If your entourage has yet to meet your amour du jour, this would be the perfect day for a getting-to-know-you gathering. Single? Sparks could fly with a friend of a friend.

CANCER: Be more “purpose-driven” in your personal life today. People adore you, and there are plenty of friendships you COULD cultivate. But since each one requires an investment of time, you want to reserve your energy for folks who fill your cup—not a bunch of small-talking randos. Have you been loading up your calendar with “meh” events out of fear of being lonely?

LEO: Bigger, stronger, faster: Well, why not, Leo? Today’s moon in your expansive ninth house could bring rapid expansion to one of your goals. Take your foot off the brake, but keep your hands on the wheel. You of all people know that progress CAN happen at supersonic speed. People from other parts of the globe could be involved, so get ready to fire up Skype or Zoom and brainstorm away! To accelerate the process, you might have to take a risk. Make sure it’s a

calculated leap instead of an impulsive gamble.

VIRGO: Got secrets? One of those skeletons is rattling the closet door, begging to be freed. Time for a confessional conversation, Virgo—the truth will liberate your soul. Connect with a trusted confidante tonight, over the phone or huddled in a private corner. If you just want them to listen without offering advice, make that clear up-front.

LIBRA: Forget all those parental advisories about the dangers of talking to strangers. Today, your usual people-watching could erupt into a fascinating dialogue when you see someone at a coffee shop who’s reading a book that changed your life or who’s wearing an indie-label designer that only a few insiders know about.

SCORPIO: You’re back! On March 5, expressive Mercury turned retrograde in your passionate fifth house. You may have felt like you were missing the love boat. Or perhaps you couldn’t get a clear read on a romantic interest. Get ready to shake off the confusion and insecurity today, as the communication planet powers forward and calls forth your most radiant self!

SAGITTARIUS: Put a little luxe in your life. Today’s decadent fifth-house moon gives you a hall pass to be a little hedonistic. This doesn’t have to be harmful to your health or the Earth. Skip the avocado toast and sip a smoothie made with young coconut milk, which requires less water to produce. Looking for a signature accessory for spring? Find a sustainable jeweler who repurposes gold and gems from antique pieces. This romantic lunation can turn up the heat with a love interest. Slip off for a lunch date, and don’t be surprised if it turns into a spicy nooner. Though it’s a weeknight, do what you can to lure friends out for some cultural activities—or at least happy hour!!

CAPRICORN: Bless this mess? Not today! With the Aries moon percolating in your domestic fourth house, tidying up your spaces could lead to sharper thinking. As within, so without, right? Now, here’s the rub: The piles in your space might be a metaphor for situations you’ve been avoiding. As you’re folding laundry and deleting junk mail, you may become acutely aware of emotions that you

swept under the rug.

AQUARIUS: The Aquarius social butterfly is bursting out of the cocoon thanks to today’s lunar lift in your communication corner. Since you won’t have much patience for desk work, rejig your schedule so you can handle the people-oriented tasks on your to-do list. A spontaneous lunch date with a coworker could turn into an amazing brainstorming session that leaves you buzzing with inspiration. With the moon in active Aries, slip out for fresh-air breaks. Who says you can’t listen in on a conference call while walking the trail of an urban park?.

PISCES: Would you care to upgrade, Pisces? With the moon beaming into your sensual (but sensible) second house, you’re willing to splurge on quality. Review your financials: Is there room to indulge? As long as it’s practical and functional, you can consider it an investment. Funds too tight for that go-with-everything Celine bag or the cold-pressed juicer? Create a special savings account and make your first deposit today. This will motivate you to keep on hustling, even if your gratification is delayed.