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SummitTIMES

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Karmapa's visit to Sikkim made possible due to CM and SDF Govt's efforts: KT Gyaltsen

**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:**

Sikkim Democratic Front is contending that Sangha MLA, Sonam Lama, has been misinforming and misleading the people of Sikkim with false, deceptive and dishonest statements on the lifting of travel restrictions on the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje which has opened the doors for him to be able to visit Sikkim.

The SDF has stressed that the credit for Karmapa's upcoming visit to Sikkim goes to Chief Minister Pawan Chamling

and his government.

Addressing a press conference here today, SDF spokesperson, KT Gyaltsen, mentioned that SDF government, since very long back, has been placing the request to the Centre to allow the Karmapa visit Sikkim.

He added that the Centre finally allowed for rules to be relaxed paving the way for the Karmapa to visit Sikkim due to the continuous and honest efforts of the SDF government and the CM.

He mentioned that the Centre granted the permission

due to the State Government's good relations with the Central Government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He further stated that the Centre allowed the Karmapa to visit Sikkim keeping in mind the peace and tranquility in the State maintained by the SDF government.

Mr Gyaltsen pointed out that the opposition parties continuously accused the SDF of not being sincere to the cause despite knowing that the issue falls under the Centre's jurisdiction.

"Now, when the Centre has

finally allowed the Karmapa to visit Sikkim, they are trying to take the credit," he added.

He further said that SDF has never mixed religion with politics and added that the CM has always worked honestly and earnestly in the interest of Sikkim and its people.

"On behalf of the people of Sikkim, we would like to express our deep gratitude to the CM for his leadership, continuous efforts and hard work for working towards bringing the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje to Sikkim," Mr Gyaltsen expressed.

ASSCWA condemns State Govt's job reservation for Weaker Sections of the Society

**ASSOC
PROTESTS NEW
RESERVATION
AFTER SC QUOTA
WAS REDUCED**

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 24 JUN:**

The All Sikkim Scheduled Caste Welfare Association [ASSCWA], in a press release issued today, has condemned the State Government's decision of providing 2% job reservation to the Weaker Sections of the Society [Kami, Damai, Sarki not categorized as SCs]

saying it was 'illegal' and 'unconstitutional'.

The release, issued to ASSCWA president, Shekhar Sewa, argues that the recent notification to provide 2% job reservation to communities not recognized as SCs was a matter of grave concern for the SC communities of the State.

Mr Sewa writes that the 2% job reservation given to the unrecognized section of the society is taken out from the 6% reservation thus far given to the SC.

"We have no problems

if the State Government provides reservation to the weaker section for their upliftment but we will not accept the proposed 2% reservation given to them from the constitutionally protected reservation of the SC community," the release reads.

"Neither the State Government nor the Central Government or even the President of India can deny the constitutional rights of the SC communities of the State," the release further states.



KASS PAINTING DRIVE AT SARASWATI VIDYANIKETAN CONCLUDES

SINGTAM, 24 JUN: A beautification/ painting drive at Saraswati Vidya Niketan, Malbasey in South Sikkim initiated by Krypton Arts Society Singtam [KASS] concluded today. The first phase of the painting drive had begun on 17 June last week. The team, led by KASS working president, Kripesh Singh, finished the beautification of the school building which is scheduled to be inaugurated on 28 June. Till now, more than eight schools have invited KASS to beautify their school premises with their artwork. [Yogen Thatal]

SFA B-Division S-League begins today

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN: Sikkim Football Association's B-Division S-League 2018 is scheduled to kick-off at Paljor Stadium here at 2 pm on Monday.

A total of five clubs have qualified for this league and will participate in the tournament which will conclude on 04 July 2018.

The clubs in the league are: Sikkim Police FC, D'zongri FC, Howlers FC, Renzong FC and Kumar Sporting Club.



IT Deptt conducts workshop on cyber security

GANGTOK, 24 JUN [IPR]: A workshop on 'Cyber Security - Cyber Crisis Table Top Exercise' was conducted by Information Technology Department

in collaboration with Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) at ATI in Gangtok today.

CERT-In, which is a statutory organization

under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India, is dedicated to raise security awareness

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England thrash Panama to move into last 16 with Belgium



NIZHNIY NOVGOROD (RUSSIA), JUNE 24 (AFP): England recorded their biggest ever World Cup finals win by thrashing an ill-disciplined Panama 6-1 on Sunday to breeze through to the knockout stage after two games.

A hat-trick from captain Harry Kane -- which means he is now the leading scorer in the tournament with five goals -- two from John Stones, his first ever in an England shirt, and

a beauty from Jesse Lingard completed the crushing victory.

The result also confirmed Belgium's qualification for the knockout stage and means Panama exit the tournament alongside Tunisia.

The records tumbled for England on an easy afternoon by the River Volga.

- RECORDS TUMBLE -

The rout was the first time England have scored more than

turn to pg02

Fake news proving deadly in India: BBC

ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, JUN 24 (PTI): Fake news spread instantaneously over WhatsApp chat groups and Facebook is causing a firestorm in India and resulting in the loss of lives, warns the BBC in a new investigative report from Bangalore.

The British public broadcaster is set to highlight the issue in a report to be aired on BBC World News on Tuesday centred around the death of Kaluram Bachanram, who was beaten to death by a mob in Bangalore after WhatsApp rumours convinced people that he was a child kidnapper.

"Kalu became a victim of India's fake news firestorm Across India eight lives have been lost in this latest wave of fallacy defeating fact. Fake news is a challenge we all grapple with but here it is proving deadly," the BBC correspondent says in his report.

The BBC has been working to combat the issue of fake news through initiatives such as "BBC Reality Check", a political

discourse fact-checking service. It was launched during the European Union (EU) referendum in 2016 for both TV and online and has now been made permanent and covers a wide range of issues.

"Fake news is a big problem and it's vital for democracy that ordinary people are able to tell truth from fiction in the news they read, watch, and hear," said Jim Egan, CEO of BBC Global News Ltd.

He noted: "Trusted news will be as important as ever as we approach the elections in India next year, however a recent BBC 'Value of News' study found that 83 per cent of Indian news consumers are concerned about fake news.

"We experienced the reality of this problem recently when a fake survey on Karnataka polls circulated on WhatsApp with BBC News branding and we were forced to put out a statement making clear that it did not come from the BBC."

BBC News said it is doing a number of things to empower people to look at the

stories they read with a critical eye. Slow news is more of a focus alongside breaking news, with more in-depth analysis of topics with data, investigations and expertise to provide context around the issues.

All these initiatives are part of BBC News' wider investment drive in India, creating 157 new jobs in the region and making Delhi the BBC's largest bureau outside the UK.

The Delhi bureau will become a video, TV and digital content production hub for the South Asia region, with the closest technological specifications to the corporation's headquarters in London.

The expansion began with the launch of four new Indian services Telugu, Gujarati, Marathi and Punjabi in October last year.

In addition, BBC StoryWorks, the global content marketing team within BBC Global News, has expanded to India with staff now based in the country for the first time as part of wider growth across the Asia Pacific region, the public broadcaster said.

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Lightning kills 5 in West Bengal

KOLKATA, JUN 24 (PTI):

Five persons were killed and seven others injured in incidents of lightning strikes in Nadia and Bankura districts of West Bengal today, police said.

While three farmers were killed and five others injured at Gajna in Nadia district, two persons were killed and two others injured in the state's Bankura district, the police said.

In Nadia district, the three farmers died when they were working in a field during rain and thunderstorm. When they were taken to the Krishnaganj rural hospital, the three were declared brought dead, a police officer said.

The five injured were admitted to the Shaktinagar hospital, a police officer said.

In Bankura district a 65-year-old woman, a resident of Birsing village, was killed in a lightning strike when she was working in a field, the Superintendent of Police (SP) of Bankura, Sukhendu Hira, said.

A 37-year-old man was also killed in lightning strike in Manushmari under the jurisdiction of the same police station, the SP said.

Two others, both residents of Merasole, were injured due to lightning strike, he added.

Seedling distribution booths in West Sikkim

GANGTOK, 24 JUN [IPR]: West Territorial Forest Division has installed seedling distribution booths at Gyalshing, Dentam, Tashiding, Yuksom, Soreng and Sombaria as part of Paryavaran Mahotsav 2018.

The booths distribute saplings of trees, fruits, ornamental and flowering plants to public and panchayats.

More than 4,000 saplings have been distributed through these seedling booths, it is informed.



A plantation drive by Cheli Morcha on 23 Secondary School in was also conducted Jun at Kitam Senior South Sikkim.



SKM's Nari Ekikaran Yatra reaches Sang Khola

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's Nari Ekikaran Yatra reached Sang Khola in East Sikkim today where a meeting was conducted chaired by working president, Navin Karki, a press release informs.

An SKM press release informs that the meeting strongly condemned the 'ill-treatment' of SKM women-wing team by a group of women from the ruling party at Mickhola on Saturday.

The release contends that during the meeting, a 23-member

constituency-level committee women wing for Martam-Rumtek headed by Urgen Lama as the president was formed.

It is informed that five women party workers from SDF officially joined SKM during the meeting, as well.

Oppn focused on allegations to cover-up for its own lack of policies and progs, SDF counters

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Sikkim Democratic Front party spokesperson, TN Sharma, has said that the vision of SDF party and its government can be seen clearly in the State's development and transformation since the party came to power in 1994.

He further refuted and condemned the recent statement of SKM acting president, Kunga Nima Lepcha, of SDF lacking proper vision for Sikkim.

Refuting the insinuations, Mr Sharma, while addressing a press conference here in the capital today, said that it was SKM which lacked a vision for the State and its people.

Likewise, SDF spokesperson, Neeru Sewa, added that SDF has been working for the people of Sikkim with its clear vision, programmes, policies and principles since its inception.

She added that Sikkim has witnessed huge development and transformation in the 24 years of the SDF government in the State. The State government, she said, has fulfilled all the basic needs and aspirations of the people

here.

