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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Governor calls on Vice President Venkaiah Naidu to visit Sikkim in Aug



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad called on Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu at his residence in New Delhi today morning.

A Raj Bhavan press release informs that it was a courtesy call by the Governor wherein several issues concerning the development and specific needs of Sikkim were discussed.

The Governor ex-

tended invitation to the Vice President to visit Sikkim at his convenient time. The Vice President has conveyed his willingness to visit Sikkim during the first week of August 2019 depending on favourable weather conditions.

Interestingly, two scheduled visits of Vice President of India to Sikkim have so far not materialised due to inclement weather.

334 soldiers killed from 2016-18 in areas where AFSPA is in force: Govt

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI):

As many as 334 soldiers were killed from 2016 to 2018 in areas where the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) is in force, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told Parliament on Monday.

In a written response to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Singh said 113 soldiers were killed in 2016, 125 in 2017 and 96 in 2018 in areas where the AFSPA is in force.

The AFSPA, which gives special powers to the armed forces, is in place in Jammu and Kashmir and certain parts of the north-east.

Singh said 69 soldiers were killed in border skirmishes

from 2016 to 2018. Responding to another question, he said the Army suffered 31 casualties during tactical actions in the said period.

Replying to another question, the defence minister said 87 soldiers were killed in terrorist attacks in 2017 and 2018.

"The Army carries out a periodical review of the security arrangements of all its camps, garrisons and installations, based on threat assessment and analysis of past incidents," Singh said.

On the basis of these reviews, suitable drills and procedure are adopted to counter such threats, he added.

HC verdict on Maha govt's Maratha quota on Thursday

MUMBAI, JUN 24 (PTI):

The Bombay High Court will on Thursday pronounce its judgment on a bunch of petitions challenging the Maharashtra government's decision to grant 16 per cent quota to Maratha community in government jobs and educational institutions.

On November 30 last year, the Maharashtra legislature passed a bill proposing 16 per cent reservation in education and government jobs for the Marathas under the Socially and Educationally Backward Class (SEBC) category. Several petitions were filed in the high court challenging the reservation, while a few others were filed in support of the quota.

On February 6, a division bench of Justices Ranjit More and Bharti Dangle commenced hearing in all the petitions. In April this year, the court closed the petitions for verdict.

The government, while defending its decision, had said reservation was only to bring up the Maratha community which was neglected since long.

The petitioners challenging the quota decision, however, claimed by granting reservation to the Maratha community, the government has given them permanent crutches which they will never be able to shed.

The government has destroyed the concept of equality by setting up a special category - Socially and Educationally Backward Class - for the Maratha community, the petitioners argued.

They also claimed that as per the Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission report, Marathas and Kunbis are one and the same caste and hence, should be included in the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category.

CM CHAIRS COORDINATION MEETING WITH SOUTH DIST OFFICIALS

Work well, rest assured: Golay to officers

NAMCHI, 24 JUN [IPR]:

Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang [Golay] chaired a co-ordination meeting with the officials of South District at the Dak Bunglow here today. Present among others were his spouse Krishna Kumari Rai, DC [South] Ragul K, SP [South] Prawin Gurung, ADC [South] Satyen Kr Pradhan, ADC [Dev] Milan Subba, SDM [HQ] Hemant Rai and Sub Divisional Magistrate and Block Development Officers from South District.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister spoke in detail about the objective of the meeting, which, he said, was to extensively understand the duties and responsibilities of government officials.

He stressed that these officials were an important part of the State Government machinery and were hence accountable for the smooth functioning of the various departments located in the district.

The Chief Minister added that officials should work in coordi-



nation with the general public so that people can reap the full benefits laid down by the State Government.

He also assured that the due rights of government employees will be ensured and that the State Government will always be receptive towards the various issues and suggestions put forth by government employees.

He also strongly urged the officials to run

their respective departments in an effective and disciplined manner.

The Chief Minister further directed that official functions organised by government departments should ensure that all are invited regardless of their political affiliations as the State Government believes in inclusiveness.

Sikkim as a state can move forward positively only when there is mutual respect and under-

standing, he said.

The Chief Minister emphasised that some schemes and projects conceptualised by the previous Government will be carried forward after much improvement and making necessary amendments.

He also underlined that any ongoing project should be properly checked by the officials and genuine beneficiaries selected for the same.

The Chief Minister further emphasised that special gram sabhas should be held at the earliest for the 2nd phase of Chief Minister's Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM).

He reiterated the decision taken during a Cabinet meeting that government projects should not take more than six months to be completed and urged officials to strictly adhere to this decision.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the idea behind declaring all Saturdays as Government holidays as one taken keeping in mind the comfort of Government officials who toil hard in providing uninterrupted service for the betterment of the public and the state.

Speaking about the acute drinking water scarcity in Namchi, the Chief Minister informed that the State Government was looking into this matter and urged the officials to adopt water conservation methods since the existing drinking water needs to be preserved and conserved at all costs.

Earlier, at the outset of the meeting, the DC South appraised the Chief Minister about the status and the working of the various government departments located in the district.

After the co-ordination meeting, the Chief Minister met with the public of Jorethang and Namchi.

Governor calls on Defence Minister

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Continuing with his series of engagements in New Delhi, Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad made a courtesy call on Union Minister of Defence, Rajnath Singh at South Block, New Delhi today evening, a press release informs.

The Governor raised various strategic issues related with Sikkim and invited Union Minister to visit the state at any convenient date, the release adds.



I-League to approach court if ISL is made top league, AIFF calls it premature and unfair

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI):

The I-League clubs Monday said they will approach "appropriate courts for relief" if the ISL is made the country's top league, even as the All India Football Federation called it "premature and unfair".

Miffed at AIFF general secretary Kushal Das's public acknowledgement of Indian Super League as the country's main league, representatives of Mohun Bagan, East Bengal, Churchill Brothers, Minerva Punjab FC and Gokulam Kerala FC, among others, held a meeting in the capital, where they decided to move courts.

The clubs feel Das' acknowledgement will be rubber-stamped in the AIFF's executive committee meeting on July 3.

"With media reports indicating that the ISL being announced as the top division league post an Executive committee meet-

ing scheduled for July 3rd, the I-League clubs are standing united stronger than ever," the clubs said in a joint statement.

"The refusal of the President of AIFF to meet the I-League clubs in spite of several requests and the subsequent vindictive actions specifically towards the I-League clubs, combined with the coercive and blackmailing attitude of FSDL towards AIFF by refusing to make payments pushes the game to an uncertain future." The apex body promptly responded with a statement of its own while urging the aggrieved clubs to come back to the drawing board.

"The AIFF feels that it is very premature and unnecessary to pre-judge any action of the AIFF, and be commenting on the AIFF Executive Committee meeting on July 3, 2019 in advance.

"The AIFF as a custodian of Indian Football

has always endeavoured to balance to the interest of all stakeholders, and the Hero I-League, and its clubs. To say that the future of Hero I-League, and the clubs will not be taken into consideration for any future decisions of the AIFF would be unfair," the federation said in its statement.

The AIFF said they have invited a top AFC official to India for discussing concerns regarding the I-League.

"As a matter of fact, a decision regarding the Hero Indian Super League becoming a league were also discussed with AFC, and FIFA before it was given recognition, and even for any future decisions AFC and FIFA will be duly consulted. In fact, during the last AFC AGM in Paris, the AIFF asked the AFC General Secretary Dato Windsor John to visit India specifically for Hero I-League issues.

SATA felicitates team on return from intl tourney



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Sikkim Amateur Taekwondo Association [SATA] felicitated its team for the outstanding performance at the recently held 2nd Indian Open International Taekwondo G1 Championship held from 11 to 16 June at Gachiboli Indoor Stadium in Hyderabad.

At the championship, Sikkimese martial artists Lagela Lama Tamang and Sushant Rai won gold and Smriti Chettri won a

silver medal.

The felicitation ceremony had Minister for Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kunga Nima Lepcha, as the chief guest accompanied by Secretary SYA, Dr RK Tamang, and other officials.

More than 12 countries had participated in this global ranking championship. It is informed that the championship is also the selection for the world championships and Olympics.

A 13-member SATA

team participated in the championship.

Team members were Sanjay Subba, Suman Tamang, Bijay Gurung, Sulochana Limboo, Angelina Rai, Rohan Kulung, Chulitim Palmu Bhutia, Sonam Bhutia, Lagela Lama Tamang, Prakiti Adhikari, Smriti Chettri, Abhinav Pradhan and Sushant Rai. The team was led by team coach, Bijay Gurung in the championship. Sabitri Pradhan from Sikkim also officiated at the championship as a referee.

Blood Army of Sikkim holds coordination meet

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

The Blood Army of Sikkim, an organization working in the field of voluntary blood donation, organised a coordination meeting at Radiant Institute of Professional Skill Development at Tadong, Gangtok on 23 June, a press release informs.

The organization has decided to create an app to help those in need of blood and achieve 100%



voluntary blood donation by 2020. Various other decisions were also taken in the meeting. Chief Coordinator, Kul Prasad Chettri addressed the programme and gave brief introduction of the organisation and its

aim and objectives. State Programme Coordinator, Suyog Pradhan, State Vice President, Mon Kumar Tiwari, State General Secretary, Krishna Chettri and Arpan Pradhan also attended the programme.

Miserable state of Government Health Sector in India

SHANKER SHARMA

Amidst the hullabaloo of development, economic growth, rise in GDP and per capita income, the progress of science and technology, the lives of the people at the lowest rung of the society has not changed a bit. The recent case of death of over 156 children due to acute encephalitis syndrome in Bihar is an example of it.

DEATH OF CHILDREN IN BIHAR

This is not the first time that it happened in Bihar. During the summer months of 2012-14, a similar outbreak had occurred where hundreds of children had died. According to the media reports on Thursday more than 400 children's have been admitted to hospital to be treated for the condition.

The experts studying the outbreak of acute encephalitis during 2012-14 have found that the victims were malnourished children who had suffered a toxic reaction to litchis. The investigation by T Jacob John, a virologist from the Christian Medical College in Vellore of the outbreak in 2012-14 found out that most of the victims were the children of labourers in the area's litchi orchard.

After having eaten litchis through the day, the children went to bed hungry, without a nutritious dinner. The combination of malnutrition and toxins in the litchi fruit caused a condition called hypoglycaemic encephalopathy, which affects the brain, according to the researchers.

Despite having the full measure of the causes of the outbreak Bihar Government did not take any prevention measures.

