



**'JOKER' EARNS JOAQUIN PHOENIX HIS MAIDEN OSCAR**  
pg 08

**FALSE INFORMATION FUELS FEAR DURING DISEASE OUTBREAKS: THERE IS AN ANTIDOTE**

04

**SOUTH KOREANS EXPLODE WITH JOY OVER 'PARASITE' OSCAR WINS**  
pg 08



# SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 38 | Gangtok | Tuesday | 11 February 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

## Adventure Tourism fest ends on a high



**SAGAR CHETTRI**  
**GANGTOK, 10 FEB:**

Adventure Tourism Festival 2020 concluded on a strong note collecting accolades from the thrill-seeking folk on Sunday.

The final two days of the 10-day festival fea-

tured mountain biking and trekking on 08 and 09 February.

The festival was organized by Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure & Eco-Tourism [IHCAE], Chemchey under Tourism & Civil Aviation Department.

The 85 KM moun-

tain biking and camping excursion started from the White Hall complex on 08 February, moved through Pangthang and Tumin and made camp at Sang and headed back to Gangtok from there the next day through Martam, Rumtek, Ranka,

Luing and concluding at White Hall complex.

The excursion was participated in by 20 cyclists - 14 from other States and six local cyclists.

Meanwhile, a trek was also taken to Rat-e-Chu in East Sikkim over the weekend. A total

of 52 trekkers joined this 21 KM trek.

Speaking to Summit Times, IHCAE Deputy Director, Everester Kazi Sherpa, shared that the festival received an encouraging response from adventure-seekers from within and outside the State.

He stated that adventure activities at SGMI Rock alone had attracted around 1,000 enthusiasts including young school and university students and their parents, domestic and foreign tourists.

He informed that some universities in the State have already booked courses and programmes for their students at IHCAE.

"Young children enjoyed all activities with showed much interest and excitement. They especially loved camping in the forest. Although the fest

**turn to pg 02**

## Aadhaar enrollment center inaugurated at Soreng



**SORENG, 10 FEB (IPR):**

With an aim to provide Aadhaar related services like new Aadhaar enrollment, child enrollment, enrollment of students and Aadhaar updation services to the public of Soreng Sub-division, permanent Aadhaar enrollment center was established by DESM&E today at Soreng Sub-Divisional Magistrate

office complex.

The Aadhaar enrollment center was inaugurated by Power Minister, Mingma Norbu Sherpa, in the presence of Soreng Chakung MLA, Aditya Golay, Additional Director DESM&E, S.K. Pradhan, Project Manager UID, Thupten Geleg, ADC Soreng, SDM Soreng, SDPO Soreng, BDO Soreng,

Panchayats and public of Soreng Chakung and Daramdin Constituencies.

With the establishment of this Aadhaar center, the public of Daramdin, Soreng-Chakung and Rinchenpong constituencies can now easily avail Aadhaar services for which they had to earlier go to DESM&E office Gyalshing.

**turn to pg 02**

**Anti-CAA protesters scuffle with cops as march from Jamia to Parliament stopped**

**NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (PTI):** Scores of Jamia Millia students and residents of Jamia Nagar on Monday got into a scuffle with police after they were stopped from carrying an anti-CAA march towards Parliament.

The protest call was given by the Jamia Coordination Committee (JCC), an organisation of Jamia students and alumni.

Despite repeated appeals from the police and the varsity authorities, the protesters refused to end their agitation. Police said the protesters did not have permission to march towards Parliament.

Amid heavy deployment of security personnel in and around the university, the protesters, including several women, began their march from Jamia's gate no 7.

The protesters raised slogans like "Kagaz Nahi Dikhayenge" (We will not show documents) and "Jab Nahi Dare Hum Goron Se Toh Kyun Dare Hum Auron Se" (When we did not fear the British, why should we fear others).

Men formed a human chain on either sides of roads as women walked ahead, waving the tricolour and raising slogans of "Halla Bol".

"It has been two months since we are protesting. No one from the government has come to talk to us, so we want to go to talk to them," said burqa-clad Zeba Anhad.

A scuffle ensued as policemen tried to stop the protesters. Many of them jumped over barricades to continue their march towards Parliament.

**turn to pg 02**

## North East MPs Forum meets

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 10 FEB:**

A meeting of the North East MPs Forum (NEMPF) was held today in the Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi, a press release informs.

12 MPs from different political parties attended the meeting and deliberated on common issues concerning the North Eastern Region and discussed the way forward to strengthen the Forum, the release adds.

The meeting was convened by MP from Meghalaya, Vincent Pala, and was chaired by former MP (Rajya Sabha), Bhubaneswar Kalita from Assam.

Former MP from Sikkim, PD Rai, who has also served the Forum as its Secretary General, was



a special invitee to the meeting and gave a brief presentation on the origin of NEMPF in 1999 under the leadership of the late PA Sangma.

He said that NEMF has made considerable strides in its brief history

in taking up some of the pressing issues of the region and highlighted that the Forum has also provided a much needed platform for the region's MPs to network and cooperate.

The meeting also registered appreciation

for the Fifteenth Finance Commission for considering many of their demands in its recommendation for 2020-21. The contributions and support of state governments, Central ministries MPs and Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI) was duly acknowledged for putting up a joint effort in highlighting the priorities of the Indian Himalayan Region to the Commission which resulted in the Conclave of Himalayan States held in July 2019 in Mussoorie.

NEMPF has taken various in the interest of North East region, ranging from social issues to developmental issues.

It has been vocal in highlighting problems faced

**turn to pg 02**

## Gangtok to host Global Cinema Festival 2020 Sikkim

**GANGTOK, 10 FEB (IPR):** Chief Secretary, S.C. Gupta chaired a coordination meeting today at Tashiling Secretariat with regard to the upcoming Global Cinema Festival 2020 Sikkim scheduled to be held in the capital from 28 Feb to 01 March.

The Chief Secretary was accompanied by the HoDs and officials of the stakeholder departments of Information & Public Relations, Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Commerce & Industries, Home (Protocol), Transport and Cooperation Department, along with President of Film Federation of India, Firdaus Hasan, and representatives of the festival organizing team.

It may be mentioned here, the Global Cinema Festival 2020 Sikkim is an initiative of the Film Federation of India in collaboration with Sikkim Film Co-operative Society Limited and Government of Sikkim to create an atmosphere of international film festivals in the State and to promote Sikkim as film locations and shooting destinations. It is also to be informed that Sikkim is the first NE State to host a film festival of such grandeur.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Secretary said that the three-



day Global Cinema Festival is a step towards creating a skill development eco-system in the field of film making in the State that offers a great opportunity for the people of Gangtok to appreciate cinema with an elevated experience. He directed all the stakeholder departments to coordinate with the organizers for successful conduct of the fest and urged for active participation from all concerned.

Expressing films as a strong medium and influence, the CS put forward his suggestion of collaboration of the Global Film Festival with the other major festivals of Maghey Mela and Winter Carnival and added that the future pros-

pects of the same will be discussed in the days to come.

Special Secretary, Commerce & Industries Department-cum-Managing Director, Temi Tea, Mrinalini Shrivastava, who is also the Festival Director, gave a detailed presentation on the itinerary of the Global Cinema Festival. She informed that the country in focus for the first Global Cinema Festival in Sikkim is Azerbaijan, one of the first countries to be involved in cinematography. The festival aims at bringing a rich cinematic experience to Gangtok with a range of 40 films including both national and international films, she added.

**turn to pg 02**



**GYALSHING, 10 FEB [IPR]:**

Sikkim Nationalised Transport's West-South division launched a new bus service from Bermiok to Jorethang today.

The service was flagged off by Minister Lok Nath Sharma, who is also the Gyalshing Bermiok MLA, from Bermiok Bazar this morning.

While interacting with the people at the

flagging off ceremony, the Minister remarked that the service will benefit all the people of the West district and urged the gathering to inform others about this new facility.

He also expressed his delight over the addressing of this long-pending demand of the public of the constituency.

During the programme, officials from

Transport Department informed that the scheduled departure time of the bus service from Bermiok is 7:30AM and that it will leave from Jorethang on the return journey at 2 PM.

The programme was also attended by Sanjay Lama Tamang, DGM;

Sonam W. Lepcha, AST; JEs; other staff; and local residents.

**INVITATION**

**Reeyaz Sangeetalya**  
AN INSTITUTION FOR LEARNING MUSIC  
Presents  
**"PANI"**  
(Save Water Save Life)  
A Creative Music Evening

7th Annual Concert 2020

*We request your gracious presence in the event*

**15 FEB 2020. MANAN KENDRA. 2PM ONWARDS**

# Pune farmers trained in organic farming at ICAR Tadong

**GANGTOK, 10 FEB (PIB):**

The ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute, Tadong organized five-day Training Programme on "Organic farming for Progressive Farmers of Narayangaon Pune-II, Maharashtra" from February 05-09, 2020.

The training programme was organized in collaboration with Gramonnati Mandal, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Narayangaon, ATMA and NABARD, Pune II, Maharashtra for the Progressive farmers of Narayangaon. A total of 20 progressive farmers and officers visited ICAR-NOFRI to get acquainted with organic farming technologies.

Dr. R. K. Avasthe, Joint Director, ICAR-NOFRI highlighted the relevance of the training programme for the promotion of organic farming by the adoption of new technologies developed for the organic systems.

Dr. Avasthe accentuated on the need of good soil health in organic production system. He stressed on soil health management and conservation agriculture practices for the production of field crops.

He specially enriched



the knowledge of the farmers with the available technologies for enhancing the productivity as well as maintaining the soil health under organic production system with addition of enriched compost, acidity management and vermi-composting. On conclusion of the training Joint Director distributed the training certificates to the progressive farmers.

The program was coordinated by Dr. Raghavendra Singh, Senior Scientist (Agronomy). He briefed about the organic conservation agriculture

and its importance for sustaining the productivity and sustainability of the organic production system. He discussed the organic production standard procedures for organic farming.

Dr. Yashoda Pradhan, Ex-CEO, Sikkim State Organic Certification Agency briefed about the journey of organic farming in Sikkim and detailed about the regulations and certification process in organic farming. She said that it is third party certification is mandatory for the export of organic produce and also to

get better prices in their local market.

Dr. Rahul G Ghadge, SMS (Agril Extension), KVK-Narayangaon appreciated the work carried out at ICAR-NOFRI Research Farm and the way training was imparted to the farmers' in simple language. He briefed about the purpose of training to the progressive farmers of Narayangaon. He said that the farmers were already practicing organic farming on their fields but needed to learn the scientific way of doing the same.

Manish Ramdas More, Shirol and Jiten-

dra Chandrakant Bidwai, Golegaon, Pune-II, Maharashtra in their address appreciated the work carried out at ICAR-NOFRI for providing them to the farming community of the country. Both profusely thanked to the Joint Director and Scientific Team for organizing the five-day training programme for Narayangaon, Maharashtra farmers.

During the technical session, Dr. T.N. Deka, Deputy Director (Research and Development), ICRI, Spices Board, Tadong discussed on the 'Organic produc-

tion techniques on Spices crops'; Dr. Laxuman Sharma, Associated Professor (Horticulture), Sikkim University detailed about the Organic production techniques of Horticultural crops'; Dr. Chandan Kapoor, Scientist (Plant Breeding) talked on 'Organic seed production of field crops'; Dr. Shweta Singh, Scientist (Plant Pathology) talked about the 'Disease management in organic production system' and Organic Mushroom production technique'; Dr. Amit Kumar, Scientist (Agronomy) briefed about the Integrated Organic Farming System (IOFS); and Dr. Mukesh Bhatt, Scientist (Veterinary Microbiology), discussed the 'Backyard poultry, dairy and goat management techniques and their role in organic farming'.