Ms Sewa stated that opposition parties in the State lack vision, programmes and policies for Sikkim.

"Their only agenda is to level baseless and false allegations against the SDF government and its leader," she added.

She stated that 2,060 people, including the frontline leadership of opposition parties, joined the SDF on Saturday after not receiving good leadership, programmes or policies in their earlier political parties.

She added that opposition parties have been keeping busy with irresponsible statements to mislead and deceive the innocent people of the State.

Ms Sewa mentioned that the participation of women in politics and jobs in earlier governments were almost negligible.

"SDF government has always worked for the protection, upliftment and welfare of women of Sikkim since its inception and now Sikkimese women are ahead in all sectors," she expressed.

She then detailed the various initiatives of the SDF government for the protection, upliftment

and welfare of Sikkimese women.

SDF publicity secretary, Amber Rai, spoke about various youth-centric programmes and policies of the SDF party for Sikkimese youths.

Mr Rai contended that other political parties in the State lack real programmes for the youth and focus instead on false promises.

He strongly refuted and condemned the allegations of there being an unemployment problem in the State as is being projected by opposition parties. He mentioned that unemployment was a problem if there were no opportunities available, which, he stressed, was not the case in Sikkim.

Responding to media queries, SDF Spokesperson, Bhim Dahal, said that Hamro Sikkim Party has no programmes or vision either and was hence focused on false allegations and irresponsible comments against the ruling party and its leader.

He added that even after the formation of the party, no clear picture has been shared about the leadership or programmes of the party.



Pilgrims throng Kamakhya temple in Assam to attend annual fair

GUWAHATI, JUN 24

(PTI): Amid tight vigil,

pilgrims and devotees from across the country and abroad have thronged the Kamakahya Temple atop the Nilachal Hill here to offer prayers on the occasion of the annual Ambubachi Mela.

The fair, promoted as an integral part of 'religious tourism' by the Assam government, began on June 22 with the closing of the temple doors for four days.

Huge number of devotees have flocked the temple, one of the 51 Shakti Pithas, to attend the festival, which was formally inaugurated by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on June 21.

The CM had said that the state government made elaborate arrangements for the devotees for their "safe, comfortable and memorable" stay here during the Ambubachi Mela.

He also hoped the devotees would pray to Goddess Kamakhya for her "blessings to empower the country through love, peace, mutual respect, trust and

cooperation".

The administration has taken measures to ensure smooth flow of devotees to and from the temple during the festival, including ferry services, health camps, cleanliness measures, security and surveillance, lodging arrangements and cultural events, a government official said.

Five major camps have been set up by the government to distribute food and water among the pilgrims, he added.

City Commissioner Hiren Nath said security has been tightened with the entire area divided into 14 sectors, six of which are being looked after by a Superintendent of Police-rank officer.

The authorities have also deployed nearly 200 volunteers, placed 400 CCTV cameras at strategic positions, set up three control rooms and several child rescue booths, he added.

Tourism Minister Chandan Brahma affirmed that his department has been taking various steps to promote and propagate 'religious and spiritual tourism' across the state

with the Kamakhya Temple being the prime focus, mainly due to its popularity among people.

The state government has plans to turn the festival as a major congregation of different faiths to create a "cohesive atmosphere" and send across the message of "integration", Assam Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC) Chairman Jayanta Malla Barua said. Prasenjit Sarmah, a priest at the temple, said the Mela has been organised in a meticulous manner this year, the premises are being continuously cleaned and measures are being taken for the convenience of the devotees.

During the four-day Ambubachi festival, Devi Kamakhya is believed to go through her annual cycle of menstruation.

The doors of the temple are closed for the devotees and regular rituals are suspended for four days. On the fifth day, devotees are allowed to enter the temple only after the 'shuddhi' or the ritualistic bath of the Devi.

England thrash Panama to move into last 16 with Belgium

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four goals at a World Cup finals since winning the tournament in 1966.

It was the first time in England's history they have managed five goals in a first half and Kane became the first England player to score a World Cup hat-trick since Gary Lineker in 1986.

It is also the first time they have qualified for the knockout stage since 2010, and the biggest victory so far at this tournament.

Intriguingly, it also means they are level on points, goal difference and goals scored with Belgium in Group G. The two sides meet in Kaliningrad on Thursday.

Despite the result, England started slowly and it was Panama who should have scored first in the fifth minute when Anibal Godoy blasted high and wide after the Central Americans carved open England's defence.

England took the lead in the eighth minute when John Stones powered home a header from a Kieran Trippier corner, held up by the referee because of wrestling and pushing by the Panamanians, something which was set to become a theme of the match.

England extended their lead from the penalty spot in the 22nd minute after Lingard was brought down in the box by two defenders.

That opened the floodgates.

Lingard scored the game's best goal in the 36th minute, a 20-yard curling shot past a helpless Jaime Penedo, then Stones added his second four minutes later, another header, following an intricate England free-kick.

Following Panama complaints, the goal was referred to VAR for offside but allowed to stand.

Kane then scored his second penalty in first-half injury time after he was almost farcically wrestled over at a corner, despite further Panama complaints.

At that stage, Panama, who received five bookings in their first match and three more here, threatened to implode, so bad was their lack of discipline.

Kane's hat-trick was completed in bizarre fashion in the 62nd minute after a Ruben Loftus-Cheek deflected off the English captain's heel into the net.

Again, the referee checked with VAR for offside, but once more the goal stood.

The second-half was largely an anti-climax, with Jordan Henderson and Raheem Sterling going close to making it seven.

However, the biggest cheer of the day was reserved for the 78th minute when Felipe Baloy scored Panama's first ever finals goal.

Railway connectivity important document of China visit: Oli

KATHMANDU, JUN 24 (PTI): Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli today said his visit to China has further enhanced the friendship and bilateral cooperation between the two countries in wide-ranging areas including cross-border rail and road connectivity.

Speaking to journalists upon his arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu after a six-day visit to China, Oli said the agreements on railways, energy, transportation, infrastructure development, tourism, among others, have prepared the outline for long-term economic assistance, the Kathmandu Post reported.

The prime minister said the agreement signed by Nepal and China for the assistance to railway connectivity is an important document of his visit.

Oli had held talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang, following which a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to build a strategic railway link connecting Tibet with Kathmandu through the arduous Himalayan terrain.

The new railway line will connect the Gyirong trading port in the city of Xigaze in Tibet with the Nepali capital Kathmandu.

Oli expressed hope that cross-border railway projects will give an impetus to cross-border connectivity between Nepal and China.

This is the second significant initiative by Oli, after he signed a transit trade treaty with China during his brief previous tenure in 2016 to reduce dependence on India for transportation of goods to Nepal.

The details of the railway agreement have not been made public.

Oli said he had visited the "northern neighbour to ensure collaboration with neighbours and to make the 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepalis' campaign successful."

He said his visit to China has further enhanced the friendship and political relations between the two countries.

Oli said he invited Chinese President Xi Jinping for a visit to Nepal and Xi has given assurance that he will visit the country in an appropriate time.

China has assured to provide necessary assistance and support for Nepal to fulfill its aim of attaining prosperity and development, he said.

During the visit, both sides agreed to implement the understandings and agreements reached between the two countries during Oli's visit to China in 2016. China, Oli said, has agreed to undertake exploration and feasibility study for natural gas and petroleum products in Nepal.

China has also agreed to help build necessary infrastructure for storage of petroleum products in Nepal.

China has been building rail, road and air links in the remote Tibet spending billions of dollars. A railway line was put in operation in 2014, linking Tibet's provincial capital Lhasa with Xigaze.

Xigaze which is also known Shegatse, is the closest Tibetan city to Nepal. Earlier, there were reports in the Chinese official media that the railway line was to be extended till India.

Meanwhile, former foreign minister Prakash Saran Mahat has said that Nepal should ask both India and China to build railway links to the country on grants instead of investing national budget in such projects.

A key leader of the main opposition Nepali Congress (NC), Mahat claimed that Nepal cannot pay back the loan if such a loan is taken for constructing railways in the country as the cost of such projects would exceed the annual capital expenditure of Nepal.

We should urge both China and India to build railways in Nepal under their grant assistance. We can't pay the loan back if we start constructing railway on our own it would need a huge investment and it would take decades or even a century to get returns from such mega projects, Mahat was quoted as saying by My Republica.

**Gangtok on
Monday,
25 June**

Temp: 25°C/17°C
Forecast: Periods
of rain, some heavy
and a thunderstorm.
Sunrise: 04:42 AM
Sunset: 6:34 PM

47 new colleges in West Bengal since 2011: Partha Chatterjee

KOLKATA, JUN 24 (PTI): Forty-seven new colleges have come up in West Bengal during the Trinamool Congress rule, West Bengal Education minister Partha Chatterjee has said.

"47 new colleges (state-aided) have come up in the past seven years," Chatterjee said at a felicitation programme for meritorious students in secondary (class ten board), higher secondary (class 12 board) examinations, 2018, at Behala in South Kolkata yesterday.

He said 40 colleges have recently got the permission to start post-graduate courses as part of the state's initiative to reach higher education to different sections of people.

English medium schools were also being set up at the primary level in different districts, he said.

He, however, did not specify the exact number of the schools.

"A few of the school buildings have already been built near Kolkata and now we are deciding on the procedures to recruit teachers for these english medium schools," Chatterjee said.

"Our children can not lag behind," he said highlighting the need to facilitate children, from different economic strata, receive quality education from an early stage to make them ready for the job market.

IT Deptt conducts workshop on cyber security

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among Indian cyber community and to provide technical assistance and advice to help recover from cyber security incidents.

A team from CERT-In New Delhi comprising of scientists, Ashutosh Bahuguna and Ravi Kumar Sharma conducted the workshop.

The workshop was attended by 80 officers and staff from various departments under the State Government.

The CERT-In team gave an overview of cyber security which included basic do's and don'ts for all cyber users along with hands-on exercises.