APATHY OF MINISTERS AND CM

Nitish Kumar, who calls himself 'Vikas Purus' did not even visit the hospital in Muzaffarpur until weeks, which is just 2 hours drive from Patna. It shows the apathy of the elected leaders. The health minister of Bihar was seen enquiring about the India Pakistan Cricket match score during the press conference about the tragedy.

THE MYTH OF AYUSHMAN BHARAT

The central BJP Government which boasts of Ayushman Bharat scheme being the largest public health scheme in the world, where the budget of Rs 6400 crores was allocated during the budget of 2018-19, which upon close observation appears to be more beneficial to the insurance companies than the actual beneficiaries. A report on The Times of India says, "the government's new health insurance scheme that envisions providing cashless insurance up to Rs 5 lakh for 10.74 crore poor families will benefit private hospitals such as those run by Fortis because of severe lack of adequate health facilities in the country."

GOVERNMENT SPENDINGS ON HEALTH

India spends just 1.3% of its total GDP in health i.e Rs 3 per capita, which is one of the lowest among the developing countries of the world. According to a report on The Times Of India, India has just 7 hospital beds per 10000 population, which is one of the lowest in the world. Russia has 97 and even China has 38 beds per 10000 population.

ACUTE SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS AND NURSES

Almost all public hospitals suffer from an acute shortage of manpower. According to a report on the Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy (CDDEP), government hospitals in India are facing a shortage of 6 lakh doctors and 20 lacs nurses. According to the recommendation of WHO (World Health Organisation) ratio of 1: 1000 must be maintained, ie there should be one doctor for every 1000 population and 1 nurse for every 483 population. However, in India the ratio of the government doctor to population is 1:10189, this means in average, one doctor is doing the work of 10 doctors in Government hospitals of India.

OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENDITURE PAUPERISING THE COMMON PEOPLE

According to the report, In India, 65 per cent of health expenditure is out-of-pocket, and such expenditures push some 57 million people into poverty each year. This means millions of population is becoming poorer due to expenditures in health.

DEATHS DUE TO EASILY-CURABLE-DISEASES

The report of CDDEP further says, 57 lakh people die every year from the diseases which can be easily treated using antibiotics. "The findings of the report show that even after the discovery of new antibiotic, regulatory hurdles and sub-standard health facilities delay or altogether prevent widespread market entry and drug availability. Just the mere existence of an effective antibiotic does not mean that they are available in countries

where they are most needed" Economic Times has quoted the Director of CDDEP as saying.

HOSTILITY BETWEEN MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS AND CITIZENS

The common people, out of helplessness due to the miserable condition of the government hospitals, are venting out their frustrations to doctors and nurses. The slew of attacks on doctors and nurses that have taken place in recent past in various places of the country are because of the failure of the common people to grasp the root cause of the crisis. The ruling class is fermenting unnecessary hostility between the common people and the medical practitioner so as to divert peoples' attention from the real cause. Both the doctors, nurses and the common people are being exploited by the ruling class. Due to lack of manpower, the workload on doctors and nurses in a government hospital is too much, exhaustion makes them angry and sometimes they burst out their anger to the common people. Common people cannot see that almost all the government hospitals across the country are running with an acute shortage of manpower and basic infrastructures.

PRIVATISATION OF HEALTH SECTOR

Ever since India allowed 100 % FDI in 2000 the governments, both at the centre and the state, have been using every available opportunity to hand out public health service to the private hospitals by slashing funds in health sector continuously, which is pushing a vast multitude of people away from the ambient of necessary service like

health. The outright negligence of the public health services, acute shortage of manpower, lack of medicines in Government hospitals in India is an indirect endorsement to the private hospitals, which are run by powerful capitalists of the country, whose sole motive is to maximize their profits. The ruling class knows people will spend on health even if it drives them to extreme poverty. For the profit-seeking capitalists, there is no safer field of investment than health. The government voted by us actually work in the interest of influential capitalist in the our country and the abroad. In one hand standard of government hospitals are deliberately being degraded and in the other private hospitals are fostering rapidly.

According to a report on The Times of India, the profit of private hospitals in India rose by 80 per cent between 2012 and 2017. Private equity investors have made an investment of over \$3.4 billion in Indian hospitals between 2007 and 2017.

According to the Government, India's medical tourism could be worth \$9 billion by 2020, up from \$3 billion in 2015. This statement makes the intent of the government clear.

ROLE OF COMMON PEOPLE

The need of the hour is voicing for raising funds in the government hospitals, the appointment of sufficient doctors and nurses in the hospitals and voicing for standardisation of hospitals with necessary equipment and medicines.

[The writer is Core Executive of Sikkim Progressive Youth Forum]

Health Minister visits Health Centres in South Sikkim

NAMCHI, 24 JUN (IPR):

Minister Health Care, Human Services & Family Welfare Department, Dr. M.K Sharma visited various Health infrastructures and took stock of Health Centers across South Sikkim today.

The purpose of the Minister's visit was to take stock of all the activities and take notice of the problems and needs of the department under his purview.

The Minister was accompanied by Commissioner Cum Secretary Health, Vishal Chauhan, Principal Director, Dr. S.K Rai, CMO South, Dr. Sharada Rai, DGHS, Dr. Pema Bhutia, JD cum MOIC Jorethang CHC, Dr. Amber Singh Subba, Additional Chief Engineer, CM Khatiwada along with officials from Health Department.



partment.

During his maiden visit of the Healthcare centers of South District since assuming office, the Minister took an extensive tour of the hospital premises of Temi PHC, Namchi District Hospital and Jorethang CHC.

The Health Minister interacted with the officials and staff for over several hours and

inspected various departments under each hospital. Dr. Sharma was given an account of all medical facilities, staff strength and availability of equipments by the Hospital incharge in all three hospitals.

The Minister later gave a patient hearing of the grievances and demands laid down before him by the employees present. He took a comprehensive account of the issues and also prompt action and intervention as per the urgency and severity of each demand. He also visited the female and male ward, labour room, maternity ward and interacted with the patients and medical staffs of each department of the hospitals.

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Speaker visits alma mater in Yangang

YANGANG, 24 JUN (IPR):

Sikkim Legislative Assembly (SLA), Speaker, LB Das toured his native village Yangang, where he visited Karongthang Secondary School, a school where he attended his elementary schooling.

He was accompanied by Minister Karma Loday Bhutia, Minister Sanjeet Kharel, CA to Chief Minister, Bikash Basnet and RK Basnet.

During his visit, he interacted with the students and staffs of the school. The School management placed various demands with Speaker for which he assured to take issues with concerned department and to make sure that all the genuine issues were taken up on a priority basis.

During the short speech he highlighted about his old memories which he spent during his elementary education and expressed that what he is now is because of his education and upbringing.

He also stated that this school has given him an opportunity to pass out from TNA with scholarships where he completed his higher studies. He furthered express that he feels immense happiness to visit his native village and acknowledge everyone for their love and support.

The Speaker elaborated that it is with the love of his people that he had reached that position and assured to work with full dedication and sincerity.

SKM thanks giving programme at Rangang Yangang



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

A thanks giving programme of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party for Rangang-Yangang constituency was held at Helipad ground in South Sikkim on Monday. The programme had Speaker, LB Das as the chief guest.

An SKM press release informs that the Speaker visited the 85 years old Karungthang School in Rangang-Yangang constituency before the programme. During the visit, the headmaster of the school stated that the school building was in deplorable condition and has been lacking proper infrastructure, drinking water, power supply

and other facilities. In response, the Speaker assured to place all grievances and issues to the concerned department.

The release informs that the thanks giving programme was also attended by Ministers, Sanjit Kharel and Karma Loday Bhutia, MLA Bishnu Khatiwada and other senior leaders and workers of the party and local gentries.


In his address, Minister Sanjeet Kharel stated that the government would provide more opportunities to needy and educated youth. He urged the people to give some time to make Sikkim better in line with the hopes and aspirations of the people.

tions of the people.

Likewise, Minister Karma Loday Bhutia expressed his confidence that SKM will win all seats in the upcoming by-elections in the State. He stated that the party workers should provide development in the constituency without any partiality. He assured that the SKM government would work for all constituencies equally.

The release informs that the meeting was also addressed by Rangang-Yangang SKM candidate in the recent elections, RK Basnet, Confidential Assistant to the CM, Bikash Basnet and Rhenock MLA, Bishnu Khatiwada.

In Loving Memory



Moni Kumar Subba

16th March 1958 - 27th May 2019

A memorial service to commemorate the life of Shri M.K. Subba shall be held on Tuesday, 25th June 2019

• 1pm - 6pm •

at The Royal Plaza, Syari, Gangtok to offer prayers for the departed soul.

~

Tara & Naresh

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

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GENERAL INFORMATION

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

**Mr. Subash Lama
Proprietor
Hotel Parasol Residency,
Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim**

BUILDING FOR SALE

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

Children's literature festival Bookaroo is almost here!

SHRAVAN CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:
India's first children's literature festival Bookaroo in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts Guwahati and Taktse International School is celebrating their annual festival here at Taktse School on 28 and 29 June.

Bookaroo is a Delhi based non-profit trust focusing on organizing literature fest for children of age group 4 to 14 years. The fest comprises storytelling sessions, painting, poetry, drama and arts.

The festival began in 2008 in New Delhi and since then has travelled to 12 different cities like Jaipur, Srinagar, and Delhi reaching the milestone of completion of 32 editions of the fest.



tions of the fest.

Along with storytellers, students from various schools like Baha'l School Tadong, Paljor Namgyal Girls School, Rey Valley Academy, Tashi Namgyal Academy and Taktse International

School will also be participating and showcasing their talent in the fest.

Addressing a press meet today, Festival Director Bookaroo, Venkatesh M said, "The main objective of the festival is

to promote and popularise education among children through culture."

He also mentioned that 20 artists and curators from various cities of India along with artists from Nepal and Bhutan are participating in

the fest.

Since 2009, Taktse International School has been attending all the editions of Bookaroo and the impact has been tremendous to both students and faculty members. With Bookaroo coming to the town, our children will get exposure to various types of literature and we are truly grateful to the organization for providing such an awesome experience to the town, said Director Taktse School, Sonam Palzor Denjongpa.

Bookaroo is also a winner of the Literary Festival Award at the London Book Fair's International Excellence Awards 2017, the first time that an Indian Children's Festival was recognized at the international level.

Singtam boy to participate in Sub Jr Boxing Nationals

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

13-year-old Tshering Sherpa from Adarsh Gaon has been selected to represent Sikkim at BFI 1st Sub Junior Men National Boxing Championship 2019 to be held at Rohtak, Haryana, a press release informs. The tournament will be held from 02-08 July, 2019.

