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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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SDF legislators to boycott Assembly till Golay is CM

Party considering challenging CM's appointment in court: Chamling

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 JUN:**

Sikkim Democratic Front president and former Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling, today stated that SDF legislators will not participate in any Assembly session until PS Tamang [Golay] remains in the post of Chief Minister. Citing the verdict of the Supreme Court in the case of former CM of Tamil Nadu, Late Jayalalitha in BR



Kapoor Vs State of Tamil Nadu case in 2001, he stated that Mr Tamang does not have any right to be the CM even for a single second as per the verdict of the Supreme Court in this case.

Speaking with media persons this afternoon, Mr Chamling stated that SDF legislators walked out from the Assembly after attending the swearing-in ceremony as Mr Tamang is not a mem-

ber of the Legislative Assembly and does not have any right to become the leader of the house.

As per the decision of the Supreme Court, Mr Tamang has been disqualified from holding

any constitutional post, he said. Speaking on not participating in the Assembly session, he stated that as the government has been formed in an illegal manner, all proceedings and decisions of the government will be illegal and unlawful.

Responding to media queries on slogans against him being shouted from the visitor's gallery in the assembly, Mr Chamling termed the incident as an attack and murder of democracy. This is the first time something like this has happened in the history of Sikkim and the State Legislative Assembly, he added. He said it was "undemocratic and a heinous crime".

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CMO gets new officers

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 JUN:**

Special Secretary Ten-zeen Kizom was today transferred from the Horticulture Department and posted as Special Secretary, Chief Minister's Office.

It might be recalled that earlier, SD Dhakal, was handed additional charge as Secretary, CMO. With a new Chief Minister in office, a fresh staffing at the CMO was always on the cards.

Also today, Additional Secretary and PRO to the CM, Bimal Rai, was transferred and posted as Additional Secretary, Animal Husbandry Department.

Joint Secretary, UD&HD, Karnitmit Lepcha, has also been transferred and posted to the CMO as has Karmanan Rai who was currently Under Secretary, Law Department.

Govt revises draft education policy; drops compulsory Hindi teaching

NEW DELHI/CHENNAI, JUN 3 (PTI): Revising its draft education policy, the Centre Monday dropped the contentious provision of compulsory teaching of Hindi in non-Hindi speaking states after the three-language proposal sparked outrage, mainly in Tamil Nadu.

The DMK and other parties in Tamil Nadu, which had strongly opposed the proposal in the 484-page draft National Education Policy (NEP) to make Hindi a mandatory third language to be taught in schools across the country, welcomed the Centre's decision.

The parties had alleged that the move was tantamount to thrusting the Hindi language on the non-Hindi speaking states.

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MLAs TAKE OATH OF OFFICE

SDF walks out in protest, CM expresses disappointment



Poklok-Kamrang, Rumtek-Martam and Gangtok freed for by-elections

GANGTOK, 03 JUN (IPR): The first session of the 10th Sikkim Legislative Assembly was held today.

The newly elected members of the House were administered the oath of affirmation by

Pro Tem Speaker, Sangay Lepcha.

Among the newly elected members of SLA, Sixteen members from 17 constituencies were from the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha and 13 MLAs from 15 constituencies from the Opposition Sikkim Democratic Front.

Secretary, SLA, LM Pradhan, called out the names of all the newly elected Members for subscription of Oath or Affirmation.

Resignation of those

who fought from two Constituencies in the recently held election saw SKM MLA, Kunga Nima Lepcha give up his Gangtok seat while for SDF MLAs, Pawan Chamling resigned from Poklok Kamrang and DT Lepcha resigned from Rumtek Martam constituency.

In continuation of Assembly Business, the Pro Tem Speaker announced that he had received only one name for Nomination for Speaker, that of

LB Das. The Motion for Election of the Speaker was put to Vote of the House and Mr Das was elected the new Speaker of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly unanimously.

Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] then conducted the newly elected Speaker to the Chair.

Thereafter, the Speaker announced the Motion for Election of Deputy Speaker and accordingly, Sangay Lepcha was declared

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Joining of OFOJ candidates during Model Code of Conduct cancelled

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JUN:

The State Government has directed that the appointment of all "One Family One Job" candidates who joined while the Model Code of Conduct was in effect be withheld and cancelled.

A Circular issued by the Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Department of Personnel, on 31 March requests all Secretaries that the "joining of all candidates appointed under One Family One Job scheme along with those candidates appointed on temporary basis (Muster Roll, Adhoc, Contract, Workcharged etc) who have reported for duty after the enforcement of Model Code of Conduct i.e. after 8-3-2019" be immediately withheld and cancelled.

The DoP has directed that the list of such candidates along with their appointment orders be submitted to

it by 10 June 2019.

The Circular observes that many Departments had accepted OFOJ candidates while MCC was in force and argues that this was in violation of the norms of the Election Commission and points out that "the concerned department or officer would be liable to be penalized under the established norms of the Election Commission of India."

11,772 youth were handed over appointment letters under the OFOJ scheme at a Rojgar Mela held at Paljor Stadium here on 12 Jan, 2019. As per the latest circular of the State Government, several of these appointees reported to their new jobs as late as two months later by when the Model Code of Conduct had come into force. The coming days will reveal just how many OFOJ appointees are affected by the latest decision of the State Government.

Kunga Nima chairs first coordination meeting as HRD Minister



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JUN:

Minister for Human Resource Development Department, Kunga Nima Lepcha today took the first coordination meeting of the HRDD here in the Conference Hall of the Department, a press release informs.

Addressing the meeting of the Directors, Sectional heads, heads of the Districts and other senior officers, Minister, Mr Lepcha mentioned that the priority and target sectors of the present Government are education and health. He urged upon the departmental delegates present in the meeting to join hands in this much needed change we all are aspiring for.

He also mentioned that there are many shortcomings which need to be addressed immediately. He said that the officers will be given free hand to perform and there will be no political pressure so long as one works sincerely.

Speaking on Saturdays being made holidays, Mr Lepcha said that when the Government gives some benefit, the Government expects punctuality and performance to be reciprocated by the officers, teachers and employees.

Talking about the programmes of the HRDD and centrally sponsored schemes, the Minister expressed his concern over the quality of Mid-

Day Meal being served in some of the schools which needs to be improved. He expressed his happiness on knowing that being such a large Department, HRDD is performing well in several fields.

The ACS, HRDD, GP Upadhyaya gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the activities of all the sections of the Department.

Chairperson of the One Man Commission for Rational Deployment of Teachers in HRDD, MK Panicker, submitted his recommendations regarding the present status of excess and shortage of teachers in Sikkim and scopes for solving the problem in HRDD, the release adds.

Dalai Lama hails secularism, freedom of religion in India

DHARAMSHALA, JUNE 3 (PTI): The Dalai Lama Monday hailed secularism and freedom of religion in India, saying the country promoted and respected all religions and accorded freedom of faith to one and all.

He also expressed his indebtedness to ancient Nalanda University for spread of Buddhism across the world.

The Dalai Lama hailed India's Fundamental Right of freedom of religion during his day-long teachings on Gyalsey Thokme

Sangpos' 37 practices of Bodhisattva to Tibetan youths. Thirty seven practices of the Bodhisattva is an important text by Gyalsey Thokme Sangpo. According to the Central Tibetan Administration's official website, the 37 verses give instructions on how to follow the Bodhisattva path.

As per the website, Gyalsey Thokm Sangpo implying the "son of the victorious ones" is a reference to the Bodhisattvas. "Through training along the path, the Bodhisat-

vas reach enlightenment therefore they are called sons or children of victorious ones, it says. During his teachings at the main Tibetan temple in Dharamshala, the Dalai Lama also exhorted the Tibetans youths scattered all over the world to stay connected with their roots.

He advised youths to study Tibetan Buddhism through logic, reason, and debate and highlighted the importance of logic in the development of an individual's understanding and intelligence.

SDF condemns continuing inaction against post-poll violence

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 JUN:**

Sikkim Democratic Front has alleged that incidents of attacks on SDF functionaries and supporters and vandalism of their properties continue even as the State government and the administration continue to hold back despite the reporting of such incidents at police stations.

Addressing a press conference here today, SDF party spokesperson, Avinash Yakha, conveyed that the SDF strongly criticises and condemns these acts of post-poll violence

by the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha.

He further informed that most of these incidents are being reported from rural areas and added that there have been reports of such attacks even on government offices at Yangyang in South Sikkim.

Mr Yakha asserted that the SKM government and the Chief Minister have to take the full responsibility for these incidents.

He informed that around 105 cases have been reported to the police across the State but no action has still been initiated.

He added that it was the responsibility of the government to give continuity to the peace and security instituted by the SDF government in the past 25 years. He stressed that if the CM was not able to maintain peace & security, he should resign taking moral responsibility.

Meanwhile, commenting on the heckling of the SDF president Pawan Chamling by SKM supporters in the Legislative Assembly today, Mr Yakha said that the reprehensible act had sullied the decorum of the Assembly and was against all

norms of democracy.

SDF spokesperson, MK Subba, also reiterated that a Supreme Court judgment from 2001 was very clear in deciding that a person not eligible to become an MLA could not be appointed Chief Minister either.

Quoting this judgment, he said, "PS Tamang is an illegal CM."

SDF spokesperson, Srijana Thapa, further informed today that women members of the SDF would take to the streets in protest if no action was taken within two days against those who insulted the SDF president in the Assembly.

Likewise, other newly appointed spokespersons of the party, Sanjukta Rai and Khushboo Verma alleged that attacks on individuals and vandalising of properties of SDF sympathisers was continuing.

Likewise, another newly appointed spokesperson, Prashant Babu, said, "We have gracefully accepted the decision of the people of Sikkim but we will not tolerate any violence and unrest in the State."

During the press conference, SDF spokesperson Bhim Dahal, introduced the newly appointed spokespersons of the party.

Gujarat BJP MLA thrashes woman; apologises after viral video

AHMEDABAD, JUNE 3 (PTI): A BJP legislator in Gujarat was caught on camera kicking and thrashing a local NCP woman leader, who approached him for resuming water supply to her locality in Ahmedabad district.

A purported video of the incident went viral on social media, prompting the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party to demand action against Naroda constituency MLA Balram Thawani, who has apologised. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) also condemned the incident.

The woman, Neetu Tejiwani, told reporters the MLA slapped her so hard that she fell down,

claimed the corporator, too, abused and hit her.

Tejiwani said when no action was taken even after four-five days, she went to the MLA's office in Meghani Nagar area of Ahmedabad city, along with other women of her locality.

"The MLA was not in the office. But his supporters started abusing me," the woman said.

