



**VANESSA BRYANT SAYS
'COMPLETELY DEVASTATED' BY
DEATH OF KOBE AND DAUGHTER**
pg 08

**PLANTING TREES MUST BE DONE
WITH CARE – IT CAN CREATE MORE
PROBLEMS THAN IT ADDRESSES**

04

**JONAH HILL'S STORY ABOUT KOBE
BRYANT WILL BREAK YOUR HEART**

pg 08



SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 28 | Gangtok | Saturday | 01 February 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

Education Dept showcauses Sr AO for unauthorized letter on funds crunch FUNDS FOR SALARIES WILL BE MANAGED, ADDL CS CLARIFIES

**ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 31 JAN:**

A letter from the Senior Accounts Officer, East district, Education Department, to BDOs in the district conveying that the Department does not have funds to release the January and February salaries of employees engaged at Primary and Junior High Schools in the district had caused a flutter after the letter was widely shared on Facebook on Thursday.

Today, the Department officially withdrew the letter, has show-caused the officer for having communicated without authorization and clarified that the letter in question resulted from mis-

communication and has assured that the Department has adequate funds for the Jan 2020 salaries "which will be released shortly."

Speaking to SummitTimes today, the Education Department Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary GP Upadhyaya, while accepting that the letter was not a "fake," stressed that the Senior Accounts Officer had shot off the letter without seeking authorization from the Department Headquarters, "which is mandatory."

Reiterating that the Department had the funds for the Jan salaries, Mr Upadhyaya added that the final months of a financial year routinely require the department

to re-appropriate funds for salaries.

"It's not unusual and is an internal adjustment which happens every year," Mr Upadhyaya said.

The need to re-appropriate funds from different salary heads arises due to non-projection of correct salary requirement by the accounts section and due to some lapses on the part of accounts staff in the district, he added.

The letter in question had laid the blame on the doors of "some" BACs which had not reported shortfall in time due to which the Head Office could not include the shortfall of budget provision in

the First Supplementary Demand for Grants.

The Director, Primary Education, who is also the Project Director, Samagra Shiksha, acting as the Nodal Officer for Public Relations of the Education Department, in a public notice issued today, apart from withdrawing the Sr AO's letter, adds that while the Department has adequate funds to release the Jan salaries, the Department also has "ways and means" to arrange additional funds for salaries of February as well.

Meanwhile, the Additional CS, while terming the act of the Sr AO a "blunder" and a result of mis-

communication, confirmed that a Show Cause Notice has been issued to him.

He also accepted that there are some issues this year due to the large number of appointments under One Family One Job Scheme.

As per the source, the previous government has appointed almost 2000 employees under the One Family One Job Scheme for which the department has to arrange salaries from different heads.

"Even I was surprised when I came to know about the letter," said the Secretary.

As per sources, senior officials from the HRDD department

have been called by the Finance Department Secretary to discuss the matter.

"I think it will be a lesson for the Senior Accounts Officer (East), about how to handle such situations," he said.

The public notice by the department also reads, "I am informing everyone that there is no need to be misled or misguided by this as this was an outcome of miscommunication and the regular instructions of the Finance and Accounts Section of the Department being misunderstood. The Department has funds for salaries of BAC teachers for January 2020 and shall be released shortly."

Sikkim banks join nationwide strike



**SAGAR CHETTRI
Gangtok, 31 Jan**

Banks in Sikkim also joined the nationwide two-day All India Bank Strike called by Bank Unions on Friday. Banks and their ATMs will also remain closed on Saturday as well. Customers of different banks in Gangtok unaware about the bank bandh were seen returning after reading posters pasted on the closed shutters of banks and their ATMs.

CM discusses development of cooperatives with NCDC Seeks financial assistance to boost cooperatives

NEW DELHI, 30 JAN (IPR):

Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang held a meeting with Managing Director, National Co-operative Development Corporation [NCDC], Sandeep Kumar Nayak on development partnership with cooperatives of Sikkim on 30 Jan at Sikkim House, New Delhi.

The meeting was attended by senior officials from Government of Sikkim and NCDC wherein the Chief Minister, was felicitated and welcomed by the MD, NCDC.

The CM also released a document titled "NCDC in Sikkim". Mr Nayak made a presentation on the NCDC, its schemes, strategy to develop cooperatives with special focus on opportunities and possibilities to finance projects of Rs.3000 crore for cooperatives in Sikkim.

In the deliberations, NCDC MD, Mr Nayak highlighted the mega projects by NCDC in the recent past for dairy, piggery and other livestock projects in the North-Eastern states of Meghalaya and Nagaland with the support of state governments.

Mr Nayak also assured the Chief Minister that NCDC can assist the Sikkim government for cooperatives in all possible ways and at all levels. It was also add-

ed that Sikkim being a pioneer state for organic produce, the issues related to marketing, branding and tie-up with ASEAN countries for high value realization can be made possible through cooperative model of business and value chains.

Network for the Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific (NEDAC), an international platform for Asia and Pacific countries for strengthening agricultural cooperatives, can also help in this tie-up in case the state government takes up its membership, suggested Mr Nayak.

The CM agreed to the observations of Mr Nayak and highlighted that the areas of tourism especially home stay, fisheries particularly trout fish, dairy, marketing of organic agriculture products like honey, ginger, cardamom are the immediate priorities and focus areas of the state government.

The state government has already initiated a scheme to incentivize the farmers to increase production in fisheries, dairy and agriculture. He expressed his keen desire to seek appropriate financial assistance for scaling up of these activities from NCDC since it is a Government of India statutory organisation. *Cntd Pg 2*

Month-long Winter Sports Coaching Camp concludes



**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK 31, JAN**

The valedictory function of Winter Coaching Camp was held here at Paljor Stadium on Friday morning. The month-long coaching camp, which was started on 05 January, in different sports disciplines was organized by Sports & Youth Affairs Department.

The valedictory function had Forest Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia as the chief guest accompanied by the Political Sec-

retary to the Chief Minister, Jacob Khaling as the guest of honour.

The function also witnessed demonstration of skills and knowledge by young children learnt during the camp. The chief guest and guest of honour handed over certificates to participants and also interacted with children in the camp.

In his address, the chief guest expressed that sports and games is a good medium to engage children in healthy and productive activities.

He congratulated parents for sending their children to the camp to encourage them in sports and fitness.

The Minister stated that sports would help to inculcate leadership and confidence in children. He urged children to continue with sports not only to stay fit and healthy but also be a good citizen of the society. However, he stressed that sports and education must go together.

Likewise, the guest of honour expressed that



sports was the priority sector of the State government and has been working for the development of sports and betterment of sportspersons in the State. He stated that the government has been working for infrastructure development and providing coaching and exposure to local sportspersons of the State.

Mr Khaling expressed that this coaching camp was a good start to take Sikkim sports to a new dimension. He congratulated

the department of Sports & Youth Affairs for organizing such camp for children and further thanked parents for sending and accompanying their children throughout the coaching camp.

Earlier, Secretary to Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kuber Bhandari thanked the State government for reviving the sports activities across the State. He mentioned that the department has been gearing up to organize

Girls football league from March in the State and Inter-Gram Panchayat Unit sports activities in different sports discipline to bring sports culture in the rural part.

Mr Bhandari informed that on the direction of the CM the talent hunt in different sports disciplines have been started in the State and will continue to bring out talented sportspersons from the State. He encouraged children to continue with sports to stay healthy and fit.

Govt move to hire retired CBI sleuths challenged

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 31 JAN:**

A forum by the name of Sikkim Against Citizenship Amendment Act [SACAA] has demanded the Department of Personnel to cancel its recent advertisement inviting applications for two posts of Superintendents of Police and two posts of Deputy Superintendents of Police on contractual basis under Sikkim Vigilance Police for retired officers of equivalent rank in the Central Bureau of Investigation.

The forum asserted that the advertisement goes against all the recruitment rules of the State and was hence patently "Anti-Sikkimese."

An SACAA delegation submitted a memorandum regarding the same to the Secretary, Department of Personnel, at Tashiling Secretariat on Friday.

SACAA has representatives from different political parties and social organizations.

The memorandum mentions that the said

advertisement further states that: "In case no eligible local candidates apply for the posts, application from non-locals shall also be accepted."

The memorandum has highlighted some major Constitutional provisions governing Sikkim and some other Acts and Rules for appointing people under the government of Sikkim.

"We would like to remind the State government that Sikkim is governed by a special provision of the Constitution i.e. Article 371F. By virtue of this, Sikkim's old law i.e. Sikkim Government Establishment Rules of 1974 is enforced for appointment of services under the government of Sikkim. Rule 4(4) of the above said rules [supra] does not only deal with direct recruitment but it deals with also appointment of contractual basis," the memorandum adds. On the same, it states, "In this context, we feel ashamed to have to remind the State government that the

primary contention of Rule 4(4) of the Sikkim Government Establishment Rules of 1974 is to protect the interest of Sikkimese in present context who are identified as locals."

The memorandum points out that Rule 4(4)(C)(i) of the Establishment Rules states that "there shall be no direct recruitment to the higher posts in the Gazette Grades and below. All such post shall be by promotion from the lowest Gazetted posts on such condition as may be prescribed by the government". It is added that the Establishment Department notification no 286/Gen/Est dated 28.01.1980 paragraph (iv) states "All vacancies of class IV, III and II (Gazetted Grade) shall be filled by local candidates..."

It is added that Rule 98 of the Sikkim Government Services Rules, 1974 deals with the retirement on superannuation of any government servant at the last day of the month when he attains the age of 58 years. *Cntd Pg 2*

Adventure Tourism Festival begins in Gangtok

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 31 JAN:**

Adventure Tourism Festival 2020 was inaugurated by Tourism Minister, BS Panth, here at MG Marg on Friday.

The ten-day long festival is being organized by the Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure & Eco-Tourism [IHCAE], Chemchey, in a bid to promote adventure sports and to highlight IHCAE activities.

The Minister, accompanied by Secretary to Tourism & Civil Aviation Department, TT Bhutia, and other dignitaries also visited the mountaineering and adventure equipment stalls put up by IHCAE.

A booking counter has also been installed for interested people to participate in various adventure activities to be carried out during the festival.

The activities, starting 03 February includes camping at the SGMI Rock Area at Bulbuley, hiking and trekking at Rateychu, tree top rope course at SGMI Rock Area, Natural Rock Climbing at SGMI Rock Area, mountain biking from



Ganesh Tok to Luing, sports climbing at Chemchey, Zip Line Crossing at SGMI Rock Area and Hill Climbing.

Speaking to media persons after the inauguration, the Tourism Minister explained that the main objective of the festival was to encourage the youth towards adventure tourism.

He added that the State Government will continue such activities to bring more youth to adventure and eco-tourism.

The Tourism Secretary detailed the various adventure activities to be carried out around Gangtok and at other parts of the State during the festival.

IHCAE has been active in adventure and

eco-tourism activities since its inception in 2009.

IHCAE Deputy Director, Kazi Sherpa, further explained that the main objective behind the festival was to highlight Sikkim's potential in adventure activities and eco-tourism and to create mass awareness especially among youths on these fields.

He informed that registration fee for these activities have been kept very reasonable as the festival was being held primarily to create awareness in adventure activities.

This was also the first time that ICHEA was organizing events outside its Chemchey campus and that it plans to promote this festival as an annual event.

Month-long sensitization campaign by SAATHI at GPU level

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 31 JAN:

A month-long campaign was carried out with the GPU members by the SAATHI team with the motive to sensitize them, create an awareness regarding the substance abuse taking place in Sikkim.

As per a press release, 37 GPUs were visited from 06 to 29 Jan, 2020 in all the districts of Sikkim. As the GPUs are linked with the people of rural areas, SAATHI intends to collaborate with them to fight the menace of substance abuse at the grassroots level of Sikkim, the release mentions.

The agenda that was discussed were firstly about the work SAATHI has been doing in the past years and what it intends to do for SAATHI 2.0. Next, the GPU members were also informed about drugs and substances that are presently prevalent and trending in Sikkim. The GPU members were then explained about the rationale behind the idea of working with them, highlighting the importance of the role Panchayats can play to effectively combat substance abuse from the grass root level.

The GPU members were also briefed



about the importance of de-stigmatization and reintegration of individuals who are victims of substance use disorders. They were informed about the training on basic skills of counselling that they will be receiving on mid of 2020, so that they will be better equipped to handle cases relating to substance use disorders at the initial level.

An appeal was also made to the GPU members to discuss various topics related to substance abuse in their Gram Sabha meetings, and they were provided with information regarding treatments and rehabilitation available in Sikkim for substance use disorders.

A total of 206 Panchayat members from these 37 GPUs consisting of a total of 221 wards attended the meetings of

this campaign. The meetings were also attended by 125 other staff members and general public of these GPUs. In the interactive sessions of the campaign, various feedbacks, suggestion and inputs were provided to the SAATHI team.

Panchayats from various GPUs suggested that the counselling training could be provided to the staff members, SHG groups and local NGOs in the GPUs and also in the BAC level area wise, so that even other GPUs could receive this training.

Some GPUs also requested for informative materials like presentation materials and information brochures to be provided to them so that they could effectively deliver those information related to substance abuse to the general public.