Tshering Sherpa is coached by Pritam Shilal, who has over the years produced various junior champions.

Born to Lakpa Sherpa and Bunu Sherpa, Tshering will be participating in the 37 kg event. He



was selected by the of Sikkim Amateur Selection Committee Boxing Association.

Animal Husbandry Minister inspects Sikkim Milk infrastructure



GANGTOK, 24 JUN (IPR): Minister for Animal Husbandry, Livestock, Fisheries and Veterinary Services, Lok Nath Sharma visited Sikkim Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd. (SCMPUL), Tadong, 5th Mile, today.

He thoroughly inspected the Milk Processing Infrastructure and its various units including Butter & Churpi Unit, Ice cream unit, Curd unit, Milk Processing Unit, Cold storage, laboratory, packaging section, Distribution point, Refrigeration Unit, Boiler unit, Effluent Treatment Plant.

The Minister also saw demonstration of kit for detection of adulterants in milk and stressed to ensure quality products to the consumers. He also expressed his concerns over the report of coagulation of milk and instructed concerned officials to sought out the actual cause of curdled and coagulation of milk.

The Minister was accompanied by the Secretary Animal Husbandry,

Livestock Fisheries and Veterinary Services, Dr Kumar Bhandari, Director Dairy, Dr. BM. Chettri, General Manager SCMPUL, SK Pradhan, Joint General Manager, KD Barfungpa, Dy General Manager, Dr. NK Pradhan, Officials and others.

After his comprehensive visit to the Milk Processing Infrastructure, Minister, Lok Nath Sharma chaired a coordination meeting with the officials of Animal Husbandry and Milk Union. Minister advised officials to take initiatives to encourage Milk Producers for surplus production of milk so that their economic status will be uplifted and reformed.

He advised to generate massive awareness to convince people towards dairy farming. Further he articulated an example and urged to adopt concept of cluster farming and model village in every district. Speaking on the issues of existing difficulties Minister Lok Nath Sharma expressed

his strong desire to have more discussions and consultations to address the impediments and constraints for fruitful output.

Further, Minister exchanged his views to avail required cattle feed, enhancement in quality and quantity of milk production etc. Earlier, General Manager, SK Pradhan briefed on composition of Board of the Union, procurement inputs, plant operations, marketing, administration, Milk collection and Cooling facilities distributed to societies.

Secretary Animal Husbandry, Livestock Fisheries and Veterinary Services, Dr Kumar Bhandari also came out with his invaluable inputs to attract milk sellers of unorganized sector to the Milk Union.

The officials expressed happiness and extended their gratitude to the Minister for his visit. He was accorded warm welcome by the officials of Milk Union led by the General Manager.

'Support. Don't Punish' signature campaign on 26 June



REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

On the occasion of United Nation' International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, the Sikkim Drug Users' Forum [SDUF], is holding a signature campaign 'Support. Don't Punish', here at MG Marg on 26 Jun 2019. The signature campaign will be held from 10:30 am to 2 pm, and in the evening there will be a candle light vigil for drug users who have died.

Sikkim Drugs Users' Forum held a media and community dialogue on the global #SupportDontPunishCampaign, today. SDUF, has been working for the past 3 years, and was registered in 2018, however, the organisation was officially registered today.

Addressing the media today here in Gangtok, president for Sikkim Drug Users Forum, Tenzing Bhutia, highlighted the aims of the campaign which is to change laws and policies which impede access to harm reduction interventions for people who use drugs. It is also to promote rights of people who use drugs, raise awareness about the need to stop criminalising [punishing] people

for using drugs.

It was also highlighted that the campaign calls on governments to put an end to the expensive and counter-productive war on drugs which is basically the war on people who use drugs.

Simultaneously, Coordinator, SDUF, Prashant Sharma, said that the forum aims to change the false narrative through dialogue and awareness building among policy makers, implementers, key stakeholders and masses based on evidence and human rights.

The meet was also addressed by an advocate, Mingma Lhamu Sherpa, Convenor SDUF, Chewang Gyatso Sherpa.

SDUF seeks to improve the lives of drug users across the state through meaningful involvement of drug users' community in program and policy development which impact the lives of drug users in Sikkim.

'Support. Don't Punish' is a global advocacy campaign organised each year on 26 June to raise awareness of the harms being caused by the war on drugs which is basically "war on people who use drugs".

Truck falls off road near Pheedang Bridge

WANGCHUK BHUTIA
MANGAN, 24 JUN:

A Mahindra pick-up truck reportedly went off the road near Pheedang Bridge in North Sikkim at Dikchu-Mangan highway this evening at around 5:30pm. The accident was witnessed by a person from Pheedang village of Lower Dzongu on the right bank of the Teesta. The vehicle fell down at the reservoir of NHPC Teesta Stage V.

Efforts are being made by police personnel from Pheedang Check Post to trace the vehicle and the occupants.

RBI launches CMS for filing online complaints against banks, NBFCs

MUMBAI, JUN 24 (PTI): The Reserve Bank of India Monday launched an application on its website for lodging complaints against banks and NBFCs with a view to improve customer experience in timely redressal of grievances.

The Complaint Management System (CMS) is a software application to facilitate RBI's grievance redressal process.

Customers can lodge complaints against any regulated entity with public interface such as commercial banks, urban cooperative banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).

The complaint would

be directed to the appropriate office of the Ombudsman/Regional Office of the RBI.

The CMS will be accessible on desktop as well as on mobile devices. The RBI also plans to introduce a dedicated Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system for tracking the status of complaints.

Keeping the convenience of customers in mind, the CMS has been designed to enable online filing of complaints.

"The application also improves transparency by keeping the complainants informed through auto-generated acknowledgements and enabling them to track the sta-

tus of their complaints and file appeals online against the decisions of the Ombudsmen, where applicable," said RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das at the launch of CMS.

Complainants can also voluntarily share feedback on their experience in obtaining redressal.

He stressed that sustaining the confidence of consumers in banks and other financial service providers (FSPs) through prompt and effective grievance redressal, together with empowering customers through education is pivotal for maintaining trust in the banking system.

Season Sale at Titan Summit Report

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Watch brand Titan has announced discounts on timepieces during its Season Sale from 21 June to 14 July.

The World of Titan is rolling out discounts up to 40% on its watches and accessories, a press release informs. The discounts have been offered on licensed brands like Tommy Hilfinger, Police & Kenneth Kole, Fastrack Sunglasses and Titan accessories at the World of Titan stores across the country.

SIKKIM STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY
DEVELOPMENT AREA, GANGTOK
EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

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

Details are as under:-

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

Conditions of eligibility

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

MEMBER SECRETARY

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority
Development Area, Gangtok

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

History Lessons for All *Sikkim's history should not be just for the State to study*

History, they say is always written by the victor who decides which portions of the vanquished histories suit his plans and which bits are best left untold. The same has held true for the history taught in schools in India. The curriculum is embarrassingly North India-centric, so much so that even though students learn by rote the names of all those who made it emperor in the Slave Dynasty, ask them about what the northeast was up to in the meantime and they draw a blank, a complete blank. It is accepted that prior to the advent of the East India Company, the region was a collection of one empire and several kingdoms and princely states, each with its own intrigues and their own histories. But those stories are not included in the History of India textbooks.

So, the history we learn in school is actually the composite histories of the areas which came together to form the Union of India in 1947 and later? Well, not really. The focus is too limited to the areas which either the British researched in some detail or were studied some more by later-day historians. It is unfortunate that the number of pages devoted in history text books to particular areas is directly proportional to the number of MPs that area has.

But that's not history. It is only part of the narrative.

The blind-spotting of areas that got cut off with partition is even worse. The Muslim League for example was a part of the Indian Freedom Struggle and the demand for the creation of Pakistan came much after the movement had already gathered critical mass. We, however, read very little of the role played by this group in the Struggle for Independence save reading about them as the organization that forced the Partition. Icons like Subhas Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh too are glossed over. But that's another debate.

Before progressing further, it is important to make clear why we study history in the first place - to get a better understanding of where we belong - where we fit into the larger scheme of things, where we come from and how we arrived where we are today. There has been much talk about making Sikkim join the mainstream which is why it is not enough to just study Sikkimese history in schools in Sikkim [which would still be a good place to begin]. Sikkim needs to figure in the history books studied elsewhere in the country. In junior school, students learn of what Confucius meant to China even before they are taught when and how Sikkim joined India. One is not suggesting that the State become even more parochial and force Local even in the curriculum, but Sikkim does have a history that's worth learning. Few dynasties have ruled for the three hundred years that the Namgyal dynasty has to its credit [the British rule which hogs the history books lasted less than a hundred years]. Surely the British intrigues vis a vis Tibet should make for interesting reading, as should the Nepali adventures in Sikkim in the 18th century. If kids can learn of the distant Great Wall of China, why can't the story of the Lepcha tower of pots be told to them; maybe not as history, but at least as more than a myth. And would the Lepcha rebellions launched from Eastern Nepal or the stand they took based out of Kalimpong make for some interesting chapters?

It might not be out of place to even suggest here that Sikkim should prepare at least two chapters on Sikkimese history to fit into text books for schools all over the country and take it to the Centre for whetting by the text book boards for inclusion in the syllabi. The country remains endlessly occupied with rewriting its History textbooks anyway, why not slip Sikkim in too.

South Africa should learn from Brazil about how to tackle 'hidden hunger'

BRITTANY KESSELMAN
theconversation.com

South Africa faces a double burden of hunger and malnutrition, on the one hand, and obesity with associated non-communicable diseases (NCDs), on the other. In many countries, in both the global North and South, malnutrition and obesity frequently co-exist in the same people. This is a condition known as "hidden hunger".

Hidden hunger is a result of various factors. These include poverty, inequality, urbanisation and industrialisation of the food system. The interplay of these factors leaves low income households with very limited access to fresh, healthy foods. Instead, many South Africans – and other people living in similar conditions – subsist on diets high in sugar and processed starch. These diets contribute to increasing levels of obesity. But they don't meet nutritional needs.

My research among urban farmers and low-income residents in Johannesburg identified the complexity of factors that influence dietary choices. It also identified the obstacles to accessing healthy food. Cost is a major impediment while physical access, nutritional knowledge, concentration in the food industry and dietary norms also played a role in shaping diets. Without addressing all of these, South Africa will be unable to address the double burden of malnutrition and non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Despite the fact that diet has been a major contributing factor to the growth of NCDs in recent years there are virtually no connections between South Africa's agricultural and health policies. Policies to address hunger and malnutrition have tended to be housed in the Department of Agriculture. They have focused on increasing production, whether through urban agriculture or support to small-scale farmers in rural areas.