During the programme all the trainees also visited the Research Farm of ICAR NOFRI and were briefed about the ongoing research and development activities. Later on they have also visited the adopted villages of ICAR-NOFRI. Pusal Sharma, M. Ezekil Khawas, Sita Kumari and Guddu Rai assisted actively in organizing the programme.

## Rogi Kalyan Samiti meets in South Sikkim



**NAMCHI, 10 FEB (IPR):** A meeting on Rogi Kalyan Samiti was held at Namchi District Hospital, today. Present, during the meeting were Zilla Adhakshya (South), Tshering Dem Bhutia, ADC (South), Satyen K Pradhan, CMO District Hospital, Dr. Sarda Rai, DMS, Dr. S. N Adhikari along with other hospital officials and representatives of line Departments.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Sarda Rai said that the meeting was mainly convened to review the pilot health programmes of Central and State Government which has already being launched in the district.

Various issues and challenges faced by the District Hospital was deliberated in order for the smooth functioning. Dr. Sarda spoke about various activities that have been carried out under the district hospital. In addition, she also presented other issues such as shortage of staff, electricity and space for parking.

Speaking, during the meeting Zilla Adhakshya, Tshering Dem Bhutia said that the issues faced within the district hospital will be looked into and urged the officials from line department to work in tandem. She also underlined that if necessary financial support from Zilla fund will be provided.

### Adventure Tourism...

was very short, we found that these activities helped boost the confidence levels of students who participated," Mr Sherpa said.

He stressed that continuation of such activities would be very helpful for children to stay healthy and fit and ensure emergency preparedness. He urged parents to encourage children to participate in such adventure activities.

"We would like to invite all stakeholders of adventure tourism to organise this festival on a grander scale from next year onwards," he said.

Although the festival officially concluded on Sunday, the final event of the festival - Skiing - will be held from 16 to 29 February at Gnathang in East Sikkim.

Mr Sherpa informed that 30 people have registered to undergo a 14-day certified skiing course at Gnathang festival. The course will have two resource persons from IHCAE and one from Uttarakhand.

### Gangtok to...

She stated that the inaugural day of the festival will be held at Manan Kendra in Gangtok on 28 Feb and requested the Culture Department for the arrangement of proper sound system at the location. The delegates visiting the State for the festival will also be visiting Tsomgo Lake for which she asked for assistance of the Tourism Department for pass and permits.

Ms. Shrivastava apprised the gathering about the shooting for a corporate film scheduled to be held from 11-17 Feb in the capital town of Gangtok for which she urged for traffic assistance from SP East.

The CS gave suggestions on various issues related to the event and extended full support of the State government for the success of the Global Cinema Festival.

The FFI president extended gratitude to the State government for its firm support and excellent cooperation for the success of the event and commended its permissive approach towards new ideas for the development of the State and its people.

## Meeting on Kisan Credit Card and PM-KISAN in South

**NAMCHI, 10 FEB (IPR):** A meeting in connection with Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) beneficiaries was held at DAC office, today. DC (South), Ragul K. chaired the meeting which was attended by District Development Manager (NABARD), Rupen Lamichaney, Lead District Manager, Sudip Chandra and media persons.

DC spoke in-brief about the objective of KCC which he said, has been conceptualized by the Government of India to facilitate universal access to concessional institutional credit for all PM-KISAN beneficiaries.

The farmers can avail the benefits of PM-KISAN under KCC once they submit documents pertinent to land parcha, detail of crop sown and filled up form for the issue of Kisan Credit Card.

It may be mentioned that a total number of 4909 applications for KCC have been received from South District till date and 2084 applica-



tions are under scrutiny process.

The DC added that all banks have been advised to organize special camps and provide a separate window for accepting the forms and sanction KCC limit within shortest possible time not exceeding 14 days.

Officers of Line Departments including Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Panchayat and Rural Development Department (including Panchayat Secretary & Bank Sakhi under NRLM project) will facilitate dissemination of awareness among all PM-KISAN beneficiaries and motivate them to visit the bank branch

where they have PM-KISAN account for enrollment under KCC.

The KCC benefit has now been extended to Animal Husbandry and Fisheries farmers also. Those farmers who are KCC holders and also do Animal husbandry and Fisheries activities can approach the branch for sanction of additional limit.

Moreover, Mr. Ragul said that all charges including the processing, documentation, inspection and ledger folio charges as well as other service charges for KCC loans upto Rs 3 lakh have been waived.

Bank branches have been advised to prepare

list of PM-KISAN beneficiaries who do not have KCC and share the same with Government functionaries of Line Departments so that they can be approached for availing the KCC benefit.

SMSSs to all PM-KISAN beneficiaries is being sent from the PM-KISAN portal to visit the concerned bank branch for getting KCC benefit is being encouraged.

All PM-KISAN beneficiaries have been auto approved for KCC and require to simply visit the nearest bank branch with a copy of land documents and details of crop sown along with the filled up one page form for availing the benefit.

### North East...

by the people of North East in Indian metropolitan cities including the exodus of North easterners living in Bangalore and other cities in 2012 and racial attacks in New Delhi.

Moreover, as a collective of MPs from a resource rich, low economic development region, the Forum has also made submissions to key ministries on the special economic needs of the region.

In May 2015, a memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister of India for an 'inclusive, sustainable and holistic development of the North-Eastern Region.'

The meeting also discussed the need for institutionalizing the Forum to make it more effective and performance driven.

The convener, Mr Vincent Pala, highlighted the need to engage and support PSUs operating in the region and called for more interactions to take the agenda of North East development ahead.

The North East MPs Forum includes all Members of Parliament from the 8 states of North East India in both houses of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

### Aadhaar enrollment...

The Power Minister in his address thanked DESM&E- the UID Nodal Department-cum-Registrar for establishment of the center. He said that public of Soreng and adjoining areas will benefit from this initiative of the Government as Aadhaar has now become an integral part of governance and for availing schemes and services.

Mr Golay emphasized that it is a policy of the present Government to make vital services easily accessible to the rural people.

He also stressed on the need to boost the child enrollment below the age of fifteen years and directed the local administration to undertake special drive to enroll students.

The enrollment center was established by DESM&E in collaboration with Education Department, Soreng and Soreng Sub-Divisional Magistrate office.

### Anti-CAA...

Jamia Millia Islamia proctor Waseem Ahmed Khan appealed to the students to disperse and not meddle with the police. "The message has been sent. I request students in the crowd to go back to the university. Respect the law and peacefully go back," he urged the students.

The CAA allows easier citizenship for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians, Parsis and Jains who came to India from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh before 2015 to escape religious persecution there.

Those opposing the CAA contend that it discriminates on the basis of religion and violates the Constitution. They also allege that the CAA along with the NRC is intended to target the Muslim community in the country.

However, the central government has dismissed the allegations, maintaining that the law is intended to give citizenship to the persecuted minorities from the three neighbouring countries and not to take away anyone's citizenship.

## HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

email us: [news@summittimes.com](mailto:news@summittimes.com)

### KUTSE SHEGU



The 49th days Kutse Shegu of our late father Ren Rey Mondal or Tenzing Lepcha, who left for heavenly abode on 29th December 2019 falls on 15th and 16th February, 2020.

All relatives, family, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Rey Busty, Rumtek East Sikkim. We also express our gratitude to all the well wishers who stood by us during our time of bereavement.

**9832015083 Nima Lepcha**  
**2. 8167734336 Mingur Bhutia**  
**3. 7550819886 NT Lepcha**  
**4. 9434407296 Rinchen Lepcha**  
**5. 7908711074 PW Lepcha**

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

### FLAT FOR RENT/LEASE

Fully furnished 3BHK flat available for rent/lease at Church Road near DPH. Roadside and five minutes walking distance from MG Marg.  
**For more details: 9083826462 /9832556698**

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

**Contact: 9800201335**

### LAND FOR SALE

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

### LAND FOR SALE

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

**To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at**

#### GANGTOK:

For circulation details Contact: (Sandeep) 9734152451 & for Advertisement booking at 9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at [advertise@summittimes.com](mailto:advertise@summittimes.com)

#### SILIGURI:

Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building,

Room No.7, 1st floor. Opp. Ganga Hotel. Hill Cart Road. Siliguri – 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail at [mani\\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mani_siliguri@yahoo.co.in).

#### KOLKATA OFFICE:

Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezine – 2, 2nd floor. Kolkata – 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. 9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: [contact.synapse@gmail.com](mailto:contact.synapse@gmail.com)/ [irshad\\_ali123@rediffmail.com](mailto:irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com)

## VVKI to conduct AOL Yoga classes for ICFAI Univ students

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 10 FEB:**

ICFAI University, Sikkim, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Vyakti Vikas Kendra India (VVKI), The Art of Living International Center, Bangalore in connection with IMPARTING Yoga for its YES!+ (Youth Empowerment & Skills) Program. The MoU signing took place in the office of the Art of Living, Bangalore, on 07 February between

Dr. Jagannath Patnaik, Vice Chancellor of the ICFAI University, Sikkim and Mr. Rajesh of the VVKI, an ICFAI Univ press release informs.

VVKI is a charitable trust that carries out Art of Living programs.

"The ICFAI University believes in creating and disseminating knowledge and skills in core and frontier areas through innovative educational programs, research, consulting

and publishing and developing a new cadre of citizens with a high level of competence and deep sense of ethics and commitment to the code of professional conduct," the release details while explaining the collaboration.

VVKI will now conduct Yoga for YES! + (Youth Empowerment & Skills) program for ICFAI University, Sikkim, students at the University campus.

## Pakistan crush Bangladesh by innings in first Test

**RAWALPINDI, FEB 10 (AFP):**

Pakistan completed a crushing innings and 44-run victory over Bangladesh on the fourth morning on Monday, taking a 1-0 lead in the two-Test series.

Bangladesh were bowled out for 168 in their second innings after resuming the day on 126-6 as Pakistan's pace and spin attack was too hot to handle despite a flat Rawalpindi stadium pitch.

Fast bowler Naseem Shah, who at 16 years and 359 days became the youngest bowler to take a Test hat-trick on Sunday, finished with 4-26 and was declared man of the match.

Despite Naseem being unavailable to bowl on Monday with rib pain, Pakistan mopped up the last four wickets in 90 minutes, inflicting their 10th defeat on Bangladesh in 11 matches with one draw.

Bangladesh skipper Mominul Haque started the day confidently, square-driving paceman Shaheen Shah Afridi for his fifth boundary in the first over, but then fell leg-before in the same over for 41.

Liton Das (29) and tail-ender Rubel Hossain kept Pakistan at bay for 11.5 overs before Mohammad Abbas trapped Rubel leg-before for five.

Leg-spinner Yasir Shah dismissed Das lbw and had Abu Jayed for three to finish with 4-58 and complete the win.

With the victory, Pakistan gained 60 points in the World Test Championship, taking their tally to 140 points.

India lead the nine-team championship table with 360 points followed by Australia (246) and England 146.

Top two teams on the championship table will play the final at Lord's in June 2021.

Pakistan's victory was on the cards after they bowled Bangladesh out for 233 in the first innings and then piled up 445 in reply, with Babar Azam smashing 143 and Shan Masood 100.

This becomes Bangladesh's sixth defeat in 14 months, including their fifth by an innings. They have yet to score a championship point in three Tests. The second Test starts in Karachi -- after a two months break -- from April 5-9. Bangladesh had only agreed to tour Pakistan in three phases due to security concerns over a long stay, first playing a three-match Twenty20 series last month.