Many GPUs also suggested that SAATHI team and other resource persons working in the area of substance abuse to visit villages and make their presence in the community outreach programs to talk to the local residents in order to effectively deliver the message on the harmful effects and the importance of abstaining from substance abuse.

Door-to-door campaigning in vulnerable homes carried out by SHG members of another GPU area could be more effective was another suggestion provided by Panchayat members. SAATHI team or members working in the schools could intervene and counsel the shops selling alcohol and cigarettes to minors in local area so that they could understand the seriousness of this issue.

In addition to this, the GPU members also recommended that awareness campaigns and trainings should also be imparted directly to the local coaching institutions and such other local organizations, so that every local organization in the villages could have easier access to counselling and treatment facilities at the initial levels. The counselling provided

in the schools should be a family-based therapy, as the issue of substance abuse and addiction is interrelated to the environment at home was also advised by the Panchayat members. In addition to that, they recommend that focus should be on providing group sensitization programs for fathers, mothers and youth so they all understand the issue of substance abuse with shared empathy. Lastly, the Panchayat members recommended that attention should be given to reduce supply as well and not just the demand of various substances and drugs which are available in Sikkim.

SAATHI will be organizing training for the panchayat members on basic skills of counselling, wherein they will be trained on identifying substance abuse cases and how to handle them at initial level.

SAATHI has covered 100 Government Schools in the past four years and in this next phase, it is planned to cover 180 more schools and around 70,000 students in the next 3 years. The program is supported by TITAN Co. Ltd, Social Justice & Welfare Department, Education Department and Health Department.

BJP takes a dig at SKM Govt

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 31 JAN:

Taking a dig at the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha government, the Bharatiya Janata Party's Sikkim unit has suggested that it implement its "parivartan" [change] slogan in work to fulfill

the hope and aspiration of the people of Sikkim.

In a press release issued today, the party highlights that the people brought SKM to office convinced by its promise of real change and contends that the people continue to wait for the

SKM Government to deliver. The press release, issued by the state-unit general secretary, SB Karki, states that SKM had protested the practice of politically motivated transfers and service extensions and should hence desist from doing so itself.

India bans export of all kind of respiratory masks

NEW DELHI, JAN 31 (PTI): India on Friday banned exports of all kinds of personal protection equipment, including clothing and masks used to protect people from air borne particles.

The move assumes significance as there could be a spurt in demand for such products due to outbreak of deadly coronavirus that has claimed more than 200 lives in China while the number of confirmed cases reached near 10,000.

"Exports of all varieties of personal protection equipment including clothing and masks used to protect the wearer from air borne particles and/or any other respiratory masks or any other personal protective clothing (including coveralls and N95 masks)... is hereby prohibited with immediate effect till further orders," the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

Air India's 423-seater jumbo B747 plane took off from the Delhi airport on Friday to evacuate Indian nationals from Wuhan as China deals with the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Around 400 Indians are expected to be evacuated.

Air India Chairman and Managing Director Ashwani Lohani said on Friday morning, "No service will take place in the plane. Whatever food is there will be kept in seat pockets. As there will be no service, there will be no interaction (between cabin crew and passengers)."

"Masks have been arranged for the crew and passengers. For our crew, we have also arranged a complete protective gear," he added.

The government has reached out to over 600 Indians living in China's Hubei province, the epicentre of the outbreak, to ascertain their willingness to be brought back to India.

In a separate notification, the DGFT has also banned imports of stock lot papers.

These are kind of discarded, improper sized and unused papers.

The move aims at cutting down imports of non-essential items into the country.

CONTACT

SUMMIT TIMES
REPORTERS

SINGTAM
8170070813

MANGAN/ DIKCHU
9832612485/
9434011213

GANGTOK
8116388176

9832424750
8016270440

Medical camp by 72 BN at Rimbi



GANGTOK, 31 JAN (IPR): A medical camp was organised by 72 Bn Yuksum at Rimbi today.

The camp was conducted under the supervision of 72 Bn Medical Officer, Dr Rakesh Kumar

Ranjan, accompanied by Rimbick Primary Health Centre staff and local panchyat, Sunmaya Limboo. Around 60 people were treated and given medicines for their respected ailments.

Govt move to hire retired CBI...

"The above highlighted laws of appointment into services are some of the basic laws to have dealt with any appointment into government of Sikkim. But, we have to out rightly state that the your department advertisement mentioned at the outset inviting 2 posts of SP and 2 posts of DSP under Sikkim Vigilance Police is in total violation total violation of every law of recruitment of services into Sikkim Government and the special constitutional provision for the State of Sikkim," the memorandum says.

It further states that the act of employment advertisement by the department on behalf of the State Vigilance Police has undermined the people of Sikkim and the ethos of constitutional provision related to Sikkim. Such practice will also undermine the judgement of the Supreme Court of India in State of Sikkim and Ors Vs Surendera Prasad Sharma and Ors dated 19/04/1994.

On the same, the memorandum has asked the DOP to cancel the advertisement immediately which was arbitrary in contravention of all the recruitment rules for the State of Sikkim and moreover the advertisement being Anti-Sikkimese.

CM discusses development...

He also showed his interest in MoU with NCDC to be finalized before budget so that adequate provisions can be kept in the state budget to implement the identified activities in cooperatives through NCDC lending.

The CM suggested to hold a meeting in Sikkim shortly with the Chief Secretary and his team of Heads of relevant departments and MD, NCDC to work out the specific plan for cooperative development and associated lending by NCDC.

He further said that a team of senior officials and personnel from the cooperative sector of the state may be taken on field visit to Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh to study successful cooperative societies in the priority areas for possibilities of cooperative development in Sikkim.

to book advertisements in
SummitTimes, call
03592-208698 9734152541

~ **SummitTIMES** ~
CLASSIFIEDS

FLAT FOR RENT/LEASE

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

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

Contact: 9800201335

LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

Mobile Spice Clinic held at Soreng

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 31 JAN:

Indian Cardamom Research Institute, Tadong, Spices Board conducted one-day Mobile Spice Clinic Program at Soreng, West Sikkim, today a press release informs.

Leading the program, Dy Director (Res) of ICRI, Dr TN Deka explained the various diseases and physiological disorders in large cardamom, pests and disease characteristics, and their management.

Scientist-C (Agronomy), BA Gudade ex-

plained the establishment of large cardamom nursery, irrigation and nutrition management, importance of shade and characteristics of shade trees for large cardamom plantation, organic approaches in cultivation, in-situ moisture conservation practices.

Scientist of crop improvement, Ashutosh Gautam informed about the selection of good planting material, characteristics of various cultivars and their adoptability to different altitude, principal



pollinator in large cardamom, their conservation and relevance to yield.

At the end of program Assistant Director (Development), PT Lepcha shared information on

various schemes of Spices Board and requested the farmers to take maximum benefits of same.

Educational program 'Guiding Juniors' concludes

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 31 JAN:

Two-week long educational program Guiding Juniors organised by Sikkim Youth Federation concluded today in various centers across the state.

A press release informs that the program had formally commenced on 10 January with a day-long induction program for the 60 volunteers held at Janta Bhawan, Gangtok. These volunteers from colleges and universities were then

sent to their designated centres in a group of three each, to guide and educate the school going students of that village. During the span of fifteen days the volunteers taught various topics to the students like schemes and policies of the government, Article 371F, career counselling, and communication skills.

Various scholastic competitions were also organised by the volunteers of SYF across various centres and prizes were awarded to the winners during the concluding program of each centre.

On the concluding day at various centres, the students, parents and panchayats offered khadas to the volunteers. They also thanked the members of Sikkim Youth Federation for coming up with a fruitful programme like this. These volunteers will be felicitated later for their contribution to the society, the release adds.

prizes were awarded to the winners during the concluding program of each centre.

On the concluding day at various centres, the students, parents and panchayats offered khadas to the volunteers. They also thanked the members of Sikkim Youth Federation for coming up with a fruitful programme like this.

These volunteers will be felicitated later for their contribution to the society, the release adds.



Core sector growth recovers to 1.3 pc in Dec

NEW DELHI, JAN 31 (PTI): Growth of eight core industries recovered to 1.3 per cent in December 2019 after remaining in the negative zone in the previous four months helped by expansion in the production of coal, fertiliser and refinery products.

The growth was, however, lower than 2.1 per cent recorded in December 2018.

Production of crude oil, natural gas, and electricity contracted in the month under review.

Sectors which

recorded positive growth were coal, refinery products and fertiliser.

However, growth rate of steel and cement sectors slowed down to 1.9 per cent and 5.5 per cent respectively.

During the April-December period, core industries recorded growth of 0.2 per cent against 4.8 per cent in the year-ago period.

The eight core sectors recorded negative growth in the four months to November 2019.

Commenting on the data, ICRA Ltd said: "Despite the pickup in the core sector performance, we expect the IIP growth to dip in December 2019 from the initial 1.8 per cent in November 2019, led by the wider contraction in auto output as well as the YoY decline in non oil merchandise exports after a gap of two months".

These eight sectors comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the IIP.

Par panel for overhaul of allied healthcare services

NEW DELHI, JAN 31 (PTI):

Taking note of the changing dynamics in the health structure, a parliamentary panel on Friday recommended restructuring of The Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill and renaming it as the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Bill.

The report of the standing committee on Health said it was the need of the hour to raise the status of the allied healthcare professions such as phys-

iotherapy, occupational therapy, radiology, etc and bring the profession out of the dominance of doctors by standardisation of its education and practice, an official statement said.

The committee expressed concern over the non-representation of all the professions and recommended that the structure under the Bill be redefined in a manner that facilitates development of each recognised category as well as different professions under one umbrella body.

State Level Workshop on Jal Jeevan Mission

GANGTOK, 31 JAN (IPR): A day-long State Level Workshop on Jal Jeevan Mission was conducted here at Manan Kendra, Gangtok, today.

Jal Jeevan Mission is an initiative taken by the Government of India to provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every rural household by 2024.

The workshop was organised by Rural Development Department, Government of Sikkim in collaboration with stakeholders of the state to share the importance of conservation of water.

The main objective of the programme was to inform rural governing bodies of Sikkim about the Government's water mission scheme.

The workshop was attended by Minister for Rural Management & Development, Sonam Lama, representative from Jal Shakti Mission, Government of India, A. Muralidharan, Principal Secretary, Rural Development Department, C.S. Rao, District Magistrates from all districts, Addi-



tional District Collectors (Development), SEs, AEs, JEs, Zilla Adhyaksha from districts, Government officials from various Departments, Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats.

Minister, Sonam Lama in his short address hoped that the mission to provide water to every household will be a successful mission. He urged the rural governing bodies to use natural spring water to implement water mission for continuous in their respective areas and requested co-

ordination of all line departments to serve the people of Sikkim.

Mr Muralidaran in his address talked about importance of conserving water due to alarming reports of depletion of water supply in rural areas of India. He stated that it was the vision of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in the form of Jal Jeevan Mission to provide sufficient water supply to the rural areas. It was reported that it is the largest water supply mission in the world.

Mr Muralidaran gave a brief note on Trinity programme under the mission to provide infrastructure, sustainability and grey water area. He reminded that the District Magistrate play a big role in the mission as the Chairman of Water Mission in their respective districts. After concluding his speech, he interacted with the stakeholders. During the workshop, the role of Panchayati Raj Institution for Water Mission was also propagated.

ISRO readying for low cost satellite launch vehicles

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JAN 31 (PTI): The Indian Space Research Organisation is readying low-cost satellite launch vehicles costing about Rs 30-35 crore each, which can put into orbit satellites weighing 500 kg.

The first such launch from the country is expected to take place in the next four months.

This capability will give ISRO a big commercial boost as it will be able to cater to micro, mini and medium segments of the market, Haridas T V, Deputy Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre said, taking part in the panel discussions at 'EDGE 2020, The Space Conclave', here on Friday.

"The biggest advantage is that ISRO now can manufacture these vehicles in a turnaround time of just three weeks," he said.

ISRO has earmarked \$1,600 million for launch vehicles, of which \$870 million will be for PSLV and the remaining for Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle, he revealed.

ISRO has planned some 500 Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle launches in the next five years, a press release quoting Haridas said.

The Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO) model is picking up very well in the space and defence sectors.

"We want to leverage it to the maximum in the coming days," he added.

Earlier, in his keynote address at the session, titled 'Navigating Space Industry Through Innovation, Agility and Collaboration,' Dr Rabin Giles, Director Innovation, CNES Connect said there is tremendous scope for cooperation between France and India in the development of space technology.

"India and France can work to set up a model for the Moon programme," he said.

Elaborating on the cornerstones for a space deal, Dr Giles said partnerships are the solution. Next come science,

which is the DNA and thirdly, the connect needed to the downstream sector.

Dr Giles said the space industry is a sector where 'patience and dream' play a big part.

"Innovation needs trust and failure is an option" is the dictum that he follows when he works with start-ups, said he said adding the key factor was trust.

Dr Daniel Baker, Director of Americas LASP Programme, stressed the need for students from Universities to take part in space research programmes.

In this context he lauded the new Space Park, which will be a launch-pad for exploration.

The seeds of success will be in replicating the success of the LASP here, he said.

Collaboration, Innovation and Agility are the key to a successful space programme, said Raqib Islam, UK Space agency.

Taking collaboration forward, the UK Space Trade Mission had visited India last week to explore areas of cooperation, he said.