For its part, the Department of Health remains confined to treatment with medication and limited advice – like diet and exercise. This is despite the fact that the department recognises there needs to be a multi-pronged approach to NCDs.



This needs to change. South African practitioners and policy makers could learn from international examples, where the public and private health sectors have begun to make the link between food and wellness. In particular, policies that were introduced a quarter of a century ago in a city in Brazil provide a useful template of what an integrated approach could look like.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

Innovative policies and programmes in various countries are beginning to link food and health.

To draw a few examples from the United States, which faces high rates of obesity and NCDs, the new field of culinary medicine looks at how dietary changes can restore and maintain health. A number of hospitals are creating food gardens to serve healthy meals to patients. Doctors are writing scripts for fruits and vegetables so that patients can afford them.

At the same time, in the US and Canada, food banks and other organisations that combat hunger are attempting to distribute healthier foods. These organisations are also engaging in advocacy for a more just and equitable food system.

The link is also being made

between the livelihoods of food producers and the environmental sustainability of the food system. In the US a non-governmental organisation incentivises recipients of the government's food assistance programme, SNAP, to buy fresh produce at local farmers' markets through a double value coupon programme. The UN's Purchase from Africa for Africans Programme leverages public procurement for school meals to improve children's health and education while supporting small-scale family farmers. It draws lessons from Brazil and has been implemented in five African countries.

The city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil provides a noteworthy example of how innovative, integrated food and nutrition security policies can assist communities. It has been implementing policies designed to ensure that residents are able to enjoy the right to food for the past 25 years. The city's programmes include:

- popular restaurants serving subsidised healthy meals;
- shops selling subsidised fresh fruit and vegetables in under-served areas;
- a food bank. This reduces food waste by rescuing food otherwise discarded by retailers. The food

is then checked and provided to social programmes (such as crèches and old age homes);

- farm stalls and farmers' markets. These enable small-scale farmers to sell directly to consumers, cutting out the middleman and thereby raising incomes;
- public procurement from small-scale farmers, especially those using agroecological production methods;
- school lunches and school gardens. These ensure that children have access to nutritious meals and that they learn about food production and nutrition.

On a research visit to Belo Horizonte, I saw how these programmes improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables – a key measure in the fight against malnutrition and obesity.

They also support decent incomes for small-scale producers through direct market access and public procurement. In addition, environmentally sustainable production is encouraged through reservation of additional public funds to purchase agroecologically-farmed foods.

Beyond the health and economic benefits, the programmes support social cohesion through communal eating spaces, cultural events that feature local gastronomy, and local farmers' markets where people can meet the farmers who grow their food and enjoy a sense of community.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Belo Horizonte's food and nutrition security programme is its low cost: less than 2% of the city's budget. Another is the degree of co-operation among government departments, as well as partnership with civil society organisations.

When the policies and programmes developed in Belo Horizonte were rolled out nationally, Brazil experienced a notable decline in hunger.

The model provides many useful lessons that could greatly benefit South Africa. The Department of Health, along with other government departments and civil society partners, needs to take a bold move to tackle the problems of malnutrition, obesity and associated NCDs through a multi-faceted approach.

[the writer is Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of the Witwatersrand]

How mafia and corruption scandals rocked Italian football and left fans with a crisis of faith

ANNA SERGI
theconversation.com

Football could be considered Italy's most popular sport, with world-class teams worth billions attracting a dedicated following across the country. But more than that, football shapes the nation's collective identity, bringing people from the smallest village to the biggest city together in their love for "the beautiful game".

But over the past decade, media investigations and research have uncovered an unseemly lack of virtue within the industry. Mafia infiltration and corruption have come to characterise Italian football to the point that malpractice, deviance and criminal behaviour might seem to be the norm.

For example, fans of one of Italy's most successful teams, Juventus Football Club (also known as "Juve"), have been dismayed by a series of corruption allegations. In April 2019, the Italian Supreme Court ruled that Juventus managers had supplied match tickets that were touted for profit by groups of hard-core fans, known as ultras, under the control of individuals linked to the Calabrian mafia, known as the 'ndrangheta.

In an earlier case, concluded in October 2018, former Juventus player and 2006 World Cup winner Vincenzo Iaquinta was sentenced to two years in prison for firearms offences, in part of a larger trial concerning the infiltration of 'ndrangheta clans in northern Italy. The footballer's father was also sentenced to 19 years on mafia-related charges.

PLAYING FOR POWER

These incidents are not confined to one club – organised crime

groups have interests at all levels of the sport. In 2018, football generated €2.397 billion in Italy alone – the bulk of which came from audiences, not even counting TV, sponsorship and advertising contracts. It's obvious that an industry attracting such enormous amounts of money would make an appealing target for criminal groups that seek to accumulate profits and conceal the proceeds of crime.

But mafia-type groups are also driven by power, with the aim of gaining influence through intimidation or protection and ultimately governing through violence or corruption. Criminal groups such as 'ndrangheta clans use football as a platform to boost their reputation and prestige through more or less legal activities.

Some clans will interfere with youth soccer associations, for example by sponsoring young players, buying or establishing teams or even "saving" them if they are in financial difficulties. A special committee of the Italian parliamentary Antimafia Commission explored these occurrences throughout Italy in 2017.

Groups may use the leverage gained in local environments to exploit business opportunities or gain power at higher levels, too. In the case of Juventus, ticket touting offered clans control over a profitable market, as well as a means to exercise power over the sometimes violent ultras. This, in turn, boosts the reputation of the clans by demonstrating their capacity to exercise influence and control over people and territories using money and violence, if needed.

LOSING FAITH

Mafia groups also use personal

networks and contacts to fix match results and benefit from illegal betting networks. A famous case involving a Serie A footballer, Giuseppe Sculli – the grandson of a very prominent 'ndrangheta boss – showed how mafia interests can be pursued through players or referees for criminal purposes.

In Italian football, match-fixing can occur at alarming scales. The Calciopoli scandal in 2004 eventually led to Juventus being relegated to the lower league in 2006. During this case, it was alleged that different football players, referees and managers had created a system of corruption and sleaze which favoured the victories of certain teams, including in the Serie A.

Italians' faith in fairness in football after the Calciopoli scandal has dropped drastically. But money laundering and fraud allegations continue to be made against those the highest level, as seen in the 2019 case concerning the former president of the Palermo FC, Massimo Zamparini.

While the state of Italian football seems especially bleak, allegations of corruption in this industry happen everywhere. In October 2018, Belgian authorities charged five people in relation to a massive police inquiry into financial fraud and match-fixing. In May 2019, Spanish police forces arrested a number of La Liga and second division players and club executives as part of an investigation into match-fixing. Most recently, in June 2019, former UEFA president and Juventus football star Michel Platini was arrested on suspicion of corruption over the decision to name Qatar as host nation of the 2022 World Cup

– even as he serves a four-year ban from football for receiving a "disloyal payment".

A RED CARD FOR CORRUPTION

There is no doubt that boosting public confidence in the fairness of football requires improved systems of governance, from the local levels to the national arenas. So it's good news that international governing body FIFA is set to restore the offence of corruption to its ethics code, having it removed the previous year.

There also needs to be better care and transparency around the enormous amount of money that the industry attracts. FIFA and national bodies – such as the FIGC in Italy, for example – need to oversee the transactions for buying and selling teams and players, make arrangements for legal betting and ensure accountability in sponsorship systems, to begin with.

But there also needs to be an awareness that the industry offers social and symbolic capital to mafia organisations and organised crime groups, as well as economic opportunities to "dirty" entrepreneurs. In response, bodies such as FIFA need to develop specialist knowledge and build in antidotes to corruption, while maintaining oversight and disciplinary power over the industry.

The football field is a meeting place for different interests and different people. It's a space for business, but also for entertainment and competition. Leadership of such fields requires integrity, dedication and the will to work for the many – not enrich the few.

[the writer is Senior Lecturer in Criminology, University of Essex]

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Assam to set up special group to protect rhinos of Pobitora

GUWAHATI, JUN 24 (PTI): The authorities will set up special rhino protection groups following reports that poachers from other states are targeting Assam's Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary that has the highest density of rhinos in the world.

According to the intelligence reports, poachers from neighbouring Nagaland and Manipur in collusion with local miscreants have targeted the sanctuary where no poaching was reported during the past three years, Morigaon Superintendent of Police Swapnil Deka said.

The special rhino protection groups will consist of villagers in vulnerable and sensitive areas near the famed rhino habitat and they will report any suspicious movement of people to the authorities to prevent poaching, he said.



vent poaching, he said.

"The success of no poaching during the last three years in the sanctuary was possible only due to the efforts of the villagers and they must continue to cooperate with the forest and police departments in preventing such incidents," Deka said.

The SP called upon

villagers to share information about the presence of suspected persons in the area promptly to protect the rhinos of the sanctuary.

Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary is a 38 square kilometre park with a core area of 16 sq kms. It has a rhino population of 102, the highest density of rhinos per square kilo-

metre in the world.

The 33 revenue villages surrounding the rhino habitat in Central Assam's Morigaon district form the backbone of rhino protection mechanism in the area, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctaury ranger Mukul Tamuli said.

"The villagers have been playing a key role in

preventing rhino hunting in Pobitora but their co-operation is more vital now as it has come to our notice miscreants are roaming in the area to kill rhinos," he said.

Villagers as a community have made Pobitora famous and it has provided various sources of livelihood to the people of the area, particularly through tourism ventures, Chief Executive Officer of bio-diversity conservation group 'Aaranyak' Dr Bibhab Talukdar said.

By protecting the rhino, they are protecting the wetland ecology which sustains them in the area, he said.

Talukdar lauded the authorities for formation of the special rhino protection groups from among the villagers from vulnerable areas on the fringe of the wildlife sanctuary.

CPI(M)-Congress stages protest, walkout over cut money issue

KOLKATA, JUN 24 (PTI): The MLAs of Congress and CPI(M) Monday staged a walkout from the West Bengal assembly protesting against the ongoing "cut money scam" and demanded inquiry into the incident.

Shouting slogans against the Trinamool Congress government over the cut money issue, legislators of both the parties came down to the well and demanded that the government set up an inquiry commission to look into the issue.

Seeking an explanation from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the matter and return of the cut money, the MLAs staged a walkout from the House.

"We demand setting up of an inquiry com-

mission to look into this issue of cut money. We want to know who has taken the money," Congress chief whip Manoj Chakraborty told reporters outside the House.