## Blood donation camp at NHPC Project Hospital



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 10 FEB:**

NHPC Teesta-V Power Station organized a blood donation camp at the Project Hospital in Balutar today with technical support of the Blood Bank, District Hospital, Singtam in collaboration with the State Blood Transfusion Council, Gangtok.

Around 30 volunteers donated blood at the

camp today, a press release informs.

Speaking on the occasion, Head of the Power Station and CEO, Teesta-VI HE Project, Sahadev Khatua, explained that the objective of the blood donation camp was to bridge the gap between blood required for transfusion and supply at the blood bank and increase awareness regarding blood donation.

## Need for financial sector reforms: Oppn in Lok Sabha

**NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (PTI):**

The Opposition in Lok Sabha on Monday expressed concern over the "decline" in investment in the country and said the expected GDP growth rate and tax collection figures appear unrealistic.

Participating in the discussion on the Union Budget 2020-21, BJD member B Mahtab said that investment in India has been the main driver of growth, but it has been declining since 1991.

"We are measuring GDP growth... more the investment, the growth would be faster and quicker," he said.

In this Budget, he said, adequate corrective measures are necessary.

The banks were not in a position to lend for infrastructure, Mahtab said, adding that government should not lose sight of wider reforms in the public sector. "There is a need to bring competition within the banking sector," he said.

NCP's Supriya Sule termed the budget as "long and tiresome" and attacked the government saying "they are living in a fairy-tale world".

The Budget, she said, exposed the failure "of this government when it comes to fiscal health".

She said while the government is talking about achieving USD five trillion economy, "we are not even barely crossing five per cent (growth)".

She said that the government was talking about bullet train but the fact was not even a single acre of land was acquired for the same.

"They are in fairy-tale world... they live in make-believe world," Sule said.

She was also of the view that there was a need for revival of economy and promotion of

private sector investment. Expressing apprehension over the Budget numbers, Preneet Kaur (Cong) said presumption of 10 per cent nominal GDP growth and 12 per cent rise in tax collection seem "optimist and unrealistic given the low economic growth and falling exports".

Agriculture sector seems to be an area of concern, she said, adding, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana needs to be reviewed.

For the benefit of farmers, he said, the premium needs to be shared by both the Centre and the state.

Observing that Indian growth story is at crossroads, Kaur said that cautious pragmatism has crept in and the country has fallen in middle income trap.

However, BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi said there is a balance between intent and content, and vision and provision in the Budget.

"We have moved from policy paralysis to policy action under the Narendra Modi government," she said. The focus is on growth and the Budget will strengthen the foundation of Indian economy in the new decade, she said.

The Budget promotes six major sectors against the backdrop of current economic scenario, she said, adding it will help facilitate investment, spur consumption while giving a push to infrastructure and fillip to agriculture sector.

Observing that this is an age of technology, Sarangi said the Budget has recognised this and made several announcements in this regard. The technology will help ease living condition of people, she added.

# Meeting on Kisan Credit Card held in East

**GANGTOK, 10 FEB (IPR):**

A meeting under the chairmanship of Additional District Collector (East ), Jamyang C. Namgyal with stakeholders of the State on sensitization of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loan scheme was held here at the office of Additional District Collector, East, today.

The meeting had the presence of Additional Director, Agriculture Department, Bina Rai, Lead District Manager, State Bank of Sikkim, Gopal Lama, General Manager, NABARD, R. Tshering and Deputy General Manager, NABARD, G. Ramesh Kumar.



KCC is a special initiative of the Government to facilitate universal access to concessional institutional credit for all PM-KISAN beneficiaries. The scheme includes SMS service to all PM-KISAN beneficiaries

from PM-KISAN portal to visit the concerned bank branch for getting the KCC benefit.

It is informed in the meeting that under the scheme, the eligible farmers can now take benefits of PM-KISAN

under KCC once they fill up a one page simplified form, submit land record documents and the details of crop sown in the land.

The benefit has now extended to eligible Animal Husbandry and

Fisheries farmers and all charges including the processing, documentation, inspection and ledger folio charges as well as other service charges for KCC loans upto Rs. 3 lakh have been waived.

It was also reported that 2,627 beneficiaries in East Sikkim will be covered under the KCC Scheme.

ADC directed Bank branches to prepare list of PM-KISAN beneficiaries who do not have KCC and share the same with Government functionaries of Line Departments so that they can be approached for availing the KCC benefit.

## State Advisory Committee for PC&PNDT Act meets

**GANGTOK, 10 FEB [IPR]:**

A meeting of the State Advisory Committee under the PreConception and Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act [PC&PNDT] was held at the Conference Hall of the Health Department today chaired by Principal Secretary K Sreenivasulu.

The meeting was held to discuss renewal of USG Clinic Sukhim Diagnostic Centre, increase the number of USG clinics in the State, including the state appropriate authority to be designated for advisory board and to ensure cesarean section audit and IUI registration under ART act.

The Chairperson stressed the need to strengthen the PNDT Cell

of the State Government and called for strict vigilance and combined efforts from the members of the Advisory Committee.

The Pre-Conception and Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act has been enacted by the Parliament of India to stop female feticide and tackle the alarmingly declining sex ratio in the country.

The meeting was also attended by Dr K Jigme Tobgay (PDHTS), Dr Paras M Karki (Consultant), Dr Jigme Tenzing (Pediatrician, STNM Hospital), Dr Niti Lama (DIO, Law dept), Dr Neera Lepcha (LO, Health dept) and other officials and members of the Advisory Committee.

## Pottery lessons for Namcheybong women



**GANGTOK, 10 FEB:** A five-day skill development workshop on pottery for women concluded here at Namcheybong, East Sikkim, today. Zilla Panchayat, Namcheybong,

Aho Yangtam Territorial Constituency, Suren Limboo, was present as chief guest for the valedictory function. 33 ladies from the area received training at the workshop.



### What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV	Precautions to Prevent nCoV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fever</li> <li>● Difficulty in breathing</li> <li>● Dry Cough</li> <li>● Severe acute respiratory syndrome</li> <li>● Pneumonia - like symptoms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wash your hands often with soap.</li> <li>● Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer</li> <li>● Observe good personal hygiene.</li> <li>● Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.</li> <li>● Avoid contact with people with possible symptoms.</li> <li>● Avoid contact with animals and consumption of undercooked meats.</li> <li>● Avoid travel to nCoV affected places.</li> <li>● Wear a mask if you have respiratory syndrome and cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing.</li> </ul>
Treatment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Treatment is symptomatic and supportive, based on the patient's clinical condition.</li> <li>● No vaccinations available as of now.</li> <li>● Visit Doctor in case symptoms detected</li> </ul>	



If you seek help, you may call :  
-Toll free no. 104  
District surveillance Officer  
EAST : 7029372100  
WEST : 9593297809  
NORTH : 9641957468  
SOUTH : 7407691463  
New STNM  
AMS : 9434711402

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE  
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**

## NOTICE

The written examination for the 45 [Forty Five] contractual posts of Mid Level Health Providers [4th Batch] for Health and Wellness Centre under National Health Mission [NHM] has been re-scheduled to be held on

Date: 12th February 2020

Time: 9.00 am

Venue: 6th Level, Examination Hall, New College, Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences

Candidate are requested to be present before 9.00am along with one ID proof.

Dr PM Pradhan [MD]  
PDHSI-cum-Mission Director  
Health and Family Welfare Department



**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRIES  
UDYOG BHAWAN, TADONG, 737102  
GANGTO, SIKKIM**

## NOTICE

THE Department of Commerce and Industries invites Request for Proposals (RFPs) from reputed firms for seating up, operating and management of Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facility (HWSTDF)-cum-Biomedical Waste Treatment Facility (BWTF).

The interested firms may download Request for Proposal (RFP) document from the official website of C&I Department [www.industries.sikkim.gov.in](http://www.industries.sikkim.gov.in) where it will be displayed from 08.02.2020 and submit their Expression of Interest (EoI) as per details in the website.

Sd/-  
Director  
Commerce & Industries Department  
Govt. of Sikkim.

R.O. No. 351/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20 Date: 31.1.20

## Shape the Monolith into an Asset

*Don't blame the bureaucracy, inspire it*

The new government, one hears, is putting together a codified transfer policy, has awarded government servants Saturdays off [a decision which is being partially rolled back now], insists that it wants officers to work without fear or favour in the best interest of the people. The expressed intent is clear - the government is calling upon public servants to adapt faster to the demands and requirements of the changing times. This is not a new call and it has often been stressed that government officers should be on the job 24x7. That such expectations continue to be conveyed is a clear indication that the message has not gone through effectively enough. Now, with elections over, the setting is right for administrative and executive shortfalls at the root of many current complications and confrontations to be corrected.

Of course, no one expects officials to be in office throughout the day all through the week because what is being underlined is the fact that officers should not shirk responsibility or dodge behind excuses. This is required because there is simply too much procrastination in how government offices function, too much nonchalance in how work is put off and staggering insensitivity with which people's affairs are handled. What this leads to is a scenario where officials from departments get so injured by the routineness of things that they do not recognize obvious priorities and drag their feet even on urgently required interventions.

This attitude continues to remain entrenched. A work culture under which even on-the-spot directions [which would convey urgency] from as high as the Chief Minister's office can be deferred, needs a vigorous shake up, and it is not as if attempts have not been made to work the bureaucratic monolith into better shape. There was the five-day week with longer office hours on working days idea which has now been abandoned as much because there was no guarantee that the extra hours saw any work get done as the care and cure option getting extended to actually encourage truancy. Then there are the smart-card and biometric attendance gadgets which were installed at offices. These obviously did not deliver because frequent appeals are still made for better attendance in government offices.

What is obvious is that the public as well as the public representatives are not very satisfied with the performance of the public servants. Improper as it may be to paint all officers and government employees with the same brush, the end-result, the performance of the departments on the whole makes it difficult not to be prejudiced.

But all of this should not lead to fatalistic acceptance. It is not as if government employees don't want to work at all. Given the multiplicity of agencies and offices, in many cases lethargy has set in for want of clear job descriptions, undefined roles and too much interference. A visit to any government office will bear out the fact that the work-culture is slack in Sikkim not because of the personnel, but because there are too many with too little work. There are few who abandon work midway and leave office, but there are many who have nothing constructive to do in all the hours they spend in their chambers. Here again, the tried and tested formula for similar problems elsewhere is VRS. It fails in Sikkim because even before the employees takes the option of VRS there are others in line to take up their jobs. The weight never really gets shed, especially not now when every agency of the government is on the verge of being over-staffed, because there are too many considerations and connections which cannot be ignored in a small state like Sikkim where most things work at a personal level.

So what does one do?

The oversized administration has been viewed for far too long as a burden and since no solution has really worked out, perhaps a change in attitude is required. What if, the same monolith is accepted as an asset and then segregated into compact units with clearly identified roles and responsibilities and then deployed on the field to deliver the "development" that is the final aim of every government. The BDO experiment was one such effort and has delivered rather well. To repeat a point here, there are very few government employees who don't want to work, they grow lethargic because they are not given anything interesting and constructive to do. If more clarity is offered and more responsibility given, things could start looking up. The approach should be to challenge the public servants with complex tasks, back it with greater autonomy in decision-making and then establishing a clear relationship between effort and reward. This, when complemented by the frequent trainings that have now become mandatory should keep refreshing the officials on their exact roles and contributions to Sikkim's future.