"We shouted slogans against Kishore Thawani. Soon, Balram bhai arrived in a vehicle, came out, snatched the mobile phone from my hand and slapped me very hard. I fell down, after which he started kicking me. They hit me with a stick," she said.

"He kicked me in the stomach and put his boots on my face. There were six-seven more people. When my husband tried to stop him, his men came out from the office and started thrashing my husband," the woman said.

Following an uproar, the legislator apologised for his action and claimed that he was attacked by

the group when he was telling them to meet him on Monday.

Thawani said he went to the woman's residence to seek apology, claiming that she had tied 'rakhi' on his wrist and pardoned him.

"I apologised and we have resolved the issue. I told my sister (Tejiwani) to pardon me for my action. I've promised her that I will stand by her," he said.

"It happened unintentionally. I did not intend to harm or insult anyone. I will rectify the mistake and will even say sorry to her," the MLA said.

Earlier, he alleged that the woman and her husband, who are NCP leaders, came to attack him in a "pre-planned manner". "I had requested them to come tomorrow morning to resolve their complaint. I am very sorry for the mistake."

The Congress, meanwhile, sought action against the MLA and demanded apology from the BJP and Chief Minister Vijay Rupani.

ICAR-National Research Centre on Yak interacts with yak herders



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 JUN:**

ICAR-National Research Centre on Yak, Dirang organized a programme in collaboration with Department of Animal Husbandry, Livestock, Fisheries and Veterinary Services, Government of Sikkim and ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute, Tadong, Gangtok on 30 and 31 May, 2019.

The programme, conducted under Tribal Sub-plan and AICRP on FMD programme of the institute, had an interactive meeting with the affected yak herders of the region, a press release informs.

Most of the farmers lost their yaks due to starvation during heavy and continuous snowfall during Jan to May, 2019. The farmers were provided with basic amenities like tent, concentrated feed, salt, veterinary medicines including vac-

cines for FMD. Besides these, important implements like chaff cutter, silage bags and cream separators were also provided to help overcome crisis during winter, the release mentions.

The programme was organized to aid yak herders of Muguthang, Dongkong and adjoining areas of Lachen and Lachung area under Chungthang sub-division in North Sikkim.

While expressing concern over the loss of yaks, Dr P Chakravarty, ICAR-NRCY assured help and assistance in overcoming such eventualities in future and to enhance their economic standards through yak husbandry by adopting technologies.

Dr Dinamani Medhi, Senior Scientist cum in-charge Extension, Scientist, Dr Juwar Doley, Officer in Charge, FMD of the institute and

Principal Scientist, Dr Rafiqul Islam, ICAR-NORRI, Tadong briefed them on the importance of various nutritional and healthcare interventions to be adopted, particularly during crisis, and also for improvement of their yaks.

The district administration and AHLF&VS department informed the gathering about monitoring of the situation and on taking remedial measures including the release of permissible ex-gratia payment to the affected farmers.

ICAR-NRC on Yak in consultation with AHLF&VS, Govt of Sikkim would arrange such programmes in future for farmers of the region towards mitigating future crisis. A total of 56 yak herders attended the programme and appreciated the efforts and support of ICAR-NRC on Yak, the release mentions.



Glam Miss Sikkim and Miss Teen Sikkim in Jorethang

REBYNA RANA

JORETHANG, 03 MAY:

Siana Glam World presents Glam Miss Sikkim and Miss Teen Sikkim, 2019 held another audition at Jorethang on Sunday. The next and final audition is scheduled to take place on 08 June at Singtam.

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SDF legislators...

"In the assembly session, except for legislators no one else is allowed to speak or express their thoughts and strict discipline is followed. The situation created by the SKM supporter in the Assembly proves that not only Sikkim but the State Assembly is also not secure. This is totally an undemocratic act and SDF strongly condemns this act of SKM," he said.

He mentioned that the government has to run as per the law and the constitution so it is the responsibility of the government to take action regarding this incident.

Responding to queries on the decision of the Governor to appoint Mr Tamang as CM, Mr Chamling stated that the Governor did this using the powers provided by the Constitution.

"I do not have anything to say on the Governor's decision. However, it is up to the party to challenge it in court and we are considering that option," said Mr Chamling.

He stated that the role of the opposition is not limited to debates inside the Assembly but it has equal responsibility outside the Assembly as well.

"We are a responsible opposition but we would not want to participate inside the Assembly as this government is unconstitutional as per the verdict of the Supreme Court and so we took the decision as per the law," he said.

SDF walks...

the Deputy Speaker of the 10th Sikkim Legislative Assembly who was also conducted to the Chair by the Chief Minister.

Immediately after the Speaker took charge, SDF president Pawan Chamling stood up and contested the appointment of SKM President, Mr Tamang as the Chief Minister of Sikkim.

He contested that as per Constitutional and legal provisions, Mr Tamang cannot hold any Constitutional post. Mr Chamling then walked out of the House along with his party MLAs.

The Chief Minister then introduced his Council of Ministers to the House.

The Speaker and the Deputy Speaker expressed their gratitude to the Leader of the House and congratulated all the Members on being elected Members of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker expressed full support and coordination to the House and reiterated his stand that he would work with full dedication to uphold the ideals of democracy.

The Chief Minister congratulated the newly elected Speaker and Deputy Speaker and extended his best wishes to them. He also congratulated all the Members of the House for being elected to the House.

In his valedictory address, the CM thanked the people of Sikkim for restoring faith in the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party and for giving it the mandate to run the Government.

He stated that the Members of the House have been duly elected under the provisions of the Constitution of India and with the formal approval of the Governor of Sikkim. He also placed on record his gratitude to the Governor of Sikkim for giving his consent to form the Government.

He also congratulated the people of the country for bringing the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) back to power by offering huge mandate. He congratulated the Prime Minister, his Council of Minis-

ters and all Members of Parliament for forming the Government at the Centre with a huge majority.

The CM expressed his disappointment at the walk-out staged by the Opposition MLAs and termed the act as a gross violation of the Constitution and argued that this showed the disregard SDF leader Mr Chamling has for democratic ideals.

He added that the SKM had accepted the people's mandate in the previous Assembly elections (in 2014) and played the role of an opposition party with utmost sincerity.

The Chief Minister further said that the new Government will work as the people's government with no discrimination based on party affiliation, caste, creed and other divisive forces. He said that the only aim of the Government is the holistic development of the people of Sikkim.

The Chief Minister said that the new Government will have zero tolerance towards corruption and violence of any form. He said that the Government will work in coordination and consultation with the people of Sikkim at various stages.

The Chief Minister stated that the Government will fulfill all the promises made during the elections on priority. He categorically stated that the Government would not indulge in victimization of Government employees and everybody would be encouraged to perform their roles freely and without any fear. The Chief Minister said that all Government employees should work within the ambit of the rule of law.

The Chief Minister thanked the Speaker for the smooth conduct of the day's proceedings. He also thanked the Government machinery led by the Chief Secretary, as well as the Election Commission for the peaceful conduct of the elections.

After the Vote of Thanks was proposed by Speaker, the House was adjourned sine-die.

Govt revises...

"Students who wish to change one or more of the three languages they are studying may do so in Grade 6 or Grade 7, so long as they are able to still demonstrate proficiency in three languages (one language at the literature level) in their modular Board Examinations some time during secondary school," the revised draft of the NEP said.

In the earlier draft, the panel proposed mandatory teaching of Hindi in non-Hindi speaking states.

"Students who wish to change one of the three languages they are studying may do so in Grade 6, so long as the study of three languages by students in the Hindi-speaking states would continue to include Hindi and English and one of the modern Indian languages from other parts of India, while the study of languages by students in the non-Hindi-speaking states would include the regional language, Hindi and English," the earlier draft policy said.

Tamil Nadu had always resisted the "imposition" of Hindi. In 1965, the state witnessed violent protests against a proposal that Hindi would be India's only official language.

Karnataka Chief minister H D Kumaraswamy Sunday said one language should not be imposed on oth-

ers in the name of three-language formula.

The DMK on Monday said the Centre's decision showed that late party patriarch M Karunanidhi was "living," apparently suggesting that it was a success to his legacy of opposing "imposition" of Hindi.

After presiding over a meet of his party district secretaries, MPs, and MLAs, DMK president M K Stalin said in a tweet: "At a time when we are celebrating the birth anniversary of Thalaivar (leader) Kalaingar (late Karunanidhi), the Central government withdrawing the Hindi compulsory subject clause shows that Kalaingar is living."

"Let us guard mother Tamil always breaking up the hegemonic imposition of Hindi," he said.

The DMK on Monday celebrated the 95th birth anniversary of Karunanidhi, a former chief minister who passed away last August.

Hours before, the party meet said it would democratically fight tooth and nail any decision that may imperil the two-language formula in force in Tamil Nadu for five decades.

A resolution adopted in the meeting said: "This meet categorically states that the DMK will democratically fight tooth and nail any decision that may im-

peril the two language policy in force in Tamil Nadu."

It cautioned the BJP-led government at the Centre to "not play with the sentiments of the Tamil people."

Since 1968, after the DMK stormed to power in 1967 under the leadership of Dravidian stalwart and party founder C N Annadurai, a two-language formula of Tamil and English was being followed in the state.

The PMK, an ally of the BJP, alleged that the recommendation was for imposition of Hindi and wanted the scrapping of the proposal.

Oscar-winning composer AR Rahman welcomed the Centre's decision. "Draft(NEP)policy corrected. Beautiful solution," he tweeted.

"It was a draft report and not a policy yet. We have sought feedback from various stakeholders. The committee has modified the earlier draft and made some changes," a Human Resource Development Ministry official said in Delhi..

According to the revised draft, the modular board examinations for language proficiency would test only basic proficiency in each language.

"Such a change in language choice in Grade 6 would certainly be feasible if the student so desires and would in such cases be supported by teachers and

the schooling system."

Union minister Prakash Javadekar, who had formed the panel when he was the HRD minister in the previous term, earlier asserted that no language should be imposed on anyone. He clarified that the committee had only prepared a draft report and no decision had been taken on implementing it.

Congress leader and former chief minister of Karnataka Siddaramaiah said no attempt should be made to impose Hindi forcefully. "Nothing should be done against our opinion. There is no need for three languages. English and Kannada are there... they are enough. Kannada is our mother tongue, so primacy should be given to Kannada," he said.

He told reporters in Mysuru that there would be no compromise on the issues of Karnataka's water, land and language.

Asserting that no attempt should be made to impose Hindi forcefully, Siddaramaiah said, "If they are making a three-language policy, then it will be like forceful imposition."

"Did we ask for Hindi? If it is done without our consent it will be forceful. It will be unilateral decision. We will also protest," he said.