The opposition MLAs were carrying posters and placards bearing 'Cut Money means Chief Minister'.

After protesting outside the assembly for sometime, they re-entered the House and participated in the proceedings.

Reacting to the protest, Parliamentary Affairs Minister and senior TMC leader Partha Chatterjee said the opposition is not interested in smooth functioning of the house.

TMC leaders at the municipal and panchayat

levels have been facing public ire in the districts of Birbhum, Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Burdwan, Malda, Purulia, Nadia, Kolkata, West Midnapore and Bankura.

TMC Rajya Sabha MP Santanu Sen, too, has recently faced allegations of seeking "cut money" from a realtor in north Kolkata. Sen has denied the accusation as "baseless and politically-motivated" to malign his reputation.

During a recent party meeting, TMC supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had warned leaders that those involved in taking "cut money" from government schemes and other corrupt practices would be put behind the bars.

Rationalise airfare between Kolkata-Aizawl and Imphal-Aizawl sector: Mizoram CM to Puri

AIZAWL, JUN 24 (PTI): Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga has urged Union Civil Aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri to rationalise the airfare between Kolkata-Aizawl and Imphal-Aizawl sectors.

In a letter to Puri on Friday, Zoramthanga said the north eastern state has extremely poor air-connectivity with only seven flights a week between Aizawl and Kolkata, as compared to 91 flights a week from Kolkata to Imphal and Agartala.

"The airfare between Kolkata and Aizawl in comparison to airfare in other parts of the country for the same sector length and flying time is unrealistically high," he lamented.

Careful comparison of the airfare between Kolkata - Aizawl with other parts of the country "clearly revealed that the air flying time between the sector is neither governed by sector-length nor flying time," he said, adding that it was "arbitrarily fixed".

Such arbitrary fixation of air fare in the Kolkata-Aizawl sector (only Air India flights operate) adversely affects the entire population of Mizoram.

"Such arbitrary fixation of airfare is not only discriminatory, but it also deliberately violates the law of the land as enshrined in Article 14 of the Indian Constitution," the chief minister said.

Article 14 of the Constitution of India provides for equality before the law.

The extremely large difference in the airfare between Kolkata-Aizawl (Rs 16,716) and Kolkata-Imphal (Rs 3,916) is Rs 12,800 while the sector length is 241 nautical miles (Kolkata Aizawl) and 325 nautical miles (Kolkata-Imphal).

The airfare between Imphal-Aizawl, which is barely 90 nautical miles (flying time of 20 minutes) is Rs 7,950 which is far higher than Imphal-Kolkata fare of Rs 3,845, a sector distance of 325 nautical miles, and a flying time of one hour and 20 minutes, he said.

One year passed, CBI yet to respond to Assam CM's letter on coal syndicate: minister



GUWAHATI, JUN 24 (PTI): Assam minister Chandra Mohan Patowary Monday said Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal had written to the CBI around a year ago asking it to probe illegal trading of coal, known in the state as "coal syndicate", but the agency is yet to respond to it.

Over 100 persons, including government officials, have been arrested in 2018-19 for their alleged involvement in the "coal syndicate", said Patowary, the state's commerce and industry minister. "The CM had written to the CBI for a probe on syndicate about a year ago. The CBI has not responded yet. May be they will respond, as it is from the CM's Office," Patowary said at a press conference here.

The opposition

Congress had demanded a CBI enquiry into the scam claiming that the Coal India Limited was involved in it and it was beyond the state CID's mandate.

Since February last year, the CID of Assam Police is investigating illegal coal trading in the state.

In 2018-19, around 300 coal laden trucks with no proper documents were seized by the police. Also, over 100 people have been arrested in coal syndicate cases. These people include senior government officials," Patowary said. Patowary said the Chief Minister formed a state-level monitoring committee on syndicate, which takes report from the Deputy Commissioners and SPs of the districts on daily basis.

He said 450 cattle

were rescued and 55 smugglers were arrested from different places of the state this month, showing the government's "zero tolerance" to any form of syndicate.

On Congress MP Pradyut Bordoloi's allegation that coal syndicate is continuing with support from the Chief Minister's Office, Patowary dismissed the charge as baseless.

"Bordoloi was a minister and MLA for 15 years. All know that there were 150 illegal check gates, which were shut down as soon as Sarbananda Sonowal came to power. Probably under Bordoloi's influence, coal syndicate in Margherita is going on," the minister said.

Margherita is the assembly constituency of Bordoloi.

Robbers summon businessman home, gun him down

DIPHU (ASSAM), JUN 24 (PTI): Assailants summoned an Assam businessman to his residence in Karbi Anglong district and shot him dead after assaulting his son and looting valuables from the house, police said on Monday.

An employee of the liquor businessman, identified as Mulsingh Rathode, was also injured in the attack that took place on Sunday night.

Around seven men barged into Rathode's residence at Khotkhoti, beat up his son and looted gold and money from the house, district

Superintendent of Police Gaurav Upadhyay told PTI.

They then forced the businessman's son to call his father home and as soon as he reached there, they shot him in the head with an AK-47 rifle and injured his employee before fleeing, Upadhyay said.

Rathode was taken to a hospital in neighbouring Dimapur of Nagaland where doctors declared him brought dead, he said.

An investigation into the incident has started, police said.

Import of plastic waste banned from August this year: Javadekar

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): The government has banned import of plastic waste from August 2019, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said in Rajya Sabha Monday while listing out steps taken to curb pollution.

Replying to a query during Question Hour, the minister informed that about 20,000 tonnes of plastic wastes get generated every day in the country and out of that only 13,000-14,000 tonnes are collected.

"We have taken a decision to ban imports of plastic waste from August 2019," Javadekar said.

The minister highlighted various steps taken by the government to protect environment and control air pollution.

Through school nursery, he said, children are taught to grow trees.

After the successful pilot projects, the government is taking up this on a large scale.

That apart, he said the government has taken a decision on fencing urban forest area and then converting them into forest with peoples participation.

Javadekar said the Centre has already notified six waste management rules in 2016, covering solid waste, plastic waste, e-waste, bio-medical waste, C&D waste and hazardous wastes.

The minister said that air pollution is a global

phenomenon with some city facing acute problems.

Javadekar highlighted that number of steps have been taken to curb air pollution in the national capital, including development of expressways to prevent 60,000 trucks entering into the city.

In reply to another query related to violation of norms by some state governments for widening of roads, the minister asked the member to write a letter regarding this and promised immediate action.

In a written reply, the minister said the World Health Organisation (WHO), from time to time, has been publishing estimates of mortality/morbidity attributable to environmental pollution.

"These estimates are, however, based on models, simulations and extrapolations. Though air pollution is one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments and associated diseases, there are no conclusive data available in the country to establish direct correlation of death/disease exclusively due to air pollution," Javadekar said.

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Pompeo in Saudi Arabia, Iran threatens more US drone attacks

DUBAI, JUN 24 (AP): US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo held talks Monday with the Saudi king and crown prince after days of mounting tensions following the downing of a US drone last week and after President Donald Trump pulled back from the brink of retaliatory military strikes on Iran.

Iran's naval commander, meanwhile, warned that Iranian forces would not hesitate to act again and shoot down more US surveillance drones that violate Iranian airspace.

The US denies the drone, valued at more than USD 100 million, violated Iranian airspace. Trump said he backed away from planned strikes after learning that 150 people would be killed but that military action remained an option.

On Monday, Pompeo held separate talks with King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the Saudi port city of Jiddah to discuss the escalation with Iran.

Pompeo wrote on Twitter that he had a "productive meeting" with King Salman and discussed "heightened tensions in the region and the need to promote maritime security" in the Strait of Hormuz near the Persian Gulf, through which roughly a fifth of the world's traded oil passes.

From the kingdom, Pompeo will travel to neighbouring United Arab Emirates, another close US ally.

The regional stops, made on his way to India, may be aimed at reassuring Washington's Sunni Gulf Arab allies that the White House remains committed to maintaining pressure on Shiite Iran following Trump's last-minute about face, which likely raised questions about US willingness to use force against the Islamic Republic.

In what it says are defensive moves, the US has built up its military presence around the Persian Gulf in recent weeks.

Iran's naval commander, Rear Admiral

Hossein Khanzadi issued a warning to Washington that Tehran is capable of shooting down other American spy drones that violate Iranian airspace.

Khanzadi spoke Monday during a meeting with a group of defense officials in Iran.

"We confidently say that the crushing response can always be repeated, and the enemy knows it," Khanzadi was quoted as saying by the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

Tensions have been escalating since Trump last year withdrew the US from a global nuclear deal with Iran and re-imposed economic sanctions on Iran.

A fresh round of US sanctions is to be announced later on Monday in a bid to force the Iranian leadership into talks.

Iran has decried the US sanctions, which essentially bar Iran from selling its oil internationally, as "economic terrorism".

Before boarding his flight to Saudi Arabia, Pompeo described the sanctions as a way to deny Iran "the resources to foment terror, to build out their nuclear weapon system, to build out their missile programme."

The hastily arranged Saudi visit by Pompeo, considered a hard-liner in the Trump administration, and the upcoming stop in the UAE come as both countries have expressed alarm over Iran's military reach.

Saudi Arabia and the US have accused Iran of being behind attacks on oil tankers near the Persian Gulf over the past several weeks, while the UAE has been urging diplomacy to avert a wider conflict.

On the eve of Pompeo's visit to the kingdom, Yemen's Iranian-allied rebels attacked a Saudi airport near the Saudi-Yemen border, killing a Syrian resident and wounding 21 other civilians, the Saudi military said.

The Houthi rebels claimed they used bomb-laden drones in the attack on the Abha airport, the second in

less than two weeks. Drones were also used to attack a Saudi oil pipeline last month.

Saudi Arabia has been at war with the rebel Houthis in Yemen for more than four years. The Houthis say the attacks targeting the kingdom are a response to relentless Saudi airstrikes on Yemen that have killed thousands.

Before his departure to Saudi Arabia, Pompeo said talks will include discussion on "how we can build out a global coalition, a coalition not only throughout the Gulf states, but in Asia and in Europe... to push back against the world's largest state sponsor of terror," referring to Iran.

But even as Pompeo delivered his tough talk, he echoed Trump in saying the US is prepared to negotiate with Iran, without preconditions, in a bid to ease tensions.

"They know precisely how to find us," Pompeo said.

Throughout the recent crisis, Trump has wavered between bellicose language and actions toward Iran and a more accommodating tone, including an offer for negotiations. Iran has said it is not interested in a dialogue with Trump.