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Casino Mahjong celebrates seventh year anniv

REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

Casino Mahjong celebrated its 07th anniversary with a two-day musical extravaganza at Mayfair Resort near Ranipool, East Sikkim on 23 and 24 June.

Entertainers comprising of artists from Nepal, Bollywood and Russian dancers performed in the two-day event.

Bollywood actress Kriti Kharbada was the star attraction of the celebration on the evening of 23 Jun.

On the occasion, Casino Mahjong presented financial assistance to 10 organisations and one sportsperson as a part of its annual CSR engagement.

Kapinzal Social Foundation, Ravangla, Rose Mary Punch Club, Dentam, Lachung Dzumsa, Freedom NGO, Tathangchen, Bhavi Safalta Club, Yangyang,



Kabi Lungchok Mendang Construction and Press Club of Sikkim were each awarded Rs 75,000 for their future endeavors by Casino Mahjong. Additionally, Tintek Lee Aal Sangh, Mayalmu Sangh, Tadong were also provided with Rs One lakh each as financial

assistance by the casino.

CS Rai Junior High School, Arithang was also awarded with Rs 50,000 by the casino.

Lastly, Sikkim's Marathon Man, Amar Subba was felicitated with Rs 50,000 for his achievements as

a sportsperson.

Casino managing directors, Ugen T Ladakhi and Bikash Chamling, were present on the occasion.

Addressing the media, Mr Ladakhi said that the casino believes in giving

back to the society.

"The whole idea of us growing is to give back to the society and contribute to the growth of the society," he said. He further informed that among 400 employees in Casino Mahjong, more than 90% comprise of locals.



Gold for Mandeep, 4 others take silver at Mongolian boxing tourney

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): Mandeep Jaangra (69kg) was the lone Indian boxer to claim a gold medal among the five finalists but the country's contingent gave a fine account of itself in the summit clashes of the Ulaanbaatar Cup in Mongolia today.

The silver medals went to both the women finalists Sonia Lather (57kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) and Himanshu Sharma (49kg) and Etash Khan (56kg). All the four boxers fought their hearts out but failed to find favour with judges.

India ended the tournament with one gold, four silver, and four bronze medals.

"It has been a tremendous performance. Those who made the finals were obviously good but even those who lost in the semifinals gave very good performances. I don't have any complaints with any of them," men's coach Jaidev Bisht told PTI.

Mandeep was up against local boxer Otgonbaatar Byamba-Erdene and set the pace of the bout with his aggressive combination punches. It helped that his opponent looked out of sorts for most parts, attempting wild swings that hardly connected. Mandeep won the bout on a split decision.

"Had we been slightly lucky in some bouts, the

colour of some medals would have been better," Bisht said of some of the unexpected losses.

Sonia, a former World and Asian championships silver-medallist, added another second-place finish to her tally despite a strong performance against home favourite Tumurkhuyag Bolortuul.

Lovlina was outwitted by Chinese Taipei's Nien Chen Chen in a bout that lacked spark for the most part and had very few impact punches on display.

Himanshu was up against a very aggressive Iranian in Omid Ahmadsafa and although the Indian kept his composure, the ferocity of his rival's attacks tilted the scales. Ahmadsafa won on a split verdict.

Etash was simply unlucky to end up on the losing side against another local favourite Kharkhuu Enkh-Amar. The Indian was the more dominant of the two boxers, connecting cleanly and powerfully.

However, the judges thought otherwise and the gold medal landed with Enkh-Amar in a split verdict.

Ending with bronze medals were Shiva Thapa (60kg), debutant Vanshlimpuia (75kg), Ashish (64kg), and Bina Devi Kojiam (48kg), a direct entrant into the last-four stage owing to the small size of the women's draw.

SCA conducts chess tournament

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 24 JUN:

A daylong chess tournament was organised by Sikkim Chess Association on the occasion of Olympic Day 2018 here at Lumsey in East Sikkim on Saturday.

The tournament was part of the weeklong celebration leading up to Olympic Day by Sikkim Olympic Association along with various other sporting activities in the State.

In the competition, Rahul Gurung stood first in boys' category followed by Thendup Tamang in second and Rohit Gurung on third positions.

In girls' category, Sushmita Lama came in first while Priya Chettri and Supriya Rai finished the tournament second and third respectively.



Man held for cheating, impersonating in Jalpaiguri

JALPAIGURI (WB), JUN 23 (PTI): A man has been arrested for allegedly cheating a number of people and impersonating as the personal assistant of a West Bengal government minister, the police said today.

The person had collected money by promising people jobs, and he was arrested yesterday by officers of Kotwali police station, a police officer said.

He used to tell people that he was the personal assistant of North Bengal Development Minister Rabindranath Ghosh, the officer said, adding, the miscreant had collected more than Rs 1 lakh.

Flood situation improves in Assam; CM visits Cachar district

GUWAHATI, JUN 24 (PTI): The flood situation in Assam improved today even as nearly two lakh people are still reeling under the deluge in six districts, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said.

The six districts are -- Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Hojai, Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi.

So far, 24 people have died in the floods in the state, including three in landslides.

As per the report issued by the ASDMA, Karimganj is the worst affected district with more than 1.25 lakh people hit by the deluge, followed by Cachar with over 27,000 people.

Currently, 394 villages are under water and 3,100 hectares of crop areas have been damaged, the ASDMA said.

The authorities are running 133 relief camps and distribution centres in four districts, where 27,954 people are taking shelter at present, it said.

The Jia Bharali river is flowing above the danger mark at the NT Road Crossing in Sonitpur district.

Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister

Sarbananda Sonowal today visited flood-hit Cachar district and took stock of the situation from the district administration, officials said.

He also interacted with the inmates of flood relief camp set up at the Silchar Government Boys' Higher Secondary School in Silchar town this morning.

Sonowal then went and interacted with people of the Silchar-Kalain road at Shivbari, which has been affected by flood waters of the Barak river.

He assured of full support from the state government in relief and rehabilitation of the victims.

Locals, activists protest decision to fell over 14,000 trees in south Delhi

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): Locals, activists and environmentalists protested today against the government's order to fell over 14,000 trees for the re-development of seven south Delhi colonies.

About 1,500 protesters hugged the trees in Sarojini Nagar, launching their own "Chipko Movement", a forest conservation movement where people embraced trees to prevent them from being cut in Uttarakhand (then Uttar Pradesh) in the 1970s.

They also tied green ribbons, which symbolise "Rakhi", thereby promising to protect the trees. A velfie (video-selfie) booth was also set up to create awareness through social media.

People were holding placards with messages like "Save Trees, Save Delhi", "We want clean air" and "Save the trees, they will save you".

"We will not let the trees be cut. Delhi's air quality level is deteriorating and instead of finding a solution to it, we are cutting more trees," Ramesh Singh, a local, said.

The Forest department recently gave permission to chop off at least 14,000 full-grown trees to make way



for the re-development of residential facilities for central government employees.

According to a government statement, in Sarojini Nagar, 8,322 of the 11,913 trees would be cut while in Nauroji Nagar, 1,465 of the 1,513 trees would be chopped. In Netaji

Nagar, 2,315 of the 3,906 trees would be cut, while in Mohammadpur, 562 trees would be felled.

As many as 723 trees in Kasturba Nagar would be cut, 750 trees in Srinivaspuri, and 93 in Tyagraj Nagar.

The move has angered

environmentalists and residents of the area, who are demanding that the decision be withdrawn.

"There are other ways to redevelop the area that do not involve cutting of trees," Swati Chaturvedi, another local and a landscape architect, said.

The government earlier defended its decision by saying that the redevelopment would lead to an increase in the green area coverage by about three times and the compensatory plantation of trees will be done in the ratio of 1:10, thereby resulting in an enhanced tree-coverage area.

However, residents have doubts. "How could you expect a 30-year-old tree to be replaced by a sapling? It would take a very long time for the sapling to become a tree and till then, what will happen to the environment?" resident Om Narayan said.

Activists have called the decision "suicidal" and urged the government to reconsider it.

The issue has also triggered a political blame game with Union minister Harsh Vardhan claiming that the AAP government was responsible for granting the permission to fell trees in non-forest areas and the latter claiming that the clearance for the same was issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, headed by Vardhan, in November last year.

SummitTIMES

Remain Inquisitive,
Stay Informed
*Without that there can be
no real involvement*

Advertisement spots on television are not expected to be profound, but sometimes the more entertaining ones can also be very illuminating. One such is the animated entertainer of some years ago that tries to sell Mentos with its wonderful spin on how humans came to rule the world. If it does not screen anymore, and if you happen to belong to a generation which missed the original run, try YouTube, this gem is surely available there. As for the TV spot, it is all about allowing the brain to light up, experimenting and progressing – changing, evolving and growing up. Regressive attitudes and closed minds are signs of a society in decay and the first signs manifest with withering inquisitiveness. Once a society starts growing indifferent to information [without which there is no grist for inquisitiveness], it ceases to be dynamic, without which there can be no growth. Stop growing, stop exercising the muscle that flexes ideas and atrophy sets in, and then everything tosses into a downward spiral. It goes without saying that it is inquisitiveness that led mankind out of the caves and into the world of microchips; developed language from monosyllables and clicks & clucks to discourses and epics and communication from shouted greetings to mobile phones and its emojis. It is curiosity, not necessarily necessity, which triggers inventions and changes mindsets. An inquiring mind strengthens democracy, reinforces accountability and substantiates public opinion. Stop being inquisitive, give up asking questions and its back to the stone age when everything happened because it was destined to or dictated by the biggest bully in the cave and no one was wiser.

Turn the mirror on Sikkim, or the neighbouring hills and plains. Whys and wherefores do not infiltrate conversations here which are invariably just litanies of complaints which end up with the most common words on everyone's vocabulary, "Ke Garne, Yestai Ho." A finality in dejection. And therein lies the root of most of the problems, from denials to dejections to corruption to poor human resource development/deployment. The inquisitiveness is gone, replaced by defeatism, an acceptance of fate and absence of the energy to launch inquisitions. Examples proliferate all around... look around... notice. Someone takes a decision and while everyone nags, and some even wonder, no one demands an explanation.... All this because inquisitiveness and the interest to stay informed remain under-developed.