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Sikkim Citizen Forum demands justice for molestation victim

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JUN:

The members of Sikkim Citizen Forum today met with the Vice Chancellor of Sikkim University Avinash Khare with regard to the molestation charges against Sikkim University Professor, Shilajit Guha, a press release informs.

A delegation led by Thuckchuk Lachungpa also submitted a letter to the Vice Chancellor demanding speedy and impartial justice for the victim.

The Vice Chancellor informed that the Internal Complaints Committee is investigating the matter. The Committee is



likely to submit a report on 10 June, it is learnt.

“Our main purpose was to meet the Vice

Chancellor and know the progress of the case. We have requested him for the speedy

justice to the victim,” said Mr Lachungpa.

It may be mentioned that the HoD of Mass

Communication department, SU, Silajit Guha has been accused of molesting one of his students.

Sensitization on SADA for Investigating Officers and Public Prosecutors



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JUN:

Sensitization programme on “Sikkim Anti Drugs Act, 2006 and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Act, 1985” for Investigating Officers (Police Officers), Public Prosecutors, Additional Public Prosecutor and Assistant Public Pros-

ecutors was organized on 01 Jun, 2019 (Saturday) at Sikkim Judicial Academy, Sokeythang, Gangtok, a press release informs.

Superintendent of Police, Tenzing L Lepcha, West Sikkim and PI, Sanjay Rai, SHO Singtam Police Station were the resource persons.

During the workshop all the procedures

involved under the two Acts were discussed in detail by the resource persons. The participants gave inputs and shared ways to tackle problems faced in the field as well as during trial of cases under these two Acts, the release mentions. The resource person also spoke about “Mission Jyoti”.

Sensitization program for Judicial Officers of Sikkim



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JUN:

Sensitization program on “Stress Management and Art of Hearing, Regulating appropriate decorum in Court Room” for Judicial Officers of Sikkim was organized on 26 May, 2019 (Sunday) at Sikkim Judicial Academy,

Sokeythang, Gangtok, a press release informs.

Professor, Vidyand Jha, Behavioural Science, Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata was the resource person for the programme. There were two sessions during which the resource person identified the various causes of

“Stress” in a Judicial Officer and suggested ways to handle them.

The resource person also discussed “persuasion” while covering the second leg of topic which was on “Art of Hearing, Regulating appropriate decorum in Court Room”, the release adds.

Sanju FA continues winning ways in C-Div League



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 02 JUN:

Semyu Football Academy, Sombaria, has registered another victory in the ongoing Sikkim Football Association [SFA] C-Division Sikkim League 2019

here at Paljor Stadium.

Sanju FA edged past Red Panda Football Club, Namchi, by a solitary goal. Namshok Subba scored the winning goal for the team to earn the full three points.

In another match of

the day, Brotherhood Football Club has defeated JVC Football Club, Singtam, 4-0. Sanjay Rai scored a hat-trick for the winning team while one more goal was added by his teammate, Santosh Subba.

Civic action at Kingstone to repair road



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JUN:

Nawa Nirman Pariwar of Kingstone, Rhenock, undertook a special initiative today to repair the stretch of road from Rhenock-Rongli Fatak to Aritar.

The road is in a deplorable condition and has witnessed several accidents, an NPP press release informs.

The club members, most of whom are 60 years and above in age, pooled funds to repair the road using a concrete.

At work on the road were mostly employees from various departments, drivers, youth, and also a retired headmaster, former principal and an ex Assistant Director. Well done!

The 49th, Kutse Shegu of Lt. Ongay Lingzerpa, ex-employee of High Court of Sikkim who left for his heavenly abode on 25/04/2019 (Thursday), falls on 12/06/2019 (Wednesday)

Address :- (Lower Tathangchen)

Family members.....
Mrs. Zangmu Bhutia (Wife),
Mr. Tashi Sonam Bhutia (Eldest Son),
Mr. Karma Namgyal Bhutia (Youngest Son),
Mrs. Kiki Zangmu Bhutia (Eldest daughter),
Ms. Pema Choki Bhutia (Youngest daughter)
Mrs. Diki Ongmu Bhutia (Eldest daughter-in-law),
Mr. Chopel Bhutia (Eldest Son-in-law),
Mrs. Thinlay Ongmu Bhutia (Youngest daughter-in-law) and all family members.....



~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

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RBI kick starts Financial Literacy Week with focus on farmers



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 JUN:

The Financial Literacy Week, an initiative of the Reserve Bank of India to promote awareness on key topics every year through a focused campaign, got underway here today focused on farmers and how they can benefit by becoming part of the formal banking system.

Growth in agriculture is necessary for the overall economic growth & finance is an essential enabler for the same, an RBI press release informs, while adding that RBI is actively involved in formulating policies that enhance the flow of credit to the farming community.

In order to build

awareness and disseminate financial literacy messages to the farming community, focused content in the form of posters and leaflets have been prepared for dissemination.

Banks have been advised to display the posters and content in their rural bank branches, Financial Literacy Centers, ATMs and websites. Further, RBI will undertake a centralized mass media campaign in June on Doordarshan and All India Radio to disseminate essential financial awareness messages to farmers.

It is RBI's endeavour to reach out to the farming community and

all stakeholders are requested to co-ordinate and make this financial literacy campaign a success, the release appeals.

In pursuit of the same, GM and O-i-C of RBI, Gangtok, RV Sangvai, inaugurated the FLW 2019 here today in the presence of GM NABARD, Gangtok, R Tshering, Lead District Manager, Gopal Lama; MD of SISCO Bank, Pema Chenzon; Tilak Raj from Horticulture Department and representatives from various other commercial banks.

The RBI will be conducting Financial Literacy Programmes across all districts with active participation of NABARD, SBI, CBI and SISCO Bank.

Social Justice, Empowerment & Welfare Department Integrated Child Protection Scheme Government of Sikkim

Walk-In-Interview

No. 581/SJE&WD/ICPS/2019

Dated: 17/05/2019

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited from eligible local candidates for filling up of the following posts on contractual basis for a period of three years under Integrated Child Protection Scheme in the Social Justice Empowerment & Welfare Department sponsored by the Ministry of Women & Child Development. The details of posts and eligibility criteria are as under:-

S I . No.	Name of the post	No. of post	Educational Qualifications	Sitting Allowance
1	Member, Child Welfare Committee (05 posts)	02 (East District) 02 (North District) 01 (West District)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should have a minimum of 07 (Seven) years of experience of working with children in the field of education, health, or welfare activities. OR Should be a practicing professional with a degree in Child Psychology or Psychiatry or Social or Sociology of Human Development of in the field of Law. OR A retired judicial officer 	Rs. 1500/- per sitting
2	Member, Juvenile Justice Board (02 posts)	01 (East District) 01 (North District)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should have atleast 07 (Seven) years of experience of working with children in the field of education, health, or welfare activities. OR Should be a practicing professional with a degree in Child Psychology or Sociology or in the field of Law. 	Rs. 1500/- per sitting

Terms and Conditions:

- All the placement stated above under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme are purely on contractual basis.
- The above appointment shall not confer not any right for regularization in future.
- The candidate shall be selected through walk-in-interview.
- The candidate fulfilling above eligibility criteria as prescribed against each post shall apply.
- Candidate must be in good health and physically fit to discharge his/her duties.
- Application should have attained 35 (thirty five) years of age.

The interested candidate fulfilling the eligibility criteria must submit the RESUME addressed to the office as stated below on or before **19.06.2019 (WEDNESDAY) latest by 4 P.m.**

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Attested copy or requisite qualification from a recognized Board/University, form 10th Standard onwards.
- Attested copy of Sikkim Subject Certificate/Certificate of Identification from the Concerned Authority.
- Attested copy of valid Local Employment Card.
- No objection Certificate from the Secretary, Head of Department in the case of any temporary employee serving in Government Departments.
- Experience Certificate duly certified by the relevant Issuing Authority.

Application addressed to the Additional Secretary-cum-Director, ICPS, SJE&WD, along with the Under Secretary, ICPS, Social Justice empowerment & Welfare Department, 5th Mile, Lumsey, East Sikkim on or before 19.06.2019 (WEDNESDAY) latest by 4 p.m. Only applications with prescribed and attested documents received within the stipulated date and time shall be entertained.

Social Justice, Empowerment, & Welfare Department reserves the right to reject any application not found fulfilling the above terms and conditions. NO TA/DA shall be admissible for attending the interview.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED AT THE TIME OF INTERVIEW

Date of interview is on 27th June 2019.

Venue of the interview is in Conference Hall, SJE&WD.

Time of the interview will be from 10.30 a.m. onwards

Note: interested and eligible candidates may also visit www.sikkimsocialwelfare.gov.in

R.O. No.: 26/IPR/PUB/Classi/19-20

Date: 17/05/2019

(K. Sreenivasulu), IAS

Principal Secretary

Social Justice, Emp. & Welfare Department

Sans Funds, Hence Ad hoc

Panchayati Raj Institutions will need fiscal muscle to become robust

Another round of Panchayat elections will be coming around soon. Don't hold your breath though since parties in Opposition are notorious for finding excuses to "boycott" such elections, even the municipal ones, for want of having done enough legwork in the interim to be able to offer even a fight at this grassroots level polling. Some "national" parties occasionally field candidates, but panchayat elections require a massive line-up of candidates and some parties do not even have enough members, leave aside ticket hopefuls. Even the ruling party does not always field candidates from all wards, preferring on occasion to allow the victors into the party ranks. Things could be different this time around since the present Opposition has been the ruling for 25 years and still enjoys impressive voter support.

To get a sense of how "big" this segment is, here are some numbers – Sikkim has 95 Gram Panchayat Units and around 900 panchayat members! Unlike assembly elections, where candidates do not have to be voters in the same constituency, for panchayat elections, one has to be a registered voter of the ward one intends to contest from. For any party to contemplate contesting this election, it will need to have a pan-Sikkim footprint. Traditionally hence, the only contests have been among ruling party candidates and the independents. At the ward level, these can become interesting tussles, but when expanded to the state level, fragmented independents hold no significance. Now there is a chance the panchayat elections will actually see a contest.

And this is a good development because when the party in government gets a free run, it becomes complacent in its commitments towards panchayats and towards real devolution of power. That has been unfortunate because when party-based panchayat elections were first held, SDF had actually made the effort to draw up GPU-level election manifestoes. That was a first. Unfortunately, also the only time that such an effort was made, obviously because they have no serious challengers at that level. One hopes that original sentiment returns and the panchayat elections are approached with more seriousness and commitment next September because there is a lot that still needs to be done to reinforce the panchayati raj institutions.

