

Transfers

MIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 18 FEB:

The State Government today effected transfers of some brass officials of the DC South, Prabhakar has been transferred as Special Election Department while Special Secretary, Land Revenue and Department, Rinzin Wang Bhutia is the DC South. Additional Secretary, D, Raj Kumar Yadav has been transferred as posted as the new North while the DC North, Kar-R Bonpo will take Yadav's place. Assistant Director, Rakdong-Tintek un-Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Yadu Sapkota has been transferred and posted as Revenue Officer cum Assistant Director, Sub-Divisional Office, Yuksam Land Revenue and Department.

Adhoc teachers take to the streets, receive HRDD notification but remain unconvinced

SAGAR CHHETRI

GANGTOK, 18 FEB:

Aggrieved members of All Sikkim Adhoc & Temporary Employees Association [ASATEA] seeking service regularization among other demands occupied the Na-

the Human Resource Development Department having gone to their satisfaction. However, convinced that the Department was not looking into their demands in earnest, the ASATEA took to the streets again today.

The HRDD notification issued on 18 Feb on the demand of Adhoc teachers:

"The government has deemed its expedient to consider the demands of adhoc teachers of government schools of Sikkim for service regularisation and extension of adhoc services in public interest. Now, therefore, the government is pleased to decide that services of those adhoc teachers who have completed five years of un-interrupted service and are qualified as per NCTE norms will be regularised after the scrutiny of their documents and others formalities as may be required in line with the NCTE norms. The government is further pleased to extend the adhoc service of existing adhoc teachers for a period of two years and regular appointment whichever is earlier, in public interest and to ensure that the functioning of the school is normal and regular."

tional Highway here on Monday to press for their demands. This, within a week of their talks with

Vehicular traffic was disrupted for hours when adhoc teachers moved from Deorali and



then sat in protest at Sisa Golai. Adhoc teachers finally dispersed at around 5:30 in the evening on receiving an assurance from HRDD.

Earlier in the day, the HRDD had also issued a notification announcing that adhoc teachers who

meet the NCTE norms and have been on the job uninterrupted for five years or more will be processed for regularization and extend the services of other adhoc teachers for two years.

The protesting teachers, however, had prob-

lems with the manner in which the notification was worded and also decided to continue with the protest since the notification made no mention of non-teaching adhoc staff or the fate of adhoc language teachers.

Earlier, the adhoc

teachers had started the rally from Deorali.

Although the police tried to stop the rally at different spots along the way, the teachers kept pushing through until finally the police stopped them at Sisa Golai.

Since traffic was dis-

rupted at this spot, vehicles were diverted to Nam Nang and Aritha but these are barely serviceable roads for kind of traffic the National Highway receives and delays ran for hours for commuters.

Senior police officials and District Collector [East] arrived at the spot and appealed the teachers to clear the highway and eventually after two hours of complete blockade, the road was opened enough for one-way traffic.

Later, HRDD officials also reached the spot and tried to convince protesting teachers that their demands were being met, but the teachers did not budge.

The DC [East] read out the notification issued by the department to adhoc teachers.

However, the teachers **turn to p**

Bhumchu greetings from Governor and CM

MIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 18 FEB: On the occasion of Bhumchu festival, Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad extended warm greetings and good wishes to the people of Sikkim, informs a press communiqué from Raj Bhavan. In his message the Governor has said, "The sacred Bhumchu, the blessed emerging at holy Tashiding Monastery has always signified good fortune for the people of Sikkim. May the festival once again reiterate the age old Sikkimese culture of harmonious living and the blessings of our guardian deity and continue to bring peace, progress and prosperity in the lives of my Sikkimese in the days to come."

Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling and Tika Maya Chamling have

Also extended warm greetings and

best wishes to the people of Sikkim on the sacred and auspicious festival of Bhumchu.

"Bhumchu is unique to Sikkim and forms an integral part of our identity as Sikkimese. It is a day to pay our reverence and obeisance to our patron saint, Guru Padma-sambhava and pray for His continued blessings to our land and our people. Therefore, keeping in mind the significance of the Bhumchu festival, the Government has declared it as a gazetted holiday from this year," the Chief Minister has said.

"I pray that the holy waters of the Bhumchu bring good tidings to Sikkim and may the auspicious festival be a harbinger of good fortune and happiness in the lives of the Sikkimese people," he has further added.

UAHGA to intensify protest if Departments fail to issue notification on demands



MIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 18 FEB:

On the third day of the dharna today, members of the association blocked the road when the concerned department did not respond to their

CM tables Rs. 3,56,629.60 lakh

Vote on Account

GANGTOK, 18 FEB (IPR):

The two-day Seventh Session (Part-VI) of the Ninth Assembly of Sikkim Legislative Assembly began today wherein two Bills were introduced in the House.

Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, also the Minister in Charge of Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department introduced the Sikkim Regulation of Transfer of Land (Amendment) Bill, Bill No. 2 of 2019.

The Bill aims to ensure protection against alienation of the land holding of the Limboo



community.

Following persistent demand of the Limboo community for protection against alienation of Land belonging to per-

sons from the Limboo community and with a view to ensure such protection of the interest of Land of the said community, Sections 3(A) and

3(B) have been proposed for insertion in the Act.

Likewise, Tulshi Devi Rai, Minister in Charge of Social Justice, Empowerment & Welfare

Department introduced

the Sikkim Prohibition of

Beggary (Amendment) Bill, Bill No. 3 of 2019.

The Bill seeks to amend section 25 of the Sikkim Prohibition of Beggary Act, 2011 which cast stigma on the persons suffering from leprosy and to create a disability on them as per the direction given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 24/04/2015 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1151/2017 in the matter of Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy versus Union of India.

Discussion and vote on both the Bills will be taken up on the second day **turn to p**

TWO-DAY ASSEMBLY SESSION BEGINS

Bill introduced to protect Limboo land from alienation

GANGTOK, 18 FEB (IPR):

The 2nd State Level Special Olympics for Children with special needs under the inclusive education programme was held today at West Point Senior Secondary School.

The event was organised by Samagra Shiksha, Human Resource Development Department, with the objective to provide a platform and opportunity to the special children

Minister, RB Subba, as chief guest accompanied by Deputy Mayor Lashey Doma, State Project Director, HRDD, Bhim Thatal, Joint Com-

special needs from the districts.

Speaking at the event, the Minister highlighted the importance and benefits of hosting

help in every possible manner and stated that he was highly inspired to see children doing such great work despite their challenges.



"The talent of children with special needs is equivalent to other children. Every single one of you present here has the spirit to excel, therefore you must keep your spirit alive throughout your life," he said.

GP Upadhyaya, Additional Chief Secretary, HRDD, gave his best wishes to the children and thanked Samagra Shiksha. He expressed hope that such event would help the children

Government concerned authorities on TB, HIV and viral hepatitis program.

On 28th July 2018, Hon'ble Mr. J.P Nadda, Union Minister has announced a National Viral Hepatitis Control program across country and has allocated 100 crore for the planning, implementing and establishment of free test and treat program across nation.

We the people living with Hepatitis C have communicated, advocated State Health Department authority from 2015 for free test and treatment but they were fail to deliver the promises that they made and claimed. During those periods many of our friends and family member or the citizen of Sikkim died due to the viral hepatitis and many have suffered high price of diagnostic and treatment.

After the long demand finally Ministry of health and Family welfare came up with the plan and budget to eliminate viral hepatitis by 2030, India is a signatory of WHO resolution 69.22 endorsing WHO Global Health Sector Strategy on viral hepatitis 2016 - 2021, World health Assembly to achieve Sustainable development Goal (SDG) 3.3 and which is discussed in the legislative assembly to work on the SDG goals. It is estimated that there are 40 million general population are infected with chronic Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) and 6-12 million are people with Hepatitis C virus in India.

There are several components that exist in the current program of GoI such as Immunization for Hepatitis B; Swacha Bharat Mission; safety of blood and blood product; safe drinking water and sanitation, which are directly or indirectly related to the response to viral hepatitis.

The aim of the National Viral Hepatitis Control program is to "reduce morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis."