Few will fail to measure up if this is done. In the end, even this solution might not work out, but at least Sikkim would have tried and exhausted all options...



## False information fuels fear during disease outbreaks: there is an antidote

MARINA JOUBERT  
*theconversation.com*

False allegations and rumours about the coronavirus outbreak have been running riot on social media and in some mainstream media. Misinformation is rampant and conspiracy theories have added to the confusion. Examples include reports that the virus can kill a person in seconds, that Ghana has developed a successful vaccine and that HIV drugs have been used as a cure. There has even been a photo showing dozens of coronavirus victims lying dead in the streets of Wuhan in China.

All of these claims have been shown to be false.

The spread of rumours and plain lies has happened in the wake of other disease outbreaks. For example, when Ebola broke out in West Africa in 2014, rumours about the source of the disease included that the virus was cultivated and released to kill Africans. During the 2018 outbreak of the bat-borne Nipah Virus in India, it was alleged that news of the disease was a corporate conspiracy to boost sales of mosquito repellent.

This sensationalist and alarming content is spread via online channels, creating what have become known as "digital pandemics" or "(mis)infectious". Their effect is to amplify public anxiety. This can derail official efforts to provide credible information to the public. Misinformation also has devastating consequences for affected communities, such as the current increase in anti-Chinese sentiments.

Several factors fuel the spread of misinformation during outbreaks of infectious diseases. These include fear and the speed of social media. As previous incidents like this have shown, it's possible to counter the foolishness. But this requires scientists and public health officials to step up to the plate and to proactively use their platforms to convey accurate information.

### FUELLING FEAR

Misinformation spreads fast when people are afraid. A contagious and potentially fatal disease is frightening. This provides the ideal emotionally charged context for rumours to thrive.

People rely on mental shortcuts (or heuristics) when facing complex information, rather than consider everything carefully and critically. This allows them to make instant decisions that are, unfortunately, often wrong.

Scientists need time to study a new disease

and test potential treatments, but people may be desperate and impatient. As a result, it's common for old home remedies and unproven treatments to be revived. One example is the claim that oregano oil can cure the coronavirus. I have personally received a detailed WhatsApp message about how "Biblical oils" such as frankincense can cure any stage of a coronavirus infection.

Ingrained negativity bias means that people love to share bad news. A 2018 study confirms that false news travels farther, faster and more widely than the truth. Scientists ascribe this to the novelty and emotional reactions these messages invoke. This also explains why people are inclined to speculate and spread exaggerated rumours about the perceived dangers of an infectious disease.

### NEW MEDIA

Editors and journalists no longer control the flow of news and opinion. Anyone can generate and distribute text, images, sound clips and video on social media. It's easy, fast and virtually free to distribute information. Messages can be amplified, shared and reacted to at levels previously unimaginable.

Social media channels provide near-perfect vectors for misinformation to proliferate. Some social media tech giants claim that they are doing what they can to stop the spread of half-truths and outright falsehoods about the coronavirus. Facebook, for example, has promised to help limit the spread of false information by taking down content containing false claims and conspiracy theories that have been flagged by leading global health organisations and local health authorities.

But sources of misinformation are often unclear and it may seem daunting (or even impossible) to control their spread.

### TAKING CONTROL OF THE NARRATIVE

Research has shown that, during a health crisis, affected communities are eagerly looking for information and able to assimilate positive health messages rapidly.

For their part, most scientists are keen to combat misinformation. They even feel morally obliged to help stem the flow of misinformation, particularly when inaccurate health messages could cause harm to desperate and vulnerable people.

Rather than lamenting the dangers of social media, scientists and public health officials should learn how to use social media more effectively for

frequent and reliable updates. This could include working with so-called social media influencers including popular sports stars and celebrities to convey accessible and actionable health messages.

The mass media can also play a key role. Major media organisations are rising to the current coronavirus challenge by providing accurate information. Take this visual guide from the BBC and the news updates from the IOL media group in South Africa.

Science media centres, such as the ones in the UK and Australia, have lists of topic experts on hand to ensure journalists can reach them easily. These platforms are providing expert responses to the coronavirus and extensive multimedia resources that help journalists report the story more accurately.

Institutional media offices, science academies and learned societies could play a significant role in mobilising experts to respond visibly and pro-actively during disease outbreaks. For example, many universities such as Harvard and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine are providing updates.

International, national and regional public health organisations share the responsibility to provide accurate and timely information to the media and the public. For example, the World Health Organisation (WHO) provides basic advice to the public and has a team of risk communication experts and social media teams. The WHO also issues daily situation reports and hosts press briefings.

And people are being called on to judge online sources more critically so that they will be able to distinguish between credible and dubious content. For example, the International Federation of Library Associations created an infographic with eight simple steps on how to spot fake news.

There are a number of a number of additional challenges that pertain to Africa. A report on South Africa identified a few of these. They include getting accurate information to people who aren't literate or don't have internet access; constructive involvement of traditional healers; making health messages available in indigenous languages and empowering public health officials to communicate accurately, clearly and speedily. All are relevant to other countries on the continent.

*[the writer is Science Communication Researcher, Stellenbosch University]*

## Reduce stress at work and prevent burnout – a psychologist explains how

SARAH TOTTLE  
*theconversation.com*

How did those new year's resolutions work out for you? Old habits will have already returned for many – you're not alone if you've already stopped using that new gym membership. Similarly, you're in good company if 2020 is already stressing you out.

Stress, and more chronic exhaustion such as burnout, is commonplace within the modern workplace. People are sinking under the pressure of an attendance culture that glorifies being present at work at the expense of their health. But why exactly does this happen and what can you do to prevent it?

Presenteeist cultures, which see employees working longer hours, have been linked to higher rates of burnout. This is the opposite of absenteeism. People attend work when sick, or even overwork, and it is a habit that is more common than we think. Employees feel they're unable to challenge this culture because they see everyone else doing the same thing.

People that go to work when ill or work longer hours than expected often work at less than their full capacity. Studies show this results in a decline in productivity.

One study in the Netherlands

looking at a variety of jobs found that presenteeism may appear to be profitable for companies at first because of the reduced absence of employees. But in the long term, presenteeism resulted in higher levels of sickness and absenteeism later on.

Other studies have found that presenteeism can cause a decline in productivity in the individual employee by at least one third and is more costly to the employer than its counterpart, absenteeism. It is also what makes employees sick.

The World Health Organisation officially classifies burnout as an "occupational phenomenon". It is defined as "a syndrome conceptualised as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed". And it is characterised by feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion, negative and cynical feelings towards your job, and a decline in performance.

### STARTING AT THE TOP

Tackling burnout is the responsibility of both organisations and their employees. If improving your health is a priority for you, your work health plays a crucial part in this – both physically and mentally.

Leaders need to lead by example. There is a trickle-down effect in leadership where subordinates copy those above them. They don't want

to appear weak and feel they need to push themselves more. If leaders start taking lunch breaks, going for a walk in the middle of the day, and leaving at a reasonable hour, that sets a good example to their team.

If you're a manager and you see more and more presenteeist behaviour, shame culture could be affecting your organisation. Consider tackling this head on. Provide fruit, encourage walks outside and tell your staff to leave on time. These are just some of the small changes you can make to help create a healthier, happier workplace. If you can, get workplace wellness consultants to run workshops for you and your team.

### HEALTH STARTS AT HOME

If you're an employee, you shouldn't expect your boss to solely be responsible for your workplace wellbeing. You also need to make changes yourself. There's no shame in returning to those new year's resolutions you set back in January.

Here are some tips to relieve your stress and lower your chances of burnout:

Pick a priority. Write down exactly what you want to happen this year. Are you looking for a career change or a promotion? Do you want to prioritise your life outside of work? Once you've defined what you want,

you can start making small changes to work towards this.

Set some goals. Once you have established exactly what you would like to achieve, set some monthly objectives. Work at a pace that suits you. Achieving smaller goals can result in a dopamine boost that will increase your sense of accomplishment and motivation.

Get better sleep. Prioritising rest and improving your sleep hygiene will boost your immune system. Getting disciplined about logging off electronic devices one to two hours ahead of going to sleep at night will also improve the quality of your sleep.

Get more exercise. If you're in a sedentary job, get out more. Taking a lunch break can help get the mental clarity needed to be productive and accomplish more challenging tasks. You will also avoid the afternoon slump.

Help others around you. Research shows that behaviour like supporting others and giving positive feedback to colleagues can help reduce your own stress levels and the effect that your stress has on your mental health.

Reducing stress at work and mitigating the effect it has on you is down to a mix of physical and mental pursuits. It's everyone's responsibility.

*[the writer is Business psychologist, Lancaster University]*

# Assam plans survey to identify indigenous Muslim population

**GUWAHATI, FEB 10 (PTI):** Assam is likely to conduct an exercise to identify the state's indigenous Muslim population and segregate them from illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, even as doubts over the accuracy of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) are yet to be addressed.

As per the plans, the survey will be conducted to identify people of four communities -- Goria, Moria, Desi and Jolah of the tea tribes, considered as indigenous.

Assam Welfare of Minorities Minister Ranjit Dutta has convened a meeting on Tuesday with various organisations of the four communities and other stakeholders to finalise the plan.

"Assam has about 1.3 crore Muslims population, of which around 90 lakh are of Bangladeshi origin. The remaining 40 lakh are from different tribes and they need to be identified," Assam Minority Development Board Chairman Muminul Aowal told PTI.

The indigenous Muslims are deprived of benefits of the government welfare schemes in absence of proper identification, he claimed.



cation, he claimed.

Aowal, who is also the convenor of Janagosthiya Samanway Parishad Asom (JSPA), said the entire rationale behind such an exercise is to give protection to the indigenous people from demographic changes in the state.

"The NRC included lakhs of Bangladeshi-origin people.

So, we cannot rely on that. If we do not act now, one day all the indigenous tribes will be wiped out from Assam," he added. "Once the indigenous

tribes are officially recognised, it will be better and easier to work for the development of these people. I, as a representative of these tribes, had in 2015 met the then Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh," Aowal said.

The indigenous groups had urged Singh for such a survey, he said.

When asked how the exercise will be carried out, Aowal said, "We will request the state government to get an approval from the RGI (Registrar General of India). Without the RGI's approval,

the findings may not be legally tenable." The organisations representing the Muslim tribes want the paper works to be completed by March so that the actual fieldwork of enumerating people can begin early next fiscal, he said.

"The entire initiative is of the Minority Department of the state government, but it does not have the required manpower to carry out such a state-wide exercise. That is why it can be conducted through the Revenue Department, which is

present at the village-level," Aowal explained.

The NRC, which was published last year under the supervision of the Supreme Court with over 19 lakh exclusions, is being criticised by all sections for the "minimal number" of people left out.

It is being alleged that genuine Indians, mostly Hindus, were left out and many illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, mostly Muslims, were included. The apex court is still hearing a number of petitions on the issue.

## KMSS leader Akhil Gogoi again remanded to judicial custody

**GUWAHATI, FEB 10 (PTI):** A special NIA court on Monday remanded Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti chief advisor Akhil Gogoi, arrested under the stringent UAPA during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, was remanded again to judicial custody till February 25.

Gogoi, also an RTI activist, has been in judicial custody since December 26. He had mobilised public protests against the CAA across several districts in Upper Assam before his arrest on December 12.

"The court remand-

ed him to judicial custody again. He would be produced before the court on February 25," Gogoi's counsel Santanu Borthakur told PTI.

While being taken inside the court, the KMSS chief advisor shouted: "The agitation (against the CAA) is not for the sake of agitation. We need a solution."