The Annual Technical Inspection Report on Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies for the year ended 31 March 2014 prepared by the office of the Principal Accountant General (Audit), Sikkim, offers some keen, and obvious, insights. It appears that against a mandatory funds transfer of Rs 147.36 crores in 2013-14, only Rs 3.63 cr was released to PRIs, and that too only by the Rural Management & Development Department, which, by the way, should have released Rs 16.11 crore in that financial year. Expectedly then, in the absence of a sound basis of transfer of funds, PRIs could not formulate any plans with certainty and planning at the PRI level was on an ad hoc basis. The mandated transfer mentioned here is the 10% share of the plan fund which the Sikkim Cabinet had decided in March 2007 to be transferred by various departments to the PRIs. The Third State Finance Commission recommendations of March 2010, which were accepted by the State Government, had further stipulated funds transfer ranging from 2% to 35% from plan allocation. How has this progressed? PRIs received a sliver – 0.36% – of this mandated funds transfer in 2013-14. The most lavish transfer was in 2010-11 when it received 1.78% of the total plan allocation of the State budget.

Of course, there are other funds that come to the panchayats, but even this is what is earmarked for them in principle and when these do not arrive, planning and empowerment suffer. The devolution of power has also remained a work in progress for too long, further constricting what the panchayats can and cannot do. In this lack of clarity, planning suffers. Take for instance the District Planning Committees, which even though they exist and hold meetings, are yet to show any imaginative plans or rural pragmatism to deliver grassroots-level planning. The Report observes that the Annual District Development Plans "merely" consolidate the annual plans received from various line departments without taking any inputs from the grassroot level. No one is suggesting that the government is sabotaging the panchayats, but what is obvious is that the departments have become possessive about their jurisdictions and funds and not abiding even by Cabinet decisions taken nearly a decade back. As a result, the patronizing attitude of babus continues in the government's engagement with the panchayats. For this to change, real funds and real power will have to be transferred. When that is done, more people with political ambitions and sense of social service will want to start at the panchayat level and build their careers from there. This is borne out by the fact that among the better MLAs and more proactive leaders of the ruling party are those who were panchayat representatives at one time. Now, imagine an army of around 900 such representatives and what they could deliver for Sikkim (and also consolidate for the party they belong to) if they were allowed the muscle to shape robust bastis and proud rural-folk.



Chinese students and workers are uniting again, 30 years after Tiananmen Square crackdown

LEILA CHOUKROUNE
theconversation.com

"We will fight together, advance and retreat together," concluded Qiu Zhanxuan in a video his comrades released on May 4, 2019. Qiu was the former leader of a Marxist student association at the prestigious Peking University. He had prepared the digital testament to be released in case he disappeared.

Qiu did disappear in late April after he'd dared to call for a united front between students and workers, 30 years after the infamous Tiananmen Square crackdown. He had previously been arrested and then released in December 2018 on his way to a mark Mao Zedong's 125th birthday.

This came after students from Peking united with striking workers at the company Jasic Technology, whose attempts to form a union were blocked in July 2018. Students from Peking University, but also Renmin and Tsinghua universities, travelled to the south of China the following month to support the aggrieved workers. They were arrested, some released, and others, such as Qiu, have since disappeared.

It was students based in Peking who began protesting in April 1989 after the sudden death of Hu Yaobang, the reform-minded former Communist Party of China secretary-general. They called for political reform and democracy, but also for more social freedom and equality. Progressively, workers joined the movement all across China. Initially they weren't welcomed by the students, who feared their movement would be diluted, but they soon realised that all Chinese citizens were fighting for the same cause: the realisation of the socialist ideal in the form of a more democratic and equal society.

The students' peaceful hunger strike in Tiananmen Square ended on June 3 and 4 when more than 200,000 troops were sent in to suppress what the communist regime saw as a counter-revolutionary riot. It's estimated anywhere between hundreds and thousands of protesters were killed.

Today again, the same issues are at stake, that of equality and justice in a society which hasn't achieved the socialist dream, but instead become

a fierce capitalist market. With economic growth in China stagnating and as President Xi Jinping's promise of a "China dream" becomes more distant for many of the 300m Chinese workers, student agitation could jeopardise the regime's stability.

FALLEN PROLETARIAT

Long gone are the days of the "iron rice bowl" – the guarantee of a stable job for life with the assorted social benefits. The Chinese proletariat is no more the elite of communism but the prime victim of Chinese-style capitalism and fierce globalisation. Chinese workers are in a worse situation than they were in 1989. They have fewer state protections, and the fate of many depends on their ability to accept and survive the often unregulated working conditions of the private sector.

As Han Dongfang, executive director of the Hong Kong-based China Labour Bulletin (CLB) observed, the situation is much more complex now than it was 30 years ago. The charismatic railway worker was only 26 when, on April 17, 1989, he gave a speech at Tiananmen Square to advocate the right of Chinese workers to freely organise. He helped create the Beijing Worker's Autonomous Federation, the People's Republic of China's first independent trade union. It was dismantled soon after the June 4 crackdown in 1989.

One of the most wanted Tiananmen protesters, Han turned himself into the police and spent two years in prison. Banned from China, he continues his fight from Hong Kong where he set up CLB in 1994.

There is still a lot to struggle for. There is no right to go on strike and no right to unionise in China today – yet some workers still protest over issues such as unpaid wages, restructuring plans, health and safety or even gender equality. The CLB recorded 1,701 strikes in 2018. Chinese workers are very active despite the risks strikes entail – from being fired, to being arrested, imprisoned or even disappeared.

DISENCHANTED AND REPRESSED LABOUR

Chinese labour law is actually well designed to protect workers, as my research has documented. Chinese-style public-interest litigation as well as forms of collective negotiation – if not yet collective bargaining – have become widespread in

China since legal reforms in the 1990s and early 2000s. But these laws only work if they are implemented and adjudicated independently, and the system remains unpredictable.

The past ten years have also brought massive disenchantment about a Chinese legal system that circumvents the rule of law. Too many murky practices remain commonplace, such as forced labour known as "reform through work" (laogai or laodong gaizao) or "re-education through work" (laojiao or laodong jiaoyang). Such practices are still used by the state and some private companies alike, both on Chinese territory but on flagship foreign investment projects abroad. Reports have detailed Chinese workers dispatched overseas forced to live in inhumane conditions deprived of their passports, going unpaid for months.

In the past, discontent was centred among construction workers. Many migrated from the countryside to the cities without a clear residence permit, or what's known as hukou status, making them vulnerable to possible abuses. Now, discontent is spreading.

One recent movement, called "996" made headlines as Chinese tech employees name and shame their employees about a culture of working from 9am to 9pm, six days a week. This has included denunciations by workers of the powerful Alibaba founder Jack Ma who advocates such a punishing working culture. Tech workers have also protested online about long hours via GitHub or in using memes, stickers and T-shirts.

While a lot has changed in China since 1989, much has remained the same. The state is present at every level of society, which has become extremely unequal. The leadership of the Communist Party of China remains unchallenged politically, and yet a form of civil society coexists with an authoritarian regime that represses individual democratic aspirations. In this context, some students and workers are trying to unite around the same hopes and aspirations as their predecessors in 1989 – for equality and justice.

[the writer is Professor of International law and Director of the University Research and Innovation Theme in Democratic Citizenship, University of Portsmouth]

How Muslim leaders can respond in an age of extremism

HAMID FOROUGHI & HARRY HUTSON
theconversation.com

Islamic terrorism remains a global issue – with the horrific bombings in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday, which claimed over 250 lives, just the latest example. In that case, Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility, but the extent of its direct involvement remains unclear.

What we know for certain is that murdering innocent people in their homes or places of worship, or as they go about their daily business, yields outrage, fear and grief. It turns people against one another, and invites retribution. Terror is a vicious cycle, always a catastrophe for its victims, inevitably a calamity for its perpetrators, and unavoidably a cost for humanity.

But can community leaders help mitigate this? In ongoing research, partly funded by the University of Portsmouth, we asked more specifically how Muslim leaders should respond in communities simultaneously blamed for and victimised by terrorism.

Many Muslims leaders condemn such attacks outright. And in May 2017, 70 Muslim clerics from three Muslim countries – Pakistan, Afghanistan and Indonesia – issued a Fatwa against violence and terrorism in all its forms. The Fatwa said:

"We reaffirm that violence and terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group, as violent extremism and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations in-

cluding violence against civilians and suicide attacks are against the holy principles of Islam."

Despite these and other public pronouncements, however, Muslim leaders are often held accountable. They are expected to rein in terrorists acting according to radical interpretations of Islam, or, even worse, stand accused of being terrorist sympathisers themselves.

AN 'OTHER'

Earlier research suggests that a key problem is that Islam is commonly treated as an "other", something in opposition to the "Western world". The upshot is that Muslim leaders in the West face prejudice when they attempt to speak for themselves and their communities, particularly if their message doesn't chime precisely with the majority view.

Over a century ago, W. E. B. Du Bois called out the "othering" of black Americans in the early 20th century. In his seminal text, *The Souls of Black Folk*, he argued that the problem is not only how the dominant group categorises minority groups in stereotypical ways, but also how these communities come to see themselves from the dominant group's perspective.

Indeed, when Muslim leaders respond to terrorist attacks, they are faced with a double bind. In the eyes of wider society, either their community is to be pitied as collateral victims of violence enacted by a few radical ideologues in their midst, or they deserve to be shamed as complicit by virtue of several shared beliefs.

A condemnation of the attacks

by Muslim leaders, alone, does not redeem Muslims, as it still portrays them as an "other", collectively responsible for, and somewhat complicit in, the actions of a few. Similarly, appealing to victimhood merely reinforces prejudices of weakness, depicting Muslims as unable to resolve their own matters, and therefore in need of "rescue".

But such marginalisation of a group could itself sow the seeds of further violence. The leader of the biggest Muslim party in Sri Lanka, Rauff Hakeem, warned that feelings of marginalisation among Muslims may be exacerbated if crackdowns are overzealous. If Muslims, a minority community in Sri Lanka, are more widely seen as "others", it is less likely that distinctions will be made between terrorists, criminals – and ordinary followers of the religion. Tensions will likely rise. As Hakeem said:

"That's a worrying factor for all of us. The vulnerability can result in serious feelings of insecurity. We should not build up fertile ground for radicalisation further."

ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES

Our investigation into how Muslim leaders responded in the aftermath of the April 2013 Boston Marathon bombings, which killed three and injured hundreds, shows that leaders of minority communities can create alternative narratives that can help reshape the dominant perspective.