Sikkim State Health and Family welfare has to establish few components according to the guideline prepared by Ministry and Family Health welfare before testing and treating the people. They are;

1. State Program Steering Committee
2. District Program Level steering committee
3. State Viral Hepatitis Control Management Committee (SVHMC)
4. District Viral Hepatitis Control Management Committee (DVHMC)
5. Program Implementation Plan (PIP) which has to be submitted to MoHFW
6. How many Model Treatment Center and treatment Center will be established in Sikkim
7. How many testing and treatment has been

our willingness to be part of the state steering committee but we haven't got any response from Mission Director, NHM till now.

Again we wrote a letter to State Nodal Officer, Dr. Tara on 28th Jan 2019 requesting for the updates on the Viral Hepatitis Control program in State. She responded our concern over the phone stating that she will share the details once she joined office but she didn't respond to the mail, again we wrote a follow up mail on 7th of Feb 2019 but there is no response from the State Nodal Officer for the viral hepatitis control program.

It has been 8 months from the program being launched but Sikkim State NHM couldn't provide any updates on the National Viral Hepatitis Control Program (NVHCP), this shows how officials being in the position handling the GOI program in the State, it is shameful that people still have to go to Pvt. Diagnostic for the testing and have to buy expensive medicine to treat Hepatitis C Virus (HCV).

We the people living with Hepatitis C expressed strong disappointment towards the State Health Department for not doing enough work to ensure public health is taken care as first priority basis.

We demand if NHM couldn't manage or handle the NVHCP than they should write to the Ministry of Health and Family welfare to seek other option to initiate the NVHCP in Sikkim State.

Our lives are being put on Risk even after the NVHCP has been launched in Jul 2018 and there is no announcement made by the Health department to the general people so that people can come and seek help from the State Health Department.

After the GOI stating alarming burden of the viral hepatitis in the country that State has not taken enough initiative, since Health is the State Subject but not minimum step has been taken by the State Health Department to ensure that people living with viral hepatitis don't have to go for expensive diagnostic and treatment.

If concern officer are not working as they are assigned to particular work, they have no right to be in the position, so we demand and urge Mr. AK Ghatani, Hon'ble Minister and Mr. Chawan, Secretary of Health Department to take right action so that NVHCP program can be roll out in time and people may not die waiting for the test and treatment.

[The writer is Coordinator, Sikkim Drug Users' Forum, Gangtok, East Sikkim
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For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, the Assistant Engineer (Mangan), Roads & Bridges Department Government of Sikkim, invites sealed tenders under single bid system from the eligible contractors of class IV Grade enlisted with Sikkim Public Works Department vide Notification No: 556/R&B/PWD/Secy dated 28/08/2018, & 515/R&B/PWD/Secy dated 12/06/2018, for the construction of Fair Weather road through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of Ward Panchayat / Urban Local Bodies where the work is to be executed.

The details of works and time schedule are as follows:

SL. NO	NAME OF WORK	AMOUNT PUT TO TENDER (in Rs)	EARNEST MONEY @2.50% (in Rs)	COST OF TENDER DOCUMENTS (in Rs)	COMPLETION TIME
1	Construction of road from Lingdong to Barfok , Lingdong Barfok GPU km 0.00 to 1.00	4238496.00	1,05,962.00	1,500.00	09 months
2	Construction of road from Lingdong to Barfok , Lingdong Barfok GPU km 0.00 to 1.00km 1.00 to 2.00	4238496.00	1,05,962.00	1,500.00	09 months
3	Construction of road from Lingdong to Barfok , Lingdong Barfok GPU km 2.00 to 3.00	4238496.00	1,05,962.00	1,500.00	09 months
4	Construction of road from NSH to Phyang School , Lingchom Tingda GPU, km 1.00 to 2.00	4238496.00	1,05,962.00	1,500.00	09 months

TIME SCHEDULE:

1	Date of submission of application with Bank receipt for issue of Tender Document (excluding Tender Form) from the Office of the Assistant Engineer, Mangan Sub-Division, Roads & Bridges Department, Mangan, North Sikkim.	20 th Feb 2019 (10.00am to 4.00pm)
2	Date of issue of Tender form on submission of TDR (as Earnest money) from the office of the Assistant Engineer, Mangan Sub-Division, Roads & Bridges Department, Mangan, North Sikkim.	25 th Feb 2019 (10.00am to 4.00pm)
3	Last Date and Time for submission of Tender in the village Administrative Centre of respective Gram Panchayat Unit.	
a	For works from Sl. No.01 to Sl. No.1,2,3,4	28 th Feb 2019 (10.00am to 1.00pm)
4	Date and time for Opening of Tender in the village Administrative Centre of the Respective Gram Panchayat Unit.	
a	For works from Sl. No.01 to Sl. No.1,2,3,4	28 th Feb 2019 (2pm to 4pm)

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT:

1. Tender is open only to the eligible Contractors/Firms of appropriate Class/Area.
2. The intending tenders/contractors should apply in writing for issue of tender documents. The application would be invariably be signed by the contractor himself/herself. The tender documents will not be issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDERER. The application shall be submitted initially for each work listed above with all required documents.
3. The application should enclosed attested copies of the a) latest No objection Certificate/tax Clearance Certificate from Commercial Taxes Division, FRED, b) Validated/Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate and Professional Tax Clearance Certificate along with the application. It is mandatory to produce the original validated/Updated Enlistment Certificate during sale/issue of the Tender Documents for verification.
4. The prescribed Non-Transferable Tender Documents (excluding the Tender Form) can be obtained during the period specified in (as above from the office of the Assistant Engineer (mangan) , Roads & Bridges Department, Mangan , North Sikkim on production of requisite Bank receipt of the State Bank of Sikkim towards the cost of Tender Documents (Non-Refundable) under the revenue head of the respective GPUs where the work is to be executed.
5. Earnest money deposit @ 2.50% in the State Bank of Sikkim shall be in the form of Deposit Receipt of Schedule Bank which includes deposits in the form of Temporary Deposit Receipt (TDR) in favour of the Account Officer, Roads & Bridges Department, Nirman Bhawan , Gangtok, Tender Form shall be issued only on production of Temporary Deposit Receipts of 2.50% earnest money.
6. The Tender Documents, including the Tender form with quoted offer should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the tenders and the name of work superscripted on it, supporting documents listed at Sl. No: (a), 3 (b) and 3 (c) above should be enclosed with the offer.
7. Sealed Tenders may be deposited in the Tender Box in the Gram Prasad Kendra of the respective GPUs where the work is to be executed on the date and within the time indicated above.
8. Tenders shall be opened by a Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the presence of the tenderers on the date and time indicated above.
9. The Tenderers should sign on every page of the tender documents as Acceptance of the General Direction and Conditions of the contract and other laid down norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of Value Added Tax and all other Taxes and Levies. Over writing and corrections should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
10. In case of any discrepancy in rate(s) printed in the schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the Tender documents, rates as per approved Schedule of Rates will be taken as correct. For items outside the Schedule of Rates (SOR), the rates shall be as per the technically checked estimate/analysis. Decision of the PCE-cum Secretary Head of the Department will be final in this regard.
11. The work value, scope and quantum of the work are subjected to change; the contractor shall execute the work as per the directives of the Department. No claim on this account is entertained whatsoever. If any claim is made, it shall be as per the agreement rates.
12. The Department reserves the rights to hold payments to the contractor unless test certificates are not produced by the contractor when called upon to do so.
13. Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractor shall be at his/her own risk and cost. The Department shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to labour at site.
14. The offer shall remain valid for a period for 90 (ninety) days. The work should commence within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of issue of Work Order.
15. All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed to a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills of the contractor @ 5.00% of the value of work done.
16. The department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigned any reason therefor.
17. The contractors are also required to submit Xerox copies of PAN card.
18. The recoveries of Royalties on Forest Produce shall be as per rates notified by the Government from time to time and applicable on the date of payment. In no case, claim of any contractor for deduction as per rates incorporated in Analysis of Rates or Schedule of Rates on the date of tender shall be acceptable.
19. Subletting of contract work is against the norms and if it comes to notice ,the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.
20. The department also reserves the right to increase, decrease ,alter or modify the item of works as indicated in the NIT without assigning any reason thereof.
21. In case the man power employed by the contractor are from outside the State or neighboring countries ,it shall be the responsibility of the contractors to get them registered with the Labour Department, Government of Sikkim as per the relevant labour Laws.
22. Use of explosive shall be regulated as under:
 - (a) Transportation ,Handling ,storage and use of Explosives (if necessary)shall be in accordance with the provision of the India Explosive Act and General Guidelines, Circulars issued by the department and other competent authorities on the subject from time to time.
 - (b) The rules and regulations issued by the Sikkim Public Works Department or any other competent authority shall strictly be adhered to with regard to transportation ,storage, handling and use of explosive.