There could be two reasons for this, one, that the people have given up hope of getting answers, and the second, the people believe they know the reasons. Both are dangerous signs. People cannot give up their inquisitiveness, not in a democracy where it is not only their right to ask questions, but also their responsibility. As for the belief that they know the answers, this is even more dangerous because the belief is not an informed one, it is inferred and it is in situations like these that rumours and canards gain credence, doubts and suspicions proliferate and chauvinism dominates.

WALTER E. LITTLE
theconversation.com

The Fuego volcano puffs smoke against a clear blue sky, as it has done for centuries.

Here in Antigua, 10 miles away, people go about their daily business: Students rush to school; tourists snap shots of the UNESCO-protected city's Spanish Colonial architecture and cobblestone streets.

Volcano hikes are still marketed as a popular tourist activity. Guatemala's tourism board has even issued a press release reassuring tourists that Guatemala is safe.

That is not true for the tens of thousands of people who were caught by Fuego volcano's recent eruption. On Sunday June 3, El Fuego turned violent, spewing columns of fire, ash and rocks – pyroclastic flows that billowed up some 15,000 feet before raining over the region.

Some 60 square miles of mountainous central Guatemala were blanketed in deadly 400-degree ash. Families having Sunday lunch in the communities of San Miguel Los Lotes and el Rodeo were buried in 10 feet of ash and volcanic rock.

Officially, 110 people died and 197 are missing.

We are an anthropologist-photojournalist team who lives in the area. After the eruption, we interviewed survivors and photographed the devastation. We have come to believe that official death toll is grossly underestimated.

INSUFFICIENT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

According to the National Coordination for Disaster Reduction of Guatemala agency, the region now buried in dense, gray ash is home to more than 1.7 million people.

But no one knows how many people actually lived in the disaster zone.

Guatemala's 2012 population census was cancelled for political reasons, so the

WILSON T. BELL
theconversation.com

Children and family have been central to the institution of the concentration camp from its beginnings 120 years ago. Wikipedia has now added the notorious American border detention centres to its list of concentration camps, and the #FamiliesBelongTogether Twitter hashtag has brought up frequent comparisons.

The merits of the comparison between detention centres and concentration camps have been debated elsewhere, but can we learn anything from this dreadful history of children behind barbed wire, even as the Trump administration finally moved to end the practice?

The British constructed camps during the 1899-1902 South African War in order to divide families. They hoped that Boer men who were fighting British forces would give up once they discovered that their wives and children were held in camps.

Similar to the Trump administration's apparent hope that the breakup of families would deter unwanted migration, the British sought to deter Boer fighters. British parliamentarians critical of the policy labelled these "concentration camps," alluding to the Spanish policy of the "reconcentration" of civilians during the Spanish-American War (1898).

Conditions in the British-run camps were horrific, particularly for children, with mortality rates upwards of 25 per cent. An epidemic of measles accounted for roughly 40 per cent of childhood deaths in these camps, and other diseases such as typhus and dysentery were also devastating.

FAMILIES BROKEN UP IN FORMER SOVIET UNION

The Soviet Union's system of camps that reached their peak during Joseph Stalin's rule from the 1930s to the 1950s also reveals the destruction of families. While mass arrests broke up the family, and children of "enemies of the people" were separated from their parents, there were also many children in the Gulag itself.

Prison camps developed an infrastructure that, on the surface, supported pregnancy and childbirth. There were maternity wards in some camp clinics, as well as nurseries, and pregnant women and nursing mothers officially received increased rations.

In practice, the system was regularly a nightmare. Children born in the camps were separated from their mothers, who only managed to see them at set times for nursing.

Hava Volovich, whose own daughter died in the camps, remembers that hundreds of camp children died each year, meaning that there were "plenty of empty beds in the infants' shelter even though the birth rate in the camps was relatively high."

At the age of two, many of the surviving children were sent either to orphanages or to relatives — a forced redistribution of children away from their parents, who, as Gulag prisoners, were at best

The dreadful history of children in concentration camps



stigmatized, and at worst seen as a major threat to Soviet society.

The Gulag also held camps for young offenders, where teenagers worked as forced labourers and faced horrific living conditions.

NAZIS CRUSHED FAMILIES

Nazi policy included both large-scale deportations and large-scale importations of population groups, with major implications for families.

The Nazis removed citizenship from German Jews then, during the Second World War, sent most Jews, from Germany and elsewhere, to camps outside the borders of pre-war Germany. Yet, as the war progressed, Germany brought in huge numbers of forced labourers from all over Europe (U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions' claim that German-run camps were designed to keep Jews in, rather than out, is unfounded).

Nazi family policy was a pivotal part of the concentration camp. Once the death camps were operational, the Nazis crushed the family unit among undesirable populations, focusing on Jews.

The selection process at Auschwitz could result in the temporary survival of one or both parents, if they were physically fit (or just lucky), but children were usually sent directly to their deaths.

Jewish writer Elie Wiesel lost his mother and sister right away, and only survived selection because he lied about his age, claiming he was 18 and not 15, his actual age.

The unimaginable cruelty of many practices — the smashing of babies' heads against walls, the medical experimentation, particularly on twins — reveals an extreme dehumanization.

Even at the show camp of Terezin, which included a family camp, only 150 of the roughly 15,000 children sent there survived.

HIGH MORTALITY RATES

What do these historical cases have in common? All involved the separation, either immediate or eventual, of children from one or both parents, and all involved horrific conditions and extremely high mortality rates for the children.

In all cases, the dehumanization of the unwanted population was a key starting point. As historian Aidan Fort writes of the South African case, Gen. Herbert Kitchener referred to the Boers as "savages with only a thin white veneer," and British officials often described the Afrikaners as "dirty, careless, [and lazy]."

Former Gulag prisoners frequently reported

that guards and officials referred to them as animals or as "scum." As one former prisoner wrote, quoting a camp boss: "A person? ... There aren't any here! Here are enemies of the people, traitors of the motherland, bandits, crooks. The dregs of humanity, scum, riff raff, that's who is here!"

The dehumanization of the Nazi camps is well known, as Nazi propaganda frequently likened the Jews to vermin or to an infectious disease, making Trump's tweet about asylum seekers particularly chilling:

Another commonality can be found in the experiences of the victims.

In all cases, children separated from parents could not have known if they would ever see their parents again, or under what circumstances. The children of the camps had to rely, for the most part, on other children, for any support or security. Often, the separation was permanent.

These comparisons only take us so far, however. Some commentators have looked not at European powers, but to a long North American history — including slavery and residential schools — of separating non-white children from their parents.

If there is any optimism to be found in the historical examples of children in concentration camps, perhaps the history of public reactions can provide some hope.

In South Africa, reports by Emily Hobhouse and then the Fawcett Commission, particularly on starving children, galvanized public pressure to force the British government to improve conditions at the camps.

OUTCRY HELPED END PRACTICE

In contrast, in Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia, there could be neither public nor parliamentary discussion of inhumane internment conditions.

Bu today, some U.S. reporters and lawmakers have visited the American detention centres, and non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International and even the Methodist Church, as well as many elected officials, maligned the policy.

The public discussion, and the public outcry against the separation of children from their parents that eventually caused U.S. President Donald Trump to cave and end the policy, perhaps makes the American case more similar to that of South Africa than either the Nazi or Soviet camps.

This similarity, however, depends on the actions now of the Trump administration, which for several weeks before its reversal included denial, deflecting blame and even justification.

But with reports of children being torn away from their mothers' arms while breastfeeding, the more notorious concentration camps of the 20th century must serve as a stark reminder that the act of dehumanization is a slippery slope towards violence and further atrocities.

[the writer is Assistant Professor of History and Politics, Thompson Rivers University]

After volcano eruption, Guatemalans lead their own disaster recovery



last exhaustive door-to-door national census was conducted in 2002. That means population data from the affected areas is almost two decades old.

In that period, the country's population has grown from 12.2 million to over 16 million, according to the World Bank.

Poor, rural communities like those on Fuego's slopes are difficult to count accurately because they are remote and difficult to access. Census workers tend not

to speak the indigenous languages that predominate in the Guatemala's Mayan highlands.

MISINFORMATION

In our interviews with victims of the Fuego eruption and the volunteers helping them, several people have complained that the Guatemalan government is reporting information they know to be inaccurate.

It estimates that 12,823 people were evacuated and 3,613 people placed in

shelters. Weeks after the eruption, the official death toll remains at 110. Local residents insist it is much higher.

"The government gives these numbers to look like it's in control," one rescue volunteer told us. "We know they are lies. Thousands died and will never be found."

Since the eruption, rain has regularly fallen across Guatemala, hardening the volcanic ash into something resembling concrete. Unless the government sends

dozens of workers with heavy equipment, bodies will likely remain entombed where they fell.

A FUMBLING RESCUE EFFORT

The lack of up-to-date population information has made it even harder for Guatemala's cash-strapped government to plan an effective, coordinated rescue and recovery mission.

President Jimmy Morales has declared that Guatemalan law doesn't allow him to spend a penny of the national budget on emergencies. He has asked Congress for US\$26.7 million in emergency relief funds.

Considering that simply repairing the 10.5 miles of national highway RN14 destroyed in the eruption is estimated to cost \$30 million, many Guatemalans say this budget is clearly insufficient.

Officially, the government's disaster reduction agency is charged with coordinating evacuation, cleanup efforts and providing supplies to victims during any national emergency. National police officers and soldiers are now in place to guard the disaster zone to keep survivors and rescue workers out of the eruption zone.

But the larger rescue effort was mounted by people outside the government. Local volunteer firefighters and emergency workers entered the disaster zone to rescue victims from the hot ash and shuttle survivors to shelter. Social media and civil society organizations — including the academic Guatemala Scholars Network — have played a bigger coordinating role in local aid activities than Guatemala's national disaster office.