PSR Sastry, Director DSP, Defence Research and Development Organisation said DRDO was trying to make cost-effective technologies work for them.

Later, in a session titled 'Enablers of Space Industry Challenges and Insights

into Space Regulations and Policies,' Dr Ranjan Kaul, Partner, Dua Associates, Shri Abhishek Malhotra, MD, TMT Law Practice and Shri Nitin Pai, Co-Founder, Takshashila Institution, concurred on the need to encourage the private sector to play a potent role in the country's space sector and the need for enacting legislation for the same.

Space is an engine of growth. Liberalisation of space is needed in the national interests, they said, adding that the private sector should be allowed in all the sectors of the space industry.

"Treat private and government players on a level playing field," they added.

Sports Dept felicitates Sikkim football team

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 JAN:

Sports & Youth Affairs Department felicitated the Sikkim football team for their performance in the recently concluded 9th Dr T Ao North East Football Championship 2020 held at IG Stadium in Kohima, Nagaland.

Sikkim emerged as the runners-up in the championship after going down to Mizoram by a solitary goal in the final match. Sikkim's goalkeeper, Urgen Pinto Sherpa was awarded as the Best Goalkeeper of the tournament and Sikkim's Kilp Namgyal Barfungpa adjudged as the Best Midfielder of the tournament.

On the occasion of the valedictory function of Winter Coaching Camp at Paljor Stadium this morning, Forest Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia and



Political Secretary to the CM, Jacob Khaling along with Secretary to Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kuber Bhandari and other officials congratulated them for their performance in the tournament by offering

khadas. Sikkim team coach, Mayal Dok Lepcha expressed his happiness and satisfaction on the State team members for their impressive performance throughout the tournament and in defeating strong teams

of the region. He stated that the camp organized by Sports & Youth Affairs Department for the State team before leaving for the tournament also helped the team members to perform better in the tournament.

Kalakshetra withdraws nod for vocalist Krishna's event

CHENNAI, JAN 31 (PTI): Kalakshetra Foundation, an autonomus body under the Culture Ministry has withdrawn its permission to noted Carnatic music vocalist T M Krishna's book release function slated to be held on February 2 on its premises here.

While the revocation of the nod has led to a volley of protests in the social media, the organisers have said that the event will now be held at another premises here on the same day and time (6.45 pm).

The reputed institution, devoted to the promotion of performing and visual arts and music made known its decision in a letter to the publisher of the book "Sebastian & Sons: A Brief History of Mrdangam Makers."

Mrdangam, known as 'mirudangam' in Tamil is a percussion instrument.

Citing the book review in a daily, KF Director Revathi Ramach-

andran said, it "contains certain statements relating to the book which touch controversial issues and certainly have a lot of political overtones."

The institution was unaware of the "controversies surrounding the subject matter of the book," at the time of renting its auditorium for the book release, she noted.

The foundation said it was a government organisation and hence cannot allow any programme that may instigate political, cultural and social disharmony.

"We therefore regret to inform you that we hereby withdraw our permission given for usage of our auditorium for the book release function.

The hire charges are remitted back to the bank account from which it was received," she said.

The withdrawal of permission triggered a bout of protests in the social media and Krishna

said he was "saddened and baffled" by the foundation taking back its permission.

The book celebrated generations of mirudangam makers, their travails and how they were marginalised.

In a tweet, he said the venue for the launch of the book has been shifted to Asian College of Journalism here.

Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi chief Thol Thirumavalavan who is set to take part in the event alleged: "Kalashetra humiliates not just T.M.Krishna but Dalits too. T.M.Krishna's book has nothing controversial, but throws light on what exist in the society.

Actor politician Kamal Haasan too slammed the denial of permission and alleged it stemmed from subservience.

"Subservience to foreigners (rulers), dominant caste and higher officer is due to age old fear and devotion," he said in


a tweet.

The book release is set to happen at a college sans "hurdle and fear" the Makkal Needhi Maiam chief said and extended his greetings.

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram took to twitter and said, "Shameful that Kalakshetra should withdraw permission to hire their auditorium to release the new book by T M Krishna.

'Withdraw permission' is an euphemism for cancelling a contract. Cancellation is illegal besides being high-handed."

In November 2018, Krishna's concert in Delhi, organised by the Airports Authority of India was allegedly cancelled following a troll campaign against it for hosting the vocalist, a Magsaysay award winner who has been called an "urban Naxal" and "a converted bigot" among other epithets.



SIKKIM STATE ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

SSERC

P. O. Tadong, Sikkim -737102

Tel: (03592)281081, 281088, 280081, Fax. (03592) 281044

Email: sikkim.serc@gmail.com

No: 318/SSERC/2017-18/10

Date: 30.01.2020

NOTICE FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Power Department, Government of Sikkim, a deemed licensee engaged in distribution and retail sale of electricity in the State of Sikkim has filed its Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) and Tariff Petition for the Financial Year 2020-21 before the Sikkim State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SSERC).The ARR and Tariff Petition have been registered by the SSERC as Case No. MYT/2020-21/P-01/PDS dated 05.12.2019. The copies of the ARR/Tariff Petition can be viewed and downloaded from the Commission's website (www.sserc.in/Tariff Petitions) and also from the official website of the Power Department (power.sikkim.gov.in).

Power Department has already issued a 'Public Notice' on the ARR/Tariff Petition soliciting objections and suggestions from the consumers and stake holders on the proposed ARR and Tariff proposal. As per the said 'Public Notice', any person who intends to file objections or suggestions on the ARR/Tariff Petition of the Power Department may do so by filing statement of objections or comments before the Secretary, Sikkim State Electricity Regulatory Commission. Objections or comments shall be submitted in 5 (five) copies by registered post or in person, which should reach the Secretary, Sikkim State Electricity Regulatory Commission, Old SITCO Complex, Deorali, Gangtok-737102 on or before 10th February 2020.

The objections or comments shall be submitted with copies of the relevant documents and evidences in support thereof alongwith Affidavit as per Form SSERC-3 of Sikkim State Electricity Regulatory Commission (Conduct of Business) Regulations, 2012. Form SSERC-3 can be downloaded from the Commission's website (www.sserc.in/Regulations & Rules/Conduct of Business).

The SSERC therefore proposes to hold a Public Hearing on the ARR/Tariff Petition filed by the Power Department on the date, time and venue mentioned below:


Date	Time	Venue for Public Hearing	Category of Consumers.
19 th February 2020	10.30 AM to 2.30 PM	Small Meeting Hall , Chintan Bhavan, Gangtok, East Sikkim	All categories of Consumers

Interested parties/persons who intend to be heard in person may appear before the Sikkim State Electricity Regulatory Commission for the purpose and would be heard as per the above schedule.

Sd/-

Director (T&T)

Sikkim State Electricity Regulatory Commission



RURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

GANGTOK, SIKKIM

No: 240/PMGSY/RDD

Date: 27/01/2020

PRESS NOTE

"HIRING OF GIS ANALYST"

The State Rural Roads Development Agency, Rural Development Department seeks application for hiring of a GIS Analyst (GA) on contract basis for use of GIS in day to day functioning of SRRDA especially for implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). Details are as given under:

Name of post	: GIS Analyst (GA).
Number of post	: 1(one)
Qualification	: M.Sc/ M. Tech./M.Sc(Tech) in Geo-Science/ Geo-Informatics/Remote Sensing and GIS/GIS Geography/Earth Science.
Salary	: Rs. 30,000/- to Rs.45,000/-per month depending on skill and experience in GIS.

Eligibility criteria:

1. The GA should have basic knowledge of GIS, be able to operate QGIS/ArcGIS and prepare/modify/update shapefiles as and when required and compile from various sources such as satellite imagery/ toposheet, reports, etc.

2. The GA should know operations such as buffer, spatial join and conducting geometry/ topology checks.

3. The GA should be able to operate Google Earth and prepare KML files as when required.

4. Experience in AutoCAD and database management is a plus.

5. The GA should have relevant knowledge of IT systems and Excel.

6. Should have 3+years of professional experience in GIS.

The local desirous candidates having requisite qualifications and fulfilling the above criteria's may come for appearing in walk-in-interview along with an application and all the certificates in original in support of their qualification, experience as well as no objection certificate from the present employer, if any , in the Conference Hall of Rural Management Department on 25th February, 2020 from 11 am onwards.

Sd/-

Chief Engineer cum Empowered Officer

Rural Development Department.

R.O.No.338/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20

Date: 27.01.2020

Pollution Needs to Be Controlled

...but the Board is not equipped well enough to do so

Remember the time a couple of years back when a “high-level” team of the State Pollution Control Board visited a hydel project site, and as a parting shot, told the project developers that if they did not meet certain stipulations, they would not be issued a Consent For Operation certificate? The meaning of the certificate is self-explanatory. But that does not mean that it is of any relevance. As per the performance audit on “Effectiveness in the Functioning of State Pollution Control Board” by the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, out of the 256 “industries” registered in Sikkim, 86 were operating without this Consent For Operation. This was for the year 2015-16. Industries have to renew these CFOs sixty days before the lapse of the consents, but the policy-makers have conveniently not included a penalty clause in case of delays, some units tend to get their Consents renewed up to 180 days after it has lapsed. What this effectively means is that for the period that they had no CFO, they were irregular/ unauthorized operations and this alone can be interpreted in a host of different ways to dodge accountability for, in this case, pollution caused during this period. Apparently, the Board is processing the file to include a penalty clause, but it is anybody’s guess on how long that could take since the Board has remained oblivious to such a requirement for the past twenty-five years. SPCB was set up in 1992.

The point being made here is that the SPCB, if anyone wants it to be an effective defence against pollution by polluting industries and activities, should be reminded of its charter and pushed to become serious about its responsibilities. Its only priority is Sikkim and its environment, and that is how it should conduct itself. But it hasn’t. The Board, when it was formed in 1992 and again in 2008 when it was separated from the State Land Use and Environment Board, was tasked to “plan a comprehensive programme for the prevention, control or abatement of pollution of streams, wells and air in the State and to secure the execution thereof”. To make sure that the Board at least appeared to be doing all this, it was directed that Annual Action Plans be prepared defining various activities and sub-activities proposed to be taken up including physical and financial targets to be achieved in the ensuing year in line with the vision and long/short term goals of the Board. The Board never prepared any Annual Action Plan! Does its less that influential role in keeping polluting units in check surprise then? This casual approach towards its responsibilities manifests in worrying situations where industrial units can pollute without worry in Sikkim. A site visit by CAG auditors to 16 water polluting industries in East Sikkim (there are 65 such industries all over the State) revealed that three units – a fruit preservation unit, a pharmaceutical unit and a distillery – did not have any effluent treatment plants at all! Two other units had ETPs, but they were non-functional and another, which had a functional ETP, did not to use it! Until the auditors visited, the SPCB had preferred not to notice any of these illegalities.

It is clear that the Board which has an important role to play, is handicapped by an adhocism which has gone on for too long. It needs to revisit its charter of institution and begin approaching its spelled-out tasks in earnest. It would help if the Board was allowed to genuinely function as an independent body staffed by adequately qualified personnel.

WRITE US:

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

Planting trees must be done with care – it can create more problems than it addresses

LULU ZHANG
THECONVERSATION.COM

Thanks to the climate crisis, we are fast approaching the “point of no return”, according to world leaders. We are also in the midst of the sixth mass extinction. And the state of worldwide land degradation has also reached a critical level: ever-increasing demands for food production, urbanisation and economic development have led to large and extensive land conversion. All of these issues are, of course, interconnected.

Across the world, we are seeing severe drought and water scarcity, soil erosion and contamination, soil organic matter and nutrient depletion, acidity and salinity, disruption of hydrological and biological cycles, and species extinctions. All these issues place unprecedented pressure on finite land resources over the planet. An astonishing 33% of the world’s land is moderately or highly degraded and in urgent need of restoration.

Land degradation is globally recognised as a major contributor to global warming. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) estimated in 2018 that 10% of human-induced greenhouse gas emissions derive from deforestation alone.

Even this is probably an underestimate: soils are disturbed during and after deforestation, and the carbon previously stored in the soil is subsequently released in the form of CO₂, further driving global warming. Soils are capable of holding three times as much carbon as the atmosphere; they are fundamental to mitigate climate change.

Given the high potential and importance of soils and woody biomass to

store carbon and offer numerous ecosystem services that are vital to all life, planting trees is often advocated as the most cost-effective way to keep global warming under 2°C and an urgent priority to prevent, reduce and reverse land degradation and to avoid conflict and migration. There is much support for this approach from national policy-makers.

THE WATER PROBLEM

It’s brilliant that the tide seems to be turning, and the value of land is being recognised again. But we must be careful about how reforestation takes place, as there’s no such thing as a free lunch.

For example, lands subject to certain climatic and ecological circumstances have a very limited amount of water to support tree growth. In general, the more water available for tree growth, the larger trees grow and the more carbon they store. It’s obvious, then, that a close relationship exists between water and the carbon cycle.

But water is, of course, not infinite in non-humid regions. Social and ecological water demands compete with each other for water. In such cases, if the ecological water demand from new forests is much higher than the capacity of ecosystems to deliver it sustainably, the social water demand is likely to be compromised. This may cause water use conflicts and water scarcity.