Trump initially said Iran had made a "very big mistake" and that it was "hard to believe" that shooting down the drone last Thursday was not intentional.

But he also said over the weekend that he appreciated Iran's decision to not shoot down a manned US spy plane carrying 30 people.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has blamed the United States' "interventionist military presence" for fanning the flames.

US military cyber forces on Thursday launched a strike against Iranian military computer systems, according to US officials. The cyberattacks disabled Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps computer systems that controlled its rocket and missile launchers, the officials said.

‘Cry at beginning, smile at end’: Marta makes emotional Brazil plea

LE HAVRE (FRANCE), JUNE 24 (AFP): Brazil star Marta issued an emotional appeal to her heirs on Sunday, telling them they are responsible for the survival of the women's game in her football-obsessed country.

The 33-year-old Marta, nicknamed ‘Pele in a skirt’ by the Brazil great, is widely considered to be the best female player of all time.

However, her dream of winning a World Cup for the first time died again on Sunday in a 2-1 defeat to hosts France in the last 16 of this year's global showpiece.

“We’re asking for support, you have to cry at the beginning and smile at the end,” said Marta, the record World Cup scorer with 17 goals.

“You have to want more, train more, to be ready to play 90 minutes, plus 30 minutes extra-time and every minute.

“This is what I ask the girls,” she added before hailing fellow veterans Formiga and Cristiane who are also likely to have played in their last World Cups.

“Formiga is not forever, neither is Marta, neither is Cristiane. Women's football depends on you to survive. Think about it, savour it.”

On Sunday, hosts France survived a scare to beat Brazil in extra time and reach the quarter-finals when captain Amandine Henry scored a dramatic winner.

Lyon midfielder Henry struck in the 107th minute after Thaisa's equaliser for Brazil, following Valerie Gauvin's opener, had forced a 1-1 draw in 90 minutes.

France will face either reigning champions the United States or Spain in the last eight in Paris on Friday.

Pak court extends remand of Zardari's sister for 14 days in fake accounts case

ISLAMABAD, JUN 24 (PTI): An accountability court on Monday extended till July 8 the physical remand of Faryal Talpur, the sister of former president Asif Ali Zardari, in a case related to money laundering through fake bank accounts.

Talpur, 61, was arrested by the officials of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in Islamabad, days after the anti-graft body apprehended her brother and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairman Zardari on June 10.

The NAB presented Talpur before the court on Monday. Her counsel, Lateef Khosa, said that her client has nothing to do with Park Lane apartments and is not even its director, Geo Tv reported.

The accountability court extended her physical remand till July 8.

The NAB is investigating four cases where the former president and his sister are the prime accused.

Copa America starts anew in quarters, says Argentina's Messi

PORTO ALEGRE, JUN 24 (AFP): Argentina will start from afresh in the Copa America after averting disaster with Sunday's 2-0 victory over Qatar that sent them into the knock-out stages, star Lionel Messi said.

Goals from the Barcelona icon's forward partners Lautaro Martinez and Sergio Aguero were enough to propel Argentina from bottom of Group B to second and into a quarter-final meeting with Venezuela on Friday at Rio's Maracana stadium.

“The important thing was to win to keep going in the Copa, to get through the group stage,” said Messi, who will turn 32 on Monday.

“This will be an important boost for what's to come ... another Copa begins now.

“This victory must give us strength and make us grow as a team.”

Argentina's performance was far from pitch-perfect, but they were good enough to beat a limited Qatar side, who gifted them the opening goal after four minutes when Bassam Hicham played a suicidal ball across his own box straight to Martinez.

Messi admitted, though, that there were nerves in the Argentina camp.



“It's tough playing this kind of game due to the necessity, the obligation (to win), the fear of missing out.

“But beyond that we played well and went through, which is what matters.” Aguero, who was recalled after he was dropped for the 1-1 draw with Paraguay, had a mixed game alongside Messi and Martinez.

He worked hard to create chances for himself but lacked sharpness and precision in his finishing, until his brilliant goal where he burst past two defenders before shooting high into the far corner.

“Luckily I was picked to start and luckily at times the three of us worked well together and we won,” he said.

- NEED TO IMPROVE - Argentina will now play a side who beat them 3-1 in a friendly in Madrid in March.

“They're quite tough opponents who counter-attack really well and we'll try to be wise to that,” said Aguero.

Coach Lionel Scaloni gave a sober assessment of Argentina's form after a third straight match in which they struggled for long periods and failed to entirely convince.

“We're satisfied be-

cause we're in the next round ... but we have to improve in every aspect,” he said.

“Today at times the team played well and rid itself of fear.” And Scaloni hit out at claims back home that the squad was divided.

“As long as we're playing in the Copa, everyone's pulling for the same side. There must be total unanimity,” he said.

“Many players aren't even 25 yet and it's a positive thing for them to have played in this match.” However, he was scathing about the state of the Arena do Gremio pitch in Porto Alegre,

which will host a both a quarter-final and a semi-final.

“You can't play on this pitch. Even so we tried to play, to press high, we played very well in the second half.” He had kind words for Qatar, who head home after a draw and two defeats from their three group games.

“They're a very worthy team with a great future, with young players,” he said.

The Asian champions, who will host the 2022 World Cup, have been invited back to next year's Copa America, which will be played in Argentina and Colombia.

Argentina, Uruguay, Peru through to Copa America quarter-finals

PORTO ALEGRE, JUN 24 (AFP): An early goal by Lautaro Martinez and Sergio Aguero's late second gave Argentina a 2-0 win over Qatar on Sunday that qualified them for the Copa America quarter-finals.

Already-qualified Colombia beat Paraguay 1-0 in the other Group B match to secure a place in the last eight for both Peru, who finished third in Group A, and Uruguay, currently second in Group C.

Argentina, who finish second in Group B behind Colombia, will play Venezuela at Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana stadium in the quarter-finals, while tournament debutants and guests Qatar are out.

Paraguay, on two points, must wait and see what happens in Monday's Group C clash between Japan and Ecuador before finding out if they qualify as one of the two best third-place finishers.

Peru, with four points, are sure of that while only a draw between Japan and Ecuador would see Paraguay progress.

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni recalled Manchester City forward Aguero for the crunch tie while Martinez kept his place at the expense of Angel Di Maria.

Asian champions Qatar made a calamitous start when a weak headed clearance from Tarek Salman fell to Martinez 12 yards out, but the Inter Milan forward sent his volley over the top.

He didn't have to wait long for another chance though as Bassam Hisham played a ball across



his box and straight to the feet of the Argentina forward, who scuffed a shot into the bottom corner after just four minutes.

“The goal came early and that allowed us to approach the game with greater calmness,” said Martinez.

“There was pressure, we had to win to progress and we're happy. Now we have to work hard.”

With the weight was lifted from Argentina's shoulders, they played with a freedom expected of a side boasting talents such as Aguero and five-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi.

Qatar played with limited ambition but their talented forwards looked dangerous when they did venture into the final third.

Hasan Khalid Al Haydos got in behind the Argentina backline and tried to chip Franco Armani but the goalkeeper got a touch to divert the ball

behind, although the linesman's flag was up and it wouldn't have counted.

“We paid for inexperience, we started two matches by conceding goals from unnecessary actions,” said Qatar's Spanish coach Felix Sanchez, alluding to their opening tie against Paraguay when they also conceded in the fourth minute.

“We played a great team that knew they had to win, they took their first chance really well. It was our mistake.”

- AGUERO INDUSTRY REWARDED -

Messi burst into life with an acceleration towards Qatar's area before slipping a pass to Aguero, who dragged his left-footed shot wide under pressure.

Qatar were sporadically dangerous on the break and Portuguese-born Ro-Ro stole in at the back post to

meet a Karim Boudiaf cross but couldn't direct his volley on target.

Up the other end, Nicolas Otamendi headed over from close range when it looked easier to score.

Argentina almost scored a second after Qatar goalkeeper Saad Al-Sheeb spilled a header by Martinez causing a scramble in the box, but neither Aguero nor Martinez could poke the ball home.

Iraq-born Hisham almost made amends for his earlier gaffe with a free-kick at the end of the half but his shot, which passed through the Argentina wall, clipped the outside of the upright.

Another direct Messi run set up Aguero but his shot was deflected over by Algeria-born Boualem Khoukhi.

Aguero then drew a save from Al-Sheeb with a shot from out-

side the area.

Qatar made few chances but when they did, Akram Afif snatched at his effort from distance when a smarter move would have been to play in a runner from midfield.

Aguero finally scored the goal his industry deserved with a purposeful run past two defenders before sending a cross-shot into the far bottom corner eight minutes from time.

Already guaranteed of winning the group, Colombia's Portuguese coach Carlos Queiroz made 10 changes to his line-up, with only Juventus forward Juan Cuadrado retaining his place.

They took the lead just after the half-hour mark when Gustavo Cuellar scored through goalkeeper Roberto Fernandez's legs from a tight angle.

In the second half Colombia had a goal and a penalty award chalked off by VAR.

‘Don’t blame me for boring races,’ says Hamilton after another F1 procession

LE CASTELLET (FRANCE), JUN 24 (AFP): A triumphant Lewis Hamilton told his and F1's critics Sunday not to blame the drivers for “boring” processionary races, but instead to turn their focus on the rule-makers.

The defending five-time world champion produced a flawless demonstration of racing to triumph from pole position for the second year in succession Sunday's French Grand Prix.

In a largely uneventful race on a sweltering afternoon at the Le Castellet circuit, he led his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas home as they extended the Silver Arrows winning run to 10 races.

It was hardly entertaining stuff for the fans at the track or the global television audience and Hamilton warned that the sport needed to consider making “serious changes”.

Speaking after his 79th career victory, he told reporters they should consider who should be blamed before drawing any conclusions.

“Don't point fingers at the drivers because we don't write the rules,” said Hamilton.

“We have nothing to do with the money and all that kind of stuff.

“You should put the pressure on the people at the head who should be doing their job. I think they are trying to, but for many, many years they have made bad decisions.”

Hamilton's relentless success in a dominant Mercedes team has been celebrated in some quarters as an era of greatness, but others -- including the British driver -- have said they want to see more on-track battles and closer competition.

As a keen follower of other racing series, including Indycars in the United States, Hamilton has often said Formula One needs to change its technical rule-book to encourage

‘Don’t blame me for boring races,’ says Hamilton after another F1 procession

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Speaking after his 79th career victory, he told reporters they should consider who should be blamed before drawing any conclusions.