Morales, an unpopular leader, was already enmeshed in a campaign finance scandal. His party is under investigation by a United Nations anti-corruption prosecutor.

Now, the Guatemalan press is skewering him for his ineptitude in responding to

turn to 05

Assam lynching: Media houses, students launch campaigns on social media use

GUWAHATI, JUN 24 (PTI): Social organizations, media houses and student communities in Assam are working to create awareness on responsible use of networking websites, in the aftermath of the recent lynching episode in the state, fuelled by circulation of rumours.

Nilotpal Das (29), a sound engineer, and Abhijeet Nath (30), a businessman, were on June 8 pulled out of their vehicle at Panjuri in Karbi Anglong district and beaten to death by a mob, who suspected them to be child-lifters, following dissemination of fake news on social media.

The incident prompted a local media house to launch 'FakeMat' campaign here to increase awareness about the dangers of "rumour mongering" on digital platforms.

The campaign aims to engage with the youth, who are active users of the internet, through various platforms like the digital and social media, outdoor and print media and on-ground activities, the managing director of 'G Plus', Sunit Jain, told PTI.

"I request people not to spread fake news as we have seen that such news can lead to tragic situations," Assam Health and Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said, supporting the campaign.

An online crusade has also been initiated by Gauhati University Postgraduate Students' Union (PGSU). "We have taken a pledge not to circulate unverified information,



to create awareness among the backward sections, maintain peace and harmony in all situations and not take law in one's own hand under any circumstance," PGSU general secretary Monjit Sarma said.

Assam police had said in the past that student communities would be involved in creating awareness on social media use.

The editor of web magazine 'Thumbprint', Teresa Rahman, along with others, have recently reached out to rural schools in the state to give them lessons in "judicious use" of online platforms.

"It is amazing that the school

children are well aware of the business of fake news. We urged them to develop rational thinking and not allow social media to enslave them," she said.

Rahman also said that more rural schools would be brought under the ambit of the initiative in the near future and hoped that the students would in turn educate other members of their communities.

Post the lynching incident, the Assam police has upgraded and strengthened its social media presence by launching a special unit for cyber patrolling - 'Nagarik Mitra' - to thwart any attempt to spread

hatred or rumours.

Additional Director General of Police (Security) Harmeet Singh, who is in-charge of monitoring social media, said the "Assam police smart social media centre" would be a platform for "providing credible information" to the citizens.

"Social media has both positive and negative ramifications and our objective is to sensitize citizens against those who use social media for nefarious, anti-social and anti-national activities," he added.

Lurinjyoti Gogoi, the general secretary of All Assam Students Union, said they would soon launch

a full-fledged campaign against any news that may "weaken" the Assamese society.

"Even now, many of our units at the grassroot level are conducting campaigns against harmful practices. But we will soon launch a full-fledged campaign across the state to ensure that quality value education are imparted to the younger generation," he asserted.

The campaign will focus on ensuring that students from all sections are better equipped to deal with any type of misinformation that can harm people and the Assamese society as a whole, Gogoi added.

Political and social activist Tinat Atifa Masood shared similar views.

It is the responsibility of every citizen to make sure that they do not forward "anything and everything" to a group or an individual on social media as it could cost some people their lives.

"We demand that severe punishment be meted out to those who indulge in such acts, which will be a precedent for others who might be nurturing similar plans to create unrest in the future," she added.

The lynching of the two young men in Karbi Anglong district had rocked Assam earlier this month, prompting Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal to personally monitor the progress of the investigation. Altogether, 64 people, including the prime accused, have been arrested so far for their involvement in the case.

Missing Argentina soccer fan in Kerala found dead

KOTTAYAM (KER), JUN 24 (PTI): The body of a 30-year-old Argentina football team fan was recovered from a river near here today, two days after he left home upset over poor showing of the South American team in the World Cup, police said.

Dinu Alex, an ardent fan of Argentina football team and its captain Lionel Messi, was missing since he left his home in Arumanoor near here on Friday, saying, in a note, he was going to end his life upset over Argentina's 0-3 rout against Croatia in the World Cup.

Police, along with the Fire and Rescue service personnel, were searching for his body in the nearby Meenachil river.

It was found in the river near Illickal Bridge, about 10 km from his village, police said.

In a suicide note, which was found in his room, Alex had said he was upset with Argentina's defeat and was going to end his life.

Alex's father had said his son was a great fan of Messi.

Argentina has just one point from two games in so far in the World Cup in Russia.

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Monsoon activity revives; likely to reach central and N India this week: IMD

NEW DELHI, JUNE 24 (PTI): A India Meteorological Department (IMD) data has revealed that less than 25 per cent of the country received normal or excess rains till now, with the weatherman today saying that monsoon activity has revived over the weekend and is making a steady advance.

Central India and the north Indian plains, that have been witnessing a rise in temperatures, are likely to get some relief in the next two to three days, the meteorological department said.

Conditions are becoming favourable for pre-monsoon thunderstorm activity



over parts of northwest India from June 27, IMD's Additional Director General Mritunjay Mohapatra said.

The monsoon is expected to hit Delhi on June 29, its normal onset date for the national capital.

After making an early arrival on May 29, three days ahead of its normal on-set date, the

Southwest Monsoon battered the coastal parts of Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and south Gujarat.

However, the overall monsoon deficiency till yesterday stood at minus 10 per cent.

Of the four meteorological divisions of the country, only the southern peninsula has recorded 29 per cent

more rains. The rainfall deficit was 29 and 24 per cent in east-northeast and northwest India respectively.

Of the 36 meteorological subdivisions in the country, 24 subdivisions have received "deficient" and "largely deficient

rainfall". This means, less than 25 per cent of the country has received "normal" or "excess" rainfall.

"The monsoon has revived from June 23. It has today advanced to Gujarat's Saurashtra (region), Veraval, Ahmedabad,

and Maharashtra's Amravati. On the eastern side, it has covered the entire Assam, reached Jalpaiguri in north West Bengal and Midnapore in south West Bengal. The North Indians plains will receive pre-monsoon thunder showers on June 27," Mohapatra

said.

In the next 48 hours, the remaining parts of Odisha, West Bengal, some parts of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, remaining parts of Maharashtra, and east Uttar Pradesh will witness monsoon showers, he said.

After volcano eruption, Guatemalans lead...

contd from pg04
this national disaster.

LOCAL RESPONSE

People did not wait for the Guatemalan government to help after Fuego exploded.

On the Sunday of the eruption, La Merced Church, in Antigua - which was not affected by the volcano - rang its bells, calling parishioners to help the priests who were already loading trucks of supplies to help the victims. Church officials tell us they have sent an average of four trucks daily to shelters, full of collected food, clothing, medicine and other items.

Hangars at La Aurora International Airport, in Guatemala City, have become temporary storage for relief goods pouring in from private donors around the country. It is one of 21 donation centers where hundreds of volunteers bag and label food, clothing, medication, cleaning supplies and personal hygiene items. They are then driven to affected areas.

Volunteers in Antigua's central plaza are accepting donations, too. They deliver food and medicine now. Other items they're housing for later.

"The media will soon move on to something else, people here will grow weary and the government won't do what it needs to do," explained one woman receiving donations. "So we're collecting anything and everything that is given and saving it for later."

A delegation of volunteers lead by firemen from Antigua are making regular 34-mile trips to the ash-covered village of Paraiso El Xab, where people are now contending with poor air quality, water contamination and damage to crops. Eswin Cabrera, president of the town's Community Council Development Organization, says unripened coffee beans will soon begin to rot.

The National Coffee Association estimates that the eruption destroyed 15 square miles of Guatemalan coffee farms.

ACCUSTOMED TO DISASTER

Neighbors helping neighbors is standard practice in Guatemala.

Guatemala has Latin America's sixth-smallest economy, according to the World Bank, and one of the world's highest crime rates. Almost 60 percent of people live below the poverty line.

Guatemalans know they cannot rely on the national government to provide. And they know how to handle natural disasters. Four of the 37 volcanoes in the country are active. Fuego has erupted some 60 times over the past 500 years, most recently in September 2012.

On June 17, Guatemala suspended its search for bodies and survivors. Local rescue workers, however, continue their grueling efforts.

[the writer is Professor of Anthropology, University at Albany, State University of New York]



47 new colleges in West Bengal since 2011: Partha Chatterjee

KOLKATA, JUN 24 (PTI): Forty-seven new colleges have come up in West Bengal during the Trinamool Congress rule, West Bengal Education minister Partha Chatterjee has said.

“47 new colleges (state-aided) have come up in the past seven years,” Chatterjee said at a felicitation programme for meritorious students in secondary (class ten board), higher secondary (class 12 board) examinations, 2018, at Behala in South Kolkata yesterday.

He said 40 colleges have recently got the permission to start post-graduate courses as part of the state’s initiative to reach higher education to different sections of people.

English medium schools were also being set up at the primary level in different districts, he said.

He, however, did not specify the exact number of the schools.

“A few of the school buildings have already been built near Kolkata and now we are deciding on the procedures to recruit teachers for these english medium schools,” Chatterjee said.

“Our children can not lag behind,” he said highlighting the need to facilitate children, from different economic strata, receive quality education from an early stage to make them ready for the job market.

Praggnanandhaa becomes world’s second youngest Grand Master

CHENNAI, JUN 24 (PTI): India’s R Praggnanandhaa has become the country’s youngest and the world’s second youngest Grand Master at the age of 12 years, 10 months and 13 days after reaching the final round of the ongoing Grendine Open in Italy.

The Chennai-based player was paired with Grand Master Pruijsers Roland in the final round, which ensured that he would achieve the feat. After beating GM Moroni Lica Jr in the eighth round, he needed to play an opponent above rating of 2482 in the next round to make his third GM norm.

Ukraine’s Serget Karjakin remains the youngest ever GM, having achieved the feat at the age of 12 years and seven months in 2002.

In 2016, Praggnanandhaa became the youngest International Master at the age of 10 years, 10 months and 19 days. Five-time world champi-



on Viswanathan Anand, the country’s first GM, congratulated Praggnanandhaa on his achievement.