This is not purely conjectural: it has already proved a problem in parts of the world that have already embarked on ambitious tree-planting projects.

THIRSTY TREES

In China, for example, an enormous investment has been made by central and local governments to plant trees since the late 1970s. Today, Chi-

na plans to increase its forest coverage rate to 23% by 2020, to 26% by 2035, and to 42% by 2050. This is not just a state effort: private companies, Alibaba and Alipay, the e-commerce giant and global leader of mobile payment, aims to invest US\$28 million into tree-planting projects.

As a result, total forest area in the Asia-Pacific region has been increased by more than 17 million hectares over 25 years owing to afforestation: the establishment of new forests. These new forests are mostly in China due to the country’s afforestation investment strategy. In a targeted area the size of France – the Loess Plateau – the forest cover doubled from 50,000 to 100,000 km² between 2001 and 2016.

But while China becomes greener, the health of freshwater system deteriorates. A recent study by colleagues and I conducted on China’s afforestation effort provides evidence that replacing natural grass vegetation with unmanaged artificial black locust plantations – a fast-growing non-local species – for soil conservation and carbon sequestration has significantly changed the water availability as well as whole water cycle.

Black locust plantations – which make up the bulk of the China afforestation – are much more thirsty than natural grassland. They use 92% of annual rainfall (700mm in a wet year) for biomass growth, leaving only 8% of annual rainfall for human uses. As a result, not enough water remains to recharge groundwater or flow into rivers and lakes. We found that deep percolation (the water moving from root zone into groundwater) in years with average or lower-than-average rainfall can be expected to be close to zero.

Why shutting down Chinese ‘wet markets’ could be a terrible mistake

CHRISTOS LYNTERIS & LYLE FEARNLEY
theconversation.com

An epidemic of a new coronavirus, yet to receive a proper name by the WHO, has been developing in China and affecting other parts of the world over the past few weeks. So far, we know thousands have been infected, with nearly 200 deaths, with the virus having spread to numerous countries.

As anthropologists who have worked for a long time on diseases that spread from animals to humans (zoonotic diseases) in China, our research can provide insights into the unfolding crisis.

It is highly probable that this new form of coronavirus which causes pneumonia – in some cases lethal – emerged through a zoonotic spillover; a “jump” of the virus from non-human animals to humans, in early December 2019.

Chinese scientists have traced the potential source of the virus to Wuhan’s Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market, which 27 of the initial cluster of 41 admitted hospital patients (but not the first recorded patient) had visited.

The market sold much more than seafood, including a range of wild animals. And scientists suspect that the virus “jumped” to humans from one of the wild animal species sold at the market. Contrary to the earlier hypothesis that the virus originated in snakes, current genetic evidence suggests an emergence in bats, which are less frequently sold in Chinese markets, but are widely believed to constitute the animal reservoir of many infectious diseases transmissible to humans. Wuhan closed and disinfected the market on January 1, and China issued a temporary ban on all trade in wild animal products on January 22.

In the wake of the coronavirus epidemic, global media accounts of China’s live animal markets have themselves gone viral. A New York Times article, for example, consciously described China’s “omnivorous” markets in a way that would be aesthetically unacceptable to its western audience (whole plucked chickens — with heads and beaks attached), as well as an assortment of wild animals, selected to shock the reader:

“Live snakes, turtles and cicadas, guinea pigs, bamboo rats, badgers, hedgehogs, otters, palm civets, even wolf cubs.

But the focus on exotic food consumption in China often relies on Orientalisation, and is in some cases tinged with anti-Chinese sentiment.

CREATING MORAL PANIC

The epidemiological need to be specific about what species the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market actually contained, and in what frequency, is undermined by media reports urging for a permanent ban or abolition of these “wet markets”. Such reports often lean heavily on a montage of images from different markets across China with little information on the where and when

these were taken, and no acknowledgment of the significant variations in cuisine across different regions of the country.

These images communicate a sense of disgust towards the eating habits of the Chinese and at the same time reflect a fear of the interconnectedness of two types of “emergence” in China: viral emergence and economic emergence.

Anthropologists have discussed in some detail how the Chinese model of development (the economic emergence of China in the 21st century) has been perceived in the West as a threat, both in political and cultural terms: China’s economic development because of its rapid nature and the competition this might pose to the US or EU economies; and culturally, because reforms seem incompatible with western expectations of modernisation. In short, rather than China adapting to capitalism, capitalism (in China) is adapting to China.

China’s food consumption is iconic in this process. While Chinese consumers have embraced supermarkets and pre-packaged foods, China’s economic development has not led to a demise in Chinese forms of consumption, such as the desire for “warm meat”, and has not ushered in European and American cultural norms of what is eatable and what is not.

In western media, “wet markets” are portrayed as emblems of Chinese otherness: chaotic versions of oriental bazaars, lawless areas where animals that should not be eaten are sold as food, and where what should not be mingled comes together (seafood and poultry, serpents and cattle). This fuels Sinophobia and anxieties of what anthropologists have long identified as “matter out of place”: a symbolic system of pollution through which proscriptions and prescriptions of what foods or food-stuffs may be combined is held up.

This image is highly flawed, not only because it relies on western sensitivities of what is eatable and what is not, and which portrays a modern form of Chinese food trade and consumption as “traditional”, but more practically, because it misrepresents the material and economic reality of these markets.

DIVERSITY OF THE MARKETS

In reality, most seafood, live animal and wholesale markets in China contain far less exotic fare. An enormous variety of different kinds of market are confusingly lumped within the term “wet market”, a term which originated in Hong Kong and Singapore English to distinguish markets selling fresh meat and produce from “dry” markets selling packaged and durable goods such as textiles.

Today, China’s “wet markets” can be distinguished along several lines of distinction, with differences that are often crucial for accurately assessing the risks they pose for the emergence of viruses: scale (wholesale or retail), produce (live animals, only slaughtered meat and fresh vegetables, only live seafood; animals (domestic only

or wild). Where markets do contain what many western media portray as “wild animals”, the majority of these are actually bred and farmed in captivity, such as mallard ducks, frogs, or snakes. Only a smaller proportion of animals are actually poached from the wild for sale.

THE STRUGGLE OF CHINESE FARMERS

What is perhaps most omitted in the discussion of Chinese wet markets is the perspective of farmers, producers, and vendors. Although media reports often marvel at the consumption of wild animals, little is said about why farmers produce them. As Lyle Fearnley learned during fieldwork research with wild swan goose (dayan) farmers in Jiangxi Province, two factors brought most farmers into the breeding of wild geese during the late 1990s: an opportunity to meet consumer demand without illegal poaching from the wild, and as a path toward higher-value production, at a time when rural smallholder farmers faced increasing economic pressure from large-scale industrial food producers.

During China’s post-Mao market reforms which began in 1978, collective farmland was redistributed to individual households, leading to an explosion in smallholder farmers, known as “specialised” (zhuan yehu) because they focused on particular cash crops or livestock, including chickens, ducks or pigs. But in the 1990s, China embarked on a “second leap” to expand the scale of agricultural production. Heavily capitalised “dragonhead enterprises” (longtou qiye) – industrial food production conglomerates – built integrated supply chains, often centred on slaughterhouses and processing facilities, and contracted livestock out to household-scale farmers.

AFTER THE LIVESTOCK REVOLUTION

An enormous consolidation followed, as independent smallholders were progressively driven out of livestock farming, especially in sectors such as pork or poultry, because prices dropped too low and the cost of inputs went up. Livestock diseases, such as Newcastle disease and Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome, also played a role in driving smallholders out of these sectors. Unable to survive as independent smallholders, many farmers faced a drastic choice: take up farming under contract to an industrial food conglomerate, or get out of farming pork or poultry altogether.

Some farmers discovered a third way, opting to raise local breeds and wild animals that could be sold for higher returns in niche markets. Many of these species were less afflicted with diseases than mainstream livestock, often simply an effect of the smaller number being farmed.

Although the higher price of wild animals compared to domesticated has led to the belief that its consumption “is a dietary choice and not driven by low income”, for farmers the story is differ-

Our findings support the mounting evidence indicating that planting forests is resulting in substantial reduction in river discharge and freshwater availability in northern China. Forest plantations deplete soil water, reduce surface runoff and streamflow through enhanced water consumption, thereby intensifying water scarcity.

The discharge of China’s second-largest river (the Yellow River) and its tributaries have significantly decreased in comparison to pre-afforestation time. This is alarming for the health of the river and regional water security. It could affect the wellbeing of 108 million people living in the Yellow River Basin and 400 million people living further downstream.

REWILDING WITHOUT HARMS

There are persistent misconceptions about the role of tree-planting in regulating and providing water among scientists, land managers, policymakers and the public. China’s afforestation efforts should be a warning to other nations considering how to establish new forests, because global and national long-term greening efforts in areas with land degradation, water shortage and drought problems must not compromise the safety of water supply at local and regional levels.

Rewilding and afforestation are good intentions to stop soil erosion, enrich soil organic matter and nutrients, preserve biodiversity and increase carbon stock. But choice of less thirsty trees and better forest management are required to lower the water needs of trees and ensure water security.

[The writer is Senior Research Associate, United Nations University]

ent: breeding wild animals can be a path towards a steady income when it remains a struggle to live off the land in rural China.

The variety of markets grouped under the term “wet markets”, much like the farming of wild animals, have provided important livelihoods to independent smallholder farmers. These markets often also have informal supply chains that enable smallholders to transport animals to market without the involvement of large-scale food processing firms that own slaughterhouses and control contracts with supermarkets. But although informal, it’s not to say such markets are unregulated. Research by Christos Lynteris recorded regular inspections of “wet markets” markets by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and by municipal sanitary authorities that begin after the SARS epidemic in 2003.

“Wet markets” form an integral part of the Chinese market and of Chinese social life. And based on the latest data suggesting a significant number of early cases of coronavirus without links to the Huanan Seafood Market, several infectious disease experts have raised doubts about whether the market was the source of the novel coronavirus at all. Whatever the case, while shutting them down temporarily and curbing wild-animal trade has advantages when it comes to preventing disease, a permanent shut down or abolition of “wet markets” would have an immense and unpredictable impact on everyday life and wellbeing in China.

A permanent shutdown of “wet markets” would affect patterns of food consumption in ways that are unknowable but potentially harmful to public health. It would deprive Chinese consumers of a food sector that accounts for 30-59% of their food supplies. Due to the large number of farmers, traders and consumers involved, the abolition of “wet markets” is also likely to lead to an explosion of an uncontrollable black market, as it did when such a ban was attempted in 2003, in response to SARS, as well as in 2013-14, in response to avian influenza H7N9.

This would involve enormously greater risk to public and global health and than the legal and regulated live animal markets in China today. And live poultry and animal markets have long served as a crucial “early warning” site for viral surveillance, including in the United States.

What “wet markets” in China require is more scientific and evidence-based regulation, rather than being abolished and driven underground.

[Christos Lynteris is Senior Lecturer, anthropologist, University of St Andrews; Lyle Fearnley is Assistant Professor, Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD)]

Google stops programme in Bengal after violence

SURI(WB), JAN 31 (PTI): Panic over the proposed country-wide NRC and NPR and rumours that data was being collected for the purpose led to violence in West Bengal's Birbhum district and internet giant Google to stop its digital awareness programme in the area, the district authorities said on Friday.

There was panic in the area over rumours that the data was being collected by women employees of an NGO employed as Internet Saathis which triggered a mob attack on the houses of two of them at Rampurhat on January 22.

Their houses were ransacked and set ablaze houses, the authorities and the family members of the two women said.

The Internet Saathis work in collaboration with Google to empower

rural women use smart-phones and the internet in their day to day lives. They woman had reportedly collected some general data as part of the training, the NGO said.

After the violence, the district administration ordered the NGO and Google to stop the programme.

"We were not kept in the loop about the programme. As it led to a panic among the people we had asked the NGO to stop the programme immediately. It has now been stopped," Birbhum district magistrate Moumita Godara told PTI over phone.

The Internet Saathi Program was launched by Google in partnership with Tata Trusts in June 2015 and the women trainers were paid Rs 1500 per month, the NGO said.



When contacted, a Google spokesperson confirmed that the digital awareness programme has been stopped.

"We, along with Tata Trusts, are in constant touch with more on ground partners to provide support needed to ensure the safety of internet saathis. As an immediate step, we have stopped the programme and will continue to co-ordinate with the local administration to dispel

the rumours," a Google statement said.

According to Azaruddin Mollah, the uncle of Saini Sultana one of the women whose house was ransacked and set ablaze, those working as internet saathis need to take down some details such as names, ages, addresses of beneficiaries for their own data base while imparting training.

"All of a sudden due to rumours that the two women were collecting

data for NRC and NPR their houses were ransacked and set ablaze," he told PTI over phone.

Sahidul, the grandfather of the other woman Chumki Khatun whose house too was set on fire, said, "Now the girls are all jobless. It is affecting our family income."

"We are also facing a sort of isolation in the village as some people are suspecting that we were collecting data for NRC," he added.

CAA against NE people, their culture, language: Cong MP

NEW DELHI, JAN 31 (PTI): The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is against the people of the Northeast and the legislation will "destroy" the language and culture of the region, Congress MP Abdul Khaleque said on Friday.

