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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Setijhora slide cripples NH 10 for 6 hours



**SUMMIT REPORT
KALIMPONG, 13 JUL:**

Fresh landslides at Setijhora on NH10 this morning at around 8AM blocked NH 10 for 6 hours crippling vehicular movement towards Siliguri. The highway has remained disrupted at this sport for a few days now and had barely been cleared for a few hours late last evening, it may be recalled.

Today, it took five hours of risky labour for West Bengal PWD to clear the road during which time traffic was

completely held up. Passenger vehicles were seen taking the alternate route from Birik towards Latpachar and then Sevoke to reach Siliguri.

The slide caused a traffic jam of about 4 to 5 km on both sides.

Meanwhile, around a 40 ft long and 4 ft wide stretch of the highway was washed out between the Geilkhola and 29 Mile stretch.

Traffic out of Gangtok was also held up for several hours through the day at 32 Mile between Ranipool and Singtam today.

FPAS invites footballers to discuss Indian Football Awards

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 JUL:

President, Football Players Association of Sikkim [FPAS], Nirmal Chettri, has invited all former and national players of the State to attend a meeting on 15 July at Paljor Stadium to discuss the hosting of the Indian Football Awards 2019. FPAS, it may

be recalled, is hosting the event at Paljor Stadium this year. He stated that it was a wonderful national level opportunity to host the Indian Football Awards in the State.

"Kindly come and join us for the love and upliftment of Sikkim Football. Let us all make this event a grand one," he urged.

OMAS holds signature campaign for Sikkim Artists Protection & Guarantee Bill

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 JUL:

Organisation of Musicians and Artists of Sikkim [OMAS] carried out a signature campaign here at MG Marg today seeking the introduction and passing of Sikkim Artists Protection & Guarantee Bill in the State Assembly.

Musicians and artists of the State performed at the venue through the day, lending a musical and artistic ambience to the signature campaign which continued from 10 AM to 6 PM.

OMAS plans to submit this petition to the State Government.

Speaking to media persons, OMAS founding member, Tshering Wangchuk Lepcha, explained that OMAS organized the signature campaign in the interest of artists of Sikkim and their welfare, and timed it to coincide with the occasion of Bhanu Jayanti today.

He said that OMAS has been working for the

welfare of Sikkim's artists since 2013 and stressed that the Sikkim Artists Protection & Guarantee Bill is very important for the protection of artists and their rights.

He informed that OMAS will submit this petition enumerating 14 demands to the Chief Minister and other concerned Ministers of the State.

The demands include: fixed income for Artists and Artisans of Sikkim, employment based on passion towards a progressive creative society, protection of traditional arts and culture of Sikkim, assured benefits and platform for entrepreneurs passionate about event management, exposure trips at national and international level, assured market economy for local artists where they can showcase their talent at national and global levels, ensuring a basic system of payment for Sikkimese artists working in productions shot in Sikkim,



allocation of earmarked budget for artistes, provision of space or galleries for display of art and handicrafts by Sikkimese artists, amphitheatres for artists particularly in the field of Music, Fashion and Dance, relaxation of taxes in the entertainment field, setting up of a semi autonomous body for artist of Sikkim, encouraging and equipping film makers with the required technology and special discount for Manan Kendra for Sikkimese artists.

Mr Lepcha mentioned that the passage of such a Bill will help solve the unemployment problem and create employment opportunities for others as well. He mentioned that

artists of the State under the banner of OMAS have raised funds during calamities within and outside the State.

"Now the artists of Sikkim are asking for their rights and we are very hopeful that the new government will take steps to secure and protect local artists," he said. Likewise, another founding member, Sonam Gyaltzen Bhutia, appealed to everyone to support the OMAS initiative to help local artists and artisans. He urged the government to set up photography display, art gallery, amphitheatres and other required infrastructure for artists of the State.

The camp has Sikkim Aakraman FC coach, Shisil Karthak, and State Sports Academy coach, Pushpa Gurung and Mayal Dok Lepcha as head coaches.

The camp also has AIFF D-licence coaches Don Tshering Lepcha, Nim Tshering Lepcha, Prabhakar Golay, Akash Chettri, Pintso Sher-

pa and Sonam Gyaltzen Tenzing assisted by senior footballers of the State.

The inaugural day had Sikkim Football Association president, Menla Ethenpa, as the chief guest accompanied by former Secretary to the Government of Sikkim, TW Rinzing, and TNA Principal, Brig-

205th Bhanu Jayanti celebration at Soreng CM exhorts students to master local languages



proficiency in language can only be possible if they love the language.

The CM congratulated the toppers of Nepali Language in the Soreng Chakung Constituency and encouraged them to continue doing well.

Addressing the school students present, he said that circumstances shouldn't govern their dreams nor should financial situations be a hindrance for their future goals.

No matter what circumstances come in life one has to have the courage to push through and achieve success, said the CM.

Mr Tamang, who is an alumni of Soreng Senior Secondary School, recalled his memories as a student and as a teacher. He credited the struggles during his school days along with hard circumstances for making him the person he is.

During the program, the CM was felicitated by the Soreng Bhanu Jayanti Celebration Committee. Bal Sahitya Awardee, SD Dhakal, was felicitated by Sahitya Akademi for his literary contributions and Pratap Pradhan was

also felicitated during the program.

Pramod Gurung (Class 12) from Chakung Senior Secondary School, Misang Dolma Tamang (Class 12) from Soreng Senior Secondary School and Mandira Rawat (Class 10) from Soreng Senior Secondary

School were felicitated for scoring the highest marks in Nepali in the constituency.

The celebration began with lighting of lamp and offering of khadas at Bhanu Salig, Community Hall Soreng followed by a peace procession (from Bhanu Udyan to

Soreng Sr Sec School). The CM along with MLA, Aditya Golay, also offered khadas to the portrait of Bhanu Bhakta.

Later, the life and work of Acharya Bhanu Bhakta was also presented by Assistant Professor [Sikkim University], Balaram Pandey

followed by Ramayana Path, Poem Recitation, Music and Cultural program by the School.

Souvenirs were presented to various personalities by the CM on behalf of the organizing committee which was followed by prize distribution.

205th Bhanu Jayanti celebrated in Gangtok

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 JUL:

Nepali Sahitya Parishad organized a Shobha Yatra stretching from Bhanu Park to Manan Kendra followed by a daylong event on the occasion of 205th Bhanu Jayanti here at Manan Kendra today.

The celebration was chaired by HRD Minister, Kunga Nima Lepcha as chief guest while UDHD Minister, Arun Upreti was the guest of honour.

The event kicked off with a lamp lighting ceremony followed by a welcome speech from general secretary Bhanu Jayanti Celebration Committee, Chunilal Ghimirey.

Addressing the gathering, Arun Upreti congratulated all the awardees and expressed his delight at the renewed energy with which Bhanu Jayanti is being celebrated in the State.

"Adikavi Bhanu Bhakta Acharya contributed much to unite linguistic and cultural diversity



in Nepali Language and contributed in making Nepali Language popular through his literary creations," he said.