Instead of just condemning terrorism or highlighting their victimhood, they can emphasise the recov-

ery, healing and development of both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Following the Boston Marathon bombings, for example, Muslim leaders doubled their efforts in community development and outreach to other groups. And when responding in the media, they discussed what they had been doing to contribute to broader society.

Muslim leaders in Boston refused to merely condemn the attacks but went further by mourning the victims alongside other individuals and communities who had been affected by the attack. They also organised counselling and support sessions for the victims of the attacks. Going beyond the immediate aftermath of the atrocity, they now participate in campaigns to control illegal guns, broaden healthcare access and tackle the problem of homelessness in Boston.

This endeavour has been picked up by the local press which since then has provided a different kind of coverage of the Muslim community in Boston, recognising its efforts to combat different social problems.

By following this example, Muslim leaders can help to make Muslim identity, not "other", but part of the mainstream. And this would allow whole societies to respond collectively to terror, and resist the temptation to find scapegoats in their midst.

[Hamid Foroughi is Senior Lecturer in organization studies, University of Portsmouth; Harry Hutson is Professor, Kenan-Flagler Business School, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill]

Strengthening law & order state govt's top priority: Khandu

Itanagar, Jun 3 (PTI): Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu Monday said his government's top priority is to strengthen the law and order apparatus in the state.

The state government last year had allocated adequate funds to the police department for procurement of arms and other equipments, he said.

"To strengthen the police forces in the state, the cabinet has sanctioned immediate creation of 1,000 posts of civil police in different levels which will go a long way in effective maintenance of law and order," Khandu told reporters at the Assembly premise here.

The chief minister said that the DGP on Sunday informed that the procurement process has been completed and hopefully all the equipment will be made available by the end of this month.

In the education sector, another priority area of the new government, Khandu informed that the state cabinet has approved creation of only



one director for School Education by merging the posts of directors of Elementary Education and Secondary Education. Referring to the growing unemployment problem in the state, the chief minister said the state government has already re-structured the state's Industrial Policy and would explore all possible potential areas including efforts to invite outside investment in private as well as public sectors for gainful employment.

On the dilapidated roads in the state, especially in the state capital,

Khandu who also holds charge of the PWD department, said he has held a meeting with deputy chief minister Chowna Mein on the issue and planning to bring a change in the communication network particularly in twin capital cities of Itanagar and Naharlagun.

"Sector roads and colony roads will be first developed," he said.

The chief minister said the work on ambitious Trans Arunachal Highway (TAH) is "not going on in a satisfactory note" in the state.

"I will take a review meeting of the depart-

mental officers immediately after the Assembly session and will issue warning to the contractors to speed up the works as per norms in time bound manner. I will also personally monitor the works," he added.

When his attention was drawn on the allegation by National People's Party (NPP) on the poor financial position of the state, Khandu claimed that the financial position of the state was healthy and sound.

"Immediately after the swearing in, I directed the Finance department to clear all the

pending liabilities of the contractors who have completed their assigned job. There should be no doubt in the state's financial position which is healthy," he said.

On the boundary issue between Arunachal and Assam, the chief minister declined to comment on the issue saying that the matter is sub-judiced in the Supreme Court. He, however, appealed to the people of both the neighbouring states residing in the inter-state border to maintain peace.

On allocation of Sports and Youth Affairs portfolio to Union Minister of State (Independent) Kiren Rijiju who hails from Arunachal Pradesh, Khandu expressing happiness disclosed that through there is no dearth of sporting talents in North East, but due to lack of modern infrastructure and guidance, the youths of the region are not in a position to excel.

"We have great hope on Rijiju that he will take the region to a new height in the sports sector," the chief minister added.

Army commissions air quality monitor at Fort William



KOLKATA, JUN 3 (PTI): As part of its country-wide 'Go Green' initiative, the Army commissioned a "Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring System (CAAQMS)" at Fort William Military Station here on Monday, a Defence official said.

Lt Gen M M Naravane, General Officer Commanding-in- Chief, Eastern Command, commis-

sioned the system, which monitors air pollution on real time basis.

The CAAQMS at the Eastern Command headquarter will measure air pollution, including particulate matter throughout the year, the official said.

In addition, it also displays wind speed, direction, ambient temperature, relative hu-

midity, solar radiation, barometric pressure and rain gauge.

The data can be remotely monitored on internet and collated into various desired formats, he said.

It can also be used by the West Bengal Pollution Control Board or any other local or international weather monitoring bodies, he added.

Arunachal govt to hand over MLA killing case to NIA

ITANAGAR, JUNE 3 (PTI): The Arunachal Pradesh government has decided to hand over the killing of Khonsa West MLA Tirong Aboh and 10 others by suspected NSCN militants to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), an official said on Monday.

The state Cabinet in its first sitting on Sunday night unanimously decided that the case be handed over to the NIA as thorough inves-

tigation needs to be carried out in a time bound manner and justice be delivered expeditiously to the bereaved family members by booking and nabbing all the culprits, the official said.

The cabinet headed by Chief Minister Pema Khandu also condemned the killing of the MLA and 10 others by suspected NSCN militants.

The cabinet approved for providing a Group C post in the government

to the next of kin of the deceased and provide Rs 20 lakh as ex-gratia to the next of kin of the deceased. Nationalist Peoples' Party (NPP) MLA Aboh along with his son and nine others were killed when suspected NSCN militants opened fire at their vehicles near 12 Mile area in Tirap district on May 21.

The MLA along with his relatives was on his way to Khonsa from Dibrugarh in Assam.

Issue-based support to NDA govt: MNF MP Lalrosanga

AIZAWL, JUN 3 (PTI): Ruling MNF leader and the lone Lok Sabha MP from Mizoram C Lalrosanga Monday said he would give issue-based support to the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre.

According to a press statement issued by the Mizo National Front (MNF) Lalrosanga will, however, strongly oppose the government on any issue detrimental to the interests of Mizoram and the integrity of the country. Lalrosanga said he would support the Na-

rendra Modi government on issues which are good for the country in general and for the Mizo people in particular.

"However, I will oppose the proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill tooth and nail if the central government continues to strive for its legislation without giving necessary exemption to Mizoram and the north-eastern states," he told party workers.

Legislation of the Citizenship Amendment Bill was the main plank of the

opposition Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) and the Congress combine which had fielded Independent candidate Lalnghinglova Hmar against Lalrosanga.

While the MNF and Lalrosanga said the ruling party was also against the Citizenship Amendment Bill, the opposition had demanded that the MNF should snap ties with the NDA and North East Democratic Alliance if the former was serious about its objection to the proposed amendment.

Assam govt ex-gratia for SSB personnel killed in Maoist attack

GUWAHATI, JUN 3 (PTI): Assam Government Monday announced an ex-gratia of Rs 20 lakh to the family members of slain SSB personnel Neeraj Chetry, who was killed in a Maoist attack at Dumka in Jharkhand.

Chetry hailed from Helem in Biswanath district of Assam and his mortal remains arrived here Monday evening, officials said.

It will be taken to his village where the last rites will be performed, they said.

Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said in a statement that the country is proud of the courage and valour of Chetry, who laid down his life for its sake.

He also expressed his condolences to the bereaved family members.

The SSB personnel was killed and four others were injured in an encounter between the security forces and Maoists in Dumka district of Jharkhand early Sunday, police said.

224-room hostel coming up in JNU for students from Northeast



NEW DELHI, JUN 3 (PTI): A 224-room hostel will be constructed at Jawaharlal Nehru University here at a cost of Rs 11 crore to accommodate 424 students from the Northeast, the government said Monday.

The four-storeyed building will come up on an area spread over one-and-a-half acres and the construction work will begin soon, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER).

The first-of-its-kind hostel will accommodate 200 boys and 200 girls, besides housing physically handicap students in 24 rooms.

Officials have briefed DoNER Minister Jitendra Singh about the progress of the work related to the JNU hostel and other projects.

Singh was informed that Rs 11 crore has been released for the construction of the JNU hostel and the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) is in the

process of issuing the tender. It was informed in the meeting that a hostel constructed in Bengaluru for girl students from the Northeast has become functional.

The process of land acquisition for another hostel in Rohini has started. The Rohini facility is meant for students from the Northeast studying in colleges and institutions of Delhi University. The Delhi Development Authority has released Rs 2.5 crore for the land. The

hostel will be built on an area of about five acres.

The status of the North Eastern Cultural and Information Centre, to be set up in Dwarka in Delhi, was also discussed at the meeting. The estimated cost of the project is about Rs 50 crore.

The minister said the centre would act as a cultural and convention and information hub of the region in Delhi. It will have a library-cum-reading room and an art gallery showcasing the Northeast.

Mamata raises questions over EVMs, asks opposition to demand return of ballot papers

KOLKATA, JUN 3 (PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday raised questions over voting machines used in the Lok Sabha elections and urged opposition parties to unitedly demand the return of ballot papers for polls.

Banerjee said a fact-finding committee should be constituted to find out the details about EVMs.

"We have to save the democracy. We don't want machines, we demand a return to the ballot paper system. We will start a movement and it will be initiated from Bengal,"



she told reporters after a meeting with party MLAs and state ministers to review TMC's drubbing in the elections.