The Lok Sabha MP from Assam said the party will continue to lodge protest against the "anti-people" law, both inside and outside Parliament.

"The CAA will hurt the interests of the people of the Northeast and endanger the language and culture of the people of the region," Khaleque told reporters here.

The Congress leader said this in the wake of President Ram Nath Kovind's remarks at the joint sitting of both houses of Parliament hailing the CAA.

Kovind said the legislation has fulfilled the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi.

"We have protested against the CAA inside Parliament and near the statue of Mahatma Gandhi today. We will continue to protest against the CAA both inside and outside Parliament till the act is repealed," he said.

According to the CAA, members of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities

who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014 facing religious persecution there will not be treated as illegal immigrants but given Indian citizenship.

President Kovind on Friday lauded the CAA saying Parliament fulfilled the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi, who had suggested after the partition that the Hindus and Sikhs of Pakistan, who do not wish to live there, can come to India. Khaleque also slammed Union Minister Anurag Thakur for his "divisive" remarks during the campaign for the Delhi assembly elections.

Punjab govt bans online lottery schemes

CHANDIGARH, JAN 31 (PTI): The Punjab government on Friday decided to ban all types of online lottery schemes in the state, an official spokesperson said.

The ban, under Section 5 of the Lotteries (Regulation) Act 1998, would not only check il-

legal lottery business but also give a boost to the state's tax and non-tax revenue, the spokesperson said after a Cabinet meeting here.

He said the Cabinet also gave approval to prohibition of the sale of computerised and online lotteries marketed and

operated through vending machines, terminals and electronic machines, along with the online scheme tickets which are sold, organised, conducted or promoted through internet by any state within the Indian Territory or by a foreign country.

Coronavirus: Families of home quarantined advised to postpone weddings

THRISSUR(KER), JAN 31 (PTI): The Kerala government on Friday asked families of those who return from novel coronavirus-hit regions to postpone marriages in order to prevent a possible outbreak of the disease in the state.

A day after a medical student from Wuhan tested positive for Coronavirus, the state government strengthened its resolve to check the spread of illness to others and directed those coming from China and other affected regions to strictly remain under home quarantine.

State Health Minister K K Shailaja, who is leading the fight against the disease, advised postponement of marriages in those families, where people came from the virus affected regions.

"Home quarantines are being done only as



a precaution. No need to panic," the Minister told reporters here after meeting the private hospital authorities to prepare them for facing the challenge.

She said family members of the people coming from the affected-regions should abide by the protocol.

"It is heard that in some such families, preparations are being made for marriages. There is no harm in temporarily postponing the date of the marriage."

After holding a meet-

There will be some difficulties in postponing the marriages fixed earlier. But this is a protocol. This must be obeyed," Shailaja said.

Those who are home quarantined would be under observation for 28 days.

"Those who are going for job, they should take leave and be under observation. Health volunteers would be around to solve their problems," the Minister said.

After holding a meet-

ing with representatives of private hospitals in Thrissur district, Shailaja said isolation wards are being set up in such facilities and training programmes are being conducted for the health officials there.

She urged the people not to create panic in the society over the issue as it was meant to be managed diplomatically.

"We have taken all precautions in the district. People should not become restless," the

Minister said, instilling confidence among people.

Earlier in the day, Health authorities shifted the woman student, who tested positive for novel Coronavirus, from the general hospital to the Government Medical College here.

The medical college student from Wuhan University was shifted to an isolation ward set up in the Medical College Hospital in the early hours on Friday.

At least 1,053 people are under observation in the State as the Left Democratic Front government scrambled to tackle the emergency.

The toll in China's novel Coronavirus outbreak has climbed to 213 with the number of confirmed cases totalling 9,692, China's national authorities announced on Friday.

Economic Survey 2019-20 highlights

NEW DELHI, JAN 31 (PTI): Following are the highlights of the Economic Survey 2019-20 tabled in Parliament on Friday:

* GDP growth pegged at 6-6.5 per cent in fiscal year starting April 1, up from 5 per cent in current fiscal

* Fiscal deficit target for current fiscal may need to be relaxed to revive growth

* Uptick in growth projected in second half of current fiscal based on 10 factors including higher FDI flows, build

up of demand pressure, positive GST revenue growth

* Survey asks government to deliver expeditiously on reforms to revive growth

* Ethical wealth creation key to India becoming USD 5 trillion economy by 2025

* Share of formal employment increased from 17.9 per cent in 2011-12 to 22.8 per cent in 2017-18 reflecting formalisation in the economy

* Theme of Survey is wealth creation, promotion of pro-business

policies, strengthening of trust in the economy

* To achieve GDP of USD 5 trillion by 2024-25, India needs to spend about USD 1.4 trillion over these years on infrastructure

* 2.62 crore new jobs created in rural, urban areas between 2011-12 and 2017-18 among regular wage/salaried employees

* 8 per cent increase in regular employment of women in 2017-18 over 2011-12

* Excessive government intervention in

markets, especially when the market can do the job of enhancing citizens welfare perfectly well, stifles economic freedom

* Debt waivers disrupt the credit culture, reduces formal credit to same farmers

* Suggests government to systematically examine areas where it needlessly intervenes and undermines markets

* Calls for improving governance in public sector banks, more disclosures to build trust

* Calls for measures to make it easier to start

new business, register property, pay taxes, enforce contracts

* Easing of crude prices lowers current account deficit; imports contract more sharply than exports in first half of current fiscal

* Declining inflation from 3.2 per cent in April 2019 to 2.6 per cent in December 2019, reflecting weakening demand pressure in the economy

* GST collections grew by 4.1 per cent for the centre during April-November 2019.

UP hostage crisis: All children rescued, accused killed

FARRUKHABAD (UP), JAN 31 (PTI): Twenty-three children aged between six months and 15 years, who had been taken hostage by a murder accused after inviting them to his daughter's birthday party, were rescued late on Thursday night after police killed the captor in a village here.

The hostage drama began at Kasaria village in the afternoon and continued for about eight hours.

"The accused was killed and there were about 23 children who were rescued safely," Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Awasthi told reporters at a hurriedly called press conference at 1.20 am.

"The accused had invited the children for

the birthday party of his daughter and held them hostage. It started about 5.45 pm on January 30 and continued for about eight hours," Director General of Police (DGP) O P Singh said, adding that in the entire operation they had tried to "engage" the accused and were successful.

He said the accused had initially released a six-month-old girl by handing her over to his neighbour from a balcony.

Police said Batham handed over the girl to his neighbour from a balcony.

Accused Subhash Batham fired from inside the house on those who tried to speak to him, police said, adding that a man and two policemen



suffered a bullet injury.

The motive of the accused was not known immediately.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath monitored the situation in Farrukhabad, which is nearly 200 km from state capital Lucknow. "The CM as soon as he got to know about the incident called a meeting of crisis management group and personally monitored the situation

and ensured children are rescued safely," Awasthi said.

Earlier, a team of NSG (National Security Guard) commandos had taken a special aircraft to reach Farrukhabad, a senior security official in Delhi said.

Police said Batham, a murder accused, seemed to be mentally unstable.

Inspector General of Police, Kanpur Range,

Mohit Agarwal, said, "The man called the children for a birthday party and held them hostage in the basement of the house. He fired six shots from inside the building."

He said Batham fired on those who attempted to speak to him.

Batham wanted to talk to the local MLA, but he refused to speak to the leader when he arrived, Agarwal said.



NEW DELHI, JAN 31 (PTI): The youth who fired a pistol at a group of anti-CAA protesters near the Jamia Millia University, in which a student was injured, was on Friday sent to a 14-day protective custody by the Juvenile Justice Board, police said.

The accused was pre-

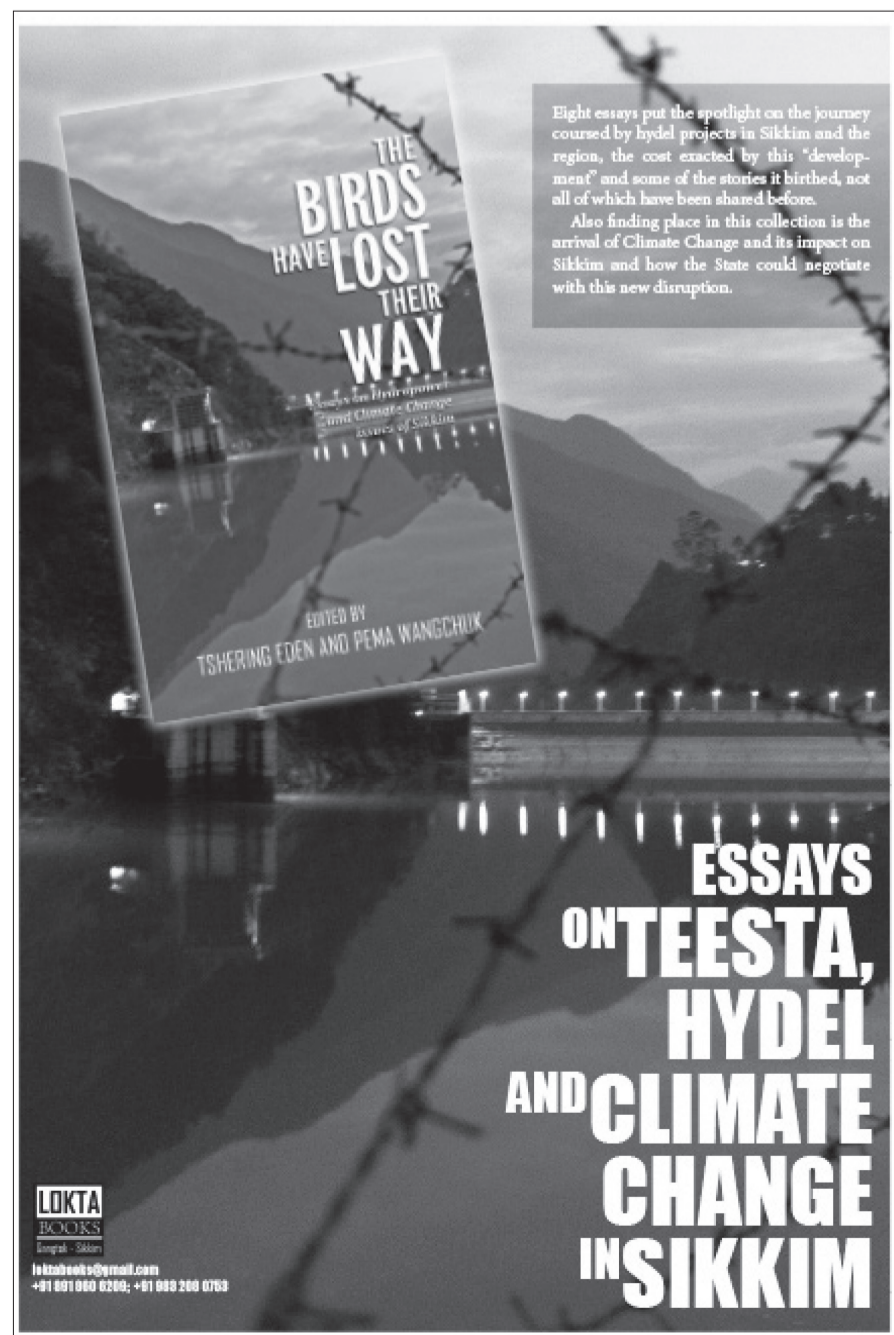
sented before the Board in the afternoon, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Rajesh Deo said.

The police said they have also urged the Board to form a medical panel to conduct a bone ossification test that will verify the age of the youth.

On Thursday, the ac-

cused fired a pistol at a group of anti-CAA protesters, injuring Jamia student Shadab Farooq, before walking away while waving the fire-arm above his head and shouting "Yeh lo aazadi" amid heavy police presence.

The Crime Branch is probing the case.



Premier League: 10 things to look out for this weekend

THEGUARDIAN

1) NDIDI TO ECLIPSE KANTÉ AGAIN?

Credit to Leicester. Or should that be shame on Chelsea? Wherever you choose to put the emphasis, the fact is that Wilfried Ndidi is now a more influential Premier League midfielder than N'Golo Kanté. The Frenchman has been good this season, of course, but Frank Lampard, like Maurizio Sarri, has not been getting the best out of him. Ndidi, meanwhile, has been outstanding and, if he dominates central midfield again on Saturday, then Leicester will probably put their Carabao Cup disappointment behind them, take a significant step closer to Champions League qualification, and make the jostling for fourth place very interesting.

2) WALKER-PETERS HAS WORK TO DO

Ralph Hasenhüttl deserves acclaim for the way that Southampton have tightened up since that historic mulling by Leicester in October. But they have still conceded more goals in their last two league matches than Liverpool have in their last 10. And their defence is likely to have a new look at Anfield on Saturday, with Kyle Walker-Peters set to step in on the right-hand side for the Arsenal-bound Cédric Soares. Japhet Tanganga did a fair job containing Liverpool's wingers earlier this month but his solitary lapse was punished by a goal that gave the league leaders victory at Spurs. Southampton hope that the player who left White Hart Lane after being overtaken by Tanganga can do better against the champi-

ons-elect and reignite his career with help from Hassenhüttl.

3) HOW DO CITY PRIME THEMSELVES FOR EUROPE?