Teesta Stage-IV establishes e-Library at North District Library



COMMIT REPORT Gangtok, 18 Feb:

Teesta-IV Hydroelectric Project of the NHPC established an e-Library at North District Library here as part of its CSR & SD initiative from the year 2018-19. An NHPC press release informs that this

intervention was part of the organisation's initiatives under the education sector to provide e-learning facilities for the first time in North Sikkim.

Teesta-IV HEP, in co-ordination with the District Administration, has also been execut-

ing other interventions in education sector such as scholarships, winter coaching camps for Board exams, the release adds.

The e-Library facility has begun with six Desktop computers [with computer tables and chairs], additional two

tables and seven Chairs with two steel almirahs were handed over to Zamyong Lode Lepcha, Library (In-charge), District Library, Mangan.

The e-Library was inaugurated by Karma R. Bompoo, District Collector (North), today.

Artist Sewon Rai's first solo exhibition underway at The People's Studio

GYANA RANA GANGTOK, 18 FEB:

Artist Sewon Rai is holding a solo art exhibition at the People's Studio at Artem, Kazi Road. The exhibition began on 11 Feb and will conclude on 08 Mar. This is Mr Rai's first



ata and has also completed BFA in painting from Indian College of Arts & Draftsmanship, Kolkata.

He also got the Kala National Research Scholarship, Kolkata [2017-18] and has received many awards like the Biraj Mohan Dutta Memorial Best

... programmes, messages, maybe even some seminars or workshops and some more tokenism at the national and state level to mark the days leading up to International Women's Day on 08 March. Do not, however, expect the larger issues to be addressed or even "noticed" in the rum-roll of unbridled male chauvinism which continues to drown out all matters of significance. Expect promises of protection and care, those traditional umbrellas offered to keep women in their place and hobble them from, for want of a better term, reaching their potential. And that is how this will remain because unless the society accepts ambition in women as a normal progression of initiatives like the "beti badhao" undertaking, everything will remain superficial lip-service. The relegation of women to second-class citizens with limited access to education, ownership, and, yes, even ambition, is unfortunate because that is not how things began and there is no reason why they should be allowed to remain so.

Women have had an eventful march through history. At the start of humankind, women were deified and almost all prehistoric legends refer to a Mother Goddess as the Creator, as their god. We find this in Sikkim too with the Lepcha legend of genesis which speaks of Itbu-Debu, the Mother, the Creator and sustainer who created everything on earth including 'Mu-tan-ji-Rong kup,' [the Mother's Loved Ones] - the Lepchas. Power was first worshipped as a Female Force - Shakti - even before the Hindu pantheon was fleshed out, and women, because they were blessed with the power to give birth, were revered and respected, even feared. But man remained a hunter-gatherer at heart and as civilization grew, he started embodying the idea of god with traits of himself. Soon, everything that could not be understood was given a female form, perhaps because most aspects of womanhood remained inscrutable to men. It followed soon after that whatever mankind could not understand, it applied a negative male force to. Soon, the woman started getting seen as the corruptor.

This image sustained itself through centuries and at a subconscious level, continues to influence many minds, especially when even the slightest hint of ambition or even self-preservation creeps in. If we were to look at even the modern Sikkimese history, women have been painted in very poor light. Take for example, Pende Ongmu, the half-sister of the third Chogyal of Sikkim, Chagdor Namgyal, who, history tells us, schemed his assassination. While aspirations for the throne would have been more acceptable in a man, in Pende Ongmu's case, she was reviled as the reincarnation of a wicked queen of Tibet because she desired power. More recently, two important figures, Hope Cooke and Elisa-Maria Langford, wife of the first Chief Minister of Sikkim, LD [Lazim], have been portrayed in less than favourable light by successive writers. Few have even bothered to give credit where it was due. Hope Cooke for example tried to modernise education in Sikkim and reinforce Chogyal Palden Namgyal's plans to give the Sikkimese a stronger sense of Sikkimeseness. It was her conviction to motivate Sikkim to celebrate its uniqueness that made India suspicious and her growing prominence must have made some in Sikkim insecure as well. Similarly, Kazini was an important support to LD [Lazim]'s fight for democracy. Neither story ended too well and both have been victims of male prejudice.

It is this prejudice that occasions like the International Women's Day should strive to eradicate. It has had but limited success and more often than not, ended up celebrating stereotypes instead. This, despite the fact that women are not demanding much. They do not want to be returned to their original position of reverence. All they ask for is an

sledging – or transphobia, sport so often at the forefront of deb concerning equality and diver To complicate matters, academic search apparently pales into significance in comparison to quantitative surveys from various organisations – among them Stonewall and Foot v. Homophobia – which alleges levels of homophobia.

The commitment to LGBT+ bility, then, is absolutely crucial to proving sport's image, thus ensuring that members of the LGBT+ community are not turned-off from participation in sport – in whatever shape or form that may be. In recent years, this bility has been most evident in the lution of the Rainbow Laces campaign.

With the might of Sky Sports backing, this has undoubtedly had a positive impact. The most recent of these campaigns, in November 2016, saw Stonewall FC – the UK's LGBT+ football team – become the first club of its kind to play at Wembley Stadium, while Altrincham Town will don a Rainbow kit on Saturday, February 16, in support of football's ongoing fight against homophobia.

Similarly, the emergence and growth of LGBT+ fan groups at a number of knots – including, most recently, Manchester United – has provided a welcome environment and a haven for LGBT+ fans, especially in football.

Just as effective as this, however, is also the notable increase in heterosexual allies in sport – just like the 'The Warwick Rowers' are perhaps one of the earliest high-profile examples of heterosexual allies – their annual calendar has, according to the BBC News, "won international acclaim for promoting LGBT+ inclusion and gender equality in sports".

In stigmatising homophobia, it is not homosexuality, as was previously the norm – all this shows us how sport has come. If more professional athletes were as active and outspoken as cricket hero Joe Root, sport would be an even more positive place for LGBT+ people.

[the writer is Course Leader of the School of Sport, Health and Social Sciences, Solent University]



to have said nothing – the usual response to unwanted on-field sledging. But he did something positive – something which could, of course, have a significant knock-on effect for younger LGBT+ people seeking a career as a professional athlete. Therefore, unlike psychologist John Amaechi – who wrote in the Independent that Root shouldn't be praised for doing precisely what you would expect from anyone who witnessed homophobia – I think praise for Root sends an important message that homophobia is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in professional sport.

FORCING CHANGE

Over the years, sport has rarely been recognised as an industry committed to equality and diversity. Typically, it has been seen as a cultural arena in which dominant forms of masculinity, and heterosexuality, have been both encouraged and celebrated. If we look back at some of sport's first openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual athletes, they were hardly welcomed with open arms. Footballer Justin Fashanu and tennis players Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova are but some of the examples of sport's seemingly incompatible relationship with "alternative sexualities".

But the industry has undergone remarkable social change over the past two decades – change expertly summarised by the brilliant US academic, Vikki Krane, who in 2016 wrote:

"Sport is entering a new era of inclusion and acceptance. Previously dominated by stereotypes and norms surrounding masculinity and femininity, prejudice and discrimination towards non-conforming attitudes had prevailed ... Yet, as more athletes reveal their gender identity, sexual orientation, and LGBT identities, they are being supported by teammates, coaches, and fans ... This is a whole different landscape from what has occurred in the past."