“Welcome to the club & congrats Praggnanandhaa!! See u soon in chennai,” he tweeted.

Meanwhile, Pragma’s coach R B Ramesh described it as a fantastic achievement.

“Fantastic achievement of course. Feeling proud that one of my students could achieve this. It was a collective effort from parents, who stood by

him in tough times, sponsors Ramco group, ONGC and his school,” he told PTI.

“BIG Relief! Congratulations @rpragchess . Great inspiration personally working with you! He travels an hour each way to attend lessons.

Great commitment from the parents. Thanks to sponsors Ramco and Mr. Venkaraman Raja too!,” he also tweeted.

Ramesh said Praggnanandhaa had the chance to break Karjakin’s record last year and did come close to making the GM norms but missed out narrowly in the end.

“Last year, Praggna has come close to making the GM title but now that it has been achieved, we are all very happy. He can only get better from here,” said Ramesh, whose movement is hindered by polio.

He also said there would be greater expectations from the youngster now that he has become a GM. “Pressure is something every sportsman should learn to live with, can’t complain about that,” he added.

Praggnanandhaa’s father A Ramesh Babu said he was overjoyed with Pragma’s achievement.

“I am overjoyed. He has put in a lot of hard work. Credit goes to my wife, who accompanies him to tournament and is very supportive. Due must be given to coach (Ramesh sir),” he added.

Praggnanandhaa’s sister Vaishali is also a WIM and has won the world under-14 and 12 titles previously.

Meanwhile, V Kameswaran, India’s first international arbiter, said Praggnanandhaa had developed consistently and a bright future lies ahead of him.

“Becoming India’s first youngest and world’s second youngest GM is not all of a sudden. Though he missed becoming the World’s youngest GM, his relentless chess pursuits for high honours are simply outstanding. The credit definitely goes to his parents, sister Vaishali and coach GM R B Ramesh,” he said.

Kohli panicked while preparing for England tour: Ganguly

NEW DELHI, JUN 24 (PTI): A tough tour of England four years ago made Virat Kohli panicky while preparing for the upcoming series but former India captain Sourav Ganguly is happy that the star cricketer did not end up playing county cricket in his eagerness to be well-prepared.

Kohli is a fantastic player. He will do well this time. I am happy that he did not play county cricket before the England series. I think he was eager to play county (ahead of the series) because he was panicky after not having a good tour last time around. He is too good a player to miss out this time, Ganguly told PTI.

Kohli’s much-hyped stint at Surrey was eventually ruled out after he suffered a neck injury.

Before departing to England earlier this week, the Indian skipper felt not playing county could be a blessing in disguise as a break from the game has refreshed him completely.

He has also moved on from what happened in England four years ago when he could only muster 134 runs in 10 Test in-



nings at 13.40.

Kohli has been supremely successful in South Africa and Australia, making England a territory to conquer.

Ganguly thinks both captain and the team will do well in the five Test series.

India’s chances are bright but England are also in good form. It will be a closely contested series, he reckoned.

Expressing his concerns on the health of the game, Ganguly said he was scared’ after England amassed 481 runs in an ODI against Australia at Nottingham



ham on June 19.

The record score also drew a negative reaction from Sachin Tendulkar, who said bowling with two new balls in ODIs was a recipe for disaster .

Ganguly fully concurred with Tendulkar, saying bowling with two new balls take reverse swing out of the equation.

Yes two news balls do take reverse swing out of the picture because the ball doesn’t get old enough to reverse,” he said.

“Reverse swing is also dying because the grounds are a lot greener today. The balls don’t

get scuffed up enough. They don’t get dry and rough on one side for the reverse to happen.

Pressed further on the controversial subject, Ganguly questioned the rotation policy followed by teams like Australia.

500 runs in 50 overs is terrible. Bowling has to find a way. I don’t understand why the best bowlers don’t play. Wasim (Akram) and Waqar (Younis) played ODIs and Tests all together, so did (Glenn) McGrath and (Brett) Lee and (Shaun) Pollock and (Allan) Donald. All played at the same time. I don’t understand having a separate set of bowlers for Tests and ODIs,” he said.

It (481/6 in England) was a poor advert of cricket. Every over had three boundaries. You cannot have Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood not play. So the best of players have to play. Nathan Lyon mostly plays Tests, doesn’t play ODIs. Shane Warne played everything, so did Anil (Kumble) and (Muttiah) Muralitharan, said the former inspirational skipper.

Turkey’s Erdogan faces resurgent opposition in twin election test

ISTANBUL, JUN 24 (AFP):

Turks began voting today in dual parliamentary and presidential polls seen as President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s toughest election test, with the opposition revitalised and his popularity at risk from growing economic troubles.

Erdogan has overseen historic change in Turkey since his Islamic-rooted ruling party first came to power in 2002 after years of secular domination. But critics accuse the Turkish strongman, 64, of trampling on civil liberties and displaying autocratic behaviour.

Polling stations opened at 0500 GMT (10.30 IST) and were due to close at 1400 GMT (7.30pm IST) , with the first results expected late in the evening.

Over 56 million eligible voters can for the first time cast ballots simultaneously in the parliamentary and presidential elections, with Erdogan looking for a first round knockout and an overall majority for his ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP). But both these goals are in doubt in the face of an energetic campaign by his rival from the secular Republican People’s Party (CHP), Muharrem Ince, who has mobilised hundreds of thousands in mega rallies, and a strong opposition alliance in the legislative polls.

Erdogan remains the favourite to hold on to the presidency -- even if he needs a second round on July 8 -- but the outcome is likely to be much tighter than he expected when calling the snap polls one-and-a-half years ahead of schedule.

Analysts say the opposition’s performance is all the more troubling for the authorities given how the campaign has been slanted in favour of Erdogan, who has dominated media airtime.

“Even if the odds are on the incumbent’s side, the race is likely to be far tighter than many expected,” said Ilke Toygar, analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute and adjunct professor at University Carlos III in

Madrid.

“Ince has shown in a very short time that a serious alternative could be emerging.” The stakes in this election are particularly high as the new president will be the first to enjoy enhanced powers under a new constitution agreed in a April 2017 referendum strongly backed by Erdogan.

Erdogan, whose mastery of political rhetoric is acknowledged even by critics, has won a dozen elections but is now fighting against the backdrop of increasing economic woes.

Inflation has zoomed well into double digits -- with popular concern over sharp rises in staples like potatoes and onions -- while the Turkish lira has lost some 25 per cent in value against the US dollar this year.

Meanwhile, former physics teacher Ince built up a national following with lacerating attacks on Erdogan’s rule, bringing up near-taboos like the AKP’s past cooperation with the group of Fethullah Gulen blamed for the 2016 failed coup. He mustered colossal numbers for rallies in the three largest cities of Izmir, Ankara and Istanbul on the final days of the campaign, promising a “different Turkey”

“Ince’s wit, audacity, ability to poke holes through Erdogan’s narrative and connect with Turks beyond the traditional base of his secularist CHP has flustered Erdogan and his team,” said Anthony Skinner, head of MENA at Verisk Maplecroft.

Erdogan has at times seemed on the back foot, making promises to lift the state of emergency imposed after the coup bid and ensuring the 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey go home only after similar pledges by Ince.

The votes of Turkey’s Kurdish minority will be especially crucial in the parliamentary poll. If the pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) wins seats by polling over the 10 per cent minimum threshold, the AKP will struggle to keep its overall majority.

‘It’s a special moment’ - Djokovic relief at final return

LONDON, JUN 24 (AFP): Novak Djokovic admits his first final in a year will be a “special moment” as the former world number one prepares to face Marin Cilic in the Queen’s Club title match.

Djokovic has endured a barren 12 months due to a combination of a nagging elbow injury last year and poor form in 2018.

The 12-time Grand Slam champion is more accustomed to fighting for the sport’s biggest prizes.

But, in a sign of how far he has fallen, Djokovic claimed reaching the final of the Wimbledon warm-up event at Queen’s is a significant milestone on his road to recovery.

Not since he won the grass-court event at Eastbourne 12 months ago has Djokovic made it to the last day of a tournament.

So the 31-year-old’s 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 victory over France’s Jeremy Chardy in the semi-finals meant a lot to the Serb.

“It feels great, first one since Eastbourne. So it’s been a year. It is a special moment for me,” he said.

“Obviously I have been hoping to get here and working hard for it.

“So now that I get a chance to fight for a trophy in one of the biggest tournaments on the grass court season, it means a lot to me.

“I’m really pleased with the way I have played throughout the whole week.”

Amid repeated suggestions he had lost his desire for success since completing his career Grand Slam at the 2016 French Open, Djokovic has seemed to be searching for motivation in recent months.



He has played his way back into form with four successive wins in his first appearance at Queen’s since 2010.

He traditionally opts to play only exhibition matches before Wimbledon, but the lawns of Barons Court have proved reinvigorating.

With Wimbledon starting on July 2, Djokovic is relishing the prospect of going into a tournament he has won three times with a trophy under his belt.

Given his 14-1 career record against Cilic, he will be favoured to beat the Croatian top seed.

But Cilic has been in superb form this week and Djokovic knows he will pose a stern test on Sunday.

“It’s quite different playing him on grass,” he said.

“We have played in Wimbledon, but he’s just a different player, I think.

“In last couple of years he’s been in the form of his life and reaching his highest ranking in a career. And finals of Wimbledon, finals of Australian Open.

“You know, he’s probably been playing the best that he’s ever played. Grass court suits him very well. He just has a big game overall.”

Cilic won 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/3) in the other semi-final against Australia’s Nick Kyrgios.

Now the former US Open champion is hoping to go one better after losing

the Queen’s final to Feliciano Lopez 12 months ago.

That match was decided by a final set tie-break and the 2012 Queen’s winner is determined to make amends.

“The motivation is still there, it’s quite big. It’s a 500 (points) and big tournament to get ready for Wimbledon,” he said.

“I don’t have regrets for last year, if that’s what you’re asking.