"I will ask all the

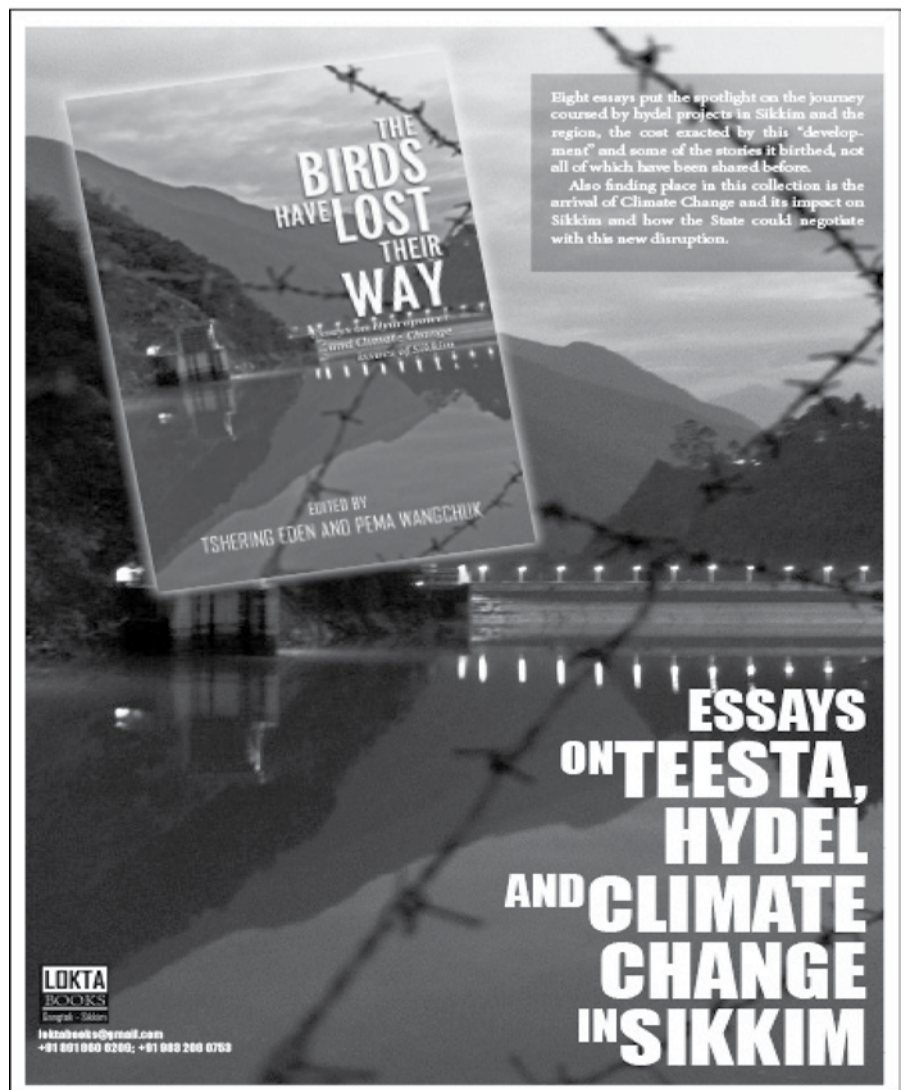
23 political parties in the opposition to come together and demand the return of ballot papers. Even a country like the US

has banned EVMs," she said. The Trinamool Congress supremo alleged that BJP has used money, "muscle", institutions, media and the government to win the elections.

The BJP managed to win 18 out of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state because of the Left Front, she said.

"The BJP managed only 18 seats not 23 as they were claiming... And that also because of the Left Front parties. But we (TMC) have managed to increase four per cent of our vote share," she added.

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Injured Lungi Ngidi out of India game, Amla recovering well

SOUTHAMPTON, JUN 3 (PTI): South Africa's troubles compounded after young fast bowler Lungi Ngidi was ruled out of the team's next World Cup game against India here Wednesday.

Ngidi had suffered a left hamstring injury during team's defeat against Bangladesh on Sunday and hobbled out of the field bowling only four overs.

"Ngidi suffered a sharp discomfort in his left hamstring. We decided he had a hamstring strain. He will be out for at least week to 10 days," team doctor Mohammed Moosajee told the mediapersons after the match against Bangladesh at the Oval.

"He will have a scan tomorrow and hopefully ready for the West Indies game." Ngidi has had injury issues having missed IPL due to a side strain while playing a home series against Sri Lanka. Ngidi's ideal replacement should be Dale Steyn provided he gets fit in time. Steyn bowled a couple of overs in the nets but there is still no clarity on his availability for the India game.

If Steyn doesn't make it, all rounder Chris Morris could possibly be an ideal replacement candidate. There was however some positive news for the Proteas as senior batsman Hashim Amla seems to have recovered from the concussions suffered after being hit in the helmet by Jofra Archer.

"The plan is to have him ready for the India game in Southampton. His initial reports on concussion was inconclusive. The next test showed he could bat. However he felt some symptoms and was rested for the Bangladesh game," Moosajee said.

14 killed, 8 injured in van-truck collision in Pak's Balochistan province

KARACHI, JUN 3 (PTI): Fourteen people, including five children, were killed and eight others injured on Monday when a van carrying passengers collided with a truck in Pakistan's Balochistan province, police said. "Both the vehicles were over-speeding and the drivers lost control over them and they collided," senior police official Murad Jamali said.

The incident happened at Alikhail area of Qila Abdullah district in Balochistan province. The van was en route to Zhob from Quetta "As many as 14 people died in the accident," Jamali said, adding that those killed included five children and a woman.

Five members of a family are also among in the deceased, he said.

The eight injured have been shifted to the civil hospital in Quetta, he said. Police have cordoned off the area and further investigation into the matter was underway. Road accidents are common in the province. Most of the mishaps are caused due to reckless driving and bad roads.

Eternal chokers tag is like Shakespearean tragedy: Rabada



KUSHAN SARKAR

SOUTHAMPTON, JUNE 2 (PTI): The tag of eternal chokers is as painful as "Shakespearean tragedies" but the ongoing World Cup could be different for South Africa since youngsters in the side are not carrying burden of the past, says pacer Kagiso Rabada.

Since their return to international cricket in 1991, the only major event won by South Africa was the 1998 inaugural mini-World Cup (later known as Champions Trophy) in Bangladesh.

They have never made it to the final of an ICC World Cup.

"It's something that

has been haunting us for years. It's like a Shakespearean tragedy almost. Hopefully, we can change that," Rabada told PTI during an interview before the World Cup began. Rabada said youngsters like him go into the tournament with a clean slate. "You can't be anything but positive going into the World Cup. We believe we have every chance to win the World Cup. What has happened in the past, you got to let go of that," said the 24-year-old, who has 108 wickets from 67 ODIs.

"We have a young team that has shown potential. And I feel it's a blessing that not many

of them have been to the World Cup. It's young and it's fresh," said Rabada.

In 2015, when South Africa toured India, Rabada had bowled a fabulous final over to Mahendra Singh Dhoni at the Green Park in Kanpur, defending less than 10 runs. That match perhaps was the first indication of Dhoni's waning powers as a finisher.

When asked about his perfect executions at the death, Rabada said that more than all the homework done, it is all about what works at any given moment.

"These days players do a lot of analysis. So the batters and bowlers are

looking up batting and bowling histories. You can prepare what could be coming your way. "But it's more about what works for you on the day of the match rather than all the planning you've made," said Rabada, whose ODI economy rate is an envious 5.01.

Being compared to Jasprit Bumrah is a compliment for the talented Protea, who reckons that the ongoing World Cup will be an interesting one for the fast bowlers.

"Well, that's a compliment surely. But I don't know who is the best because all teams at the moment have good fast bowling units. which is

also a big reason why I think this World Cup will be a very interesting one," he said.

South African cricket over the years has suffered due to a lot of quality cricketers quitting international cricket to play county cricket, using the Kolpak agreement.

The Kolpak deal allows any player from European Union as well as Caribbean and South Africa to ply their trade in UK without being considered overseas citizen.

"Kolpak is a touchy issue, people are entitled to their choices of course. For me playing for the country is a big deal," Rabada made his priorities clear.

With Faf du Plessis in all likelihood playing his last 50 over World Cup, Rabada is certainly a contender for national captaincy, a challenge he wants to accept head on as and when the opportunity arises.

"I get asked this question very often. I think if I am given the responsibility I would take up the challenge. There's a lot you need to learn," said the youngster.

"The more people keep mentioning it, the more I try and put myself in the captain's shoes on the field and sort of assess match situations. So if the opportunity does come up to me, I would take it up as a challenge and give my absolute best.

Arunachal govt to hand over MLA killing case to NIA

ITANAGAR, JUNE 3 (PTI): The Arunachal Pradesh government has decided to hand over the killing of Khonsa West MLA Tiron Abob and 10 others by suspected NSCN militants.

The cabinet approved for providing a Group C post in the government to the next of kin of the deceased and provide Rs 20 lakh as ex-gratia to the next of kin of the deceased.

Nationalist Peoples' Party (NPP) MLA Abob along with his son and nine others were killed when suspected NSCN militants opened fire at their vehicles near 12 Mile area in Tirap district on May 21.

The MLA along with his relatives was on his way to Khonsa from Dibrugarh in Assam.

Griezmann on target as France defeat Bolivia

NANTES (FRANCE), JUN 3 (AFP): Antoine Griezmann scored as France eased past Bolivia 2-0 in a friendly in Nantes on Sunday, ahead of the world champions' resumption of their Euro 2020 qualifying campaign. Thomas Lemar gave France the lead on five minutes and Griezmann, who last month announced he was leaving Atletico Madrid after five seasons, notched a second before the break.

Griezmann moved eighth on the list of France's all-time leading scorers with his 29th goal as he surpassed 1998 World Cup winner Youri Djorkaeff. He is

now just one goal behind Just Fontaine and Jean-Pierre Papin, and two adrift of Zinedine Zidane.

There was a slight note of concern for France though as they lost Kylian Mbappe to an ankle injury at half-time.

Didier Deschamps' side return to competitive action on June 8 when they face Turkey in Group H. Both nations have six points from two matches. "We needed to get a little warm-up in. It's going to be tough in Turkey, we'll have to be ready," said Griezmann.

"I may not be in top form. This match will do me good, to get some minutes and be in good shape for Saturday.

Gymnast Patra finishes seventh at FIG World Cup

NEW DELHI, JUN 3 (PTI): Indian gymnast Rakesh Kumar Patra finished seventh in the finals of the Parallel Bars at the FIG World Cup in Koper, Slovenia.

In the final field of eight gymnasts, Patra finished second last with a score of 13.650.

Frank Baines of Great Britain clinched the top spot, while Kazakhstan's Milad Karimi settled for the second place and Ilia Georgiou of Cyprus was third.

Earlier, Patra had qualified for the Parallel

Bars final at the eighth position.

The FIG World Cup in Koper is the third of the seven World Challenge Cup Series for 2019. The World Challenge Cup events are major FIG events with a broader participation and open to all countries.

At each event, the gymnasts have the opportunity to win prize money and World Challenge Cup points which will count towards the World Challenge Cup Ranking List for each apparatus.

There will be no margin for error against India: Kallis

LONDON, JUN 3 (PTI): South Africa have no margin for error after second World Cup loss and should take advantage of India's 'first game nerves' to bring their World Cup campaign back on track, said legendary all-rounder Jacques Kallis.

South Africa, who were thrashed by England in the opening match, suffered their second successive loss in the World Cup, going down by 21 runs against Bangladesh on Sunday.

Kallis believes the Proteas will be under a lot of pressure ahead of their clash against favourites India. "It's disappointing and frustrating and there is lots of pressure on the next game, otherwise the tournament could be over before it's really started for South Africa," Kallis wrote in a column for the ICC. "It doesn't get any easier though against India but it's their first game and our third, so maybe that could give us the edge we need."

"They've not played for a week and maybe they'll be some first game nerves, where as we are settled."

The 43-year-old from Cape Town said India will make South Africa pay if they commit any silly mistake.