Kunga Nima Lepcha stated that the teachings in Ramayan are still useful in today's times and its lessons can be implemented in every individual's life so as to make life more meaningful and precious. The Minister stressed on the need to conserve cultural ethics and encouraged people of every community to work towards conservation of individual history so that the future generation can see the vibrant traditions and the bond of brotherhood prevalent in Sikkim.

The event saw Ramayan recitation by the students of West Point Senior Secondary School and poetry recitation by Kavita Dahal, a student of Sichey Senior Secondary School.

The Bhanu Puruskar 2019 was presented to Dhurba Lohagan while citation and mementos were presented to nine awardees in different fields of literature, journalism, art, music, etc. The awardees are MB Khulal, Amar Baniya, Narendra Lepcha, Lokendra Pradhan, Pranay Lamichaney, KK Chettri, Mandip Lama, Bikram Gautam and Sumi Rai.

Two students, Binita Sharma, Sombarey Se-

nior Secondary School and Emma Devi Chettri of Assam Linzey Senior Secondary School, toppers of Class XII CBSE board, were awarded with certificates and cash prize.

Present as special guests were Roads and Bridges Minister, Samdup Lepcha, former MP, Dil Kumari Bhandari along with State BJP president, D. B Chauhan, Padma Shree Sanu Lama along with other dignitaries and officials.

Earlier in the morning, the celebration started with the offering of traditional scarves and garlands to the statue of Adikavi Bhanu Bhakta Acharya at Bhanu Path.

60 youngsters in training at Aakraman's Summer Football Camp

SAGAR CHHETRI

GANGTOK, 13 JUL:

Sixty young aspiring footballers are attending the Summer Football Camp for boys and girls [aged between 07 to 18 years] which got underway here at Tashi Namgyal Academy football ground on Saturday.

The week-long

football camp is being organised by a Gangtok-based premier division club, Sikkim Aakraman Football Club.

The participating children have been divided into three groups - 9 to 12 years, 13 to 15 years and 16 to 18 years - for the camp under experienced and certified coaches.

The camp has Sikkim Aakraman FC coach, Shisil Karthak, and State Sports Academy coach, Pushpa Gurung and Mayal Dok Lepcha as head coaches.

The camp also has AIFF D-licence coaches Don Tshering Lepcha, Nim Tshering Lepcha, Prabhakar Golay, Akash Chettri, Pintso Sher-

pa and Sonam Gyaltzen Tenzing assisted by senior footballers of the State.

The inaugural day had Sikkim Football Association president, Menla Ethenpa, as the chief guest accompanied by former Secretary to the Government of Sikkim, TW Rinzing, and TNA Principal, Brig-

adier [Retd] M George Jacob, as guests of honour.

The first day of the camp also had Indian international footballers from Sikkim, Nirmal Chettri and Bikash Jaiu as special guests along with enthusiastic parents and guardians of the participating children.

Sikkim Aakraman FC president, Jigmee Singey Rinzing Wangchuk, mentioned that the club has plans to organise such camps twice a year - every summer and winter.

He said that the camp has been designed after extensive research to provide knowledge on the basics and funda-

mentals of football to lay a strong foundation for aspiring footballers to play at the professional level in the future.

He added that the camp will also have audio-video coaching sessions and interactive sessions with prominent international and national footballers of Sikkim with participants.

Mr Wangchuk mentioned that the camp was also a talent hunt to spot skilful young players for the U-15 and U-17 teams of Sikkim Aakraman FC. The club has provided jerseys, stockings and kit bags to all participants along with healthy diet every day after the training session.

Bhanu Jayanti celebrated in Gyalshing

GYALSHING, 13 JUL (IPR): The 205th Bhanu Jayanti was celebrated with great enthusiasm today at the Community Hall, Gyalshing, West Sikkim. .

The programme began with homage to Adi Kavi Bhanu Bhakta Acharya by Bhanu Salig, Kyongsha by chief guest, Dr Rajendra Bhandari and guest of honor Area MLA-cum-Minister for IPR, LN Sharma.

Also present were Minister for PHE, Bhim Hang Subba; Chairman for State Bank of Sikkim, DB Gurung; Chairman (GMC), IK Newpaney; Padmashree awardee, Kedar Gurung; DC(W), Karma R Bonpo, HODs and literary personalities.

This was followed by traditional and cultural Sobha Yatra till the Community centre, Gyalshing. Addressing the gath-



ering, the chief guest, Mr Bhandari stated that Adi Kavi Bhanu Bhakta Acharya's contribution in promotion of Nepali Language will always be remembered as a medium of uniting the Nepali speaking communities.

"We must understand and acknowledge the work of this re-

nowned literary legend. It's not just a scholarly material to be read in schools and colleges but also for us to remember that this extraordinary writer was the pioneer to kindle the spirit of literature and illuminate minds through his great work. We must thus do our

duties as responsible citizens to keep up the legacy of the 'Adikavi'," he concluded.

LN Sharma (Minister IPR) said that Bhanu Bhakta Acharya is a man who needs no introduction. He is an inspiration not only for writers but also for all those who believe in the

power of the vernacular language. His greatest work was his translation of the 'Ramayana' from Sanskrit into Nepali language. We must always remember his invaluable contribution to Nepali literature and the crucial role that he played in bringing Nepali literature to the forefront.

The celebration also showcased the felicitation of renowned literary figures, felicitation of meritorious language students of class 10 and 12, Ramayan path, Poem recitation, Essay writing competition, cultural programmes and prize distribution.

At the outset DC, West delivered the welcome note and the event concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by DCSO, West, Dilip Sharma.

Bhanu Jayanti celebration at Singtam disappoints



YOGEN THATAL

SINGTAM, 13 JUL:

With no Shoba Yatra, no poem recitations, no cultural program and no displays of Nepali dresses (Daura Sural and Chaubandi cholo), Singtam missed grand Bhanu Jayanti celebrations this time.

Bhanu Jayanti in Singtam Bazaar used to be an occasion that hundreds of people attended. Sad-

ly this time not only the locals but visitors also missed such grand celebration.

This is the first time that Bhanu Jayanti was celebrated separately; one in Shanti Nagar and the other in Singtam Bazaar. Only a few people were present during the celebration at Bhanu Park at Singtam and Shanti Nagar Gaon Sudhar Samity.

In previous years, there used to be a grand celebration and a musical night but this time nothing of the sort was organized.

SKM senior party advisor, TN Dhakal, officials from Singtam Police Department, SMTWDA president, Tinku Adhikari, and a few known faces were present during the celebration.

North Sikkim celebrates 205th Bhanu Jayanti

MANGAN, 13 JUL (IPR):

North Sikkim celebrated the 205th Bhanu Jayanti in a grand manner here at Multi-Purpose Hall of Mangan Senior Secondary School today. Forest Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia, attended the celebration as the chief guest.