Sport, then, despite so many claims to the contrary, is, it seems, falling in line with broader social trends across the West; in the UK and the US, for example, social attitude surveys – probably the most effective means to measure cultural attitudes toward homosexuality – have never been as unerringly positive as they are now.

TEAM PRIDE

But, as I wrote in a recent article for the UK's Sports Media LGBT+ Network, professional sport still has an

400,000 African pangolins are hunted for meat every year – why it's time to act

DANIEL J INGRAM
theconversation.com

Pangolins, a group of unique African and Asian scaly mammals, are considered to be one of the most heavily trafficked wild mammals in the world. They are hunted and traded for their meat, scales, and other body parts, and used as traditional medicines in parts of Africa and Asia.

Of the eight pangolin species, four are found in Africa. These are the white-bellied, black-bellied, giant, and Temminck's ground pangolin. Three of these species live in Central African forests. The tree-dwelling white-bellied and black-bellied pangolins, weighing approximately 1.5 to 3kg (comparable to a small rabbit), and the ground-dwelling giant pangolin can weigh up to 33kg (the weight of a small Labrador dog).

But little is known about population sizes, mortality rates, and reproductive potential of African pangolins. Mounting evidence suggests that as the availability of Asian pangolins declines, and international trade flows increase, traders increasingly supply the more abundant and less expensive African pangolins to meet demand.

Seizures of pangolins and their scales and skins from Africa, destined for Asia, are increasing with over 53 tons seized in 2013 alone. These estimates likely represent a fraction of all pangolins traded, and an even smaller portion of the number of pangolins hunted.

To better understand how many pangolins are hunted in Central Africa each year, I and a team of researchers collated information on the quanti-



hunted for meat include blue duikers, brush-tailed porcupines and greater cane rats.

For Central African forests in Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Congo, we estimated that at least 400,000 pangolins are hunted annually for meat.

But we don't yet know whether pangolins can withstand these levels of hunting. This is mainly because we don't yet have reliable pangolin population estimates for any of the species that inhabit Central African forests. Ideally, we would also need population and hunt-

Secondly, increases in the accessibility of remote areas to people and extractive industries may lead to more pangolin hunting. For example, a recent study showed that Asian industry workers in Gabon requested pangolins from hunters more than any other species.

Finally, the international trafficking of pangolins over the past decade has boomed. They are one of the most trafficked wild mammals in the world. For example, eight tonnes of pangolin scales trafficked from Nigeria, one of the largest ever hauls of scales, was intercepted a couple of weeks ago in Hong Kong.

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to armed tribal
urgency in the state
the last two decades
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sons (IDP).
West Tripura and
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took out a procession
and submitted a
morandum to West

...ment provide the dis-
placed people in the
districts the status of IDP.
The committee sec-
retary Sajal Podder said
insurgents were granted
rehabilitation packages
after surrendering arms.
However, those
whose lives were af-
fected due to insur-
gency are living home-
less, two decades after

...packages, it was not
We did not commit any
crime. We are homeless
since 2000. We want the
government to grant us
IDP status and provide
all benefits to all of us,"
Podder said.

"The erstwhile Left
Front government pro-
vided housing to 202
families who lost their
homes in armed insur-

...tion facilities and cas-
compensation to each
family displaced due to
insurgency. We also de-
mand that they should be
granted the status of IDP,"
Podder told reporters.
Over 6,500 non-tribal
families were dis-
placed due to armed
insurgency and ethnic
clashes in different parts
of Tripura since 1980.

...along with some other
Indians while they were
working on a ship at the
Indo-Pakistan border,
state Parliamentary Af-
fairs Minister Chandra
Mohan Patowary told the

...laghat, Assam, was ar-
rested on 28/10/2018
by Pakistani authori-
ties," said Patowary in
reply to a starred ques-
tion of BJP MLA Mrinal
Saikia in the House.

...stan's Karachi.
The Assam Police has
taken up the matter with
the central agencies for
consular access and re-
lease of the prisoner, Pa-
towary added.

Chit Fund: WB Chief Secy, DGP, Kolkata Police chief refute CBI charge of obstruction in probe in SC

NEW DELHI, FEB 18 (PTI): West Bengal government and its police refuted CBI allegations in the Supreme Court Monday that they obstructed investigation into the Saradha chit fund scam cases, with the state cops asserting the central agency forcefully tried to enter the Kolkata police commissioner's residence on February 3 without valid papers.

Chief secretary Malay Kumar De, DGP Virendera Kumar and Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar filed separate affidavits in the apex court on the contempt petition moved by the CBI in connection with the scam and tendered "unconditional and unambiguous apology" for alleged disobedience of the court.

The trio maintained however that the West Bengal government and the state police at no point of time obstructed investigation nor any official denied co-operation to CBI.

The officers opposed the contempt petition against in which CBI alleged that they were tampering with evidence and not complying with the apex court's various orders relating to the probe by asserting that there was a need for directions to the probe agency not to make any vague allegations without substantial and cogent evidence.

Referring to the February 3 incident, Kolkata police commissioner Rajeev Kumar said in his affidavit that CBI forcibly tried to enter his house without valid papers. The contention has been supported by the DGP in his affidavit.

They have also claimed that no police officials went on 'dharna manch' where West Bengal Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee sat to protest the CBI action.

The DGP and Kumar said no police officer, in uniform or otherwise at any given point in time, ever sat or joined the dharna along with Banerjee.

Kumar said it was the petition through his brother seeking quashing of the transit remand claiming it to be defective.

earlier in the day, transferred the petition to another bench for hearing it today itself due to some technical issues.

"very intriguing" as to why a major decision by the CBI was taken to interrogate him on February 3, which was the last day in office of the then interim CBI director M Nageswara Rao.

"In this context, it is also pertinent to mention here that Sunday i.e. February 3, 2019, was the last day in office of the interim CBI Director, who was to be replaced by the present Director, CBI, the very next day i.e. on February 4, 2019," he said in his affidavit.

Kumar further said: "It seems very intriguing as to why such a major decision could not wait even for a single day for the new Director CBI to join, especially when the last notice was issued to the answering respondent, after a gap of more than a year, as noted hereinabove."

"The action taken by the CBI, was also de hors the orders passed by the Calcutta High Court keeping in abeyance the notices issued by the CBI under section 160, CrPC to the State Police Officials, in presence of the counsels representing the CBI."

Kumar, against whom CBI has alleged tampering of electronic evidence including call detail records, said he was never in direct possession of evidence, material or documents.

They responded to the notices issued on February 5 by the apex court which had asked them to clarify their stand on the allegation that evidence was tampered with and the state police was not cooperating with the Central Bureau of Investigation.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi had said that after perusing the affidavits, a decision will be taken whether they would be required to make personal appearance before it on February 20.

It said the Secretary General of the apex court will inform the trio on February 19 whether they are required to be present on February 20.

The apex court on

February 4 had said that "if the police commissioner is even remotely trying to destroy evidence, we will come down so heavily on him that he will regret".

In the backdrop of the February 4 and 5 hearings, Kumar, who was also accused by the CBI of shielding people close to the ruling Trinamool Congress, said: "He was never in exclusive and direct possession of evidences/ material/ documents as alleged in the instant petition, for him to act contumaciously or subvert any orders passed by this Court."

"Materials have either been in the exclusive custody of the various Investigating Officers as part of the investigative units under their supervisory officers across the state and/or the appropriate courts in accordance with applicable law."

He said in the Special Investigative Team constituted by the state that "he was a member and not in a supervisory role of investigation units but was discharging function as an administrative & logistic coordinator".

Kumar said there were Assistant Commissioner of Police, Deputy Commissioner of Police and Joint Commissioner of Police rank officers for closer and direct supervision of the investigation of cases in Bidhanagar Police Commissionerate, where the deponent was posted as Commissioner of Police.

While maintaining that 76 cases have been lodged in connection with the chit fund scam, Kumar said that "his presence, adjacent to the site of dharna" was to "discharge his duties" as Director General of Police and Inspector General of Police, West Bengal, had come to the place which had become, for all practical purposes, a makeshift secretariat/camp office of the chief minister.