"We've got to play all our cards and we can't afford anymore silly mistakes at vital stages - these are the best sides in the world and they'll always punish you," Kallis wrote.

"Strange things hap-



pen in this sport and if we can get a win then I think we can go on a streak and we are still good enough to be a contender.

"There will be no margin for error though. I think you'll need six wins, maybe five with a really good run rate, to finish in the top four, so South Africa almost need to win every game they will play."

South Africa are battling injury issues with pacer Lungi Ngidi being ruled out of India clash due to a hamstring strain and Kallis feels experienced Dale Steyn needs to be drafted into the playing XI.

"The injury to Lungi Ngidi certainly didn't help Faf, he's a world-class player and a big part of our attack. You've got to play Dale Steyn against India now, and hopefully he is close to fitness," Kallis wrote.

Bangladesh posted their highest ODI total, scoring 330 for six at the Oval after South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis

elected to bowl after winning the toss. South Africa then fell short at 309 for eight while trying to become the first team to successfully chase more than 330 in a World Cup match.

Kallis wrote: "Bangladesh got all their partnerships going and once you get over 300 then it always become a tough chase, letting them score 50 or so runs in the final four overs really didn't help either and ultimately proved the difference.

"I understand what Faf du Plessis was doing with the toss and playing the extra pace bowler. However, the wicket just didn't allow it and perhaps he stuck with the tactics a bit too long and should have started bowling a little fuller and straighter.

"It's great having a game plan but you need to have a back-up when it's not working, I felt we were one step behind the entire match and just tactically a bit off. We need to be a bit smarter.



KARACHI, JUN 3 (PTI): At least 13 people, including a woman and four children, were killed when their van collided with a truck in Pakistan's Balochistan province, police said Monday.

The accident took place on Sunday night when the van was heading to Zohb from Quetta when it collided with a truck in Ali Khel area in the province, Ary News reported.

At least 13 people were killed and seven others were injured, police said, adding that five

members of a family are also included in the deceased in the dreadful accident.

Following the accident, the rescue teams reached the spot and shifted the injured to the District Headquarters Hospital, Qila Saifullah.

Local police have cordoned off the area and further investigation into the matter was underway.

Road accidents are common in Pakistan. Most of the mishaps are caused due to reckless driving and bad roads.

Damascus pounds jihadist bastion, ignoring Trump warning

MAARET AL-NUMAN (SYRIA), JUN 3 (AFP): Bombardments by the Syrian regime killed six civilians in northwest Syria Monday, hours after US President Donald Trump urged Damascus and its allies to “stop bombing the hell” out of the jihadist-held region.

Trump’s call came after Washington’s Israeli ally carried out a series of strikes against Syria over the weekend, leaving at least 15 dead among pro-government forces, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The bombardment by Damascus and regime ally Russia of Idlib province and neighbouring areas has killed more than 300 people and displaced thousands since late April, according to the Britain-based war monitor.

The violence, which comes despite a truce deal brokered by Moscow and Ankara in September, has raised fears of a humanitarian catastrophe on a scale yet unseen in Syria’s eight-year conflict, which has already claimed more than 370,000 lives.

The Kremlin insisted Monday that the Russian army was only targeting “terrorists” in Syria’s Idlib region, which is controlled by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, a group dominated by former members of Al-Qaeda’s Syria affiliate.

It accused them of firing at civilians and Moscow’s troops. “Terrorist fire in Idlib is of course unacceptable,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

“Measures are be-



ing taken to neutralise such firing positions.” The comments came in response to a Tweet by Trump on Sunday calling for an end to the bombing on the jihadist-dominated enclave, a large area which is home to almost three million people.

“Hearing word that Russia, Syria and, to a lesser extent, Iran, are bombing the hell out of Idlib Province in Syria, and indiscriminately killing many innocent civilians.

“The World is watching this butchery. What is the purpose, what will it get you? STOP!” the US president said.

But, the aerial bombardment on Monday did not relent. According to the Observatory, at least four civilians were killed in regime strikes on the town of Maarat al-Numan.

Another civilian was killed in the nearby town of Heish, while a sixth was killed by rocket fire on a village in the neighbouring province of

Hama, it said.

Human Rights Watch on Monday accused the Syrian regime and its ally Russia of using “internationally banned and other indiscriminate weapons in unlawful attacks on civilians in northwest Syria in recent weeks.”

It said they “used banned cluster munitions and incendiary weapons... along with large air-dropped explosive weapons with wide-area effects, including ‘barrel bombs.’”

Analysts predict that President Bashar al-Assad and his allies will continue to chip away at the area, but not unleash a major assault that would create chaos on Turkey’s doorstep.

In recent weeks, jihadists and pro-government have engaged in fierce battles over positions on the fringes of the enclave. On Monday, the regime tried advance against jihadists in the north-east of Latakia province.

According to the

Observatory, the clashes killed 12 pro-regime fighters and seven jihadists.

The latest violence in Syria’s jihadist-held northwest comes amid soaring tensions between Syria and neighbouring Israel. Syria accused Israel of targeting an airbase in Homs province overnight, reportedly killing five people, just hours after carrying out raids on military and intelligence posts south of Damascus that killed 10.

“Our air defences thwarted an Israeli aggression and destroyed two of the rockets that targeted the T-4 airbase,” a military source told state news agency SANA.

The remaining rockets “killed one soldier, wounded two others, and damaged an arms warehouse,” the source added.

The Britain-based Observatory reported five killed, including one Syrian soldier, adding that a rocket warehouse was destroyed. In addi-

tion to the Syrian army, Iranian fighters and Hezbollah paramilitary forces are also stationed at the airbase, according to the monitor.

Israel did not claim the attack. A spokeswoman for the Israeli army told AFP: “We do not comment on foreign reports.”

But hours earlier, Israel said it had carried out strikes in the province of Quneitra. It said the attack was in response to rare rocket fire from its neighbour late Saturday.

The Observatory said 10 people were killed, including Syrian soldiers and foreign fighters. Israel has carried out hundreds of air strikes in Syria, most of them against what it says are Iranian and Hezbollah targets.

The country says it is determined to prevent its arch foe Iran from entrenching itself militarily in Syria, where Tehran backs Assad in the country’s eight-year war.

Trump brings Brexit advice on state visit to troubled UK

LONDON, JUN 3 (AFP): Britain will roll out the red carpet for US President Donald Trump on Monday as he arrives in Britain for a state visit already overshadowed by his outspoken remarks on Brexit.

Queen Elizabeth II will welcome Trump and his wife Melania to Buckingham Palace, where they will be treated to a guard of honour, a private lunch and later, a glittering state banquet.

But beneath the pomp and ceremony, Britain is in turmoil with Prime Minister Theresa May due to step down within weeks over her handling of her country’s exit from the European Union.

True to form, Trump ripped up the diplomatic rule book before he even touched down by saying former foreign minister Boris Johnson would

make an “excellent” choice to succeed May.

He also recommended May’s successor walk away from talks with Brussels, refuse to pay Britain’s agreed divorce bill and leave the EU with no deal.

The much vaunted UK-US “special relationship” was already under strain over different approaches to Iran, China and the Paris climate change accord.

Opposition politicians are boycotting the banquet over what London’s mayor Sadiq Khan called Trump’s “divisive behaviour” and large protests are expected across the capital.

But May and Trump are expected to emphasise the wider benefits of the old alliance when they hold talks at Downing Street on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, they will join other world

leaders in the English port of Portsmouth to commemorate 75 years since the D-Day landings, which changed the course of World War II.

“Our relationship has underpinned our countries’ security and prosperity for many years, and will continue to do so for generations to come,” May said ahead of the visit. May announced her resignation last month after failing to get her Brexit deal through parliament and twice delaying Britain’s EU departure.

She will formally quit as her Conservative party’s leader on Friday, but will stay on while they find someone to replace her.

Three years after the referendum vote for Brexit, Britain remains divided and anxious about its place in the world.

Khalizad discusses Afghan peace process with Pakistani leaders



BY SAJJAD HUSSAIN ISLAMABAD, JUN 3 (PTI):

US special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad held discussions with the Pakistani leadership, including Prime Minister Imran Khan, on the Afghan peace process and the positive steps that Pakistan can take to advance it.

Afghan-born chief American negotiator Khalilzad has held six rounds of direct talks with Taliban envoys in the Qatari capital of Doha since the process began last fall to bring an end to what has now become the longest US overseas military intervention.

The Pakistani government takes credit for arranging the US-Taliban

peace dialogue by using its contacts with the Afghan insurgent group.

The US Embassy in Islamabad in a statement said that Khalilzad visited Islamabad on June 2 and held discussions with the Pakistani leadership on developments in the Afghan peace process.

He met Prime Minister Khan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Additional Secretary Aftab Khokher and Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Bajwa.

“Ambassador Khalilzad briefed Pakistani officials on the substantial progress made in talks over the last month and planned next steps,” according to the statement.

Khalilzad noted that

the United States continues to be encouraged by the role Pakistan has played to advance the peace process.

He also “discussed additional positive steps that Pakistan can take and the importance of recent efforts for improving US-Pakistan relations”.

Khalilzad and Pakistani officials also discussed the benefit of improved Pakistan-Afghanistan relations in reaching, implementing, and sustaining a durable peace.

Both countries will benefit from the increased regional connectivity, cooperation and integration that peace in Afghanistan offers, it said.

US ban has ‘no effect’ on Huawei’s aviation business: official

SEOUL, JUN 3 (AFP): US moves against Chinese tech titan Huawei have had “no effect” on the firm’s aviation business despite several countries taking steps to block its mobile services, a top company executive said Monday. Huawei has been caught in an intensifying trade war between the United States and China, with President Donald Trump moving to blacklist the Chinese manufacturer over national security concerns.

But Eman Liu, president of Huawei’s global transportation business unit, said the company’s aviation business was untouched so far.

Huawei provides information and communication technology solutions to more than 50 airports and 15 airlines around the world, including Dubai Airports and the Changi Airport Group in Singapore.

Its services include video surveillance and airport cloud systems as well as wifi services and storage servers. “Until now, there is no effect,” Liu told AFP on the sidelines of the annual International Air Transport Association (IATA) conference in Seoul.

Huawei customers at the event had pledged to

“keep cooperating” with the firm despite Washington’s accusations, Liu said. “For all the rest of the world, we are keeping doing business with them for more than 10 years,” Liu said.

“Because this trust is not one day trust. It’s a long-term trust for the past 15 years, even 30 years.” Huawei has risen to become the world leader in telecom networking equipment and one of the top smartphone manufacturers alongside Samsung and Apple. The US Commerce Department last month placed the company on an “entity list” on grounds of national security, a move that curbs its access to US-made components it needs for its equipment. A 90-day reprieve was later issued.