The program also had presence of the SP, North, Sonam Gyatso Bhutia, ADC, North, Somnath Adhikari, HoDs from various departments from the District Administration Centre, North and teachers and students from different schools of the district.

The programme began with the lighting of ceremonial lamp followed by offering of khadas on the portrait of Adhi Kavi Bhanu Bhakta Acharya by the Minister, Mr Bhutia.

In his speech, Mr Bhutia expressed his happiness to be a part of ceremony as the chief



guest.

Talking about the life of Adi Kavi Bhanu Bhakta, Mr Bhutia urged them to come forward to preserve their culture, tradition and to keep their language alive.

Complimenting the students for their cultural performance, the chief guest advised them to learn local culture, tradition and languages.

He also spoke on how parents can play an important role in passing the culture, tradition and

language to the next generation. He encouraged the parents to motivate their children to speak in their mother tongue and learn their traditions and culture.

On the occasion, Mr Bhutia conveyed the Bhanu Jayanti greetings of the Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Goday) and Minister and Lachen-Mangan MLA, Samdup Lepcha to the people of the district.

To commemorate the ceremony, a colourful

cultural programme and Ramayana Path was presented and performed by the students of different schools of the district.

Apart from this, the ceremony also saw an essay and poem recitation competition. The chief guest gave away the prizes and trophy to the participants.

Meanwhile, BP Sharma, JD, North, Horticulture Department read out the biography of the Adi Kavi Bhanu Bhakta Acharya.

Bhanu Jayanti at Chongrang

SUMMIT REPORT

YUKSAM, 13 JUL:

Chongrang Sawa Song, the organising committee for Bhanu Jayanti celebrations at Yuksam-Tashiding constituency, organized a grand celebration at Chongrang Junior High School, West Sikkim.

Area MLA, the Deputy Speaker Sangay Lepcha, was present as the chief guest. He was also the chief patron of the organizing committee.

In his address, Mr Lepcha spoke about the contributions of Adikavi Bhanu Bhakta and why is

immortalised.

The MLA also expressed his delight over the energy and vigor with which Bhanu Jayanti is celebrated every year at Chongrang.

"Let's be united with love and care so

that we can continue celebrating the occasion every year. Let's mark and preserve this special moment," he said.

The celebration also included a cultural program followed by the felicitation of local achievers and social workers.

Mukesh Rai selected for Asian C'ship Coaching Camp



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 JUL:

Namchi Singithang resident, Mukesh Rai, has been selected for India National Coaching Camp Rothak, Harayana for Asian Championship. He is currently working as Assistant Boxing

Coach at Namchi under State Sports Department.

Mr Rai is three-time gold medalist in East zone championship and has won bronze in Senior and Youth nationals. He has also won silver and bronze in the 1st North East Olympic Games.

Heavy rain jeopardises normal life in north Bengal, tourist's body recovered from Teesta canal

KOLKATA/JALPAIGURI,

JUL 13 (PTI):

Incessant rain over the past few days has jeopardised normal life in north Bengal, creating a flood-like situation in the low-lying areas and triggering landslides in the Hills.

Conditions are likely to worsen in the region with the Met department forecasting heavy to very heavy rain till Sunday in the five districts of sub-Himalayan West Bengal - Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar and Alipurdur.

Meanwhile, passenger train services between New Jalpaiguri and Alipurdur through Dooars area resumed on Saturday, railway officials said.

The train services were suspended since Wednesday and all trains were diverted through the Cooch Behar route, they said, adding, such happened as water levels in Teesta, Diana, Lish, Ghish, Raidak, Kaljani, San-kosh and Jaldhaka rivers had risen to alarm-

In addition, traffic movement resumed on National Highways 31 and 10 on Saturday, the officials said, adding, this was possible because the water receded from NH-31 in Dooars region and the debris were cleared from NH-10, officials said.

Due to landslides triggered by continuous rainfall, Sikkim and Dooars region of north Bengal have been cut off from Siliguri for the last few days. Many areas in Malbazar, Moynaguri and Dhupguri towns were inundated.

Sikkim was severely affected after landslides blocked National Highway 10, the lifeline of the small Himalayan state.

Since Tuesday, at least 35 small and medium landslides have been reported in the mountains owing to the incessant rain, an official said.

In the wake of the rising water level in rivers and flooding in low-lying areas, people have been shifted to safer locations.

South marks Bhanu Jayanti with awards, felicitations and celebration of Nepali literature



NAMCHI, 13 JUL (IPR):

The 205th Bhanu Jayanti, organized by the South District Administration, in collaboration with Dakshin Sikkim Sahitya Sammelan, was observed with much enthusiasm at the Community Hall here today.

Founder Chairperson of Dr Shova Kanti Thegim Lepcha Memorial Trust, Dup Tshering Lepcha, was present as the chief guest accompanied by Krishna Maya Rai, the spouse of the Chief Minister, DC (South), Ragul K, ADC (South), Satyen Pradhan, Professor Sikkim University, Udai Chhetri alongside officers of the district, literary figures, dignitaries and students.

The day's event com-

menced with offering of prayers and garland to the statue of the Adi Kavi at Bhanu Salik by the chief guest and dignitaries followed by the Sobha Yatra.

Addressing the program, the chief guest spelled out the importance of celebrating Bhanu Jayanti across the State on such a grand scale.

Citing the Adi Kavi as an inspirational figure, Mr Lepcha remarked that since Bhanu Bhakta Acharya laid the foundation of Nepali literature he is revered as a significant literary figure in the Nepali community globally.

He urged the present and the coming generations to draw inspira-

tion from the Adi Kavi's immense contributions to Nepali literature and make their community and state proud in various spheres.

He also proposed a structure on the lines of a Literary Club for deliberations and exchange of literary ideas for the benefit of the members of Dakshin Sikkim Sahitya Sammelan.

Additionally, he urged the students present to inculcate a habit of reading Nepali literature and infuse their knowledge to further promote the status of Nepali literature.

On the occasion, the Shiva Kumar Rai Smriti Purashkar was bestowed to Kribu Saya-

mi and Agam Singh Tamang Pratibha Purashkar to Suresh Subba 'Biyogi' with a shawl, Memento and cash prize of rupees twelve thousand and six thousand respectively by the Chief Guest for their immense contribution in the field of Nepali language.

Six literary enthusiasts namely, Dr Lobsang Lama, SK Rai, Indira Stephen, Churamani Dahal, Santa Pradhan and Mohan Das Rai were felicitated for their dedications and contributions in various fields.

The day's event saw students from various schools participating in Ramayan Path, Kavita Path (poem recitation) and Nepali Lok Nritya.

GHEWA

The Ghewa (Antayasti Kriya) of my beloved husband late Ashok Lama (Ex-Panchyat) Son of late Pema Tamang who left for heavenly abode on 23rd June, 2019 falls on 14th July, 2019.

All relatives, family, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Upper Syari, Kopibari, below Deorali Khadi, Gangtok, East Sikkim. We also express our gratitude to all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.

Mrs. Phigu Tamang (Wife) : 9832469895.