“Don't point fingers

much closer racing.

He explained that he and Renault driver Nico Hulkenberg last week attended a meeting with Formula One Management (FOM) and the sport's ruling body, the International Motoring Federation (FIA).

At this meeting, he said they discussed the plans for an overhaul of the rules for 2021 and the introduction of cars that can tolerate the close proximity of other cars in races, without aerodynamic problems.

He said he welcomed the fact that the sport's ruling bodies were open to hearing the views of the drivers.

“I had nothing to gain by going there, but if there is anything I can do to help, I will,” he added.

“They've been making all these decisions and never had a driver's input once. So, if that can be decisive and help the fans to get better racing, then I would be proud.”

He would not be drawn to say he had confidence that the initiative would result in the necessary dramatic changes to transform the racing and eliminate dull processions.

But, he said: “I have faith that it's going to be better and I really hope so. It was encouraging that they allow us to be there and they're really welcoming.

“I hope they will continue to have us there -- a couple of us drivers each time.” He added that he remained optimistic.

“I think they've extended their decision on making the rules and I think they need to be because they are nowhere near where it should be.

“They've got to make some serious changes to the decision they have already made for how 2021 should be.

“But I am encouraged that Ross (Brawn, F1 director) and his team are working, for the first time, on a real aero package that change its technical rule-book to encourage

at the drivers because we don't write the rules,” said Hamilton.

“We have nothing to do with the money and all that kind of stuff.

“You should put the pressure on the people at the head who should be doing their job. I think they are trying to, but for many, many years they have made bad decisions.” Hamilton's relentless success in a dominant Mercedes team has been celebrated in some quarters as an era of greatness, but others -- including the British driver -- have said they want to see more on-track battles and closer competition.

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Ailing Pakistan gets \$3 billion bailout from Qatar

ISLAMABAD/DOHA, JUN 24 (PTI): Cash-strapped Pakistan on Monday secured a bailout package of USD 3 billion from oil-rich Qatar, a day after Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad concluded his visit to Islamabad and agreed to cooperate in the fields of trade, anti-money laundering and curbing terror financing. The Gulf state is the fourth nation that has come forward to rescue Pakistan from default during past 11 months as the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan tries to overcome a ballooning balance-of-payments crisis.

Earlier, China gave USD 4.6 billion in shape of deposits and commercial loans and Saudi Arabia provided USD 3 billion cash deposit and USD 3.2 billion oil facility on deferred payments. The United Arab Emirates also provided USD 2 billion cash deposit.

Qatar's financial assistance was announced by its foreign minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani.

"Upon the directives of HH the Amir, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs announces of new investments in the form of deposits and direct investments worth a total of QR3 billion in the Islamic Republic of Pa-

kistan," the official Qatar News Agency tweeted, quoted the minister as saying.

"The Qatari-Pakistani economic partnership will amount to 9 billion. Qatar affirms its aspiration for further development in the relations between the two countries at all political, economic, sports and cultural levels," he said.

Advisor to Pakistan Prime Minister on Finance Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh confirmed the Qatari financial help through his Twitter handle.

"I want to thank the Emir of Qatar HRH Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani for announcing 3 billion in deposits and direct investments for Pakistan and for Qatar's affirmation to further develop relations between the two countries", Shaikh tweeted.

On Sunday, Pakistan conferred the visiting Qatari Emir with the 'Nishan-e-Pakistan', the country's highest civil honour.

Apart from stepping up cooperation in trade and economy, Pakistan and Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of exchange of financial intelligence related to money laundering and curbing terrorism financing.

Australian Islamic State orphans rescued from Syria camp

SYDNEY, JUN 24 (AFP): Eight orphans of Australian Islamic State fighters have been spirited out of a camp in Syria, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Monday, in an apparent U-turn.

The children and grandchildren of two notorious jihadis are now in the care of Australian officials, he said in a statement.

The children are believed to be aged between two and 17 and were living in a camp in northern Syria -- making consular access all but impossible.

Morrison previously indicated his government would only help citizens if they approached an embassy or consulate but appeared to have had a change of heart.

"The fact that parents put their children into harm's way by taking them into a war zone was a despicable act," Morrison said in a statement.

"However, children should not be punished for the crimes of their parents." The group includes three surviving children and two grandchildren of Sydney-born Khaled Sharrouf -- who came to prominence after posting a photo of one of his sons holding the head of a Syrian soldier.

There are also three children of Yasin Rizvic who travelled from Australia to Syria with his wife.

Both Islamic State fighters are presumed dead.

Morrison did not name the children or elaborate on how they were removed, but confirmed they were

"repatriated from the conflict zone into the care of Australian government officials".

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported that the children had been moved to a country neighbouring Syria.

Their case had gained widespread attention after the grandmother of the Sharrouf children -- 17-year-old heavily pregnant Zaynab, her younger sister Hoda, their eight-year-old brother Hamzeh, and Zaynab's two young children Ayesha, three, and Fatima, two -- had pleaded with Canberra to bring them home.

Grandmother Karen Nettleton even travelled to the camp earlier this year to meet them but was rebuffed by authorities, and Morrison said he did not want to put Australian lives at risk.

The prime minister on Monday repeated his concerns, adding that "repatriating these children was not a decision the Australian government made lightly".

"Australia's national security and the safety of our people and personnel have always been our most important considerations in this matter," he said.

The fate of foreign fighters and their families has become a significant problem for governments as the conflict against IS draws to a close.

Several European countries, including France and Belgium, have repatriated children from Syria in recent months.

China says it 'won't allow' G20 discussion on Hong Kong

BEIJING, JUN 24 (PTI): China said on Monday it would not allow the G-20 nations to discuss the mass protests in Hong Kong during their summit this week, as US President Donald Trump plans to raise the issue during his meeting with President Xi Jinping in Japan.

Hong Kong has been rocked by major protests over a bill that

would allow people to be extradited to the mainland to face trial in courts controlled by the Communist party.

It triggered violence when police fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse the crowds. The extradition bill and police reaction to the protests drew international criticism from rights groups.

Following histor-

ic protests, the Hong Kong government retracted plans to bring about the controversial law.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam also indefinitely suspended debate on the issue. But protesters are demanding that she formally withdraw the proposed changes to the extradition laws. Some also want Lam to resign.China said it

would oppose any attempt by the US or any other country to raise the current civil strife in Hong Kong during G-20 summit on June 27-28 in Osaka, Japan.

The issue is expected to be raised by Trump during his meeting with Xi as well as other G-20 members at the summit.

China's Assistant Foreign Minister Zhang Jun said China

will not allow the issue to be raised at the meeting.

G-20 is a platform to discuss global economy issues. It focuses on the global trade finance and economic issues, he said.

"One thing I can tell you, Hong Kong will not be discussed as an issue at the G-20 summit we will not allow that scenario to happen," he said.

Hong Kong is a special region of China and no foreign country has the right to interfere in Hong Kong's affairs, he said.

Asked what if Trump raises the issue, he said, "Hong Kong affairs are purely internal affairs of China we don't allow any country or any individual to interfere in Hong Kong in anyway".


GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
SIKKIM STATE TEACHERS' RECRUITMENT BOARD
GANGTOK - 737101
Ref. No: 24 /SSSTRB/19 Dated: 24 /06/2019
NOTICE

On the basis of the Written Examination held on 26th August 2018, the following candidates in order of Roll Nos. given below are declared qualified for the Viva-voce (Interview) and Classroom Demonstration for selection to the post of **Primary Teacher**

PRT FHM/TA							
SL.NO.	ROLL NO.	SL.NO.	ROLL NO.	SL.NO.	ROLL NO.	SL.NO.	ROLL NO.
1	18211001	27	1821054	53	1821077	79	1821023
2	18211002	28	1821055	54	1821078	80	1821024
3	18211003	29	1821056	55	1821079	81	1821025
4	18211004	30	1821057	56	1821080	82	1821026
5	18211005	31	1821058	57	1821081	83	1821027
6	18211006	32	1821059	58	1821082	84	1821028
7	18211007	33	1821060	59	1821083	85	1821029
8	18211008	34	1821061	60	1821084	86	1821030
9	18211009	35	1821062	61	1821085	87	1821031
10	18211010	36	1821063	62	1821086	88	1821032
11	18211011	37	1821064	63	1821087	89	1821033
12	18211012	38	1821065	64	1821088	90	1821034
13	18211013	39	1821066	65	1821089	91	1821035
14	18211014	40	1821067	66	1821090	92	1821036
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16	18211016	42	1821069	68	1821092	94	1821038
17	18211017	43	1821070	69	1821093	95	1821039
18	18211018	44	1821071	70	1821094	96	1821040
19	18211019	45	1821072	71	1821095	97	1821041
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22	18211022	48	1821075	74	1821098	100	1821044
23	18211023	49	1821076	75	1821099	101	1821045
24	18211024	50	1821077	76	1821100	102	1821046
25	18211025	51	1821078	77	1821101	103	1821047
26	18211026	52	1821079	78	1821102	104	1821048

PRT LEPCHA							
SL. NO.	ROLL NO.	SL. NO.	ROLL NO.	SL. NO.	ROLL NO.	SL. NO.	ROLL NO.
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133	18211268	154	18211269	175	18211270	196	18211271
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140	18211296	161	18211297	182	18211298	203	18211299
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142	18211304	163	18211305	184	18211306	205	18211307
143	18211308	164	18211309	185	18211310	206	18211311
144	18211312	165	18211313	186	18211314	207	18211315
145	18211316	166	18211317	187	18211318	208	18211319
146	18211320	167	18211321	188	18211322	209	18211323
147	18211324	168	18211325	189	18211326	210	18211327
148	18211328	169	18211329	190	18211330	211	18211331
149	18211332	170	18211333	191	18211334	212	18211335
150	18211336	171	18211337	192	18211338	213	18211339
151	18211340	172	18211341	193	18211342	214	18211343

PRT LIMBOO							
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3	18210600	23	18210530	43	18210487	63	18210489
4	18210602	24	18210531	44	18210488	64	18210490
5	18210603	25	18210532	45	18210489	65	18210491
6	18210604	26	18210533	46	18210490	66	18210492
7	18210607	27	18210534	47	18210491	67	18210493
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10	18210612	30	18210537	50	18210494	70	18210496
11	18210613	31	18210538	51	18210495	71	18210497
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13	18210615	33	18210540	53	18210497	73	18210499
14	18210616	34	18210541	54	18210498	74	18210500
15	18210617	35	18210542	55	18210499	75	18210501
16	18210618	36	18210543	56	18210500	76	18210502
17	18210619	37	18210544	57	18210501	77	18210503
18	18210620	38	18210545	58	18210502	78	18210504
19	18210621	39	18210546	59	18210503	79	18210505
20	18210622	40	18210547	60	18210504	80	18210506