They were there to "tackle any unforeseen situation which could have arisen due to the volatile and evolving situation", he said.

The symptoms fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, difficulty in breathing.

Other symptoms include body ache, headache, fatigue, chills, diarrhoea and vomiting blood-stained sputum.

There are three categories of H1N1 influenza -- A, B and C. A holding a state-level review meeting on H1N1, the government recently said all government hospitals in the city are equipped

...of swine have been
recorded in Delhi in the
last 10 days, taking the
total number of people
affected by the H1N1 in-
fluenza in the city since
1965, according to a
senior official.

According to a report
of the Directorate Gen-
eral of Health Services
(DGHS), the de-
ath toll due to swine
flu in Delhi this year
stands at six.

The city had recorded
1,196 cases till Febru-
ary 7 and on Monday
the number of people af-
fected by the H1N1 infec-
tion has risen to 1,965,
an official said, quoting
DGHS report.

The report had men-
tioned deaths of five
more persons from co-
morbidity.

As per the report, of
the six persons who
have died of swine
flu this year, one belong-
ed to Delhi, while the rest
were residents of other
states.

Amid the mounting
case of the H1N1 infection
in the city, the Delhi gov-
ernment recently had issued
health advisory, prescribing
the do's and don'ts.

Medical Director
Lok Nayak Jai Prakash
Narayan (LNJP) Hospital
Kishore Singh said the
hospital is well equipped
to handle the swine
flu cases, with adequate
stock of medicines.

However, two of the
tre-run hospitals have
have reported 13 deaths
due to swine flu this year.
According to senior
officials at Safdarjung
Hospital, three deaths
due to swine flu have
been recorded this year.

son, while Ram Manohar
Lohia Hospital has re-
ported 10 fatalities. More
of the 10 people who
died at RML Hospital
were from Delhi, and the
other was from outside
the city, officials said.

Seasonal Influenza
(H1N1) is a self-limiting
viral, air-borne disease
spread from person-to-
person, through large
droplets generated through
coughing and sneezing,
indirect contact by touch-
ing contaminated objects
surface (fomite) trans-
mission like telephones,
cell phones, computer
door handles, door han-
dles, pens, toys etc) and
contact (including hand
shaking, hugging, kiss-
ing), the advisory said.

The symptoms fever,
cough, sore throat, run-
ny or stuffy nose, diffi-
culty in breathing.

Other symptoms include
body ache, headache, fa-
tigue, chills, diarrhoea
and vomiting blood-
stained sputum.

There are three cat-
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holding a state-level re-
view meeting on H1N1,
the government recently
said all government hos-
pitals in the city are

800 houses in Lunglei town damaged in hailstorm



COAWL, FEB 18 (PTI): Around 800 houses in
Mizoram's Lunglei town
and nearby villages were
damaged in a hailstorm,
there was no report
of any casualty. Disaster
Management and Rehabil-
itation (DMR) department

officials said Monday.
DMR director F J Liantlu-
anga told PTI that detail
information about the
extent of damage caused
by the hailstorm which hit
the southern Mizoram
town of Lunglei town
was being prepared.

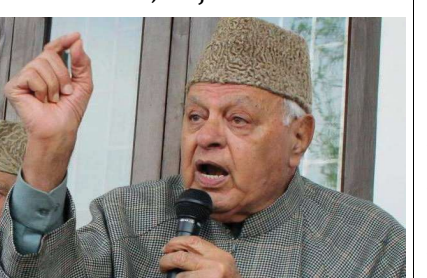
Officials in Lunglei
district said that at least
796 houses were either
completely damaged or
partially damaged in the
hailstorm which hit the
town on Sunday night.

Majority of those
damaged houses were

tin-roofed while win-
dow panes were also broken
in many places render-
ing the houses unin-
habitable, they said.

Hailstorm and heavy
rainfall also hit the state
capital, Aizawl and other
places on Sunday evening.

Farooq Abdullah takes up Kashmiri students' safety with CMs of Pb, Raj and U'khand



JAMMU, FEB 18 (PTI): National Conference President Farooq Abdullah Monday took up the security-related issues of the students and others from Kashmir with chief ministers of Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, urging them to ensure their safety and well-being.

"Abdullah spoke on phone with Punjab Chief Minister Amrinder Singh, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat and urged them to take appropriate measures for instilling a sense of security among the students and other Kashmiri people," a spokesman of the NC said here.

Expressing concern over "threats and intimidation" to the Kashmiri students in various parts of the country, Abdullah told the chief ministers that the students are in panic and fearing for their lives.

"Security is needed to be beefed up in the areas they are staying besides anti-social elements need to be booked for their intimidating tactics," the NC leader said.

The spokesman said the chief ministers of the three states shared the concern of Abdullah and informed him about various steps taken in this regard.

They assured him that all the necessary measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of Kashmiri students, he said.

Meanwhile, Abdullah has again reiterated his appeal to the people of Jammu for maintaining peace and brotherhood.

He stressed the need for isolating elements inimical to peace. "Footing attempts of anti-social elements unitedly by the people belonging to various segments of the society is need of the hour," he said.

Pulwama fallout: Minerva moves court, East Bengal wait & watch on Srinagar match

budget session of the assembly, its Excise Minister K. J. Jayaram said. The state legislative assembly is likely to be held in March, he said at a meeting of the Mizo National Front (MNF) here. Jayaram said that the prohibition would be

neered by Zoramthanga soon after taking over the reins of the state in December 2018 had declared 'dry days', but was challenged by liquor vendors and the Gauhati High Court stayed the long spell of dry days. It had declared dry days from December 21 to January 14 which was extended from January

February 20, 1997 when the stringent Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition Act, 1995 was imposed in the whole of the state except for the three autonomous district council areas, till wine shops were opened on March 16, 2015 under the Mizoram Liquor (Prohibition and Control) Act, 2014.

2019 World Cup gets underway, might it be the year that England lift the global game's premier limited-overs trophy at long last? England -- the pioneers of one-day cricket as a professional sport -- have taken part in every World Cup since staging the inaugural men's event in 1975.

But all they have to show for their efforts are runners-up medals from the 1979, 1987 and 1992 finals.

Test cricket has long been the priority for everyone in English cricket, be they players, fans or administrators.

That changed, however, after another World Cup group-stage exit at the 2015 edition in Australia and New Zealand was sealed with a woeful loss to Bangladesh.

Then England and Wales Cricket Board supremo Andrew Strauss decreed that white-ball cricket would no longer be the "poor relation", with the former England captain sacking head coach Peter Moores and bringing in Australian Trevor Bayliss specifically to turn round the team's limited-overs form.

The transformation has been remarkable with a newly-liberated England twice setting new records for the highest ODI totals -- their 444 for three against Pakistan at Trent Bridge in 2016 a prelude to last year's colossal 481 for six at the same ground.

England, captained in 50-over cricket by former Ireland batsman Eoin Morgan, with the side featuring Test skipper Joe Root and the

global spotlight even. But ICC officials point to the creation of a qualifying tournament -- from which two-time champions West Indies narrowly emerged -- as proof the non-test world still has a shot at the World Cup.

Rather than the pool stages this year, ICC have opted for a play-all group format move that many believe has more to do with ensuring India, cricket's financial powerhouse, guaranteed a minimum of nine matches to sporting fairness for the teams taking part.

Such a lengthy group phase ahead of semi-finals does reduce the chances of a team going through to the July 14 final Lord's unbeaten.

Reigning champions Australia, set to be boosted by the return of batsmen Steve Smith and David Warner following their lengthy ball-tampering bans, will be bidding for a sixth title.

India, with Virat Kohli at the helm, a major force in all forms while Pakistan defies expectations to win the 2017 Champions Trophy in England.

New Zealand will keen to go one better after losing in the 2015 final, while South Africa will arrive hoping to end years of World Cup heartbreak.

West Indies, the 1979 and 1975 champions, will have an extra incentive this year after South Africa's announcement that star batsman AB de Villiers will retire from ODIs following the year's World Cup.