Mr Tshring Chopel Tamang: 7908416933

Mr. Dilip Tamang (Brother): 9002624755

Mr B M Tamang (Brother): 9002775011

Mr M B Rai (Bother in law) : 9851926384

Mr BB Tamang (Brother)



~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

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Urgent Recruitment for a waiter with atleast 3 years experience and one kitchen helper. Contact: Hotel Paramount, Dentam, West Sikkim- 9735909625 / 8348285444

PLOT FOR SALE:

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

WANTED

HOUSEKEEPER/BABYSITTER.

Contact: 9933443442/9800500696.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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

Mr. Subash Lama

Proprietor

**Hotel Parasol Residency,
Panihouse, Deorali, East Sikkim**

BUILDING FOR SALE

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

Four & half Storied building on SALE, behind Hotel Agarwal at Pani House, Gangtok, East Sikkim. Interested parties may also buy flats - 2 flats - 1650 sq.ft, 1 Flat - 1186 sq.ft & 1 Flat on top (1 & half)- 3000 sq.ft. Contact: -9434751150

CJ completes South Sikkim visit

NAMCHI, 13 JUL (IPR): Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim, Mr Justice Vijai Kumar Bist, concluded his two-day visit to South Sikkim today. He was accompanied by his spouse, Renu Bist, Registrar General NG Sherpa, Principal Secretary to the Chief Justice, Jyoti Kharka, OSD High Court of Sikkim, Subarna Rai, District and Sessions Judge (South), Jiwan Kharga, Judicial Magistrate (South), Jwala Thapa and other officials.



ter which he visited Sri Shirdi Sai Baba Temple at Assangthang. Additionally, Siddheshvara Dham authorities as a token of appreciation handed a tulusi sapling to the Chief

Justice.

Later, the Chief Justice made a short trip to Samdrupitse where he visited the statue of Guru Padamasambhava.

Thereafter, the Chief

Justice stopped at Tagataga Tsal in Ravangla where he paid obeisance and sought blessings at the shrine and took a brief tour of the premises.

NPS wins ARCEIS interschool football tourney

**SUMMIT REPORT
NAMCHI, 13 JUL:**

Namchi Public School's boys' team has won the ARCEIS [Association of Roman Catholic Educational Institutions in Sikkim] Inter-School 'AB' Division Football Tournament. This year's tournament was hosted by NPS. They remained unbeaten throughout the tournament.

An independent panel of referees chose NPS' Thupden W Sherpa as the Player of the tournament.

Don Bosco School, Malbasey, was the first



runner-up and St Joseph's School, Rhenock, the second runner-up. The other team in the tournament was St Xavier's School, Pakyong.

In the first semifinal, NPS defeated SJS-Rhenock 5-0 and in the other semifinal, DBS edged

past SXS through penalty shoot-outs five goals to four.

In the finals, NPS beat DBS 2-1.

NPS Principal, Rev Fr Stany Sequeira, welcomed and thanked the players, coaches, managers and the School

Principals and thanked them for making the tournament a great success.

NPS Director, Rev Fr George A D'Souza, gave away the trophies to the winners. He had also inaugurated the tournament.

U'kd: Govt college library keeps outdated editions, students erupt in protest

PITHORAGARH (U'KD), JUL 13 (PTI): The Berlin Wall is intact and so is the Soviet Union. This is the impression you get if you browse the books in the library at a government college here, according to a student leader.

"90 per cent of the books at the library are outdated editions," Mahendra Singh Rawat, student leader at Government PG College, Pithoragarh said.

"According to the political science books available in the college library, the Soviet Union is still existent, the Berlin wall is intact and the cold war between the two super powers of Soviet Union and the US is still on," he said.

Rawat, Students Union President Rakesh Joshi along with other students of the college have been sitting on a dharna since the last one month against keeping outdated editions in the library.

"Though the college library has more than one lakh books, 90 per cent of them are outdated editions which are of no use to students," Bhagwan Singh Rawat, former students union president of the college, said.

The agitators demand that the college should immediately replace the old editions with the latest edition of books.

"The college gets no special grants for buying books for the library. The money spent over the books comes from the monthly fees paid by students (Rs 5 per head) which is barely enough to meet the book requirements of a single department, let alone those of the entire college," Mahendra Singh said.

The agitating students also alleged that

while the college was giving admission to thousands of students every year, the number of books available to them is a meagre number.

Speaking on the row, Pithoragarh PG College Principal D S Pangti attributed the problem to the college having more students than its sanctioned strength.

"Books are being regularly purchased. We purchased books worth Rs 2.30 lakh in 2012, but the problem arises when we are put under pressure to give admission to students beyond our strength," he said.

The principal said despite the sanctioned strength of 240 students in Science and 840 in Humanities, the current strength is 700 students in Science and 1,700 in Humanities.

He also said that the latest edition of books, especially in the Science stream, have become expensive.

"If these books are purchased, we are not able to buy the books of other subjects due to limited money at our disposal. With that limited amount, books for all 24 subjects have to be purchased. We are not in a position to purchase costly books," Pangti added.

Uttarkhand Higher Education Director S C Pant, however, denied the allegations. He asserted that the directorate was giving regular grants to each government college to buy books every year.

"Besides, the colleges are also entitled to purchase books from their own funds," he said.

"We have full strength of teachers, except 45 contractual, 59 evening faculty and 263 guest teachers who are on vacation and will soon

Two officers appointed Principal Secretaries

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 JUL:**

Two IAS officers of the Sikkim cadre of the Commissioner-cum-Secretary rank have been appointed as Principal Secretaries in the HAG Scale of the level-15 in the Pay Matrix.

Vishal Chauhan, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Health Department, and

Tenzing Gelekm Commissioner-cum-Secretary, DOPART&PG, were appointed as Principal Secretaries vide an order dated 04 July, a press communique from IPR Department informs.

Mr Gelek has since then also been given additional charge of Ecclesiastical Affairs Department.

resume duties from this month," Pant said.

Meanwhile, Uttarkhand Higher Education Minister Dhan Singh Rawat expressed doubts over the involvement of "non-students" in the agitation to foment trouble on the campus.

"Firstly, it will have to be ascertained that the agitation is purely by students and meant to advance academic standards on the campus. If it is found to be genuine, the students' demands for updated editions of books will be met soon," he said.

On the faculty strength of the college, the minister said, "The college has 1.20 lakh books with 102 teachers for over 6,000 students, while some other colleges have smaller faculty and lesser number of books in their libraries."

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Chiya Kavita team celebrates Bhanu Jayanti

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 JUL:**

Team of Chiya Kavita has also celebrated the 205th birth anniversary of Adikavi Bhanu Bhakta with a seminar and discussion on of Adikavi Bhanu Bhakta and his works at Baste Farm Stay in Lower Lingdum, Ranka in East Sikkim on Saturday.

On the occasion, a senior singer and poet, Deo Kumar Dumi presented his song and poem while other poets, DN Nepal, Padam Bahadur Chettri, Jivika Ashru, Luis Bista, SB Karki, Jagan Dahal, Deepa Rai and Amir Bhandari recited their



poems.