PRT LIMBOO							
SL. NO.	ROLL NO.	SL. NO.	ROLL NO.	SL. NO.	ROLL NO.	SL. NO.	ROLL NO.
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102	18211355	156	18211359	210	18211363	264	18211367
103	18211356	157	18211360	211	18211364	265	18211368
104	18211358	158	18211363	212	18211364	266	18211369
105	18211359	159	18211364	213	18211365	267	18211370
106	18211362	160	18211365	214	18211366	268	18211371
107	18211363	161	18211366	215	18211367	269	18211372
108	18211364	162	18211367	216	18211368	270	18211373
109	18211366	163	18211368	217	18211369	271	18211374
110	18211368	164	18211369	218	18211370	272	18211375
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113	18211372	167	18211373	221	18211373	275	18211378
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115	18211375	169	18211375	223	18211375	277	18211380
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118	18211378	172	18211378	226	18211378	280	18211383
119	18211380	173	18211379	227	18211379	281	18211384
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123	18211385	177	18211383	231	18211383	285	18211388
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128	18211390	182	18211388	236	18211388	290	18211393
129	18211393	183	18211389	237	18211389	291	18211394
130	18211394	184	18211390	238	18211390	292	18211395
131	18211395	185	18211391	239	18211391	293	18211396

Christina Aguilera celebrates 20 years of 'Genie in a Bottle'

LOS ANGELES, JUN 24 (PTI): It's 20 years since Christina Aguilera's hit single "Genie in a Bottle" released and the pop star says she is grateful for all the love and support.

The 1999 song that went on to become a chartbuster was the lead single of Aguilera's self-titled debut album, which also received favourable reviews.

"Hi lovelies! Today marks 20 years since #GenieInABottle was released... Got me feeling all types of emotional!"

"At just 18 years old, I remember coming home from Japan and seeing that it had reached #1 on the Billboard charts and feeling so grateful and happy that you guys loved it as much as I did. Thank you thank you thank you for riding with me all these years. My fighters, I love you!" Aguilera wrote in an Instagram post on June 22.

She also shared a clip with rushes from the track's video and the behind-the-scenes of its recording and making.

"Genie in a Bottle" was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), having sold more than 1.4 million copies in the US.



Cole Sprouse had crush on Jennifer Aniston while working on 'Friends'

LOS ANGELES, JUN 24 (PTI): Cole Sprouse says he had a crush on Jennifer Aniston while he was working on "Friends" as a child actor.

The "Riverdale" star featured as Ben, the son of Ross Geller (played by David Schwimmer), when he was around nine years old.

Sprouse, 26, recalled feeling "intimidated" by Aniston, who essayed the role of Rachel Green, so much so that he would forget his dialogues.

"I'm pretty sure I fell in love with Jennifer Aniston, which the whole world had at that point. But I do remember being quite intimidated around her, because of that. I remember blanking on my lines, and having a kind of stage fright when she sat next to me on the couch in one episode.

"I remember there was a cameraman who was like, 'Little boy's got a crush,' or I forget what they said. Of course, I turned bright red. But I do remember feeling like I fell in love," he told Today.com.

"Friends" was the actor's first role in which he did not appear with his twin brother, Dylan.



Lakme Fashion Week announces new batch of Gen Next designers



MUMBAI, JUN 24 (PTI): The Lakme Fashion Week (LFW) on Monday announced the fresh line-up of Gen Next designers, who are set to showcase their collections at the upcoming Winter/Festive 2019 edition.

The six designers who will get an opportunity to share their artistic vision at the fashion gala are Sahib Bhatia, Ankita Srivastava, Akanksha Aggarwal from New Delhi, along with Gaurav from Ghazipur, Mumbai's Manjushree Saikia and Stanzin Palmo hailing from Ladakh.

While Bhatia's range is inspired by textures and pushes the envelope of darkness without feeling basic, Gaurav's collection is based on the shape, texture and feel of a banana leaf.

In her collection, Srivastava will showcase the diversity in women - "who believe and love themselves and are not afraid to show their strengths as well as their vulnerabilities".

Aggarwal's clothing line epitomises self-empowering women of the latter day.

Honouring the efforts of artisans, Saikia will explore "timeless silhouettes and im-

pression of handmade textiles" through her collection.

Palmo will celebrate the design process that focuses on weaves, work of artisans and unexplored techniques of his home, Ladakh.

"Gen Next is a platform which supports fresh talent and their innovative approach towards fashion. This season is more special as we have received a large number of entries not just from Mumbai and New Delhi but also from other parts of the country. Gen next is the future of fashion and we look forward to seeing the creative collections of the winners on the runway this Winter/ Festive 2019," Ashwath Swaminathan, Head of Innovations, Lakme in a statement said.

Jaspreet Chandok, Vice President and Head of Fashion, IMG Reliance said they are looking forward to the upcoming edition of LFW 2019.

"We are always on the lookout for fresh talent with a flair for innovation. We have had some exceptional talent come to the forefront and are excited to see what these young designers bring to the ramp," Chandok said.

Michael Jackson's legacy will continue to live on: Janet Jackson



LONDON, JUN 24 (PTI): Janet Jackson may have maintained silence on the controversial "Leaving Neverland" documentary, which focuses on sex abuse allegations against Michael Jackson, but the singer believes her brother's legacy will continue through his music.

In the HBO documentary, Wade Robson and James Safechuck alleged that Jackson groomed and molested them during their childhood.

In an interview with The Sunday Times Magazine, Janet did not comment on the allegations but said, "It (legacy) will continue. I love it when I see kids emulating him, when adults still listen to his music. It just lets you know the impact that my family has had on the world."

Jackson died on June 25, 2009 at the age of 50 following an overdose of the powerful

anesthetic Propofol.

His family members, including nephew Taj Jackson, have supported him over the child sexual abuse allegations.

The legendary pop singer's brothers, Marlon and Jackie, claimed that "Leaving Neverland" documentary did not present any evidence to prove the crime.

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EXO'S D.O TO RELEASE SOLO BEFORE ENLISTING: In May, EXO's D.O shocked fans by announcing that he will be enlisting in the army on 1 July. The 26-year-old vocalist and acclaimed actor penned a letter to EXO-Ls informing fans his wish to enlist quietly, without any big celebration. Fortunately, EXO-Ls will get to savour a "thank you" gift from D.O as SM Entertainment confirmed that he will be releasing a solo track before he enlists. A representative from SM Entertainment stated, "D.O. recently finished recording his solo track. It will be released through SM STATION."

ARIES: Disrupt the status quo on Saturday, Aries, but aim for mild tremors instead of extreme shockwaves. With the Sun and moon trading friendly fire, it's obvious to everyone that change is necessary. But leadership is sorely needed to reveal the next stage of the game. That's where you come in: Make proactive suggestions or simply lead by example!

TAURUS: ETrue success doesn't simply hinge on climbing tirelessly to the top. Saturday's evocative angle between the Sun and moon points you down a more soulful path. Pause from "doing, doing, doing" and think big picture. Beyond putting food on the table, how is your work helping other people and the world at large?

GEMINI: Start your weekend on an inspired note! Pull a motivational or spiritual book off the shelf for some morning reading. Try a little "bibliomancy": opening to a random page and letting the words be your divine directive for the day. Avoid complainers like the plague and seek "high-vibrational" groups of people to spend time with,

especially if you could use an infusion of positive energy.

CANCER: Trying to get a straight answer over the last three weeks has been nearly impossible, thanks to communicator Mercury's backspin through your truth-telling ninth house. You can now breathe easy as the messenger planet turns direct and forges ahead. No more dancing around an issue—insist on the complete story. Steer clear of even slight exaggerations and aim to be fully authentic. Since the ninth house also rules travel, you've got a cosmic thumbs-up for a winter getaway.

LEO: Today's cosmos shine a light on hidden realities as expressive Mercury turns direct in your covert eighth house. Over the past three weeks, while the messenger planet was retrograde, you've held your cards close to your vest, but guarding one secret could be taking a toll on your psyche. Mercury's forward motion could attract a worthy confidante—which is a good start to releasing your burden.

VIRGO: Your routine-driven sign isn't

generally considered erratic, but Mercury's retrograde through your relationship house over the past three weeks might have made you flip-flop. Perhaps a BFF hasn't had much time for you since finding "The One" or an ex resurfaced without an offer of commitment. Enough already!

LIBRA: Channel-surfing or downward-dogging? If you've been doing more of the former over the past three weeks, you can thank Mercury, which has been retrograde (backward) in your self-care sector. But don't throw in the towel! Today, the quicksilver planet turns direct, helping you find sustainable routines.

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

SAGITTARIUS: Baby, it might (still) be

cold outside, but it wouldn't hurt to open a few windows and air out Chateau Sagittarius. With Mercury retrograde in your domestic fourth house since March 5, home and family matters might have felt a bit dazed and confused. Your survival instincts kicked in, causing you to retreat from the insanity. You can breathe a sigh of relief and re-engage today, as Mercury turns direct. Call a truce with your roomies, make up with your S.O., seek out a solution with your mother!

CAPRICORN: Banish that either-or thinking, Capricorn. After a confusing three-week Mercury retrograde in your communication house, the messenger planet powers forward today. While you prefer to pour your (prodigious) energy into one thing at a time, this approach may not be serving you. Don't be afraid to dip your toe into multiple ponds, like those librarian-slash-actors or entrepreneur-slash-activists. Commuting or living in two cities is even a possibility for some earthquake Goats.

AQUARIUS: Loosen those purse strings, Aquarius. Since Mercury went retrograde

on March 5, you may have had a few budgetary breakdowns. But the messenger planet resumes forward motion today, making it safe to once again enjoy your hard-earned cash. This is a perfect time to revisit (and if necessary, revamp) your plans to strike a healthy balance between saving and spending. Invest in your greatest resource: yourself! A personal growth workshop, meditation retreat or life-coaching sessions can awaken your creativity and usher in a tsunami of entrepreneurial ideas.

PISCES: Vote with your dollar on Saturday, Pisces. An auspicious Sun-moon angle sends a reminder of how loudly money talks. Perhaps you'll choose socially responsible companies over those with murky or questionable practices. Supporting a small business owner can keep the unique character of your neighborhood thriving. This cosmic confab could inspire you to do business in different ways yourself or even earmark some of your earnings for a very specific cause you want to support.