After arresting Gogoi from Jorhat, police had handed him over to the National Investigation Agency which booked him under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

## PK Banerjee alert and responding well: Hospital



**KOLKATA, FEB 10 (PTI):** Legendary Indian footballer PK Banerjee, who was admitted to a city hospital due to a chest infection, is responding well to the treatment, said a statement from the medical facility.

The 83-year-old was admitted to the Medica Super Specialty Hospital for a second time on Saturday. "Banerjee is alert and responding well to the ongoing treatment," a statement from the hospital read.

The 1962 Asian

Games gold-medallist is being treated by a panel of specialists, which includes pulmonologist Dr Nandini Biswas, internal medicine and intensivist Dr Tanmoy Banerjee. He is also being supervised by the Department of Neurosciences under Dr L N Tripathy and Dr Sunandan Basu.

Banerjee played 84 matches for India, scoring 65 goals.

An Arjuna and Padma Shree awardee, Banerjee was also honoured with the FIFA Order of Merit in 2004.

## Aizawl seek resurgence against TRAU



**AIZAWL, FEB 10 (PTI):** Eyeing a comeback, Aizawl FC will be taking on Tiddim Road Athletic Union (TRAU) FC in a Hero I-League match here on Tuesday.

It has been a disappointing season for Aizawl, who have notched the joint-fewest wins with only two so far.

Their latest win arrived in their previous outing against the languishing East Bengal.

If the former champions can follow up with another victory on Tuesday, resurgence could be on the horizon.

Speaking ahead of the game, Aizawl FC head

coach Stanley Rozario said, "Winning against East Bengal was a morale-booster for my players. They showed the character, attitude and fighting spirit on the field and worked hard to win the match. "It gave confidence to my players and I want us to continue with the same positive attitude and try hard to win the match and collect three full points at home."

After a seven-match unbeaten run, TRAU have been left reeling following their 0-5 loss in the Imphal derby.

A win in the reverse fixture against their city rivals last month helped

give a boost to TRAU's season and they have since taken the league by storm, going toe-to-toe against the big guns.

They will be hoping that there are no after-effects of that deflating loss but the Tiddim Road outfit, however, will be without the services of defender Soraisham Sandeep Singh, who was sent off in the derby.

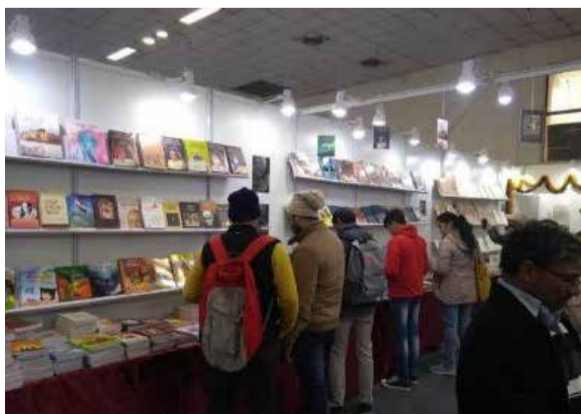
"It is heart-breaking to lose a derby but that is done and dusted now. We have to get back up on our feet and not let the defeat cloud our actions on the pitch going forward," said TRAU FC captain Princewell Emeka.

## Kolkata book fair in 2021 to be dedicated to Bangabandhu

**KOLKATA, FEB 10 (PTI):** The Kolkata book fair in 2021 will be dedicated to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, while Bangladesh will be the focus country, it was announced as this edition of the mega event concluded amid much fanfare.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is the daughter of Rahman, will inaugurate the 45th International Kolkata Book Fair to be held in the last week of January next year, said the neighbouring country's cultural affairs minister K M Khalid.

Publishers and Booksellers Guild president



Tridib Chatterjee said 2021 Kolkata book fair wants to honour the 'Father of Bangladesh' on the occasion of his birth centenary, besides commemorating the deep-rooted ties between the two nations.

This year, over 25 lakh

people visited the 12-day fair that saw the sale of books worth around Rs 23 crore from over 600 stalls till Sunday evening, Chatterjee said.

"This was a world record for any book fair by any yardstick," he claimed.



## Governor calls on PM

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 10 FEB:**

Governor Ganga Prasad called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his office at Parliament House, New Delhi, today and apprised the Prime Minister about various issues concerning the development of Sikkim, a press release from Raj Bhawan. The Governor sought the Prime

Minister's and Union Government's continuing patronage and support towards Sikkim's specific developmental needs.

Earlier in the day, the Governor paid a courtesy visit to senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader, former Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani at his residence and enquired after his health and well being.

## Hundreds march to Jantar Mantar against CAA, NRC

**NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (PTI):**

Hundreds of protesters, including students and civil society members, poured onto the streets in central Delhi on Monday protesting against the amended citizenship law and the National Register of Citizens.

The protesters, carrying placards and banners of all sizes and colours, converged at Mandi House around 11 am and started marching towards Jantar Mantar where they reached around 12.30 pm via Barakhamba Road and Tolstoy Road. A large number of police and paramilitary personnel walked along with them.

"The protesters do not have permission to take out a march, but as long as they maintain peace, we do not have a problem," a police official said. The protest call was given by the Welfare Party of India.

The protesters, however, claimed that they had the permission and would march till Jantar Mantar. Children as young as 10, senior citizens, civil society members and university students filled the streets and ran the length of central Delhi, shouting anti-CAA and anti-government slogans.

Mohammad Shareef, who came here from

Kanpur, said his son Mohammad Rais (30) was shot dead by police when while returning after offering namaz. ] "On December 20, Rais was returning home after offering namaz. He used to sell 'papad' and also worked in marriage functions. During the commotion, Rais started running when the police shot him.

"The people from the locality took him to my house and I rushed him to a hospital. Not even a single person came to my house and asked how we were. Police misbehaved with us. Rais was killed by police when he was returning home after taking his money which he earned at the marriage function," said Shareef.

The protesters carried the photographs of freedom fighters Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad and social reformer Savitribai Phule, and demanded that the government revoke the "black law". Another victim Aftab Alam's mother said her son did not participate in any protest.

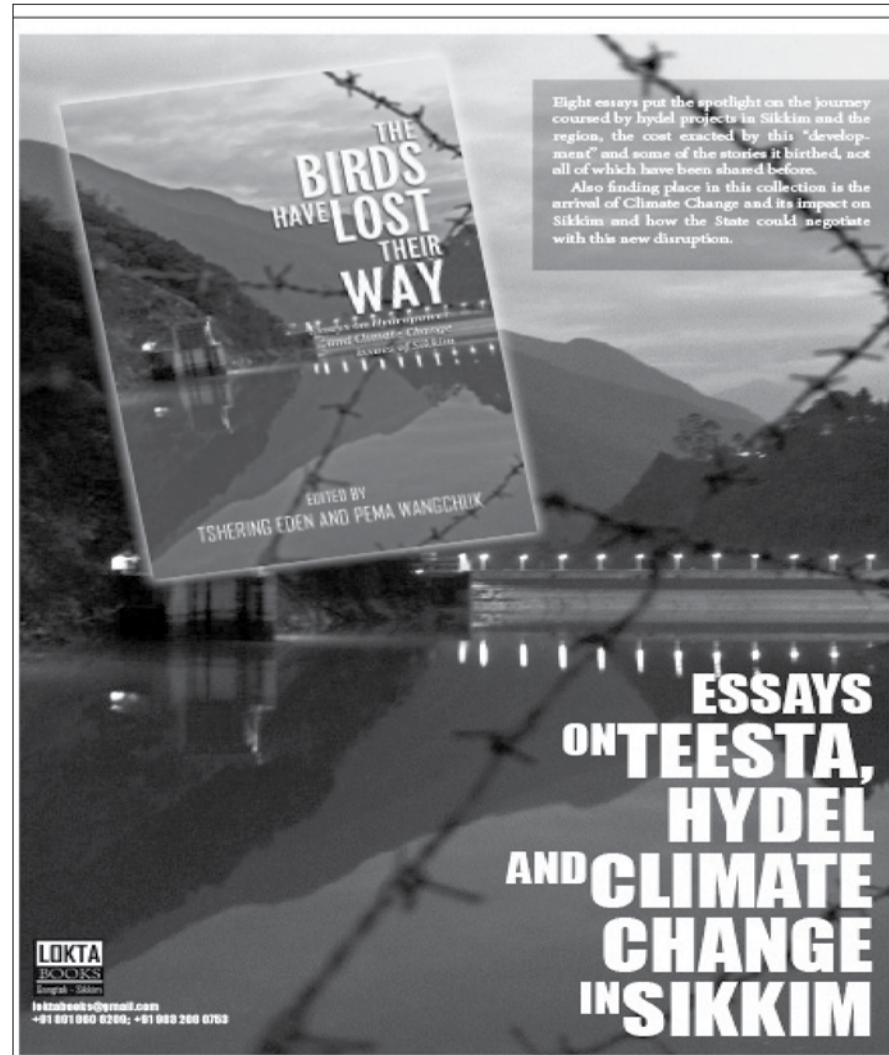
"After the death of his father, my son used to work as a mason. He was shot dead by the police when he went to offer namaz in Kanpur. The incident took place at Babu Purwa area and the bullet hit on his left side of

the chest," she said. The wife of Dr Kafeel Khan, who was in September acquitted of all negligence and corruption charges in the Gorakhpur BRD Hospital tragedy, and brother of Sharjeel Imam, arrested on sedition charges, also participated in the march.

Siraj Talib, the national secretary of the Welfare Party of India, "We are protesting against the CAA and the NRC. We have permission, I have spoken to police and we are marching towards Jantar Mantar." The protesters were raising anti-CAA, anti-government and anti-BJP slogans. They were also carrying placards with messages, which read 'reject CAA and NRC' and 'we Indians standing against NRC and reject Citizenship Amendment Act'.

Riyasat Malik (20), who works in a private organisation, said that he along with around 80 women, came here from Sunder Nagri to support the anti-CAA protest.

"Just like Shaheen Bagh, scores of women in Sunder Nagri are also sitting in protest against this newly amended law. They got to know about this march yesterday and came here in its support. This would not stop here and the government will need to revoke this law," Malik said.



# Canada’s Taylor hangs on for Pebble Beach Pro-Am triumph

**LOS ANGELES, FEB 10 (AFP):** Nick Taylor fired a gritty two-under par 70 to complete a wire-to-wire victory in the Pebble Beach Pro-Am as Phil Mickelson faded in his bid for a record sixth title in the US PGA Tour event.

Canada’s Taylor claimed his second tour title more than five years after he won the Sander-son Farms Championship as a rookie in November of 2014.

Leading Mickelson by one to start the day, he built his lead to five strokes at the turn only to see it dwindle to two through 14 as players battled in rapidly falling temperatures and gusting winds.

A chip-in birdie at the par-four 15th pushed Taylor’s lead back to three and he added another birdie at the par-three 17th to finish with a 19-under par total of 268.

American Kevin Streelman was second after a 68 for 272 as Mickelson -- who started the day one shot behind Taylor -- settled for a two-over par 74 and solo



third on 273. “That was amazing,” Taylor said. “An up and down day. I believed I could do it because I’ve done it before, but to do it in that fashion, playing with Phil, obviously gives me a lot of confidence going forward.”

Taylor and Mickelson, playing together in the last group, quickly found themselves dueling as they left the field behind early.