Poet and writer, Pravin Rai Jumeli spoke on the theme of the discussion. Likewise, sing-

ers, Bhakti Basnet and Lalit Lohar also presented their songs.

The programme was conducted by Chiya Ka-

vita coordinator, Prabin Khaling and was attended by journalists, Bishal Gurung, Dila Chettri and Sandip Prasad.

Dzongu FC and New Light Academy register wins in U-17 league



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 JUL:**

Dzongu Football Club outplayed Gangtok FC at the ongoing Sik-

kim Football Association U-17 Football League here at Paljor Stadium on Saturday, registering a 2-0 win to secure

three full points. Vivek and Dencho scored a goal each for the winning team. Similarly, New Light Academy of Namchi edged

past Chujachen Football Academy by a lone goal to pocket their three points. Pranay Rai scored the only goal of the match.

Cops trained on chargesheet preparation and forensics

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 13 JUL:**

A training programme for police officers of the State was organized at Sikkim Judicial Academy, Sokeythang, Sikkim on 10 Jul, 2019.

Senior Public Prosecutor, NP Sharma, Law Department, Government of Sikkim and Director, Dr RP Gohain, Regional Forensic Science Laboratory, Saramsa, East Sikkim, were present as resource persons.

The training programme was divided into



two sessions, the first was on "Criminal Investigation- Preparation of Chargesheet" and the

second session was on "Issues relating to Advances in Forensic Science and best practices

for successful Investigation". Both the sessions were followed by interactive sessions.

7 killed in Assam floods, north India receives light to moderate showers

NEW DELHI, JUL 13 (PTI): Heavy rains worsened the flood situation in Assam on Saturday, with the death toll rising to seven, while northern parts of the country received light to moderate showers.

The rains, however, eluded the national capital. The city continued to reel under hot weather conditions, with the maximum temperature settling at 39.6 degrees Celsius -- four notches above the season's average.

The weatherman has forecast partly cloudy skies with possibility of thundery developments towards afternoon or evening on Sunday. There will be dust raising winds during the day.

Relief from the heat is likely on July 16 as rains are expected on that evening, a Meteorological Department official said.

The situation in Assam remained grim as the floods claimed another life, taking the death toll to seven.

According to the daily flood report of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), one person was killed in Sissiborgaon area of Dhemaji district.

The deluge has affected over 14 lakh people across 25 districts of

the state, including Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, BARPETA, Morigaon, Biswanath, Sonitpur, Darrang, Goalpara, Nagaon, Golaghat, Jorhat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia, the ASDMA said.

Barpeta is the worst hit with 5.22 lakh people affected, followed by 1.38 lakh in Dhemaji and 95,000 in Morigaon, it said.

Currently, the Brahmaputra at Guwahati, Nimatighat in Jorhat, Tezpur in Sonitpur, Goalpara and Dhubri towns, while the Barak at AP Ghat in Cachar and Badarpurghat in Karimganj are flowing above the danger mark.

The ASDMA report said 2,168 villages are under water and 51,752 hectares of crop area has been damaged.

There has been massive erosion at several places in Chirang, BARPETA, Sonitpur and Bongaigaon districts, it said.

The National Disaster Response Force and the State Disaster Response Force have rescued 848 persons in the last 24 hours across the state, the ASDMA report said.

As much as 4,476.74 quintals of rice, dal, salt and 7,907.11 litres of mustard oil have been distributed, along with tarpaulin, water pouches and other essential items, it said.

Authorities are running 234 relief camps and distribution centres in 21 districts, where 20,047 people have sought refuge, it said.

Meanwhile, parts of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh received light to moderate rains, bringing down the mercury by a few notches.

Himachal Pradesh's Sarahan received the maximum rainfall of 131 mm, followed by 82 mm in Naina Devi, 71 mm in Bilaspur, 47 mm in Una, and 46 mm each in Shimla and Kangra, the MeT department said.

Kufri recorded 44 mm of rainfall, while Kasauli, Manali and Dalhousie received 13, 3 and 1 mm, respectively, it said.

The weatherman has issued a 'yellow' weather warning for heavy rains in the state from Sunday to Tuesday.

The weather office issues colour-coded warnings to alert people ahead of severe or hazardous weather that has the potential to cause "damage, widespread disruption or danger to life".

Yellow, the least dangerous of all the warnings, indicates the possibility of severe weather.

Rains in parts of Punjab and Haryana brought relief for residents from

hot weather conditions as the maximum temperatures plummeted three notches below normal.

Amritsar received 28.2 mm of rains, followed by 14 mm in Ludhiana, 12 mm in Ambala and 10 mm in Patiala, the Met department said.

The mercury settled at 39 degrees Celsius in Hisar in Haryana, two notches above normal. Narnaul recorded a high of 38.5 degrees Celsius, two notches below normal.

Chandigarh, the joint capital of the two states, also received 23 mm rainfall.

The maximum temperatures in the region oscillated between three notches below normal to two notches above normal, the weather department said.

The weatherman has predicted light to moderate rains at many places in the region during the next 24 hours.

Southwest monsoon remained normal over Uttar Pradesh which resulted in light to moderate rains at few places, heavy to very heavy rains at isolated places in eastern parts of the state and light to moderate rains at isolated places in western parts, the MeT department said.

Birdghat in Gorakhpur district recorded 17 cm rainfall, followed by Ballia (16 cm), Chandradeep Ghat in Gonda (15 cm), Domariaganj in Siddharthnagar district (14 cm), Bangsagan in Gorakhpur district (13 cm), Gorakhpur (12 cm) and Ghoshi in Mau district (10 cm), it said.

M u k h l i s h p u r (Azamgarh), Regoli, Khalilabad (Sant Kabir Nagar), Bhinga (Shravasti), Basti, Muhammadabad received 9 cm rainfall each and Gaighat (Ghazipur) 8 cm, Bani (Lucknow), Maharajganj and Akbarpur (Ambedkar Nagar) received 7 cm each, it added.

A Central Water Commission report said Ganga at Kachlabridge, river Sharda at Palia Kalan and Sharda Nagar and river Ghaghra at Elgin Bridge, Ayodhya and Turtipar and Rapti at Balrampur are flowing at dangerous levels.

Aligarh was the hottest place in the state with a maximum temperature of 38 degrees Celsius. The maximum temperature was below normal in Gorakhpur, Faizabad, Bareilly and Moradabad divisions.

The MeT department has predicted rain and thunderstorm at isolated places in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday.

Proper Rules for Temp Appointments

Such clarity would have avoided a lot of heartburn

Eleven years back, in July 2008, the State Government lifted the 'ban' it had imposed on itself on the appointment of personnel on ad hoc basis.

The ban, one must bear in mind, was not imposed because the State did not need ad hoc personnel any more. If that had been the case, it would have just stopped hiring more people on ad hoc or contract basis, not imposed a ban on it. An official ban was required for two reasons – unplanned hiring and rampant favouritism.