Bayern carrying German Champions League hopes against Liverpool



LIN, FEB 18 (AFP): Bayern Munich head coach Pep Guardiola said his team will expose Liverpool's weaknesses defending against quick counter-attacks.

"Everything must be better, but we had Liverpool at the backs of our minds," admitted Bayern coach Niko Kovac.

"We have to perform differently, but it'll be at international level and that's a very different focus -- I assume that it will be a completely different performance from us."

After Borussia Dortmund's 3-0 mauling at Tottenham Hotspur last week, and with Schalke facing English champions Manchester City on Wednesday, Bayern hold Germany's best hope of quarter-final representation.

Dortmund top the Bundesliga ahead of Bayern, but in Europe it is the Bavarians who have made a habit of reaching the latter stages of the Champions League.

"Dortmund have kept the Bundesliga exciting this year, but at this level you can't make three individual mistakes like that (against Spurs)," said former Dortmund coach Matthias Sammer, now a Eurosport pundit.

"That's why I believe Bayern are the leaders in this regard and are carrying the flag in the normal picture, which is now emerging."

Any Liverpool fan who watched Bayern struggle at Augsburg would have cause for optimism as the Bavarians' defence creaked in dramatic fashion.

- Leaking defence - Augsburg winger Philipp Max twice found space early on down the left flank which yielded an own goal by Bayern's Leon Goretzka after just 13 seconds before South Korea midfielder Ji Dong-won drilled home the hosts' second.

Kingsley Coman, who should be fit despite an ankle injury scare, rescued Bayern with two first-half goals before setting up David Alaba's winner.

Yet Sammer expects a different story from Bayern at Anfield.

"You can't compare Augsburg and Liverpool, they (Bayern) will be up for Liverpool," said Sammer.

"Nevertheless, both (Augsburg) goals came from the wings and you can't let balls like that through."

"If they make those mistakes against Liverpool, it will be hard."

Bayern captain Manuel Neuer agrees that they can ill afford Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool the same chances Augsburg were gifted.

"Liverpool are a strong, attacking team and will get more chances than Augsburg," said Neuer, back in goal after three games out with a thumb injury.

"We have to be more compact."

"When we work without the ball, there is order in our games, but on the wings we were caught cold and punished accordingly," Bayern Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said he was disappointed to see Dortmund soundly beaten by Spurs.

"I didn't smile and wasn't happy that they lost 3-0," said Rummenigge.

"I think that (the result) isn't good for the Bundesliga... These two clubs have always flown the flag (for Germany) in Europe."



hard-hitting talents of Jason Roy, Alex Hales and Jos Buttler, now sit atop the ODI world rankings heading into their upcoming five-match series away to the West Indies.

- 'NOW IS THE TIME' -

"We can say we were the best ODI side to play for England... but without a trophy, it will be difficult to say that," said all-rounder Moeen Ali, looking to help England's men win just their second major global event following the 2010 World Twenty20 in the Caribbean.

"We have come close and we feel now is the time."

"We don't feel we have to win it, it's more 'this is the time to win it'. We are an amazing side but we know this year is massive for us," added Moeen, with England, as was the case in 1975, playing host to a World Cup and an Ashes series in the same season.

But unlike that first

eight-team edition 43 years ago, which featured two then non-Test sides in East Africa and the long since elevated Sri Lanka, this year's event will be a 10-team affair contested solely by Test nations.

Ever since India and Pakistan were both knocked out in the group stage of the 2007 World Cup in the West Indies, thereby putting a huge dent in broadcast audiences, attendance figures and commercial revenues for the rest of the tournament, International Cricket Council chiefs have been determined no such 'nightmare scenario' will ever befall both Asian giants again.

The result has been a decrease in the number of non-Test nations involved to the point none will take part this year.

That has seen the ICC criticised for making the World Cup too narrow at a time when other sports are expanding rather

Mourinho open to working in France

LILLE, FEB 18 (AFP): Jose Mourinho said he could see himself coaching in France as he attended the 0-0 draw between Lille and Montpellier to reportedly cast an eye over Ivorian star Nicolas Pepe.

Mourinho was sacked by Manchester United in December in a move that cost the Premier League club £19.6 million (£25 million) in severance pay for the Portuguese boss and members of his staff.

He has since taken on a pundit role with beIN Sports, and was pictured sitting alongside Lille sporting advisor Luis Campos at the Stade Pierre-Mauroy on Sunday.

"I can imagine (coaching) in France one day," Mourinho said. "I'm a man who's worked in four different countries, who likes that, who likes to know other cultures."



when the latter was in charge at Real Madrid.

A source told AFP

United replaced Mourinho with former striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

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United replaced Mourinho with former striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

Torino frustrate Napoli as Nainggolan seals Inter win

MILAN, FEB 18 (AFP): Napoli's title hopes took a further blow as Carlo Ancelotti's side were held goalless draw for the first time in four league matches to drop further points against Torino and trail champions Juventus by 13 points.

Napoli had drawn at home against AC Milan two weeks ago and Fiorentina last time out. They will face a top-of-the-table clash against Juventus on March 3 with their Serie A bid already all but over.

Champions Juventus are firmly on track for an eighth consecutive title after Cristiano Ronaldo scored in a win over lowly Fiorentina on Friday.

"We played with full motivation, determination, but it's unacceptable

Mary Kom named brand ambassador of Puma

Delhi, Feb 18 (PTI): Time world women's boxing champion Mary Kom was on Monday named as a brand ambassador for global sportswear giant PUMA for a two-year period.

"Magnificent Mary," she is popularly known as, will be PUMA's new ambassador across the nation to be strong and accomplish their goals.

Talking about the association, Mary Kom said, "Being a woman and a mother I have faced several challenges that I have powered through, thanks to my family and team."

"PUMA as a brand has

women across the nation to be strong and accomplish their goals.

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"PUMA as a brand has



Kulbhushan Jadhav was provided by Pakistan to show his involvement in any act of terrorism and Jadhav's purported confession clearly appeared to be "coerced," Salve said.

"There is no manner of doubt that Pakistan was using this as a propaganda tool. Pakistan was bound to grant consular access without delay," Salve said.

"Pakistan used confession document as propaganda. Pakistan has disrespected the Vienna Convention," Salve said.

He said India had sent 13 reminders to Pakistan for consular access to Jadhav, but Islamabad is yet to accede.

Pakistan claims that its security forces arrested Jadhav from restive Balochistan province on March 3, 2016 after he reportedly entered from Iran.

However, India maintains that Jadhav was kidnapped from Iran where he had business interests after retiring from the Navy. Jadhav's sentencing had evoked a sharp reaction in India.

During the hearing,

India's plea came as a top UN court began a four-day public hearing in the case of Jadhav, 48, who was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage.

India, during the first phase on the hearing, based its case on two broad issues -- breach of Vienna Convention on consular access and the process of extradition.

"It is an unfortunate case where the life of an innocent Indian is at stake," ex-solicitor general Balraj Salve, who was representing India, said.

"Pakistan's story is largely based on rhetoric and not facts," he said, adding that Jadhav's continued custody without consular access should be declared unlawful.

Jadhav's trial by a Pakistani military court has also been criticised for being unfair.

India was registered against Jadhav. In May 2016, Jadhav was interrogated, and India sent reminders for consular access across May, June, and July," Salve says.

"India reminded Pakistan for consular access - 13 reminders were sent - but to no avail," he said.

"Pakistan embarrassed to disclose charges against Jadhav," Salve said.

Pakistan did not inform Kulbhushan Jadhav of his rights, he said.

Salve read out the various sections and articles of the Vienna Convention under which foreign prisoners fall.

"The Vienna Convention is a powerful tool that ensures the facility of consular access to foreign nationals who have been put on trial in foreign trial," he said.

"Article 36 of the Vienna Convention says that a country must be informed about the detention of its citizens but Pakistan did not inform India about his arrest."

Without consular ac-

side if India assisted their investigation into him being an Indian spy, asked for evidence of bank accounts, phone numbers, etc," he said.

Pakistan has not provided any evidence, he added.