Taylor got going with back-to-back birdies at the fourth and fifth, then

holed out from a green-side bunker for an eagle at the sixth to stretch his lead to two even as Mickelson birdied the par-five sixth. Taylor kept it rolling with a testing 12-footer to save par at the seventh, the picturesque par-three where his tee shot came up short in the front bunker.

The 31-year-old from Winnipeg was unable to get up and down from a greenside bunker at the eighth, but still stretched his lead over Mickelson

to three as the American made a double-bogey.

Mickelson had blasted out of a greenside bunker to two feet for a birdie at the second hole and salvaged par from a bunker at the fourth before rolling in a four-foot birdie at the fifth.

He was on the green in two at the par-five sixth, but couldn’t get his 38-foot putt to drop and settled for a tap-in birdie.

A birdie at the ninth for Taylor and a bogey for Mickelson saw them head

into the back nine with Taylor leading by five.

But Mickelson birdied the 10th, and with the wind whipping and temperature dropping Taylor dropped four shots in four holes with bogeys at 11 and 12 and a double-bogey at 14.

He held his nerve, and as Mickelson faded with bogeys at 12, 14 and 16 Streelman snuck into second place with a round that featured an eagle and four back-nine birdies.

## India skipper says Bangladesh’s reaction was ‘dirty’ following U-19 triumph

**POTCHEFSTROOM, FEB 10 (PTI):** India captain Priyam Garg has called the aggressive celebration of Bangladesh players “dirty” following their maiden title triumph at the Under-19 World Cup here.

Some of the Bangla-deshi players got carried away with their celebra-tion after their historic win over India in the final here on Sunday.

While their captain Akbar Ali apologised for the “unfortunate incident”, his Indian counter-part Garg felt it is something that should not have happened.

“We were easy. We think it’s part and parcel of the game - you win some and you lose some. But their reaction was dirty. I think it shouldn’t have happened. But it’s okay,” Garg was quoted as saying by Cricinfo.

Even when the match on, Bangladesh players were overtly aggressive while fielding with their lead pacer Shoriful Islam sledging the Indian bats-men after every delivery.

In fact as Bangladesh ap-proached the winning runs, Shoriful was seen swearing multiple times on camera.

However, his skipper Ali showed maturity be-



yond his age to apologise on behalf of the players.

“What happened, it should not [have] hap-pened. I don’t know what exactly happened. I didn’t ask what was going on. But, you know, in the final, emotion can come out, and sometimes the boys were getting pumped, and emotions were coming through.

“As a youngster, it shouldn’t happen. In any position, in any manner, we have to show the re-spect to the opponent, we should have respect for the game. Cricket is known for being a gentleman’s game. So

I’ll say, I’ll be sorry for my team,” said Ali, who scored an unbeaten 43 in a high-pressure situ-ation. Over the past two years, both teams were involved in close games with India getting the better of them on two im-portant occasions -- the Asia Cup final and tri-series final last year.

“I’ll say India-Ban-gladesh rivalry bring the part, and before the World Cup final, we lost the Asia Cup final to them a couple of months ago. So I think the boys are re-ally pumped up and take a revenge. I won’t say it should have happened,

## Morgan named captain of the year by ESPNcricinfo

**NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (PTI):** Eoin Morgan was on Monday named captain of the year by the ES-PNcricinfo Awards jury for leading England to their maiden ODI World Cup triumph.

After losing to Sri Lanka and Australia in the tournament, En-gland needed to win four straight games to lift the trophy which they did, winning the title after a tied thriller against New Zealand.

The ODI batting per-formance of the year award went to Ben Stokes for his nerve-less performance in the World Cup final. He made an unbeaten 84 in the regulation 50 overs and a further seven in the Su-per Over.

Stokes’ epic rear-guard in the Headingley Ashes Test lost out nar-rowly in the Test batting category to Kusal Perera who made a landmark 153 not out against South Africa in Durban to take the title. Sri Lanka

were 52 for three chasing a steep 304 to win when Kusal came in to bat in the fourth innings. With nine wickets down and 78 runs to chase, Perera played one of his greatest knocks to see them home.

Jofra Archer, who was voted the Debutant of the Year, also starred in the World Cup, with three-wicket hauls in five of England’s first six games. He finished the tournament as their leading wicket-taker, and took that form into the Ashes series that followed, producing six-fours in two Tests and finishing with 22 wickets at an average of 20.07.

Matt Henry, whose three-wicket spell in the World Cup semi-final knocked India out of the tournament, won the award for ODI Bowling performance of the year.

Meg Lanning and El-lyse Perry of Australia won the women’s batting and bowling performanc-es of the year awards, re-spectively.

## Manchester City run the risk of rust as Real Madrid showdown looms

**JAMIE JACKSON**

**LONDON, 10 FEB [THEGUARD- IAN]:** Sunday’s postponement of Manchester City’s match against West Ham may have an undesired corollary for Pep Guardiola’s side: they now risk being undercooked for the Champions League last-16 first leg against Real Madrid at the Bernabéu on 26 February.

Factor in doubt over Ra-heem Sterling’s availability because of a hamstring injury and similar uncertainty over Aymeric Laporte’s fitness af-ter a near season-long layoff with a knee problem and the storm-induced abandonment of the Hammers’ visit was not what Guardiola required be-fore taking on Real.

By the time of that game in Madrid, City will have had only 90 minutes of football in more than three weeks to prepare: the Premier League game against Leicester City at the King Power Stadium four days before.

It is an odd situation for Guardiola because a prevail-ing mantra of his since taking over at City in the summer of 2016 has been how the volume of matches footballers play exhausts them. The current

winter break was welcome, then, as Guardiola said on Fri-day. “We have one more game [West Ham] then we have days off and we prepare for the next games, I think a break is good for everyone,” he said.

However, this was before the game with West Ham at the Etihad was called off, because of travel issues spe-cific to the Manchester area – trams, trains and roads all being affected.

Now, the relief of a fort-night break becomes a too-long three-week cessation before a crucial tie in a competition which is City’s prime focus given they are 22 points be-hind Liverpool in their title defence.

The Champions League is the trophy Guardiola has yet to claim for City, a glaring hole that leaves a question mark over a glittering managerial CV. After failing to achieve Cham-pions League glory since Bar-celona won it in 2011, with a glittering side including Li-onel Messi, the question is: has Guardiola got the smarts to triumph over the conti-nent’s heavyweights without a five-times Ballon d’Or winner in his ranks?

In contrast to City, Real are going head to head with Bar-celona in La Liga and are the nonpareil of Europe’s aristo-crats in the business of win-ning European Cups. Los Blan-cos have a record 13 – three of which were claimed in consec-utive seasons under Zinedine Zidane, who is again in charge at the Bernabéu.

Real may no longer have Cristiano Ronaldo but it is only two years since their last triumph – the 3-1 win over Liverpool – while City’s re-cord under Guardiola is under-whelming. His “best” return is guiding City to the quarter-fi-nals – twice – where English opposition in Liverpool and Tottenham proved too good, while there was also their 2016-17 elimination that re-mains the oddest under him.

Leading 5-3 after the home leg against Monaco the manager made the odd claim before the return that City would be “killed” if they did not score at the Stade Louis II. They subsequently froze, lost 3-1, and were dumped out on away goals at the last-16 stage.

What is not required, then, is to be ring-rusty be-

fore a first leg at a venue that will be a cauldron, especially as City have lost their past two matches – to Manches-ter United in the Carabao Cup and Tottenham in the league – and who in their next will not relish facing Brendan Rodgers’ Leicester, whose slick style is bound to trouble Guardiola’s creaking team.

In Sergio Agüero, who is 31, David Silva (34) and Fernandinho (34) are three mainstays who are feeling the demands of Guardiola’s constant-pressing play. The defence – as it was at Mona-co in 2017 and continues to be – is not the best advertise-ment for the manager’s abili-ties. John Stones is lacking confidence, Nicolás Otamen-di might have been sold last summer and Kyle Walker’s erratic defensive qualities have led to him losing his place on occasion.

Then, there is the Laporte conundrum. The silver lining of Guardiola having to oper-ate without him for nearly five months was supposed to be the Frenchman returning in early 2020 fit and fresh for the tilt at the Champions League. Instead, after 78 minutes of

the 1-0 win at Sheffield United on 21 January, the centre-back has not featured since.

The manager says this is due only to managing Laporte’s return with caution and noth-ing else. Yet the bottom line is that even if he comes through the full match at Leicester and can face Real, the 25-year-old will struggle even more for rhythm than teammates that evening.

Guardiola will also want Sterling’s goal threat (he is the club’s second-highest scorer this season) and pace as weap-ons to trouble Real but there is no guarantee the player will be fit and even if he is the forward is sure to lack sharpness, too.

There is an irony in Guardi-ola believing a break is needed for players and this then back-firing because of Sunday’s in-clement weather. Especially as a fixture pile-up beckons. City already have to reschedule the Premier League match with Arsenal on 1 March because of their Carabao Cup final against Aston Villa. Now, the West Ham game will have to be squeezed in too.

It all means that the man-ager’s strategic prowess is soon to have a fascinating test.

## India hope for top order blitzkrieg to avoid 3-0 whitewash

**CHETAN NARULA**

**MT. MAUNGANUI (NEW ZEALAND), FEB 10 (PTI):** India would expect its top order to fire to avoid a series whitewash when it clashes with a high-flying New Zealand in the third and final One-day International, here on Tuesday.

Despite missing inspirational skip- per Kane Williamson in the line-up due to a shoulder injury, the hosts shrugged off the T20 series debacle to claim the ODI series.

New Zealand, though, will have the experience and leadership of William-son for the final game as he has passed the fitness test.

The major difference between the two sides has been the top-order’s impact.

With Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan missing due to injuries, Virat Kohli missing out on scoring big and KL Rahul batting later in the order, In-dia’s traditional ODI strength was neu-tralised without New Zealand having to do any hard work.

Openers Prithvi Shaw and Mayank Agarwal have shown only momentary

flashes of brilliance and have not repli-cated the kind of starts the Indian bat-ting has grown accustomed to from its top-order.

Rohit’s absence has been a major factor in India’s defeat in this series. The opener averaged 57.30 in ODI cricket in the past 12 months, having a major impact on Indian fortunes in this format.

In that light, the burden of scoring runs has been placed squarely on Kohli in this series. With 66 runs in two in-nings, he did not come through for once and the rest didn’t rise to the occasion either.

All of it resulted in reversal of for-tunes on the limited-overs leg of this tour, as India had arrived here at Mt. Maunganui a week ago leading the T20I series by a 4-0 margin. They went on to drub the Black Caps 5-0, but now find themselves in the same position at the same ground.

It is also a reversal of results from the Men in Blue’s last visit here in 2019 when they won the ODI series 4-1 but lost the T20I series 2-1. India’s previ-

ous ODI series loss in New Zealand was 4-1 on the 2014 tour here.

Shreyas Iyer, with a hundred and a half-century, has mirrored Ross Tay-lor’s rich form in Hamilton and Auck-land. But Iyer lacked the finishing touch as compared to Taylor’s experience. He couldn’t see India’s chase through in Auckland like the senior Kiwi batsman did in Hamilton.

India may also look to experiment a bit before the Test series.

Rahul, Shaw, Iyer, Kedar Jadhav and Yuzvendra Chahal did not take part in the optional practice session on Mon-day. Kohli was first into the nets against both pace and spin. Manish Pandey was in the nets beside him, while Rishabh Pant had a long session once again.

Pant has not played limited-overs’ cricket since he suffered a concussion against Australia. If India goes as per routine plan, he is in danger of miss-ing out entirely from playing white-ball cricket on this tour.