Ineffective manpower planning had straddled the State exchequer with too many personnel with unclear job specifications. And then there was growing resentment among the “left-out” for what they saw as rigged appointment processes where “contacts and recommendations” mattered more than requirement or employability while making ad hoc/ MR/ work-charge and then the consolidated pay appointments. Obviously, all efforts to make the departments observe fair-play had failed and a 'ban' was the only option left. But that was never the solution, and hence the lifting of the ban a decade ago.

Governments frequently require time-bound services of professionals for project-specific responsibilities and with the ever increasing roles that the government is undertaking, a ban on sourcing professionals for specific projects was a serious hindrance to deliverability. But that definition of temporary appointments is turned ever so often on its head with the regularization of such services like is being worked at present. Those hired on ad hoc when the ban was lifted in 2008 were always vying [along with thousands hired before them] for regularization. And the government conceded eventually and service regularization has been underway for some years now. The expectation is so normal now that not getting regularized is seen as victimization.

Back in 2008, when the ban was lifted and talk of service regularisation en-bloc started making the rounds, one had hoped that that the temp employees had been hired because they were good and the ban not lifted just because the pile of “recommendations” had become too enormous to ignore any more. Since temporary employment has a knack of becoming permanent, it is also time that the State laid down proper guidelines for even temporary appointments so that merit is not compromised and everyone provided a level playing ground.

This is necessary because the experience of such employments has been that they are processed on recommendation and contacts and not necessarily merit or employability. What this means is that those who decide to play by the rules end up getting punished, twice. First, when they avoid making the rounds to curry favour and land a temp employment, and then again when a vacancy/post which should have been open to all qualified unemployed goes to someone whose services are being regularized. Apart from the individual who stands so denied, even the State loses the opportunity to select the best from a pool of hopefuls. At a time when the roster of prospective candidates was short, this was not much of a worry for Sikkim. But that is not the case anymore. An increasing number of youth do not only have the qualifications and the ambitions, but also the self-respect not to kowtow. As more of them keep getting sidelined, there will be that many more of them of who will be resentful and disappointed. That cannot healthy for Sikkim and is a situation which can be as easily avoided as implementing the rules for temporary employment properly. Give each personnel clear job descriptions and make the conditions of their service clear as well. This is done on paper already, sure, but does anyone take them seriously since they have been sidestepped so often?

WRITE US:

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

Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

Avengers: Endgame and the relentless march of Hollywood franchise movies

DANIEL WHITE
theconversation.com

Avengers: Endgame smashed box office records in the days following its release, becoming the quickest film ever to break the \$2bn barrier and ranking as the second-highest grossing film in history after only 11 days. The Marvel epic is still creeping towards Avatar's top spot and, with the recent announcement of a strategic theatrical re-release including unseen footage, looks very likely to overtake it any time now.

The culmination of the 22-film “Infinity Saga”, Endgame represents an impressive accomplishment – not only for Marvel but also for the franchising trend in Hollywood, which shows no signs of slowing down either.

I've been researching how the landscape of Western cinema has been undeniably transformed by a shift towards the production of film sequels. Looking at the raw data, I found that box office takings of the most economically successful films of the past 17 years are a good way to understand the dominance of franchising on the film industry.

Of the 100 highest-grossing films worldwide since 2001, 86 are part of a cinematic franchise (all figures taken from Box Office Mojo). Of this 86, eight were the first instalments of their respective franchises, meaning 78% of the most economically successful films since 2001 have been sequels, follow-ups or new instalments to existing series.

The number of franchises represented among these 86 films is 32, so each franchise has on average two or three episodes to its name within the top 100, though the Marvel Cinematic Universe boasts 12 films, the wizarding world of JK Rowling has nine (Harry Potter and Fantastic Beasts) and Middle Earth has six (Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit).

Of the 14 non-franchise films within the top 100, three have sequels in planning or production (Avatar, Frozen and Maleficent), while two have had sequels rumoured (Zootopia and Coco). Three more of this 14 are remakes or live-action versions of existing films (Beauty and the Beast, Alice in Wonderland, The Jungle Book).

This leaves just six of the 100 most successful films since 2001 that are entirely original and not being franchised, extended or added to – Inception, Gravity, 2012, Inside Out, Up and Bohemian Rhapsody.

LOOK FAMILIAR?

These statistics indicate the extent to which major film studios may have defaulted to repackaging existing films for their audiences, following the same recipes and changing only one or two ingredients, or extending successful film series by creating sequels, prequels, midquels (filling a chronological



gap in a previous film) and paraquels (happening simultaneously to a previous film) to keep cinemas filling up.

The economic motivations behind the move to franchise productions are clear – the risks involved in creating, marketing and releasing another story within a familiar world, with well-loved characters and reliable narrative structures, are significantly smaller than those in the creation of new and unknown film stories.

Producer Lynda Obst places some of the onus on the American writers' strike, recognising that “the new projects, the big action franchises that could sell worldwide, were studio-generated, not writer-generated”. But did this shift coincide with the writers strike or has it always been this way?

This graph shows the increasing success of franchise films over the past few decades. Looking at the 20 highest-grossing films worldwide each year since 1989, the graph shows two clear spikes and a gradual increase in franchise films since 2001.

Although series such as Star Wars were already being reinvigorated prior to 2001, with Phantom Menace hitting the big screen in 1999, the large gap between the two lines at 2001 displays the high number of franchises introduced in that year (eight), including most notably Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings.

The increasing trend in the blue line in particular shows the gradual saturation of the market with sequels – peaking in 2011 when 18 of the 20 most successful films worldwide were part of a

franchise. This 2011 spike may well be a delayed result of both the writers strike and financial crash of 2008, showing the studios' increased reliance on franchise films for more secure revenue.

Clearly the global film industry, catered for predominantly by a closed group of powerful media conglomerates, has become dominated by the presence of tried-and-tested franchises.

IS ORIGINALITY DISAPPEARING?

In 2018 the failed introduction of a “Best Popular Film” Oscar showed an attempt to boost public interest after ratings for the Academy Awards night had dropped, which may also indicate a reduction of public interest in award-winning films themselves.

The more important question, though, is that of why we are going to the cinema. If we watched films in order to be challenged, moved or even confused, the Best Picture nominees would likely top the box office lists. But we don't – we go to the movies to be reunited with friends, to return to places that feel like home, and to find out what happens next to Tony Stark and the gang.

In an era of increased social anxiety and political turmoil, is it any wonder that we might seek a sense of home and refuge in the film worlds we have grown to love and inhabit? The success of Endgame and the predominance of the film franchise is indicative of a shift in the mindset of the studios, but also in our minds as consumers. And if a 23rd Marvel film garners no critical acclaim, but provides a moment of joyful escape for its audiences, is that such a bad thing?