Manchester City are in an awkward position. With 14 games still to go, they've no chance of winning the league, no chance of finishing outside the top four, and next to no chance of not finishing second. So, though they're still in both domestic cups, their focus is on winning the Champions League. The question is how they go about it: do they give everything in every game, or do they save themselves so that they're fresh when they need to be? On the one hand, it's hard to turn it on just like that, but on the other, it's hard to turn it on when you're knackered, and neither approach can compensate for the defensive deficiencies that have cost them in each of the last three seasons. Against Spurs, they should expect to have no choice, because their opponents need points, and José Mourinho needs to make one – not just because his genetic code dictates he can do no other. Since he succeeded Mauricio Pochettino, his team have produced few decent performances never mind any signature performances, playing joyles, guileless football in the process. They and he need something, and soon.

4) CHASE FOR EUROPE CONTINUES AT OLD TRAFFORD

By any measure this is a massive game between two clubs hoping to secure European football next season – Wolves and Manchester United drew 1-1 at Molineux



in August and there is still nothing to separate them, level-pegging as they are on 34 points, with the dream of fourth place or the relative nightmare of mid-table still possible. It might be key that Wolves have had 10 days to prepare, the benefit of losing to these opponents in the FA Cup third round, while United have had to negotiate two testing cup matches. Given their poor recent league results – their last two games ended in 2-0 defeats to Liverpool and Burnley – United and their manager, Ole Gunnar Solskjær, could not afford to take the visit to Tranmere lightly, while the Carabao Cup semi-final would have demanded full focus even if the opposition had not been Manchester City. But this game could turn out to be much more important than either of those.

5) COINCIDENCES ABOUND AT VICARAGE ROAD

After three months out with injury Danny Welbeck is expected to return to the Watford

squad for this game, against Everton, a side he was repeatedly linked with last season. Perhaps the greatest tactical problem Watford have faced this season is a complete inability to attack cohesively without Troy Deeney to knit the forward line together, but Welbeck has the technical quality to improve an unhealthy over-reliance on their captain – if he can stay fit. The game will also feature a winger who used to play for Everton and Barcelona but is now with Watford and one that used to play for Watford, now plays for Everton and is rumoured to be wanted by Barcelona. In geographical coincidence news, Everton's last visit to London was when they drew with Crystal Palace on the first day of the season, since when they have not played, even in the cups, anywhere between Birmingham and the south coast. They play Watford, Arsenal, Chelsea and Tottenham in their next five away games.

6) HOWE HAS STRIKING HEADACHES AGAINST BUOYANT VILLA

Bournemouth's 3-1 win over Brighton last week merely confirmed that Graham Potter's team are in a world of bother, not that Eddie Howe's side are too good to survive this season. There is no reason to back them to win Saturday's relegation showdown with Aston Villa – except, of course, that Villa have been prone to shooting themselves in the foot, including when these sides met at Villa Park in August. But Dean Smith's team are getting things together and go into this game looking as strong as they have at any other point in the campaign, with a relatively new formation and plenty of confidence following consecutive last-gasp wins over Watford and Leicester. They are likely to create a lot of chances for their new striker, Mbwana Samatta, while Howe must decide whether to keep waiting for Dominic Solanke to

locate the net or to give a first Premier League start to Sam Surridge instead.

7) NORWICH NEED TO ROLL BACK THE MONTHS

When these sides met in August with the sun on their backs, Norwich romped to a 3-1 victory inspired by a Teemu Pukki hat-trick, and Newcastle looked much the likelier to figure in the relegation battle. Five months on, and it's Norwich who face the survival battle, while Newcastle have moved into the middle tier and could be about to escape Mike Ashley's frying pan for the ethical fire. On the field, things have begun to tick for Newcastle, which makes this another formidable assignment for Daniel Farke's side, who haven't been playing that badly – they were frankly robbed at Tottenham – but are carrying an air of loveable-but-doomed about them. So they need to take points, preferably three, from fixtures such as this. Unlike Newcastle, Norwich

have had a quiet transfer window and with Spurs and Liverpool up after this, the Canaries need to tighten, buckle up and win here.

8) DYCHE SEEKS TO STEM THE FLOW

There are seven clubs that Sean Dyche has faced as a manager without so much as drawing. Six of those – including Sheffield United, who will visit Turf Moor in April – he has only faced once, but the other is Arsenal, who he has come up against 10 times already in league and cup without success of any sort. He has come close on occasion – the Laurent Koscielny stoppage-time handball winner of 2016, say, or the two stoppage-time Alexis Sánchez penalty winners of 2017 – but always, somehow, the Gunners have prevailed. With Arsenal still inconsistent as Mikel Arteta beds in and suffering a string of defensive injuries – though Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang will return from suspension – and Burnley having beaten Leicester and Manchester United in their last two league games, perhaps this will be the time. "There's been a lot of last-minute goals and it would be nice to get one against them," said Jack Cork. "They are going through a transitional stage and it would be good to get them at a time where they're a little bit vulnerable and try and get at them."

10) HOW WILL WILDER MANAGE CHANGE?

It's a long time since a promoted side has imposed itself on the Premier League as brilliantly as Sheffield United. Though Wolves' patient possession game worked very well last season, Blades' fast, aggressive approach is far more interesting to watch and has also been accomplished without the involvement of Jorge Mendes. Most particularly, what they are doing and what we are enjoying is a triumph for Chris Wilder, who understands football in all its aspects: his adult response to Oli McBurnie enjoying himself is every bit as important as all the cogitation and innovation. But this week he has set himself a new challenge: can he integrate an expensive outsider? Attracting a talent of Sander Berge's calibre looks like being yet further testament to the work he has done, but disturbing the balance of something which already works is always a risk. We have no reason to think that Wilder will not find a way – beginning at Selhurst on Saturday.

Pune 7 Aces look to continue winning streak in PBL

HYDERABAD, JAN 31 (PTI): Pune 7 Aces will aim to notch up their fourth win on the trot when they take on North Eastern Warriors in their Premier Badminton League match here on Saturday.

In the second tie of the day, Chennai Super-

starz will hope to bounce back against the Awadhe Warriors who will open their final leg.

Pune's strength lies in a well-knit squad who has shown remarkable fighting spirit under pressure. The men's doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Hendra Setiawan has

remained unbeaten so far in three outings.

Shetty's smooth chemistry with the world champion doubles player was evident, especially in their most recent win over the Chennai team's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Sumeeth Reddy.

"I am thoroughly en-

joying my time at Pune 7 Aces where all players share a healthy camaraderie. The team is in a really good place right now and we are confident of getting a win," said Setiawan.

Thailand Masters champion Loh Kean Yew has also been a valuable

asset for the team. Commonwealth Games gold medallists Chris and Gabrielle Adcock have delivered each time they have appeared for Pune and would be the key as they aim to displace the Superstarz from the top position in the league standings.

Pass master, goals, tempo: what Bruno Fernandes brings Manchester United

ANDY BRASSELL

MANCHESTER, 31 JAN [THEGUARDIAN]: In a relatively small country, nothing stays a secret for too long. As Bruno Fernandes stepped outside his home and on to the street, he was swiftly doorstepped by a reporter from the television news station SIC. "It's not the moment yet for my final message to Sporting fans," he said with an amiable smile. Would he at least confirm that going to England was his preference? "It always was," said Fernandes, without a second's hesitation.

All things come to those who wait and how Sporting Clube de Portugal's captain waited. In the past year it was abundantly clear that Sporting couldn't hold him much longer, and with his talent demanding a wider audience it would have been so even if they had been in better financial shape. So Sportinguistas savoured every moment over that period, from last April's stealthy rocket from range to oust

Benfica from the Taça de Portugal in the semi-final to the deflected drive that put them on the road to victory in the final against Porto.

It has been a long goodbye; more so this month, with the protracted negotiations between Sporting and Manchester United – who completed the £46m, five-and-a-half-year deal on Thursday, with the option of another year – leaving him in a strange sort of purgatory, having a farewell mini-tour in which each game looked like being his last. Fernandes's reign at the Alvalade – and it was just that – finally ended with Monday's narrow home win over Marítimo. Cristian Borja scored the winner but this Sporting victory had their No 8's fingerprints all over it, as usual.

Fernandes, 25, wore the armband, took the set pieces, drifted from centre to left to right as he made the passes, switched the play and pointed his teammates into position when he

didn't have the ball. He almost left one final sumptuous memory for those fans who adored him, smacking the crossbar with one of his frequent, sweetly struck efforts from range.

A player not getting that elite club move (and United remain exactly that in the eyes of the vast majority of players outside England) until their mid-20s arouses the suspicions of some, and recalls a different time, which encompassed cases such as those of Gheorghe Hagi and Hristo Stoichkov. Although it is unusual to see top talent waiting far beyond 21 to be flogged to a top club in football's modern economic climate, it does potentially offer Fernandes and United big advantages. He arrives with a much greater depth of experience than a player leaving Portugal for the Premier League would generally possess.

Fernandes has rarely stood still. He has always had a strong sense of educating himself: after growing up on the

outskirts of Porto and joining Boavista's academy, he took the big decision to leave for Italy, and Novara, when he was 17, at an age when most players in his position would be dreaming of a future at Porto, Benfica or Sporting.

It explains much of Fernandes's wide palette now. His range of passing and ability to change the tempo are not typical of many goalscoring midfielders, but it is testament to the tactical schooling he received in Serie B and then in the top flight, with Udinese. Italy was also where he developed his steely side. Fernandes is hard working and difficult to bully, despite his relatively slight stature.

After moving to Udine in 2013, he came under the influence of Antonio Di Natale, the club's greatest-ever player. "Bruno Fernandes irritates me," Di Natale once said, "because he's young and out of the two of us he's the one with more technical quality.

"He's got two incred-

ible feet but sometimes he just coasts through games." By the time he said that publicly, Di Natale had brought it up with Fernandes in private. He helped the young Portuguese work hard on his technique, and Fernandes acknowledges learning everything from striking the ball to better body shape from him.

By the time Fernandes played an excellent season at Sampdoria in 2016-17, he had matured considerably and even though the €8.5 million Sporting paid for him after that was the second-highest fee in their history, it felt like a pretty safe bet.

Let off the leash in the Sporting midfield with William Carvalho and Rodrigo Battaglia behind him, Fernandes came into his own in the attacking realm. He showcased his ability to score and assist, usually tucked in behind Bas Dost (the only player to cost Sporting more than Fernandes).

Mumbai City beat NorthEast United 1-0; jump to 4th spot

MUMBAI, JAN 31 (PTI): Diego Carlos scored the solitary goal as hosts Mumbai City FC defeated NorthEast United FC 1-0 in an Indian Super League match here on Friday.

The win helped Mumbai jump to the fourth spot in the standings with 23 points from 15 games and they are in reckoning to reach play-offs, with three more games left.

Brazilian Carlos netted in the 44rd minute to take his side ahead.

Mohamed Larbi's pass was collected by Carlos in the box, who then turned his marker and unleashed a low-shot to the far corner, to make it 1-0 for his side going into the half-time.

Earlier, NorthEast earned a free-kick in the eight minute which was taken by striker Lars Simon Lundevall.

After he whipped

into the box, mid-fielder Lalengmawia's header sailed over the bar.

The hosts had a chance in the 14th minute when Larbi made a descent run down the left flank and then put a cross towards the centre of the box which Carlos headed, but again it sailed over the bar.

Mohamed Rafique earned a yellow card after he tried to win the ball from Provat Lakra with a sliding tackle on the left, but he missed the ball and took down Lakra.

Subsequently, NorthEast earned a free-kick, but were unable to score off it.

Mumbai earned a free-kick, from just outside the box, but Amine Chermiti smashed it straight into the NorthEast wall.

In the 28th minute, Rowling Borges found a cross from Carlos

ter's funky new side have played some lovely stuff but continually found ways not to win. And now look at them! They have fewer points than Chris Hughton's bores had at this stage last season and find themselves going to West Ham feeling almost as vulnerable as their hosts. A clash between two teams who are far from clinical, often short on aggression and always liable to make a defensive blunder could be, in its own inefficient way, highly entertaining.

10) HOW WILL WILDER MANAGE CHANGE?

It's a long time since a promoted side has imposed itself on the Premier League as brilliantly as Sheffield United. Though Wolves' patient possession game worked very well last season, Blades' fast, aggressive approach is far more interesting to watch and has also been accomplished without the involvement of Jorge Mendes. Most particularly, what they are doing and what we are enjoying is a triumph for Chris Wilder, who understands football in all its aspects: his adult response to Oli McBurnie enjoying himself is every bit as important as all the cogitation and innovation. But this week he has set himself a new challenge: can he integrate an expensive outsider? Attracting a talent of Sander Berge's calibre looks like being yet further testament to the work he has done, but disturbing the balance of something which already works is always a risk. We have no reason to think that Wilder will not find a way – beginning at Selhurst on Saturday.

Now you can whatsApp
SummitTIMES @
9832556698

Elon Musk: Tesla Faces Battery Woes, But Future Will ‘Blow People’s Minds’

During the company’s fourth-quarter 2019 earnings call Wednesday, CEO Elon Musk revealed that a major challenge is scaling up battery production. This, he noted, would be “very fundamental and extremely difficult.” The goal, he explained, is to both supply enough cars for mass-market vehicles like the Model 3 and Model Y while also lowering the batteries’ cost per kilowatt.