In the bowling department, all pac-ers were present for training, except Mohammed Shami. New Zealand have

added leg spinner Ish Sodhi and pac-er Blair Tickner to the squad for this match. Sodhi played in the first ODI at Hamilton, bowling Kohli with a googly.

They were part of the New Zea-land A team playing an unofficial Test against India A but did not take part on the fourth day’s proceedings. Tim Southee (stomach bug), Mitchell San-ter (stomach bug) and Scott Kuggelei-jn (viral fever) are hoping to recover in time for the third ODI.

Squads:

India: Virat Kohli (capt), Prithvi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul (wk), Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mo-hammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Shar-dul Thakur, Navdeep Saini.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (capt), Tom Latham (wk), Martin Gup-till, Ross Taylor, Colin de Grandhomme, Jimmy Neesham, Scott Kuggeleijn, Tom Blundell, Henry Nicholls, Mitchell San-ter, Hamish Bennett, Tim Southee, Kyle Jamieson, Ish Sodhi and Blair Tickner.

Match starts at: 7.30am IST.

**To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at GANGTOK:**  
For circulation details Contact: (Sandeep) 9734152451  
& for Advertisement booking at 9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com

**SILIGURI:**  
Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor. Opp. Ganga Hotel. Hill Cart Road. Siliguri – 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail at mani\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in.

**KOLKATA OFFICE:**  
Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezine – 2, 2nd floor. Kolkata – 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. 9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/ irshad\_ali123@rediffmail.com

## Thai city copes with sorrowful fallout from mass shooting

**NAKHON RATCHASIMA, FEB 10 (AP):** Authorities in northern Thailand began releasing bodies to relatives Monday after security forces cornered and killed a soldier who carried out the country's worst mass shooting in an hourslong siege at a shopping mall.

The soldier killed 29 people starting with his commanding officer in a stunning tragedy that began Saturday and ended Sunday morning when security forces shot dead the heavily armed attacker in Terminal 21 Korat, an airport-themed mall in Nakhon Ratchasima.

The gunman, Sgt. Maj. Jakrapanth Thomma, 31, was infuriated at a land deal brokered by his commander's mother-in-law, as far as authorities have been able to determine. She was another of his victims.

The death toll surpassed Thailand's last major attack on civilians, a 2015 bombing at a shrine in Bangkok killing 20 people that was allegedly carried out by human traffickers in retaliation for a crackdown on their network.

Messages of sympathy for the latest tragedy were sent by several countries.

The U.S. Embassy said it stands with the people of Thailand, saddened by tragic events in Nakhon Ratchasima. More than 1,000 people mourned the victims Sunday night in a vigil led by Buddhist monks at the city's town square. They lit candles and chanted. We are here today to pray in order to send the souls of those who die to heaven, and we ask the spirits to accept those souls. So those souls can be holy, be in heaven with goodness and beauty," said artist Suwanee Natewong.

Many of the 58 wounded are still in bad condition. The Public Health Ministry sent a mental health crisis team to help relatives of the deceased cope with their losses. Survivors and victims' families at the city's hospitals recounted their ordeals.

Cpl. Korakot Ampangeun said he had been ordered to block a road so no one could go toward the gunman.

So I was signaling to oncoming traffic, when I turned around and saw him. If I had not, I would not have survived, he recalled. "I tried to run and find somewhere to hide. But I could only take two steps and then I heard the sound 'bang' My leg just went and I couldn't walk. A good Samaritan helped carry me away." High school student Nachote Chotiklang said he was in his mother's car as she passed the gunman's vehicle.

The assailant "got out of the car and fired into the window. At that, I ducked down and didn't do anything until I felt that car hit something. It hit a tree." When the teenager was asked what happened to his mother, Nachote shook his head. Another man explained that she had died. Rachanon Kanchanamethi was riding a motorbike home when the gunman fired at him. The 13-year-old middle school student was his family's only child.

# Coronavirus death toll rises to 908 in China

**KJM VARMA**

**BEIJING, FEB 10 (PTI):** The death toll in China due to novel coronavirus epidemic has gone up to 908 and the number of confirmed cases rose over 40,000, Chinese health officials said on Monday.

There were 97 deaths and 3,062 new confirmed cases of the lethal infection on Sunday, China's National Health Commission said.

Ninety-one deaths were in Hubei province, the epicentre of the epidemic, two in Anhui, and one each in Heilongjiang, Jiangxi, Hainan and Gansu, according to the commission.

A total of 908 people have died of the disease and 40,171 confirmed cases of the outbreak were reported in 31 provincial-level regions so far, it said.

Another 4,008 new suspected cases were reported on Sunday. Moreover, 296 patients became seriously ill, the commission said, adding that 6,484 patients remained in severe condition and 23,589 people were suspected of being infected with the virus.

A total of 3,281 people had been discharged from hospital after recovery.

The commission said 3.99 lakh close contacts had been traced, adding that among



them, 29,307 were discharged from medical observation on Sunday, with 1.87 lakh still under medical observation.

By the end of Sunday, 36 confirmed cases, including one death, had been reported in Hong Kong, 10 confirmed cases in Macao and 18 in Taiwan. Overseas, over 300 cases of coronavirus have been reported, including from three from Kerala.

Meanwhile, millions of people have started returning to Beijing and other cities in China after the extended holiday of China's New Year.

The holidays, which began on January 24 and were due to end on February 3, has been extended till February 9 as part of its efforts to contain the spread of the virus.

However, the employees of most of the offices have been asked to work from home.

As the biggest reverse migration began, Chinese officials said on Saturday that the cases of the deadly infection had started declining for the first time after weeks of sharp rise.

China's new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus

outside Hubei has been dropping for six consecutive days, according to the commission.

A total of 444 new confirmed cases were reported on Sunday outside Hubei, the data showed.

The numbers of new confirmed cases in these provinces during the past days were 890 on Monday, 731 on Tuesday, 707 on Wednesday, 696 on Thursday, 558 on Friday and 509 on Saturday, the commission said.

The head of the World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Saturday that the UN

health agency would send an international mission to China as it received a response from Beijing.

WHO director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the team leader would leave early next week with the rest of the experts to follow.

The UN health agency said the number of cases of the coronavirus in China was "stabilising", which is a "good news".

It, however, cautioned that it was too early to make any predictions about whether

the virus might have peaked.

"There has been a stabilisation in the number of cases reported from Hubei," Michael Ryan, head of WHO's Health Emergencies Programme said at a briefing in Geneva.

"We're in a four-day stable period where the number of reported cases hasn't advanced. That's good news and may reflect the impact of the control measures that have been put in place," Ryan was quoted as saying.

But he added that it was "very early to make any predictions".

## Israel attacks Hamas 'terror targets' after projectile: army

**JERUSALEM, FEB 10**

**(AFP):** Israeli forces attacked Hamas positions from the air early Monday, the army said, after militants in the Palestinian enclave fired a projectile at the Jewish state. The "aircraft and fighter jets targeted a number of Hamas terror targets in the southern Gaza Strip," a statement from the Israeli army said, noting a Hamas "training compound and military infrastructures" were included in the attack. There were no reports from Gaza of casualties or damage.

On Sunday night, a

projectile was launched from Gaza at southern Israel, triggering air raid sirens and sending thousands to bomb shelters.

A spokeswoman for the regional council in Shaar Hanegev, just northeast of Gaza, said the projectile apparently hit an open field.

Palestinian attacks have increased since January 28 when US President Donald Trump released his vision for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict -- a plan firmly rejected by the Palestinian leadership in both the West Bank and Gaza. It would grant Is-

rael a number of its long-held goals, including full control of disputed Jerusalem and a green light to annex all settlements and other parts of the West Bank.

In exchange the Palestinians would be offered a state in the remaining parts of the West Bank and Gaza.

Palestinians in Gaza, an enclave ruled by the Islamist movement Hamas, have launched rockets, mortar shells and balloons rigged with explosives at southern Israel on a near-daily basis since the plan was unveiled.

## Philippines moves to strip biggest media group of its franchise



**MANILA, 10 FEB [AFP]:**

Government lawyers in the Philippines have moved to strip the nation's biggest media group of its franchise in what campaigners say is another attack on press freedom under the presidency of Rodrigo Duterte. Duterte has repeatedly pledged to stop the broadcast operations of ABS-CBN and expressed anger over its reporting during the 2016 presidential election campaign.

A petition filed with the nation's top court alleges that ABS-CBN violated the restriction imposed by the constitution on foreign ownership of mass media by allowing overseas investors to join the company.

"We want to put an end to what we discovered to be highly abusive practices by ABS-CBN," the solicitor general, Jose Calida said in a statement. "A franchise is a

special privilege granted by the state, and should be restricted only to entities which faithfully adhere to our constitution and laws." The network's franchise expires on 30 March. Early in his term Duterte had accused it of failing to air his campaign advertisements and not returning the payments. The president has repeatedly vowed in public speeches to block any new licence, and a proposed law that would give ABS-CBN a 25-year operating permit has gathered dust in Congress since mid-2016.

Duterte taunted the network in a speech in December, telling its owners to sell it. "ABS-CBN, your contract is about to expire. If I were you, you're better off selling it," he said. "I will make sure that you will remember this episode of our times forever."

The government has

similarly used the same accusation about foreign ownership against the news website Rappler, which in 2018 had its licence revoked in a decision that is under appeal. The website, along with its editor, Maria Ressa, faced a string of legal charges related to its critical reporting.

"It's a clear indication that this government will do everything it can to shut ABS-CBN down," Nonoy Espina, chairman of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, told AFP.

Espina said that should the government succeed with the petition, it would open doors for similar cases against the media in the future. "If they shut ABS-CBN down, then that's one big voice lost and it will make it easier for them to start shutting down the other voices that they do not agree with."

## US Democrats trade barbs as New Hampshire vote nears

**MANCHESTER, FEB 10**

**(AFP):** Bernie Sanders and Pete Buttigieg locked horns in their fight for the US Democratic presidential nomination Sunday as they scrambled for votes with just two days to go before New Hampshire's closely-watched primary. The 78-year-old Vermont senator and the 38-year-old former mayor of South Bend, Indiana came top of the first contest in Iowa -- marred by messy confusion about the result -- giving each momentum as Democrats seek a candidate to take on Donald Trump in November.

Sanders, a leftist who won the New Hampshire primary by a landslide in 2016, led in four polls released Sunday, each of which had the moderate Buttigieg in second followed by Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren and then former vice president Joe Biden.

"I think we have an excellent chance to win," Sanders told CNN as he started a final push on the ground in the small northeastern state.

With the primary season underway in earnest, earlier collegiality among Democrats has fallen away. "I am running against a candidate, Pete Buttigieg, among others, who has raised contributions from more than 40 billionaires," Sanders told CNN.

"Our support is coming from the working class of this country." His campaign, based heavily on small donors, says it raised 25 million last month. Buttigieg, appearing separately on CNN, turned aside the billionaire charge, quipping, "Well, Bernie's pretty rich, and I would happily accept a contribution from him." Turning serious, he said he was "building the movement that is going to defeat Donald Trump," boosted by donations from some two million people.

## Soldiers and police enter El Salvador's parliament



**SAN SALVADOR, FEB 10**

**(AFP):** Soldiers entered El Salvador's parliament Sunday as the president demanded lawmakers approve a USD 109 million loan to equip the military and police to fight against violent gangs.

Nayib Bukele called an extraordinary weekend session of parliament to ask it approve a loan that has pitted the executive against lawmakers in a country with one of the world's highest murder rates.