"Inhuman detention violation of universal rights," Salve said.

He said Pakistan offered to allow Jadhav's family to visit him, the terms were agreed and the meeting was held on 25 December, 2017.

"India was dismayed at the manner the meeting with Jadhav's family was conducted and wrote a letter on 27 December marking its protest," he said.

Pakistan didn't send any details of the probe conducted by the Joint Investigation Team before informing the Indian side about the death sentence handed over to him. Jadhav was not appointed any lawyer during his trial by the Pakistani military court either, he said.

Serious charges need strict adherence to due process, he emphasised.

"India and Pakistan have a bilateral agreement on consular access," he said.

"Bilateral treaties cannot modify Article 36 of Vienna Convention. It could only supplement it," Salve added.

Pakistan should have provided a substantial explanation for why it needed 3 months for providing consular access, upon which it could have claimed that it has complied with treaty obligation, Salve said.

Salve argued that Pakistan did not uphold the Article 36 of the Vienna Convention that states consular access applies all nationals, regardless of espionage claims in Jadhav's case.

He said that the ICJ has already upheld the importance of consular access under Article 36 in two previous cases LaGrand (Germany vs USA) and Avena (Mexico vs USA).

"This quite plainly, is an egregious violation of Pakistan's obligations under Article 36 of the Vienna Convention," said



KARACHI, FEB 18 (PTI): The Pakistan Cricket Board has said it will take up with the BCCI the "regrettable" removal of pictures of its former players at a couple of venues in India, owing to the Pulwama terror attack, during an ICC meeting this month.

In a statement issued late Sunday night, the PCB's Managing Director Wasim Khan said that sports has always played a key role in defusing political tensions. The ICC meeting is scheduled to be held in Dubai from February 28.

However, the issue is expected to be raised on the sidelines as it doesn't feature in the agenda of the board meeting.

"...we have always believed and emphasised

that sports and politics should be kept separate. History tells us that sports, particularly cricket, have always played a key role in building bridges between people and countries," Khan said in the statement.

"...covering or removing portrait of former Pakistan cricket captain and Prime Minister Imran Khan and other legendary cricketers from one of the most historic cricket clubs and venues are highly regrettable actions," he added.

The terror attack in Pulwama killed at least 40 CRPF Jawans.

In the aftermath, the Cricket Club of India in Mumbai covered a portrait of Pakistan Prime Minister and former captain Imran Khan, while

the Punjab Cricket Association removed photographs of Pakistani cricketers from various points inside the Mohali stadium.

The PCB Managing Director also confirmed that Indian production company IMG Reliance pulled out of producing the Pakistan Super League matches.

"We have been informed by IMG Reliance that they will be unable to partner with us for the remaining PSL 2019. PCB has reserved all rights. The PCB always had a contingency plan in place..." Khan said.

IMG Reliance had announced its withdrawal as official production partner for PSL as a mark of protest against the Pulwama attack.

UK lawmakers slam Facebook, recommend stiffer regulation



LONDON, FEB 18 (AP): British lawmakers issued a scathing report Sunday that accused Facebook of intentional privacy and competition laws in the UK, and called for greater oversight of social media companies.

The report on fake news and disinformation on social media sites followed an 18-month investigation by Parliament's influential media committee. The committee recommended that social media sites should be required to follow a mandatory code of ethics overseen by an independent regulator to better control harmful illegal content.

The report called for Facebook in particular, saying that the company's structure seems designed to "conceal the degree of and responsibility for specific decisions."

It is evident that Facebook intentionally violated data privacy and anti-competition laws," the report states. It also accused CEO Mark Zuckerberg of showing contempt for the U.K. Parliament by denying numerous invitations to appear before the committee.

Facebook said it shared "the committee's concerns about false news and election integrity" and was open to "meaningful regulation."

"While we still have more to do, we are not the same company we were a year ago," said Facebook's UK public policy manager, Karim Palant.

"We have tripled the size of the team working to detect and protect users from bad content to 30,000 people and invested heavily in machine learning, artificial intelligence and computer vision technology to help prevent this type of abuse."

Facebook and other internet companies have been facing increased scrutiny over how they handle user data and have come under fire for not doing enough to stop misuse of their platforms by groups trying to sway elections.

The report echoes and expands upon an interim report with similar findings issued by the committee in July.

And in December, a trove of documents released by the committee offered evidence that the social network had used its enormous trove of user data as a competitive weapon, often in ways that were illegal.

Seven MPs leave Britain's Labour Party over Brexit, anti-Semitism



LONDON, FEB 18 (AFP): Seven MPs from Britain's opposition Labour Party announced on Monday they were breaking away in protest at the party leadership's support for Brexit and its failure to stamp out anti-Semitism.

Speaking at a hastily arranged press conference in London, the seven attacked party chief Jeremy Corbyn for leading the party to the far left and said they would sit as an independent group in parliament.

The group included Chuka Umunna, who has led a cross-party campaign for a second referendum on Brexit and was once seen as a potential Labour leader.

"If you want an alternative please help us build it," Umunna said.

"Politics is broken. It doesn't have to be this way," Corbyn said he was "disappointed" by the MPs' decision.

"Now more than ever is the time to bring people together to build a better future for us all," he said.

Another MP, Luciana Berger, who has been the victim of anti-Semitic abuse for years, said: "This has been a very

difficult, painful but necessary decision." Berger said the party had become "institutionally anti-Semitic", adding: "I have become embarrassed and ashamed to represent the Labour Party."

"I am leaving behind a culture of bullying, bigotry and intimidation," she said.

MP Mike Gapes said: "I am furious that the Labour leadership is complicit in facilitating Brexit."

His colleague Chris Leslie, said he was leaving because of "Labour's betrayal on Europe."

Last month the two sides held detailed talks and there were indications that they have come closer to end more than 17 years of conflict in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry reacted strongly to the announcement of a meeting in Islamabad.

Pakistan calls back envoy from India for 'consultations'

ISLAMABAD, FEB 18 (PTI): In a tit-for-tat action, Pakistan Monday called back its High Commissioner from India for "consultations" amid heightened bilateral tensions after the Pulwama terror attack, days after New Delhi asked its envoy in Islamabad to return.

Foreign Office spokesperson Mohammad Faisal said envoy Sohail Mahmood left New Delhi on Monday morning.

"We have called back our High Commissioner in India for consultations. He left New Delhi this morning," he said on Twitter.

It was not immedi-

ately clear as to how many days he will stay in Pakistan.

Mahmood was on Friday summoned in New Delhi by Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale who lodged strong protest over the killing of 40 CRPF soldiers in Pulwama.

Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Ajay Bisaria has already been called to New Delhi for consultations in the wake of the attack.

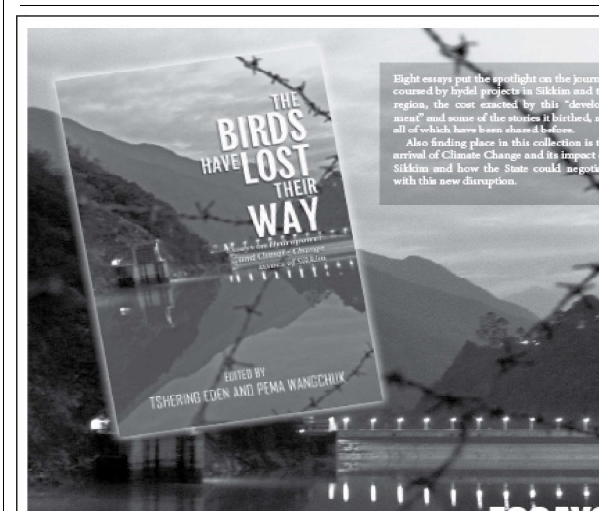
India has blamed Pakistan-backed Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorist group for the Pulwama terror attack on Thursday.

JeM has claimed responsibility for the attack.

In a major diplomatic offensive against Islamabad after the attack, India has highlighted Pakistan's role in using terrorism as an instrument of state policy.

India has demanded that Pakistan should take immediate and verified action against terrorism and terror groups operating from territories under its control to create a conducive atmosphere in the region, free of terrorism.