“I gave it my best on the court. My match was decided by one point. Feliciano played amazing tennis.

“You know, it’s great for me again that I’m here and giving myself another shot.

Pakistani Taliban names new leader in place of Fazlullah

ISLAMABAD, JUN 23 (PTI): Pakistani Taliban militants today appointed Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud as their new chief in place of Mullah Fazlullah, who was recently killed in a US drone strike in Afghanistan's restive Kunar province.

Religious scholar Mehsud, 39, replaces Fazlullah, the dreaded chief of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), who had ordered the assassination of Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai.

The new TTP chief was born on June 26, 1978 at a village in South Waziristan.

TTP spokesman Mohammad Khurasani said that their leader was killed and Mehsud was chosen by the Taliban council as his successor.

Mufti Hazratullah has been named as Mehsud's deputy, he said.

Militant sources said that Mehsud belongs to Tiarza area of South Waziristan and had studied in various religious seminaries of Pakistan.

He is believed to have authored a book in Urdu titled "Inqalab-e-Mehsud-South



Waziristan: Farangi Raj say Amreeki Samraj Tak" (Mehsud Revolution and South Waziristan: From British Raj to American Imperialism).

In the book, he, on behalf of Taliban, claimed for the first time that the TTP militants

were involved in the killing of former premier Benazir Bhutto in 2007 in Rawalpindi.

Mehsud also confessed that TTP platform was used for extortion, kidnapping and killings to get money to finance the groups' activities.

The new leader survived a drone strike in South Waziristan in 2014 in which eight Taliban militants were killed. Mehsud's current location is not known but he is believed to be hiding somewhere in Afghanistan.

Fazlullah, also known by

the alias Radio Mullah or Maulana Radio due to his long sermons on a private radio channel, had been a major figure in the TTP even before he became emir in late 2013.

He was the man in charge of the TTP operations in Pakistan's restive Swat Valley when student activist Malala Yousafzai was shot in 2012.

He was designated as a global terrorist by the US and carried a bounty of USD 5 million. He had been on the run since his loyalists were routed in a major military operation in Swat district in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province in 2009.

Fazlullah had directed numerous high-profile attacks against the US and Pakistani targets since he was appointed the group's leader in 2013, including the December 2014 attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar.

In 2014, there were reports that Fazlullah had been killed. However that information turned out to be false. In 2010, similar news about his death had broken out but later proved false.



Singapore President applauds Sikh community's contribution to society

GURDIP SINGH SINGAPORE, JUN 24 (PTI): Singapore President Halimah Yacob has praised the local Sikh community for being active in the inter-racial and religious confidence circle in the multi-cultural and multi-racial city-state.

As one of the oldest Gurdwara, the 100-year-old Sri Guru Singh Sabha (SGSS) has made "huge strides in contributing to the overall efforts in building a more caring, cohesive and inclusive society," the president said in a message to the community celebrating the SGSS centenary with a book release.

"Singapore prides itself as a multi-cultural and multi-racial society. Over the years, the various communities have played their parts to strengthen Singapore's social fabric," Yacob wrote in the book

'Daastaan Sri Guru Singh Sabha Singapore's Journey'.

"The Sikh community, too, has been active in meeting the needs of the community and engaging the wider society," she said, highlighting the social services by Singapore Sikhs, a community of over 13,000.

The president said the Gurdwara remains central to the Sikh Community.

"Apart from being a place of worship, a Gurdwara also serves as an outreach node for the community," she pointed out.

"It provides langar or communal meals, as well as conducts social, educational and other charitable activities for all Singaporeans regardless of race and religion," Yacob wrote.

The president led the Sikh community's celebration of SGSS centenary today.

Hope all countries cooperate with Human Rights Council: UN official

UNITED NATIONS, JUN 24 (PTI): A UN official has hoped that all countries would cooperate with the UN's human rights body and give access to human rights rapporteurs.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' deputy spokesman Farhan Haq's remarks came in response to a question on Pakistan's comments that it was ready to facilitate the Commission of Inquiry as proposed in a recent UN report to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir if India gives a similar access to the UN team to Jammu and Kashmir.

"We're always pleased when countries cooperate with the Human Rights Council and give access to human rights rapporteurs and we hope that all countries would do so," Haq told reporters during a press briefing on Friday.

Earlier this month, the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released its first-ever report on alleged human rights violation in Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and demanded an international probe into it.



Up to a million people have turned out for one of the last opposition campaign rallies ahead of Sunday's elections in Turkey. The rally, held in Istanbul, was in support of Muharrem Ince, the main competitor to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Turkey is going to the polls in joint presidential and parliamentary elections. Mr Erdogan is expected to be re-elected but might be forced into a run-off by the opposition.

'We want the children free!': a cry from inside migrant detention centre

OTAY MESA (US), JUN 24 (AFP): "Where are the children?" several women shout together from behind the detention centre wall.

"We want the children free!" "Do you hear us?" supporters ask from outside. "What do you need?" This was the short interplay yesterday between hundreds of protesters and people being held at a US detention centre for undocumented migrants in Otay Mesa, on the border with Mexico.

A group of people held at the centre had been separated from their children as part of President Donald Trump's "zero tolerance" policy. The president on Wednesday signed an order ending the practice of splitting migrant families, but 2,300 children have already been separated from

their parents.

"Shame," "Abolish ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement)," and "You're not alone," shouted the estimated 500 protesters rallied by religious leaders.

"I know those families are suffering and it is very hard to see that children have to go through the trauma of a detention centre when they are 10, five years old," Erica Leyva, 24, who travelled from Los Angeles to join the protest, told AFP.

Though she was born in the United States, she was briefly detained with her undocumented parents when she was four years old. "I remember how it felt to be behind bars," she said.

Otay Mesa detention centre -- managed by a private company -- has

the capacity for some 1,500 people, though in January it announced an expansion of 30 per cent, according to local media. ICE did not respond to AFP's calls about the detention centre.

On Friday, Democratic Senator Kamala Harris visited several undocumented women at the centre who were separated from their children. "The stories they shared with me paint a picture of human rights abuses being omitted by our government. We are so much better this," she said.

Demonstrators covered the name of the detention centre with a white sheet that read "concentration camp" in black letters and placed toys and stuffed animals around in protest.

Pastor and activist Ben McBride

requested a prayer for "our immigrant relatives" before moving with a group to the fence, despite a "private property" sign and the warning of two guards armed with pepper spray. At the gate, topped with barbed wire, they tied children's shoes and keys to demand the release and reunification with family of those detained.

"Release them!" they shouted. "Without justice there is no peace!" "This is indecent, it is immoral," the pastor exclaimed to officials.

Apolonia Gregorio Jeronimo, 33, and two of her three children were visiting her detained husband at the centre. Her was arrested six months ago and can be deported in August. "I thank you very much for your support," said the woman, who told how her husband arrived in the United States fleeing

gang violence in Guatemala.

"He is desperate; he is sure that they kill him," explained Apolonia, who is a beneficiary of DACA, the program that protects undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children.

Earlier in San Diego, 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the detention centre, some 1,500 people also protested against Trump's immigration policy. "Families must be together," "No to the wall," and "Seeking asylum is still legal," were among the slogans on signs they carried.

And in response to the jacket First Lady Melania Trump wore on a trip to Texas to visit a detention centre for undocumented children -- which bore the text "I really don't care."

1985 Air India bombing 'single worst terrorist attack' in Canada's history: Trudeau

OTTAWA, JUN 24 (PTI): Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has described the 1985 Air India bombing as the "single worst terrorist attack" in the country's history as he paid tributes to the 329 victims of the Kanishka Flight 182 which was blown off mid-air.

"On this day in 1985, Canadians awoke to news that defied belief, and left our country in a state of shock and suffering," Trudeau said yesterday, marking the National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism in Canada.

Air India Flight 182, bound for London after picking up passengers in Toronto and Montreal, disappeared from radar off the coast of Ireland on June 23, 1985. A bomb planted on the plane in Canada in an act of terror exploded on board, killing all 329 people on board, including 280 Canadians.

"The Air India bombing remains the single worst terrorist attack in Canada's history. This horrific act of malice and destruction left families and friends grieving



the loss of loved ones, and brought pain that will never completely go away," the prime minister said.

"In times of tragedy and testing, Canadians have shown that the values which bring us together inclusion, compassion,

justice, and equality are much stronger than the forces that try, and fail, to wedge us apart," Trudeau said.

"Terrorists believe, through cowardly and violent acts, that they can make us question not only our safety, but the

democratic institutions that keep us safe. They are wrong. Canadians are for facts and diversity, not fear and division. Our society thrives on inclusivity, and these acts only strengthen our resolve for unity," Trudeau said.

He said, "Canada condemns all forms of terrorism. We stand in solidarity with our allies, and the international community, in the ongoing fight to prevent radicalization and fight terrorism at home and abroad."

"On behalf of the Government of Canada, I extend my condolences to everyone everywhere who has lost loved ones to terrorism. We also thank and honour those who work each day to keep our citizens, communities, and country safe," he said, referring to several terrorist attacks across the world.

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan said that only one person has been brought to justice and there are those who still walk free.

"The investigation will not be completed until those have been brought to jus-

tice," Sajjan said.

A British Columbia Supreme Court judge and a public inquiry later found that the bombings were carried out by the Babbar Khalsa, headed by former Burnaby mill worker Talwinder Singh Parmar.

In British Columbia, Premier John Horgan paid tributes to the Kanishka victims as flags at the Parliament Buildings in Victoria flew at half-mast.

"Canadians will never forget this act of terror that took the lives of 329 people, including 280 Canadians. Our hearts go out to the families and friends of the victims," Horgan said.

"Perpetrators of terrorism seek to shatter our sense of safety and peace. Their violent acts try to turn communities against one another. They seek to divide us against ourselves.

We must never allow anger, fear and hatred to take root in our hearts. We will not let these senseless acts of terror change who we are," the Premier added.