Before his entry, armed police and soldiers with rifles and wearing body armor entered the chamber and stood guard -- a move not seen since the end of the country's civil war in

1992. "If these good-for-nothings (lawmakers) do not approve the Territorial Control Plan this week we will call them to hold a session again next Sunday," Bukele said in a speech to supporters outside the parliament.

Bukele, who took office last June, has pledged to tackle gang violence and intends using the loan to better equip the military and police, but lawmakers refused to sit for an extra session over the weekend to debate the issue.

Bukele also called on supporters to gather outside parliament and help pressure the politicians.

"When officials break the constitutional order, the Salvadoran people have the right to insur-

rection to remove those officials," Bukele said.

The presence of troops prompted international cries of concern.

Amnesty International said in a statement posted on Twitter that the military presence "could mark the beginning of a dangerous route for institutions and for human rights in the country." The European Union, meanwhile, expressed "great concern" over the "confrontation" between Salvadoran institutions.

El Salvador is one of the world's most dangerous nations -- excluding those enduring an armed conflict -- with an average of 35.6 homicides per 100,000 people last year.

**VIDEO NEWS SECTION**

Sikkim SCAN | Capital TIMES | Neighbourhood WATCH | Sports & Specials | ElseWhere | ETCETERA

**To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at**

**GANGTOK:**  
For circulation details Contact: +91-9748097695, +91-944702692  
4 for Advertisement booking at +91-9323427503 or at office no 03592  
208695 Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com

**KOLKATA OFFICE:**  
Irrshad Ali/ Inteqayaz, Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Marine - 2, 2nd floor, Kolkata - 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-9831083997. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/irshad\_ali022@rediffmail.com

**Phone**  
03592-208698  
+91-9832556698  
+91-9832080753

**www.summittimes.com**  
news@summittimes.com  
summittimes14@gmail.com  
advertise@summittimes.com

**Address:**  
Santa Bhawan Complex, Church Road  
Near Diesel Power House (DPH)  
Gangtok, East Sikkim, 737101



**BRIGHT & WARM:** Singer and designer Rihanna wears an orange turtleneck sweater dress and gold boots to a FENTY launch in New York City.

## Esha Deol's debut book to be out in March

**NEW DELHI, FEB 10 (PTI):** After a long hiatus from the limelight of cinema, Esha Deol Takhtani has now taken up the role of an author with her debut book on parenting.

"Amma Mia", a hands-on guide to take control of the child's diet and "making them love food", will be out in March this year, Penguin Random House India announced on Monday.

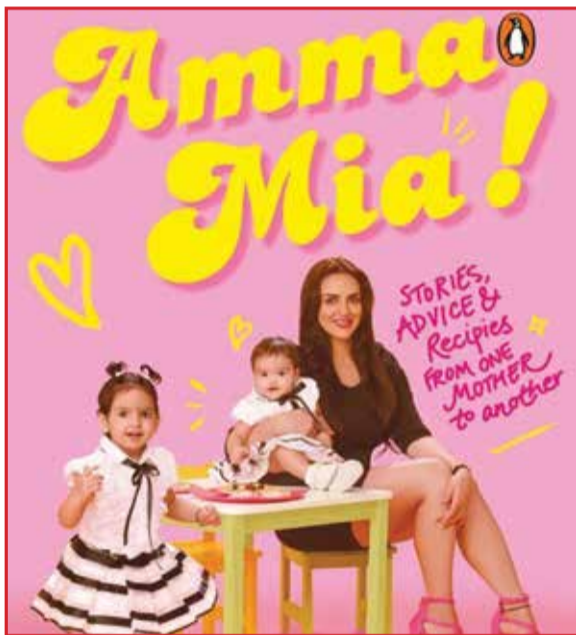
Through her first book, Deol, a mother of two daughters, documents her "adventures" in motherhood hoping to help other mothers too.

"This is my first foray into writing, with a subject that is very close to my heart-parenting. They say becoming a mother is one of the most beautiful experiences a woman goes through, and with the grace of God, I'm glad to have experienced it twice over. "Raising my two daughters - Radhya and Miraya - is nothing short of an adventure and through the book I want to share with new mothers the exciting and overwhelming joyride I've been on since becoming a first-time mom and all the tears, laughter and drama that comes along with it," the 38-year-old actor-turned-author said.

With a hope for the book to act as "a best friend and guide to all new mommies", the book is packed with advice, tips, stories, and easy and delicious recipes for toddlers.

"Esha takes you effortlessly through the early years of motherhood based on her experiences as a mother of two daughters. The

book is packed with fun tips and tricks and recipes for fresh home-cooked meals that are uncomplicated and easy-to-follow. "I'm delighted that Esha will publish this book with



us and I'm certain it will come in handy for many expecting and new parents. Give this as a special gift to a friend or enjoy using it in your own kitchen," Gurveen Chadha, senior commissioning editor, Penguin Random House India said.

Published under Ebury Press imprint, the book is now available for pre-order on e-commerce websites.

# South Koreans explode with joy over 'Parasite' Oscar wins

**Seoul (South Korea), Feb 10 (AP):** South Koreans reacted with rare collective joy Monday after director Bong Joon Ho's Parasite won the Oscar for best picture and three other awards, good news that came as their country struggles to guard against a new virus and counter North Korea's nuclear threat.

The movie's wins made history in both the Hollywood and South Korean film industries.

The class satire is the first non-English-language film to win best picture in the 92-year history of the Academy Awards, and is the first South Korean movie to ever win an Oscar.

Can you believe that 'parasite' won the Academy best picture? South Korea's biggest newspaper, Chosun Ilbo, said in a headline.

It rewrote the Academy's 92-year-old history.

Bong, Parasite and other Oscar-related news dominated search terms throughout Monday at major internet portal sites, which had been preoccupied with the outbreak of a virus in China that has killed more than 900 people and sickened tens of thousands of others, mainly in China.

Worries about the virus have been growing in South Korea, where 27 cases have been reported, though no deaths have occurred.

Sales at tour agencies, restaurants, movie theaters and department stores have sharply declined, raising worries about the impact on South Korea's already-lagging economy.

Opposition parties are accusing the government of ineffectiveness in coping

with the outbreak. But the concerns about the virus and political warfare paused Monday to celebrate Bong's wins.

It's happy news, like welcome rain, to the Republic of Korea, which is depressed, stagnant and thrown into despair due to Wuhan pneumonia, the main opposition Liberty Korea Party

emy Award ceremony together. It's deeply meaningful for Korean movies and this will open the path for further development. It's such a great honor. I'm speechless, said Kim Nam-hoon, 21.

Jeong Ho-cheol, a 26-year-old student, praised Bong for pleasing both movie critics and crowds.



said in a statement. Wuhan is the Chinese city at the center of the outbreak.

South Korean social media were overwhelmed with congratulatory messages.

President Moon Jae-in tweeted that he is proud of Bong and his staff and particularly grateful to them for giving courage and pride to our people who are overcoming difficulties.

Moon and his advisers began a regularly scheduled meeting by clapping their hands to celebrate Bong's wins.

At Bong's alma mater, Seoul's Yonsei University, students belonging to a school movie club watched the Acad-

His way of dealing with the underside of Korean society and problems such as rich-poor gaps and the way he expresses those issues are very expressive, he said.

Park Chan-wook, a prominent South Korean movie director who is regarded as Bong's main rival at home, joined the congratulations.

It is a huge blessing to work in the same industry as a person as talented as Bong and being able to call him a friend, said Park, who won the Grand Prix at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival for Oldboy, in an interview with the Munhwa Ilbo newspaper.

## Guneet Monga collaborates with seven filmmakers for anthology series

**MUMBAI, FEB 10 (PTI):** Film producer Guneet Monga has joined hands with seven filmmakers to present "Zindagi inShort", a seven-part anthology featuring Neena Gupta, Sanjay Kapoor, Divya Dutta among others.

An association of Sikhya Entertainment and Flipkart Video, the short films are helmed by Tahira Kashyap Khurrana, Punarvasu Naik, Vijayeta Kumar, Rakesh Sain, Gautam Govind Sharma, Smrutika Panigrahi and Vinay Chhawal.

"They are one of the first start-up companies in India and incubated many young engineers and business graduates to work in an e-commerce company and with Zindagi inShort, they are helping a young brigade of talented directors to fly in the film industry," Guneet said in a statement

"I am extremely excited and thrilled that, as produc-

ers, Flipkart and I can provide a platform for the aspiring filmmakers. This was a very inspired and charged space where everyone came in and worked. This is where all my heart lies," she added.

The upcoming Flipkart Original also stars Deepak Dobriyal, Swaroop Sampat, Shishir Sharma, Aisha Ahmed, Rima Kallingal, Isha Talwar and Manjot Singh.

Guneet, who has backed films like "Gangs of Wasseyapur", "Lunchbox", and "Masaan", said every director who has worked on this anthology has been working in the industry for some time and feels this is the right time for them to be launched.

"They are on the cusp of making a name for themselves and there cannot be a better opportunity for them than this," she said.

"Zindagi inShort" will be streaming on Flipkart's main app from February 19.

**DEAR READERS,**  
IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING YOUR COPY OF THE SUMMIT TIMES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD, PLEASE MESSAGE OR WHATSAPP US YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AT 9832556698 AND WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE NEWSPAPER REACHES YOU.

## 'Joker' earns Joaquin Phoenix his maiden Oscar



**LOS ANGELES, FEB 10 (PTI):** Hollywood star Joaquin Phoenix finally ended his dry run at the Oscars as he picked up the best actor trophy for his performance in and as "Joker" at the 92nd Academy Awards. The 45-year-old actor had earlier bagged a BAFTA, a Golden Globe and a Screen Actors Guild Award for his turn as a failed, unhinged stand-up comedian who descends into chaos.

In a lengthy and rambling speech, Phoenix touched upon racism, climate change and gender inequality. He also remembered his brother River Phoenix, who died of a drug overdose at the age of 23 in 1993.

"When he was 17, my brother wrote this lyric. He said, 'run

to the rescue with love and peace will follow," Phoenix said.

At the Academy Awards and the entire Hollywood award season, Phoenix had emerged as an undisputed frontrunner even though he was up against the likes of Leonardo DiCaprio ("Once Upon a Time in Hollywood"), Adam Driver ("Marriage Story"), Antonio Banderas ("Pain & Glory") and Jonathan Pryce ("The Two Popes").

An Oscar had eluded Phoenix for the most part of his career, despite his successful collaborations with Ridley Scott ("Gladiator"), James Mangold ("Walk the Line") and Paul Thomas Anderson ("The Master"), all of which had earned him nominations.

**ARIES:** Some people marry their childhood sweethearts and live happily ever after. Others serendipitously meet their soulmates in the evening of their lives after two failed marriages and several heartbreaks. Then there are those who have the privilege of meeting the one, but they take years and years to find their way into each other's arms.

Tip: Trust what's happening behind the scenes for you.

**TAURUS:** Wise words by Rupri Kaur to give your perspective on what you are experiencing right now: "It was when I stopped searching for home within others and lifted the foundations of home within myself, that I found there were no roots more intimate than those between mind and body that have decided to be whole." Your thoughts exactly.

Tip: You are finding a sense of home within yourself.

**GEMINI:** How we perceive ourselves de-

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

Tip: Claim your independence.

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

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

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

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

Tip: Choose assertiveness over aggression.

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

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

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

joy and awakens that spirit of playfulness.

Tip: Live a little.

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

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

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

Tip: Reinvent your style.

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

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

Tip: Embrace the in-between.

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

Tip: Storytelling is a form of medicine, Aquarius.

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

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