It wasn’t all doom and gloom. Musk confirmed that the long-awaited Battery Day, where the company is set to explain its latest advancements, would likely take place around April. This, Musk said, would outline a “very compelling story” about the company’s advancements and “blow people’s minds,” adding that “it blows my mind, and I know it!”

For Tesla, the battery is critical. The company has made its name in producing cars powered entirely from energy stored in lithium-ion batteries. Every car Tesla ships comes with a battery inside.

That’s both a strength and a weakness. Tesla has developed expertise and

capabilities in batteries that have enabled it to offer cars with hundreds of miles of range. But some of these batteries can measure up to 100 kilowatt-hours, and in early 2016 Tesla was paying around \$190 per kilowatt-hour for batteries. Demand for the company’s cars has also soared since the introduction of the Tesla Model 3 sedan in July 2017, sending the total number of Teslas on the road from around 250,000 in mid 2017 to nearly one million today. Tesla needs lots of batteries, and cheap.

This dependence has caused issues in the past, particularly as Tesla doesn’t just use batteries for cars. Musk explained in March 2019 that ramping up production for the Model 3 left fewer resources for the Powerwall home battery and accompanying Solar Roof.

On Wednesday, Musk suggested that this issue was rearing its head again. The company unveiled the Tesla Semi truck back in November 2017 with a suggested production date of 2019. But this week, Musk explained that the giant vehicle required so many

battery cells that the company has not accelerated production just yet. Instead, the focus has been on supporting the Model 3 and upcoming Model Y SUV.

Tesla has been gradually boosting its battery output, working with its battery partner Panasonic at the Nevada Gigafactory. In August 2018, the company announced it had reached an annual production rate of 20 gigawatt-hours, more per kilowatt-hour than all other automakers combined.

But Musk wants to go even higher. During the company’s second-quarter earnings call in July 2019, he called for the company to reach Terawatt-hour levels of output: “In order to really make a fundamental shift in the world’s energy usage and really transform things to a sustainable energy future, if you’re not in the terawatt-hour range, it’s like, it’s a nice news story but it is not fundamentally changing the energy equation.” At that point, the Nevada Gigafactory was producing 28 gigawatt-hours annually, and when extra factories in Japan were included Tesla’s



total output was somewhere around 35 gigawatt-hours.

So what’s Tesla to do? The answers may come in the Battery Day, a forthcoming explainer that could take place in April. The day is expected to be similar in setup to the Autonomy Day in April 2019, where Musk explained to investors the company’s progress on full self-driving capabilities.

What will they show? One of the standout features may be the company’s Maxwell Technologies acquisition. The \$218 million deal, announced February 2019, brings in a firm working on exotic technologies like dry electrodes and ultracapacitors. The firm has also identified a pathway to raising battery density to 500 watt-hours per kilogram. Current batteries tend to weigh around 300 watt-hours, but a jump to 500 could enable advanced uses like an electric plane.

Musk confirmed during Wednesday’s call that Tesla is working with Maxwell, while also stating that its ultracapacitor technology is an “important piece of the puzzle.” This exotic technology could transform how energy is managed within the car, and Musk was actually planning to do his PhD at Stanford University on them before he dropped out.

But whether it’s high-density batteries or advanced breakthroughs, the fundamental message is clear: Tesla needs more batteries, and fast.

“We have to scale battery production to crazy levels that people cannot even fathom today,” Musk said. “That’s the real problem.”

Senate poised to acquit Trump as witness motion appears doomed

President Donald Trump’s hopes for a speedy acquittal by the Senate received a boost on Thursday as Democrats suffered a setback in their efforts to introduce new witnesses at his impeachment trial.

Democrats had sought to have Trump’s former national security advisor John Bolton testify but a key Republican senator said he would vote “no” when the question of calling further witnesses is put to the Senate on Friday.

If the witness motion is rejected, Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a key Trump ally, could conceivably call for a vote to acquit the president of the impeachment charges as soon as Friday.

A two-thirds majority -- or 67 senators -- is needed to remove a president from office, and the 53-47 Republican majority in the Senate means Trump is virtually certain to be acquitted.

Democrats were particularly eager to hear from Bolton following reports that he claims in an upcoming book to have been personally told by Trump that mil-

itary aid to Ukraine was tied to Kiev investigating his Democratic rival Joe Biden.

The charge is at the heart of the December 18 impeachment of the 45th US president for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress by the Democratic-majority House of Representatives.

Four Republican votes are needed to allow new witnesses but Republican Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, who had been considered a possible swing vote, issued a statement late Thursday saying there was no need for more evidence.

“It was inappropriate for the president to ask a foreign leader to investigate his political opponent and to withhold United States aid to encourage that investigation,” Alexander said.

“But the Constitution does not give the Senate the power to remove the president from office and ban him from this year’s ballot simply for actions that are inappropriate,” he said.

Republican Senator Susan Collins of Maine said she would support

the call for witnesses, and Utah Senator Mitt Romney has said he was “very likely” to do so.

Another wavering Republican -- Lisa Murkowski of Alaska -- has said she will announce her decision Friday morning.

In the event of a 50-50 tie, US Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, who is presiding over the trial, could be called upon to end the deadlock. If he declines to vote, the motion calling for witnesses would fail.

- ‘Purely partisan impeachment’ -

Chief Democratic prosecutor Adam Schiff, in a last-ditch bid on Thursday to win over Republican senators wary of a drawn-out process, proposed a one-week time frame to secure new witness testimony.

“Let’s have a reasonable accommodation here,” the California lawmaker told the 100 senators sitting as jurors at the historic trial. “We’ll take one week, and you’ll continue with the business of the Senate.”

Trump’s defense team rejected the Democratic calls for more witnesses.

Johnson hails ‘new dawn’ as Britain bids farewell to EU

Britain on Friday will end almost half a century of integration with its closest neighbours and leave the European Union, starting a new -- but still uncertain -- chapter in its long history.

At the clocks strike 11:00 pm -- midnight in Brussels (2300 GMT) -- Britain becomes the first country to leave the 28-member bloc and goes it alone for the first time since 1973.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has backed Brexit since the 2016 referendum vote to leave that triggered bitterness and division but he has promised to unite the country in a new era of prosperity.

Official celebrations will be muted out of respect for half the population who wanted to stay in the EU and who remain fearful of what lies ahead.

“Our job as the government, my job, is to bring this country together and take us forward,” Johnson said in a statement to mark the historic occasion.

He added: “This is not an end but a beginning. This is the moment when the dawn breaks and the curtain goes up on a new

act.”

Nothing will immediately feel different thanks to an 11-month transition period negotiated as part of an EU-UK exit deal ratified this week.

Britons will be able to work in and trade freely with EU nations until December 31, and vice versa, although the UK will no longer be represented in the bloc’s institutions.

But legally, Britain is out -- with no easy way back.

And while the exit terms have been agreed, it must still strike a deal on future relations with the EU, its largest trading partner.

“We will remain friends, allies and partners,” Michel Barnier, the EU’s chief negotiator in those upcoming talks, told the BBC.

He added his thoughts Friday were with “the millions of British citizens who are sad, as we are sad.”

- Divided country -

Getting this far has been a traumatic process.

Despite Britain’s resistance to many EU projects over the years -- it refused to join the single currency or the Schengen free travel area -- the 2016 vote to leave was a huge shock.

It unleashed political chaos in London, sparking years of bitter arguments that paralysed parliament and forced the resignations of two prime ministers.

Johnson brought an end to the turmoil with his decisive election victory last month, which gave him the parliamentary majority to ratify the Brexit deal.

But Britons remain as divided as they were nearly four years ago, when 52 percent voted to leave and 48 percent voted to remain in the EU.

Friday’s newspapers reflected that continued split, with best-selling eurosceptic tabloid The Sun triumphantly declaring “our time has come” on its front page alongside an image of Big Ben.

But pro-European The Guardian opted for the headline “small island”, calling Brexit “the biggest gamble in a generation”.

But pro-European The Guardian opted for the headline “small island”, calling Brexit “the biggest gamble in a generation”.

He will first host a special cabinet meeting in the northeastern English city of Sunderland,

which was the first to declare for Brexit in the 2016 vote.

At 10:00 pm, he will broadcast an address to the nation, and then host a reception for staff at Downing Street.

A light show will also be held outside No 10, while millions of commemorative 50 pence coins are being minted to mark the occasion.

By contrast ex-MEP Nigel Farage, who has spent decades campaigning to leave the EU, is planning a large rally in nearby Parliament Square.

He gave a triumphant speech Wednesday, his last day as a member of the European Parliament, waving Union Jack flags and declaring that Britain was “never coming back”.

But afterwards, many MEPs bade Britain an emotional goodbye and broke into a chorus of the traditional Scottish song of farewell, “Auld Lang Syne”.

Brussels’ Grand-Place was on Thursday lit in red, white and blue.

- Trade talks loom -

British eurosceptics have campaigned for decades to free their country from what they see as an overly bureaucratic

and unaccountable institution.

Johnson has promised to leave the EU’s single market and customs union so Britain can strike trade deals around the world.

But exactly how that will work -- and at what cost to firms that depend on EU business -- is unclear.

The divorce deal resolved the issue of London’s debts, the rights of EU expatriates, the status of Northern Ireland and the transition period.

But Johnson has given himself just 11 months to negotiate a new partnership, covering everything from trade to security cooperation.

He will set out his plans in a speech on Monday but Brussels has already warned he must either limit his ambitions or ask for more time.

Johnson also wants a trade deal with the United States, where President Donald Trump is a big Brexit backer.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo hailed the potential opportunities during a visit to London on Thursday, saying: “You will see the enormous benefits that accrued to both of our nations as a result of this.”

Star quality: telescope captures Sun in greatest detail ever

A huge telescope built on the peak of a Hawaiian island has produced pictures of the Sun’s surface in unprecedented detail, revealing boiling plasma cells the size of Texas.

For the telescope’s director, that’s only just the beginning.

The Sun is a giant ball of plasma (electrically charged gas) that has been observed from Earth for centuries from telescopes, and via satellites for decades.

But the resolution has been limited: the Jap-

anese space telescope Hinotori had a mirror of 20 inches (50 centimeters).

The new Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope on the island of Maui has a 13-foot (four meters) mirror, the world’s largest for a solar telescope.

“These images have the highest resolution that you’ve ever seen,” said Thomas Rimmele, the telescope’s director.

“We now see structures that we suspected would be there, based on computer models, but we never had the resolution to really see them,” add-

ed the 60-year-old German astronomer.

Images first published Wednesday show a pattern of boiling plasma covering the Sun in cell-like structures. These are the result of violent motions transporting heat from the star’s interior to its surface.

The hot plasma rises in the bright center of the cells, cools and then sinks below the surface in a process called convection.

The telescope came online on December 10 after nine years of construction.

“It was a really emotional moment, I was really happy,” said Rimmele, who joined the project 25 years ago before eventually becoming its director. “It’s my life’s work.” Since the telescope focuses sunlight over a small area, it produces an enormous amount of heat.

“It gets really hot there, you can put metal there and it melts within a very short time,” said Rimmele.

- Corona and sunspots -

It will take six more months to install addi-

tional scientific instruments and make the telescope fully operational.

Ultimately, the goal is to measure the magnetic fields in the Sun’s atmosphere, and in particular in its corona, its outermost area that can be distinguished during an eclipse.

The magnetic fields govern solar flares that can affect air travel, disrupt satellite communications as well as bring down power grids and disable GPS, a relatively common event.



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

- Fever
- Difficulty in breathing
- Dry Cough
- Severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Pneumonia - like symptoms

Treatment

- Treatment is symptomatic and supportive, based on the patient's clinical condition.
- No vaccinations available as of now.
- Visit Doctor in case symptoms detected.

Precautions to Prevent nCoV

- Wash your hands often with soap.
- Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer
- Observe good personal hygiene.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people with possible symptoms.
- Avoid contact with animals and consumption of undercooked meats.
- Avoid travel to nCoV affected places.
- Wear a mask if you have respiratory syndrome. and cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing.



If you seek help, you may call :

- Toll free no. 104
- District surveillance Officer
- EAST : 7029372100
- WEST : 9593297809
- NORTH : 9641957468
- SOUTH : 7407691463
- New STNM
- AMS : 9434711402

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM



SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Sikkim SCAN | CapitalTIMES | Neighbourhood WATCH | Sports & Specials | ElseWhere | EICETERA

It's easy to relax... When you can trust the News.

To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at

GANGTOK:
For circulation details Contact: +91-97498971695, +91-9647102692 & for Advertisement booking at +91-9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com

SILIGURI:
Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor, Opp. Bonga Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 03. Ph. +91-9832318644/ 9800482989/ 9153035100 or mail at manirai@yahooco.in

KOLKATA OFFICE:
Irshad Ali/ Imteyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine - 2, 2nd floor, Kolkata - 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-9831083977. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com / irshad_ali23@rediffmail.com

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

www.summittimes.com
news@summittimes.com
summittimes16@gmail.com
advertise@summittimes.com

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

VIDEO NEWS SECTION

[facebook.com/SummitTimesSikkim](https://www.facebook.com/SummitTimesSikkim)



SummitTIMES

Vanessa Bryant says ‘completely devastated’ by death of Kobe and daughter



A GAL AND HER PUP! The model and actress, Emily Ratajkowski takes a stroll with her dog (Colombo) in New York City.