[the writer is Assistant Lecturer in Music, University of Manchester]

How Muslim women break stereotypes by mixing faith and modesty with fashion

ANOOSH SOLTANI & HANNAH THINYANE
theconversation.com

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's decision to wear a headscarf following the Christchurch mosque attacks in March has earned her worldwide praise. But in an online backlash, critics pointed out that women in conservative Muslim countries have no choice and risk public rebuke, fines or even arrest if they don't cover up.

This is a longstanding controversy around the Muslim veil. Is it a tool for oppressing women or can it also carry other meanings?

Our explorative research, based on interviews with young Muslim women living in a New Zealand city, shows how they use their everyday lives and identity to change stereotypes of oppression.

CONTROVERSIAL COVERING

In the aftermath of the September 11 (9/11) 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and the subsequent “war on terror”, veiled Muslim women received much attention from Western politicians, media and academics. Debates tended to frame Muslim women, their culture and their veils either as symbols of oppression by Islam, or as part of the threat of Islamic fundamentalism.

A perception of oppression of Muslim women continues today, but what is often missing in these hegemonic debates is the way in which many contemporary Muslim women reinterpret, understand and perform Islam.

Technology and social networking sites allow Muslim women to show there are many ways of understanding and practising Islam and veiling. In our study, we present two main ways in which young Muslim women use Instagram and Facebook to offer alternative discourses about Muslimness and womanhood.

HASHTAG HIJAB FASHION

The young Muslim women we interviewed join their sisters from all over the globe in promoting Islamic fashion. This movement aims to challenge the popular culture in which Islamically defined modesty and the veil are presumed to be ugly, oppressive and inimical to fashion, including the wearing of fashionable clothes designed to draw attention to the body. Young Muslim women consciously mobil-

ise social networks, posting photos and using hashtags that show them as fashion savvy consumers. Nurul Shamul is the first veiled woman in New Zealand to participate in the Miss Universe New Zealand beauty pageant contest. She explains:

“As a Muslim woman, we need to be modest and we should not be chasing validation or approval from others by trying to look beautiful. But it was important for me to enter the contest with the intentions that I wanted to pave the way for girls and show that it is possible to look beautiful and fashionable but modest at the same time. It is better that there is someone like me that other Muslim girls can look up to and relate to.”

HASHTAG HIJABISTA

Nurul uses social networks to break the stereotypes and refute a binary view of the veil and fashion. Another young Muslim woman, Hassun Ali, uses Facebook and Instagram to change the discourse of veiled Muslim women. In several posts, Ali appears with stylish, colourful headscarves to suit her body-wrapping dresses and high-heeled footwear.

Ali always accompanies her photos with hashtags such as #muslimahfashion, #hijabista and #hijabfashion.

Most of the veiled participants stated that the Quran is the most valid source of information that requires Muslim women to wear the veil (hijab). Ali's posts suggest that they reinterpret the Quranic verses (which call on Muslim women to display their beauty and draw their veils over their bosom) and rework their hijabs.

Young Muslim women in Hamilton do not wear the hijab to necessarily hide their femininity in public. Instead, they revisit the precepts of Islamic veiling and create multiple styles of modesty that are intriguing and draw attention.

SOCIALLY INTEGRATED MUSLIMAS

Stereotypes say Muslim women are docile, self-segregated, and their faith and hijab prevent them from engaging in public life. Our interviewees reject such assumptions and actively use social media to change those negative images.

Yasmin Borhan, a primary school teacher, explains: “At this specific time, after 9/11, I feel I

have much more responsibilities as a Muslim woman in the society. I wonder, even though I am a New Zealander, to people here I am not a true New Zealander. I find out I have to present who I am. I feel like I have to act in a really good manner.”

Most of Borhan's posts focus primarily on her involvement with broader communities in Hamilton. In one post, she appears with a big smile while collecting donations as a volunteer for the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation.

Several other young interviewees also post their everyday lives on Facebook and Instagram. Their main aspiration is to change hegemonic views of Muslim women as powerless and excluded from social life. They also hope their posts encourage other Muslim women to become more socially active. For example, interviewee Mona Nabilah says:

“I think in terms of Muslim women's confidence, we could do more to raise their awareness of how important it is to be out there. I feel because the media is working to our disadvantage all the time, Muslim women stick together into their own communities because they are too afraid or they're too shy.”

Muslim women are working hard, online and offline, to reflect and increase their active presence in public arenas and break down stereotypes. Social media are the communicative spaces through which Muslim women show, verbally and visually, who they are and what their lives look like. Their posted photos are colourful, inspired by fashion, yet daring, thought provoking, and tend to reveal their everyday lives.

For us, the phenomena of hijab fashion and socially engaged Muslim women, and especially the current social media chapter, open opportunities for women to exercise their power and authority on matters pertaining to Muslim women's bodies. Far from a binary categorisation of the oppressed and the oppressor, these phenomena signal a world in which Muslim women hybridise their faith and piety with modern ideas of feminism, activism and consumerism.

[Anoosh Soltani is PhD candidate, University of Waikato; Hannah Thinyane is Principal Research Fellow, United Nations University]

FIELDWORK REFLECTIONS

The Tale That Rose From the Fall

MONGFING LEPCHA

Considering the idea of human evolution, humans have come a long way. As per the theory of evolution, early humans were scavengers and relied on leftover game, stealing game from animals and also on cadavers of animals which had succumbed to death due to unfortunate incidences. Later, they started making tools for hunting and practiced gathering food which gradually developed and reached a point where agriculture came into practice and this became a turning point in human cultural evolution.

Earlier, tool-making was an important aspect which marked different human cultures. The accidental practice of agriculture brought with it several other aspects that became the base in shaping the complex human culture of the present era. Scripts and writing are recent additions to document facts and myths, but humans had already found ways to communicate before that using signs and later languages which gave rise to one of the more important aspects of culture - oral tradition.

Oral tradition consists of stories of the past, the facts, the myths etc. passed down from one generation to the other verbally. Whenever one visits any place, the people of that place always have stories to tell regarding that place and its people and these one rarely finds in books unless it has been recorded in a written form. As such, during my fieldwork, I received the opportunity to witness narration of stories and myths by people to whom those tales and folklore are legacies passed down by their forefathers.

While conducting research on water bodies, I came across many aspects of water and the role it plays in day to day lives. Not to demean other aspects, but what draws my attention are tales and folklore associated with places and people. In casual conversations, I realised that most people carry along with them many tales passed down by their forefathers. Some know the tales clearly while others remember them only in bits and pieces. Such is a tale associated with the very famous waterfall situated on the North Sikkim Highway between Mangan and Gangtok, now known more popularly as the Seven Sisters Waterfall.

The place, as most of the people in the State know, is a popular tourist attraction. Since it is located near the road, it is very convenient for people to stop there for a while and enjoy the majestic flow of nature.

The name Seven Sisters is derived from the fact that the waterfall has seven steps of aligned waterfalls that flow from the rugged surface of a high mountain cliff.

Meanwhile, the folklore which explains why it is called so is something one can probably find among people who still remember the folktales. Some very general information on it is easily available on social media, but as I dug deeper, I became privy to more aspects.