India on Friday announced the withdrawal of the Most Favoured Nation status for Pakistan and hiked the customs duty by 200 per cent on goods originating from Pakistan with immediate effect on Saturday.





RUFF DAY! The Riverdale star, KJ Apa, volunteers with the ASPCA at the Wallis Annenberg PetSpace in LA.

Grammy winner Kacey Musgraves to present award at Oscars 2019

nger-songwriter Kacey Musgraves has been added to the list of people who will be presenting the trophies to the winners at the upcoming 91st Academy Awards.

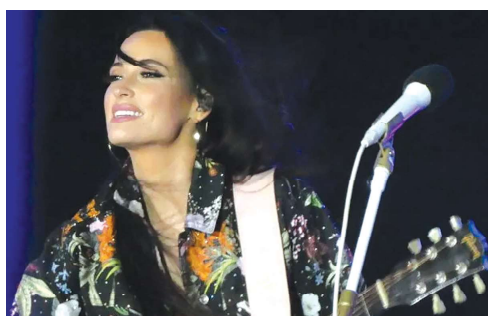
The 30-year-old musician recently won the 2019 Grammy Album of the Year award for her critically acclaimed, genre-bending record "Golden Hour". Apart from this, she also won awards for best country album, best country song and best country solo performance.

According to Variety, the Academy is yet to announce which award Musgraves will present at the awards ceremony but it is expected to be one of the two music awards for original song and best original score.

She joins previously announced presenters -- Chris Evans, Brie Larson, Awkwafina, Daniel Craig, Tina Fey, Whoopi Goldberg, Jennifer Lopez, Amy Poehler, Maya Rudolph, Amandla Stenberg, Charlize Theron, Tessa Thompson, Constance Wu, Javier Bardem, Angela Bassett, Chadwick Boseman, Emilia Clarke, Laura Dern, Samuel L Jackson, Stephan James, Keegan-Michael Key, KiKi Layne, James McAvoy, Melissa McCarthy, Jason Momoa and Sarah Paulson.

Last year's Oscar winners, Alison Janney, Sam Rockwell, Gary Oldman and Frances McDormand will also be presenting awards at the 2019 ceremony.

The 2019 Academy Awards will be held on February 24. A replacement of actor Kevin Hart as the Oscars host is yet to be announced by the Academy.



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The 73-year-old singer will perform "The Place Where Lost Things Go" from "Mary Poppins Returns" at the awards ceremony.

"So, (drum roll) Ladies and Gentlemen, I will be chateausing (that's singing) on the Oscars on Feb 24...the nominated song from 'Mary Poppins'... 'The Place Where Lost Things Go' ...so excited!!" she wrote on Twitter.

The song, written by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman, was originally performed by actor Emily Blunt in the 2018 film.

Shaiman took to Facebook to express his excitement over the news.

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actors Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper will be performing the song, "Shallow", from their film "A Star Is Born".

It was also announced that "When a Cowboy Travels His Spurs for Wings" from "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs" will be performed by Gillian Welch and David Rawlings, while Jennifer Hudson will take the stage for the Diane Warren-penned "I'll Fight" from documentary "RBG".

Farhan's 'Toofan' an endearing love story: Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra

MUMBAI, FEB 18 (PTI): Filmmaker Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra is set to reteam with his "Bhaag Milkha Bhaag" actor Farhan Akhtar in "Toofan", a boxing drama with an endearing love story at its centre.

Mehra plans to begin shooting the film by the year end.

"I am most excited for the film. I can't talk much because we haven't even started shooting. We are planning to go on floors by the end of the year. Both Farhan and I are getting to work with each other after six years. We have always been looking and bouncing ideas at each other," Mehra told PTI.

The "Rang De Basanti" director says "Toofan" isn't a real life story but is rooted in a very believable setting.

"Anjum Rajabali has written this very endearing love story of a boxer, it not a real life figure but a fictitious character. What I liked the most about it (the story) was that it has a new voice. It's set in the lower middle class. Boxing is not a rich man's sport, anywhere in the world."

For the film, just like his "Bhaag Milkha Bhaag", Farhan will undergo a body transformation and Mehra says the actor is a "rockstar, when he gets into something, he goes full throttle."

Mehra is currently awaiting the release of his next, "Mere Pyare Prime Minister", scheduled to be released on March 15.



Tiffany Haddish is working on her first music album

LOS ANGELES, FEB 17 (PTI): Actor-comedian Tiffany Haddish says she is working on her first solo music album.

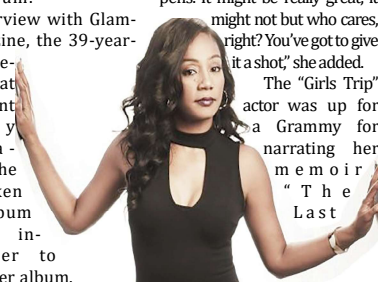
In an interview with Glamour magazine, the 39-year-old star revealed that her recent Grammy nomination in the best spoken word album category inspired her to work on her album.

"I'm working on an album! Granted, most of this album has already happened in my head, but that's how it starts. It all starts in here and

then it comes out and I've been talking to people," Haddish said.

"I'm going to see what happens. It might be really great, it might not but who cares, right? You've got to give it a shot," she added.

The "Girls Trip" actor was up for a Grammy for narrating her memoir "The Last



Black Unicorn". At the awards, the actor lost out to former President Jimmy Carter for his audio book "Faith: A Journey For All".

ARIES: Are your emotions derailing your attempts at a healthy lifestyle, Aries? Instead of numbing the pain with a plate of comfort food or zoning out with yet another Netflix binge, get real about what you're feeling. Avoidance won't make the angst go away, especially if it's wreaking havoc on your wellbeing. Reach out to a close friend or trusted relative to work out what's been bothering you.

TAURUS: Reserve judgment Saturday, Taurus, and if that's not possible, at least give others an opportunity to tell their side of the story. You tend to put people's ac-

those purse strings a little tighter. Cut back on restaurant meals or give DIY mani-pedis a whirl. Fill up your travel coffee mug and reusable water bottle at home.

CANCER: A little exaggeration is totally harmless, right? Maybe not. With the moon in your sign Saturday, you're prone to embellishing, which could raise some eyebrows. Skip the hyperbole lest people question your credibility. Channel that larger-than-life romanticism into one of your creative ventures: a home decor project, song lyrics, a short story. But when dealing with others, keep it real.

LIBRA: FSaturday, the moon illuminates your ambitious tenth house, giving you laser-beam focus. If your career hasn't been advancing as fast as you'd like, don't despair. Saturday's lunar energy puts you back in the driver's seat, and you'll start gaining momentum again. Make clarity your goal and take a phased approach. For example: What would you like to accomplish before the end of this quarter?

VIRGO: There's strength in numbers, Virgo! Skip the solo act and pour your energy into a group effort this Saturday. If you're part of collective that's lost its team spirit, deliver a moti-

your witty one-liner to a friend instead of posting it as a status update. Or maybe chuckle silently then keep it to yourself!

SAGITTARIUS: Privacy is underrated, Archer, especially on Saturday, when the moon flies below the radar in your eighth house. Catch yourself before you mindlessly invite a friend to drop over for tea when you really just need time for yourself. And honor those confidentiality agreements! When you feel the burning need to reveal a colorful story or share a controversial opinion, count to ten instead!

CAPRICORN: Assess your most import-

"no pain, no gain" philosophy. You do need to force yourself through a deprivation-based diet or agonizing cardio class. Instead, take a brisk 30-minute walk with a friend or pet. Try a dance class or join an indoor sports team. Apply the same principle to your plate: Research nourishing recipes or sign up for a healthy meal delivery service like Supermarket. There's no need to suffer through another iceberg wedge and bland grilled chicken meal!

PISCES: Saturday's passion-fueling Cancer moon can help you fearlessly ex-

REQUIRED FOR CANADA

Nurses, Caregivers, Chef-Waiters-Butchers-Bakers, Driver, Farm Workers - Meat Packers IT PROFESSIONAL

Walk for Interview & Resume Submission

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