Nintendo says no new Switch in 2020

Japanese gaming giant Nintendo said Friday there would be no fresh model of its hot-selling Switch console this year, dashing the hopes of fans eager for a new version.

“We have no plans to launch a new Nintendo Switch model in 2020,” president Shuntaro Furukawa told a briefing in Tokyo.

Competition in the industry is expected to grow tougher this year as Sony prepares to launch its next-generation PlayStation 5 for the Christmas season, and with upcoming 5G mobile phones expected to offer more sophisticated gaming.

But Furukawa said the Switch’s life cycles and customer bases were different from rival consoles.

“Other companies’ business moves will not have a special impact on our business,” he said.

The original Switch console, a hybrid that can be used for handheld play or hooked up to a screen at home, has become a huge global seller.

It is entering its fourth year, which Furukawa described as the “early stage of its middle life.”

But its sales are still solid with powerful software titles.

Last September, Nintendo also launched a scaled back, cheaper version of the console, called Switch Lite, which is a strictly handheld device. Its sales have also been solid.

In December the Kyoto-based firm behind Super Mario and Pokemon rolled out the flag-



ship Switch model in China via Tencent to further boost its global reach.

After the stock market closed on Thursday, the company reported a leap in sales and profit for the nine months to December, upgrading its full-year profit forecast on strong demand for Switch consoles.

But the stock fell more than four percent on Friday.

“Its earnings were not bad but market expectations had been higher,” said Makoto Sengoku, market analyst at Tokai Tokyo Research Institute.

The absence of a console launch would not hurt Nintendo much thanks to its hit software titles, he added.

“The new coronavirus is rather worrying,” he added, noting it could disrupt Nintendo’s shipments from Chinese factories.

“Stocks related to inbound tourists have been falling but now investors have realised Nintendo could also be affected,” he said.

Nintendo said Thursday its net profit for April-December rose 16.4 percent from a year earlier to 196.4 billion yen (\$1.8 billion) on robust sales of hardware and software.

Vanessa Bryant spoke out Wednesday for the first time since her husband Kobe Bryant and daughter Gianna were killed in a horrific helicopter crash, saying the family is “completely devastated” by the tragedy.

Vanessa, who married Kobe in 2001 when she was still a teenager, took to Instagram to communicate her grief but said she was at a loss for words.

“We are completely devastated by the sudden loss of my adoring husband, Kobe — the amazing father of our children; and my beautiful, sweet Gianna — a loving, thoughtful, and wonderful daughter; and amazing sister to Natalia, Bianka, and Capri,” she wrote on her account.

Her comments come three days after Bryant and their 13-year-old daughter died when the Sikorsky S-76 they were riding in slammed into a rugged hillside in thick fog in Calabasas, northwest of Los Angeles. The crash also killed seven others.

The helicopter was headed to Bryant’s Mamba Sports Academy in Thousand Oaks, where Gianna was scheduled to play a basketball tournament.

“There aren’t enough words to describe our pain

right now,” said Vanessa, who also changed her Instagram picture to one of Kobe and Gianna embracing. “I take comfort in knowing that Kobe and Gigi both knew that they were so deeply loved.

“We were so incredibly blessed to have them in our lives. I wish they were here with us forever. They were our beautiful blessings taken from us too soon.”

In the wake of the tragedy, Vanessa said they are still trying to come to grips with the fact that they are gone.

“I’m not sure what our lives hold beyond today, and it’s impossible to imagine life without them,” she added. “But we wake up each day, trying to keep pushing because Kobe, and our baby girl, Gigi, are shining on us to light the way.

“Our love for them is endless — and that’s to say, immeasurable. I just wish I could hug them, kiss them and bless them. Have them here with us, forever.”

Vanessa and Kobe Bryant met on the set of a video shoot for which she was modelling. She was 17 and a senior in high school at the time.

They were engaged in 2001 before getting married six months later. They had four daughters together. The



oldest Natalia is 17 while Bianka is 3 years old and Capri just seven months.

Kobe’s parents didn’t attend the wedding, partly because Kobe’s father was uncomfortable with Vanessa being Latino instead of African-American.

In 2003, Kobe was accused of sexually assaulting a 19-year-old woman at a Colorado hotel. Vanessa attended a news conference at Staples Center arena in Los Angeles and sat next to Kobe as he professed his love to her.

“I love my wife with all my heart. She’s my backbone,” Kobe said from the podium.

Kobe admitted in front of her to being unfaithful but denied sexual assault. The case

was eventually dismissed after the accuser dropped the charges.

“Millions of people” - Vanessa also thanked the millions of fans who have shown their support for the families involved.

“My girls and I want to thank the millions of people who’ve shown support and love during this horrific time. Thank you for all the prayers. We definitely need them,” she said.

Vanessa signed off by expressing more thanks “for lifting us up in your prayers, and for loving Kobe, Gigi, Natalia, Bianka, Capri and me.”

“We ask that you grant us the respect and privacy we will need to navigate this new reality,” she added.

Jonah Hill’s Story About Kobe Bryant Will Break Your Heart

Jonah Hill is recalling the moment he met his “hero” Kobe Bryant following the NBA star’s tragic passing.

In an Instagram post shared on Wednesday, the 36-year-old actor took a look back on an unforgettable basketball game where he and his late brother, Jordan Feldstein, sat courtside next to Kobe during a Western Conference Finals game in 2010. Hill shared two photos from the night at Staples Center, including a shot his brother snapped of him next to Kobe, above.

“This picture became a funny internet thing years back and it always made me laugh when I’d see memes of it,” Hill began in the caption. “I used to love ‘on purpose, very awkward photos’ whenever I was around someone I respected and this is about as comically awkward as it gets. Ah, your early 20s. It’s a dumb bit but I really liked it at the time.”

“I hesitate to post this as it’s usually connected to humor. But for me this photo represents a LOT more,” he continued. “I’m sitting next to my brother and he’s taking this. It was the night we both met Kobe and he was so nice to us. So funny, so amazing and so kind (in the middle of a game!) My brother and I grew up worshipping the Lakers and because of my job we got to sit next to Kobe and the whole team!”

“I have lived a privileged life. Truly. We were literally buzzing with excitement to meet our hero and it’s one of my favorite memories ever. It’s my favorite memory with my brother,” Hill added. “I’m sitting between Kobe and my brother and now they’re both gone. I have been staring at this photo for days in disbelief and sadness and joy. It’s my favorite picture and I think it represents for me, all of the hard and amazing things in life and how fleeting they are. But their fleeting nature doesn’t make them any less beautiful.”

The “21 Jumpstreet” star concluded the heartfelt post by saying that Kobe and his brother Jordan, who passed away



back in 2017 at the age of 40, aren’t “resting” in heaven, but “working hard.”

“I’ve been thinking a lot about saying Rest In Peace and what that means,” Hill wrote. “But I don’t think Kobe or my brother are resting. I think they’re hustling up there. Working hard and getting shit done. Cuz that’s what they do. All my love to the ones here left behind. Take care of each other and love each other. That’s the lesson I’ve learned. ☹️”

Kobe, along with his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna, and 7 others, were killed in a helicopter crash Sunday morning. Kobe, who was only 41, is survived by wife Vanessa and the couple’s three other children: Natalia, Bianka and Capri.

Following the heartbreaking accident, celebrities, fans, the sports world and beyond shared their shock and condolences on social media. See how people have paid tribute here.

Joyce Sevilla Dies: Nightlife And Entertainment Publicist For Major Brands Was 47

Publicist Joyce Sevilla was found dead at her home in West Hollywood on Wednesday, according to the West Hollywood division of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s department.

Sgt. Jennifer Roth said deputies responded to a welfare check shortly before 9 PM at Sevilla’s apartment on Harper Avenue, where they found Sevilla’s body. There was no indication of foul play, Roth said, and said the matter has been turned over to the Los Angeles County Coroner’s office.

Sevilla had a long history in entertainment, working for

Jive Records on such talent as the Backstreet Boys and Britney Spears, then seguing to the nightlife and entertainment firm Entertainment Fusion Group. She spent ten years at the firm working on major brands as head of US publicity.

Her most recent venture included heading up her own entertainment marketing and publicity firm, Sevilla Strategic Communications. Sevilla graduated from Villanova University in Philadelphia. Information on survivors or memorial plans was not immediately available.

Aries:

Aries, you are likely to feel particularly sensitive today. Understand what is triggering you at this moment. Could you be confusing your emotions with the feelings of those around you? Something to think about when you find yourself in a harsh environment. Consciously clear your space as you say goodbye to anything that’s toxic. Remember, you have the power to decide what is allowed into your sacred space and what isn’t. You could also consider creating an energy shield around you when you are meditating: visualise a bright, luminescent ball in the centre of your being growing in size until it forms a golden globe around your body. PS: Good vibes only.

Taurus:

Transitions can be an especially confusing time. On one hand, you know you can’t go back to where you came from. On the other hand, you don’t know what the next step is either. Take a deep breath and re-centre, Taurus. Adopt ‘one step at a time’ as your mantra. Trust that the Universal plan will reveal itself in due course of time. PS: Be aware of the signs and synchronicities that are leading you to your destination.

Gemini:

Are things working out magically or are you facing roadblocks at every step of the way? The Universe is always talking to us in signs and symbols. Be aware of what the current energet-

ic climate is trying to convey to you. Gemini, there is a good chance you are trying to paddle upstream when the Universe is asking you to slow down and go with the flow. Today, you’re also being asked to be mindful of the words you use. Let go of the idea that you know everything, and listen to what others have to say. This way, you’ll not only find a resolution, but also chance upon information that will challenge your beliefs and make you look at the world in a brand new light.

Cancer:

You are the fiercest version of yourself. There’s so much you want to do, and you’re not afraid to go after your dreams. What the cards want you to remember before you set out to conquer new territories: inaction is just as important as action. So be sure to rest and recharge periodically. Today, you’re also being reminded of the interconnectedness of everything. You are an individual, but you’re also part of the whole. Be grateful for the ways in which the Universe and your fellow warriors are helping you move towards the light.

Leo:

A lot of time is lost when you skip from one task to the other, trying to accomplish everything at once. Humans are not multi-taskers, Leo. The internet, as you know, is a big, fat liar. Focusing on one task at a time is the secret to creating your best work. Instead of penning down a pan-

ic-inducing to-do list, rank your tasks in order of importance. The one that you’re dreading the most? Start by getting that out of the way. This will help you organise your day better and accomplish your goals in an effective manner.

Virgo:

Just like working out, building your psychic muscles is a process. Your guides are trying to get in touch with you, sending you messages from the beyond. But are your receptors working to their optimum capacity? Today, you’re being asked to tune into your third eye, the space between your brows. Envision a luminescent golden light descending from the heavens, clearing any and all blocks. Let the power of visualisation activate your pineal gland.

Libra:

“Don’t worry about being successful but work towards being significant, and the success will naturally follow.” Queen Oprah always gets it right! How do you stay relevant, Libra? In what manner do you strive for perfection? The cards are reminding you of the importance of putting in the work and staying updated with current trends. As you do, remember that your only competition is yourself. Your writing and communication skills are also coming to the fore. Capitalising on it will help you expand your empire.

Scorpio:

Victory isn’t about being on the top. It’s about

the sense of fulfillment you derive from doing the things you were once incapable of. This is a big breakthrough moment for you, Scorpio. Give yourself the gold star you deserve. Trust that the people who matter are taking notice of your work too. So be consistent in your efforts. You have a long road ahead of you.

Sagittarius:

Is there such a thing as the absolute truth or is everything in life a matter of perspective? Replace rigidity with flow, Sagittarius. As you do, stretch your imagination and look beyond the realm of possibilities. Here, you will understand all the ways in which you have been limiting yourself. The cards are also urging you to become the harbinger of peace by resorting to nonviolent communication, a practice that helps you build authentic connections by tapping into the virtues of kindness and compassion. With an open mind, share how you feel about a certain matter as you hold space for them to share their thoughts too.

Capricorn:

Issues related to communication could be messing with your relationships. But is this a bigger deal in your head than it is in your reality? You won’t know until you talk things out. Word for the wise: hold space for an open and honest conversation. Yes, that means listening to what the other person has to say.

Social media and how to make the most of it is likely to be a hot topic too. You know that one friend who is a magnet for followers? Turn to her for sage advice.

Aquarius:

“When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace.” Let Jimi Hendrix’s words become your mantra in these dark times. The truth is, we may or may not be able to see the shift we are working towards in this lifetime. But that doesn’t mean we are not a catalyst of change. Do your bit, Aquarius. Continue to exercise kindness and compassion. Become a harbinger of the love revolution. Things to remember when you feel disillusioned: 1) No contribution is too big or small; 2) Every thought you think and action you take affects the collective consciousness.

Pisces:

Here’s some fairytale wisdom from Pinocchio to bring you out of that funk: “The most fantastic magical things can happen, and it all starts with a wish.” What are you waiting for, Pisces? Let your dreams and desires be known. The Universe is in the mood to help you create your best life right here and in this moment. Remember to stay open to receiving as you do. If what you have asked for is in alignment with your highest good, trust that it will come to you.