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ROYAL WEDDING PT 2: Game of Thrones actors, Kit Harington [Jon Snow] and his former co-star, who played his wildling lover Ygritte, Rose Leslie tied the knot on Saturday in a church service near the Wardhill Castle in Aberdeenshire, Scotland.

KUMAIL NANJIANI **CONFIRMED** AS ALIEN SIDEKICK IN MEN IN BLACK SPINOFF



Kumail Nanjiani has officially joined the cast of the Men in Black spinoff as a comedic alien sidekick named Pawny. An actor and comedian, Nanjiani previously won a Golden Globe for The Big Sick, a movie he co-wrote loosely based around his life and background. Nanjiani will be joining a cast of other big name stars including Chris Hemsworth, Tessa Thompson and Liam Neeson.

Hemsworth will be playing Agent H, a suave and goofy James Bond-type British MIB agent. Thompson will play Molly, a young woman aware of the existence of aliens who wants to join the organization. Neeson will be playing the unnamed head of MIB's U.K. branch. Hemsworth and Thompson previously co-starred in 2017's Marvel Studios hit Thor: Ragnarok.

According to That Hashtag Show, the new film will "take place within the same universe as the previous films but put a contemporary spin on the franchise that captures things on a more

global scale." The main characters from the original films - Agent K and Agent J, played by Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith, respectively - have so far not been reported to be appearing in the spinoff in any capacity. Nanjiani's Pawny is described as being both wise-cracking and sex-driven, so the character seems clearly intended to be the comic relief between scenes of Hemsworth's Agent H protecting the Earth from the worst scum of the universe.

Men in Black's spinoff will be directed by F. Gary Gray. Gray directed the recent Fate of the Furious movie, as well as praised rap biopic Straight Outta Compton. However, this film will be far from Gray's first comedic venture, as he previously helmed the cult classic 1995 comedy Friday, and the 2005 Get Shorty sequel Be Cool. The script will be written by Matt Holloway and Art Marcum, a duo credited with penning both 2008's Iron Man and recent sequel Transformers: The Last Knight. The movie will be

produced by Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment.

Not a lot of plot details have been reported so far regarding the spinoff, other than that the agents "become involved in a murder mystery that has them traveling the globe." Like its predecessors, the film will be an action/comedy, which will be nothing new for Hemsworth and Thompson who have experience in both the action and comedy realms thanks to Ragnarok. While Nanjiani has mostly starred on television, his role on The Big Sick has already given him experience on the big screen, although his action chops have yet to be tested. Neeson, meanwhile, is now mostly known for action films like Taken, but he's shown an ability to handle both comedy and drama when called to do so. Together the four will make for an interesting quartet of main characters, especially since only Hemsworth and Thompson have worked with each other before.

emotions are coming to a monthly climax today, Gemini. Don't be alarmed, but do be cautious about lashing out at people for no reason. You may feel on edge. Unintended slights from others could push you over that edge in a fury of emotion. Harsh words spoken today can damage other people's feelings for a long time, so remain silent.

CANCER: Extremes is the name of the game now, especially for you, Cancer. Today the emphasis is on action. You're the one to call to get the job done. You won't wait another second to simply go for it. Your emotions are flowing, and you have an endless well of internal strength and resources. Use this power to your advantage. Connect with others who share similar viewpoints, and watch the incredible results unfold.

LEO: Be adventurous and strike out

into new territory, Leo. Be a pioneer. Work to make some new discoveries in the world. Today isn't a day to worry about consequences. It's a day to get things started. There is a great deal of fiery energy in the cosmos helping you in your quest for the new and fresh. Take the lead and try not to get thrown off course by leeches and party poopers. **VIRGO:** Certain situations may be difficult to deal with today as they take an emotional spin, Virgo. You're getting anxious. Things are getting started without the careful planning and consideration you feel is necessary. Try not to worry so much. Your own doubt is likely to hinder any project. Have faith that things will work out. Be bold. Take an active role in helping to get the ball rolling instead of holding it back. **LIBRA:** You should find that the general mood of the day is favorable

to your personality style, Libra. Take this opportunity to present more of your thoughts and ideas to the world. Let your voice be heard. Use it with strength and vigor. You have partners and friends who are eager to hear what's on your mind. Engage in verbal sparring. You'll find that you can learn a great deal about yourself and others. **SCORPIO:** The fog has lifted and you're ready to take off, Scorpio. The dreaminess you may have experienced lately has been nice, but now it's time to get moving again. Use all that you have learned from that recent internal processing and put it to use in the practical world. Try not to get caught up in the crossfire of conversations that don't really pertain to you. Feel free to start something new. **SAGITTARIUS:** This is a terrific day for you, Sagittarius, and you'll

find that there is a great deal of power at your disposal. This is a day of new beginnings. You have the opportunity now to start over and create a solid emotional base from which to work. Rid yourself of negative feelings and self-doubt. Use this day as an opportunity to strike out on new ground and achieve whatever you set your heart on.

CAPRICORN: The fire is raging today, so be careful, Capricorn. Try not to be too impulsive in your actions. Your natural tendency may be to lash out against others without really thinking about the consequences. If you find yourself getting hot under the collar, you might need to take a step back from the situation and settle down. Pursue your goals, but make sure that you don't do so at the expense of others.

AQUARIUS: Go for the gold,

Aquarius. Today marks the beginning of the rest of your life. Treat it with respect. You may be on a crusade and your combative instincts could be working overtime. There's a lot of fuel in your engine, so don't worry about running out. The only thing you really need to be concerned about is possibly stepping on other people's toes. Make sure you consider how your actions affect others.

PISCES: You may feel as if someone is poking you today, Pisces, urging you to get up and get moving. Don't be surprised if someone seems to be picking on you for no reason. Other people's lack of sympathy and sensitivity could be acute on a day like this. Try not to take it personally. Your hard outer shell may be put to the test in terms of its ability to protect your soft vulnerability.

NICK JONAS AND PRIYANKA CHOPRA MAKE THEIR RELATIONSHIP INSTAGRAM OFFICIAL

Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra just might be the real deal.

After a weekend meeting Jonas' family at his cousin's wedding in New Jersey earlier this month, Chopra decided it was time to introduce her rumored new beau to her world. The couple jetted off to India together.

According to several sources, the pair's relationship is getting serious, and they're very happy together. They certainly seemed to be enjoying each other's company on social media, as the "Quantico" star graced Jonas' Instagram for the first time on Friday. Chopra flashes an adorable smile in the video, as she runs towards Jonas on a balcony. "Her," the "Jealous" singer wrote alongside the clip, with a heart-eye emoji.



Jonas, 25, and Chopra, 35, were first linked after they walked the red carpet together at the 2017 Met Gala. Earlier this year, the two enjoyed an epic Memorial Day weekend together, including a night at "Beauty and the Beast Live in Concert," a visit to a Dodgers game and a day on a boat with pals.

Chopra played coy about a possible romance with Jonas during her May 2017 appearance on "Watch What Happens Live With Andy Cohen." When asked if there were any "flirtatious vibes" between the good-looking stars, Chopra coyly replied, "We didn't have time yet, maybe next time we meet."

Tom Holland reveals 'Spiderman 2' title in social media gaffe

LOS ANGELES, JUN 24 (PTT): Actors attached with Marvel have a way of letting out the secret details that the franchise strives to guard with all fierceness and "Avengers: Infinity War" star Tom Holland has done just the same.



The 22-year-old actor revealed the name of his next stand-alone, which is "Spider-Man: Far From Home" in a faux pas on Instagram.

Holland, who was in Seattle to attend Ace Comic-Con, took to social media to update his fans.

He said he knew nothing about the "Spider-Man..." sequel but had received the script for the movie.

"I wanted to apologise because there's no real revelation coming out this weekend about 'Spider-Man 2'... I don't know much about it. I'm a little confused as I died (referring to 'Infinity War')."

"So, I don't really know how it all comes into play. But I got the new script. I'm super excited to read it," Holland said in the video.

But when the actor lifted his iPad and the fans got a quick glimpse into the title of the next "Spider-Man".

In April, Marvel boss Kevin Feig confirmed that the sequel will be shot in London. Actors Zendaya, Donald Glover, Jacob Batalon and Marisa Tomei are also expected to reprise their respective roles.

Jake Gyllenhaal is in talks to play the antagonist Mysterio.

GOOGLE CHROME ON ANDROID CAN NOW CACHE NEWS ARTICLES ON WI-FI FOR OFFLINE READING

The feature has rolled out in 100 countries

For emerging markets that often have to purchase data through prepaid SIM cards or others with limited data plans, viewing news articles can be a slow process full of constant interruptions.

Google Chrome on Android is getting a new feature that will automatically download relevant news articles when connected to Wi-Fi, which should help cache articles for offline reading, the company announced yesterday.

You could already download articles through third-party apps or by saving a page offline, but those methods often require users to manually pick which articles to save. Today's update automatically downloads ar-

ticles that are recommended to you based on interests and location.

Since the cache articles are ones that Google personalizes for you, they may not always be exactly what you want to read. Still, it may be helpful for some users

who want to have a bit of content for offline viewing while they're commuting or waiting in an area with limited connectivity.

Google is aiming the new feature at emerging markets that have limited access to data, and it's rolling out to 100 countries, including India, Nigeria, Indonesia, and Brazil. The feature can also be useful to anyone on a limited data plan, so here's hoping it comes to the US soon.



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ARIES: This is a great day for you to get up on stage and make your presence known to the crowd, Aries. Let people know that you're the leader of the pack. There is a great need for you to take the helm now, and you shouldn't back away from this responsibility. The warrior instinct inside you is probably strong, so don't hesitate for a second. Be brave and courageous in all situations.

TAURUS: This is a good day to add spark to your life, Taurus. If things have seemed boring and stagnating lately, you may need to infuse a bit of excitement into the situation. Add flair and dynamism to the mix. Take matters into your own hands and actively pursue your goals. You have a strong inner sense of where you need to go. Trust your instincts and move in that direction. Don't hesitate.

GEMINI: You'll notice that your