A number of countries have also blocked Huawei from working on their mobile networks and companies have stepped back from the firm following the US ban, citing legal requirements. “We cannot change the situation right now because we are businessmen,” Liu said. “But we hope the United States can change their way.” If the US persisted with its moves, Liu said, it would “force us to use Plan B”, referring to heavy investments in new technology, including developing its own chips.

Boeing finds wing defect, including among some MAX



WASHINGTON, JUN 3 (AFP): Boeing announced Sunday that some of its medium-haul 737s, including the 737 MAX 8, could have a defective wing part, but that there had been no reports of flight issues linked to the defect.

The American aviation giant, which has been rocked by an unprecedented crisis after its entire 737 MAX 8 fleet was grounded in mid-March, said a subcontractor informed it of problems with a batch of a part involved in deploying the wings’ leading edge.

The leading edge of an aircraft is key to takeoff and landing because it is meant to improve the wing’s drag and therefore the jet’s aerodynamics.

Boeing said in a statement that it had relayed the defective lot number to aircraft owners so they can inspect the parts in question.

If operators find the defective parts on their aircraft, they should replace them before putting the plane back in service, the company said.

“This is a device considered critical because if the leading edge slats don’t deploy symmetrically, there could be a lift differential that can be dangerous especially on takeoff and landing,” one aeronautics expert told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The planes were grounded after a combined 346 people died in two deadly crashes, the first in Indonesia in Oc-

tober followed by one in Ethiopia in March.

Long considered a “gold standard” internationally, the US Federal Aviation Administration’s reputation has suffered amid scrutiny of its oversight process and reports it allowed Boeing to effectively self-certify some features of the MAX.

Boeing is working on a software fix that will allow the MAX 8 to begin flying again, but differences have arisen between the United States and Canada on how to train pilots on the software after the update.

Washington believes training on computers or tablets is sufficient for seasoned pilots, but Ottawa wants to require training on flight simulators.





COLOFUL CARDI! The “Bodak Yellow” singer, Cardi B gets festive performing at the Summer Jam 2019 in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

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THE DAY AHEAD

ARIES: Ready, set, socialize! Today's new moon in Gemini supercharges the most outgoing zone of your chart, giving you maximum mingling power. Reboot your summer by committing to events like weekend camping trips, festivals and local fairs. While you might prefer spontaneity, putting these activities on your calendar will give you lots to look forward to.

TAURUS: Zoom in and give your bank statements a thorough review. Today's new moon in your money sector helps you evaluate your finances with a critical eye. Those boozy dinners and sample sales DO add up—and if you aren't mindful, they can seriously subtract from your savings. And since your landlord won't be impressed by your Gucci sandals if you can't pay your rent, you might need to make some adjustments.

GEMINI: Your future is looking bright, thanks to the dazzling glow from today's new moon in Gemini—the only one to land in your sign in 2019. Your celestial New Year starts now, giving you an en-

ergetic reboot and plenty of positive momentum. With the universe on your side, take (at least) one concrete step to get your big plans into motion!

CANCER: Ask, believe, receive. Today, the soulful moon unites with intuitive Neptune in Pisces and your broad-minded ninth house. This is the day to imagine what you want, because you can magnetize your dreams to you through creative visualization. The ninth house is all about expansion, so don't just aim for the “safe,” low-hanging fruit. Go bigger, Cancer! Feeling out of touch with your power to manifest? Try writing up a gratitude list. When you recall all the things you're thankful for, you'll begin to attract more abundance.

LEO: You SAY that you want happiness, love and freedom, but do you actually believe that your desires are possible, Leo? Today's moon-Neptune conjunction in your mystical eighth house encourages you to examine your own limiting beliefs. Since you may need tangible proof to REALLY change

your mind, hunt for people who are living the life you want for yourself.

VIRGO: Relationships can be hard work, we know, we know. But they can also be a haven from stress and struggle so stop telling yourself that you don't need people. Today, the moon and compassionate Neptune align in Pisces and your partnership house. The tranquilizing effect can be beneficial to your bonds with the ones who matter most. Soften your stance with your partner, and be gentler in your interactions with close friends.

LIBRA: Arm candy can be fun to play with, but you need more than empty calories to satisfy your romantic appetite. On Saturday, reserve your final rose for someone with style AND substance. It's a lot easier to teach someone the finer points of fashion than it is to imbue them with a great character. With the right raw materials—a caring heart, a sense of integrity, compatible interests—you'll have more than enough to work with.

SCORPIO: Still musing over the weekend's romantic escapades? Don't rush to

“back to business” mode. Today, the moon and quixotic Neptune embrace in your fifth house of passion, adding a sensual spin to your agenda. An attraction could spark, or you could be feeling especially amorous. Nobody to sidle up to (yet)? Get glamorous for yourself, Scorpio.

SAGITTARIUS: Home is where your heart is today, as the moon conjoins with sensual Neptune in your domestic fourth house. If you must trek into the office, bring the cozy vibes with you. Keep an open-door policy so coworkers can plop down and share tales of their weekends. (That expense report can wait).

CAPRICORN: Straight to the point? Not today, Capricorn. The reflective moon and compassionate Neptune meet in Pisces, your communication house. Doling out tough love and stern reprimands will get you nowhere. Validating the other person's emotions and experience? That will help you feel connected. Sometimes, a person just needs to be heard before you rush them into problem-solving mode. Instead of being emphatic, be em-

pathetic. Catch yourself if you're being too hardcore, and dial back the intensity.

AQUARIUS: Snap that selfie and post it with pride! (On Instagram AND Tinder, if you're single.) Today's new moon in Gemini glitters in your fifth house of fame and romance, bringing a beautiful confidence boost. The actions you take today can help your star rise—and burn brighter than ever by the corresponding full moon on December 11. Identify the milestones you'd like to hit during this fortuitous time, from personal successes to leaps in the game of love.

PISCES: ADon't forget to show the squad some love, Pisces. You've been killing it on the career front recently, but have you neglected your friendships in the process? Today's new moon in Gemini reconnects you with your ride-or-die besties. Balance is key, and you've got to keep your relationships alive, even as you push for professional success. You're bound to hit a speed bump at some point, and you'll need a few good BFFs to support you during those difficult times. Feeling like you need to shake things up on the home front?

Actor-singer Ruma Guha Thakurta is dead

KOLKATA, JUN 3 (PTI): Actor-singer Ruma Guha Thakurta, who impressed the audience with her impressive performance in Bengali films like ‘Ganga’, ‘Balika Badhu’ and ‘36 Chowringhee Lane’, died in sleep early Monday aged 84, family sources said.

Thakurta, the first wife of versatile actor-singer Kishore Kumar, passed away at her Ballygunge Place residence in the city. She was suffering from old age-related ailments.

Thakurta is survived by two sons including singer Amit Kumar and a daughter from two marriages.

“She passed away in her sleep early this morning. Our family doctor confirmed it. The timing of her death could be between 6 and 6.15 am,” said Ayan Guha Thakurta, her son from her second marriage.

Thakurta, a niece of film legend Satyajit Ray, worked in over 60 films.

She started her career as a dancer before moving to the then Bombay where she got married to singer Kishore Kumar in the early 1950s.

The two, who got separated in 1958, had a son - singer Amit Kumar.

She later married writer-director Arup Guhathakurta and had two children singers Sromona and Ayan Guha Thakurta.

Ayan said his mother had returned to Kolkata only a month back after a three-month stay with Amit Kumar in Mumbai.

“Dada (Amit) is coming here this evening. He will be taking all the decisions (about her last rites),” Ayan said.

Many of her films were made by great directors such as Satyajit Ray, Tapan Sinha, Tarun Majumdar, Rajen Tarafdar, Aparna Sen and Mira Nair.

She is known for her work in ‘Ganga’ (1959), ‘Abhijaan’ (1962), ‘Palatak’ (1963), ‘Antony Firingee’ (1967), ‘80 Te Asio Na’ (1967), ‘Balika Badhu’ (1967), ‘Dadar Kirti’

(1980), ‘36 Chowringhee Lane’ (1981), ‘Amrita Kumbher Sandhane’ (1982), ‘Bhalobasa Bhalobasa’ (1985) and ‘Wheelchair’ (1994).

Ruma also acted in several Hindi films like Jowar Bhata (1944), her first film, Mashaal (1950), Afsar (1950) and Raag Rang (1952).



Ruma's last film was Namesake (2006). She worked as playback singer in many films.

Ruma founded the Calcutta Youth Choir, a song and dance troupe, in 1958, which is known for its performance of folk and mass songs. Popular songs of Choir included ‘Aaj joto juddhabaj’, ‘Bharatbarsho surjer ek naam’, ‘O Ganga boichho keno’ and ‘Waqt ki awaz’. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee expressed her grief over the passing away of Ruma and extended her condolences to her family members and innumerable admirers.

“Saddened at the passing away of Ruma Guha Thakurta.

Her contribution to the field of cinema and music will always be remembered. My condolences to her family and her admirers,” Barjee wrote on her Twitter handle.

No one questioned when I played college girl at 30: Taapsee on ‘Saand Ki Aankh’ criticism

MUMBAI, JUN 3 (PTI): Taapsee Pannu says she was surprised at the criticism the first look poster of ‘Saand Ki Aankh’ received as she and her co-star Bhumi Pednekar had an amazing time taking on the characters which required them to be “double” their age. The film chronicles the story of world's oldest sharpshooters Chandro and Prakash Tomar and feature Taapsee and Bhumi in the lead. The poster was criticised for casting two young actors to portray 60-year-olds and not women closer to the age of the sharpshooters.

Taapsee, however, looks at the debate from another point of view.

“I was pretty surprised and laughed at it thinking, no one questioned me when I played a college girl at 30. Nobody questions when these big actors portray college characters being triple the age. At that time nothing happens,” Taapsee told PTI.

The “Badla” star says people should appreciate her and Bhumi for choosing to portray older characters at prime of their careers.

“It's so strange that two

also approached for the role “but they felt it's too off beat a film.” “It might not be mainstream enough for them to do, so they didn't do it. For me it was a kickass story and



actresses, at the prime of their careers, decided to look more than double their age, where today an actress always wants to look younger and younger. We decided to look double the age. Instead of appreciating it, people are finding issues with it.”

The actor says she later got to know from her producer that senior actors were

I wanted to do it. “I really want to see the same people questioning me when I am going to portray a college girl soon. I'm far away from college now. Then let's see the trolling,” she adds.

Taapsee will be next seen in Ashwin Saravanan's ‘Game Over’. The Hindi version of the home-invasion psychological thriller will release on June 14.