One of the tales linked to this waterfall is a tale, like all folklore, from the past and I am not sure how far I received an accurate retelling. Maybe it is the only famous tale about the waterfall since I have heard this from a few people.

HC seeks ASI reply on PIL relating to ancient temple in Bihar

PATNA, JUL 13 (PTI): The Patna High Court has sought a reply from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on a PIL seeking directions to authorities concerned for the preservation of a temple in Bihar's Kaimur district which is said to be more than 1,600 years old.

A Division Bench comprising Justice Jyoti Saran and Parth Sarthy passed the order Friday on the Public Interest Litigation filed by Gaurav Kumar Singh, a student of Chanakya National Law University here.

The PIL seeks a writ of mandamus (direction) for protection and preservation of Maa Mundeshwari temple and idols of the deities in it.

The PIL, which has also named the Union ministry for Youth and

Culture as a respondent, has also sought a direction for the repair of the damage that has already been caused to the temple's structure, idols of the deities installed inside it and its boundary wall besides deployment of armed personnel, i.e., CISF or police for its security.

The petitioner has appended to the PIL the printout of an email he wrote to several authorities on March 29 this year, drawing their attention towards the decrepitude of the temple "which is more than 1600 years old" and was declared a "protected monument way back in 1914".

The court directed the ASI to file its reply while fixing August 9 as the next date of hearing in the matter.

Nepal floods death toll touches 28

KATHMANDU, JUL 13 (PTI): The death toll from the Nepal floods caused by the monsoon rains reached 28 on Saturday with over 16 persons still missing, officials said.

Heavy monsoon rains for the past few days have left many settlements at high risk of floods and landslides in several places in Nepal. Transportation has also

been disrupted in all major highways.

Rain-fed rivers have also started to erode embankments putting nearby settlements at high risk of flooding.

"The rain-triggered disasters have caused havoc across the country killing at least 28 persons," the Nepal Police said in its news bulletin.

At least 10 persons



As narrated by an elderly Lepcha person, the story begins from a family which had lived near the waterfall a long time ago. The family consisted of a husband, wife a small child and the paternal grandmother of the child. Since the area was thinly populated at the time and houses were few and far between, they were the only ones who lived near the waterfall. One day, the husband and wife decided to travel to a nearby town [probably Gangtok] since they were short on provisions. The tow was at a distance of a day's walk. They left the home leaving their child under the grandmother's supervision. The grandmother asked them to get some meat for her on their way back.

The husband and wife returned after a few days and as soon as they reached home they inquired about their child to which the grandmother replied that the child was asleep. After several hours, when their child did not wake up the parents went to check on him and found only the severed head of their child laid carefully on the bed with the body missing.

The parents were devastated.

They asked the grandmother several times and she later admitted that since she could not control her thirst for meat, she feasted on the child.

The husband and wife could not bear the evil action of the grandmother, nor could they kill her directly. They decided to punish her for what she had done so they tied her up, put her inside a tungzyang (doko, container crafted using cane) and placed her under Seven Sisters Waterfall to die a slow, painful death.

Although the tale does not have any symbolic meaning associated to the existence of the waterfall and may be the one who narrated the story to me did not know the complete tale, upon asking a few other people I learned that they too knew the story vaguely. However, the story does depict humans falling prey to temptation and turning into monsters.

By looking at the magnificent beauty of nature in the form of waterfall one can get spellbound, but the tale associated with it is surely something which can leave one in distress. Whether it is something based on fact that got exaggerated over the period of time or just a hoax to draw the attention of people or something else but it is a tale that is associated to the waterfall and will flow alongside the water as long as it passes down to interested ears.

[the writer is a Research Scholar at the Department of Anthropology, Sikkim University]

Meghalaya Cabinet approves draft water policy

SHILLONG, JUL 13 (PTI): The Meghalaya Cabinet has approved a draft water policy to address water usages, issues of conservation and protection of water sources in the state.

Chaired by Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, the cabinet on Friday discussed at length the various aspects of the policy before approving the draft policy, Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong said.

"All issues related to utilization of water and livelihood and how to preserve water bodies have been outlined in this policy including community participation in the implementation of this policy by constituting a water sanitation village council at the village level," Tynsong said.

The policy was drafted by the state Water Resources department in consultation with experts in water conservation and protection of water bodies.

sustained injuries and 16 others went missing in various landslide and flood incidents in the country since Friday, while a total of 50 persons were rescued, the bulletin said.

Deaths were reported from various districts,

The deputy chief minister said that Meghalaya being a hilly state, receives a lot of rainfall but the same water cannot be retained and all water reach Bangladesh in no time.

Among the other issues discussed on the policy was the need to optimize usage and conservation of water, steps needed to protect water bodies and water sources including ground water and protection of catchment and springshed areas.

Recently, the state government has launched the Jal Shakti mission to address the problems related to water.

The state cabinet has also approved the proposal of the Finance department to hike the salary of chairman and members of the Meghalaya Public Service Commission based on the recommendations of the fifth Meghalaya Pay Commission.

including Lalitpur, Kavre, Kotang, Bhojpur and Makanpur.

Meanwhile, human resources and equipment from police offices have been mobilised in the areas affected by the rain-triggered disasters.

Blaze in Nandaram Market; brings back memories of 2008 inferno

KOLKATA, JUL 13 (PTI): A major fire broke out at Nandaram Market in the Burrabazar area here on Saturday, bringing back memories of the inferno in the same building in 2008.

No casualty was reported so far as shopowners and customers were evacuated from the 13-storey building, which housed one of the biggest wholesale markets in the country, a senior official of the fire services department said.

As many as 20 fire tenders were pressed into service to control the

blaze that had engulfed a textile godown on the ninth floor, he added.

"The fire started around 3 pm. There is no casualty and none is trapped inside," the official said.

West Bengal Fire Services Minister Sujit Bose rushed to the area soon after the blaze broke out and reviewed the fire-fighting operation.

"Armed with masks and other gear, the firemen are fighting hard to bring the blaze under control," he told reporters, while expressing unhappiness over the fire-fighting measures in

the building.

Some who owned shops on the other floors were seen shifting their wares from the building.

A major fire broke out at Nandaram Market in January 2008, which was brought under "complete control" after about 90 hours. The Army had to be called in and over 3,000 shops were gutted.

According to the firemen, Saturday's fire was likely due to a short-circuit.


"The blaze is continuing even after three hours. Smoke is billowing out of the building and has covered the en-

tire commercial area," fire service officials said.

The firemen were facing difficulties in controlling the blaze as huge quantities of inflammable articles were stored on the floor where the fire was raging on, they added.

Police have closed the arterial Brabourne Road, on which the building stands, to vehicular traffic, which is being diverted through other roads.

Bagri Market on Canning Street in the vicinity had caught fire that raged on for over three days in September last year.



NAMCHI SMART CITY LIMITED

(State Govt. Company of Govt. of Sikkim under Companies Act, 2013)

CIN :U74999WB2017SGC219726

Tender No. 13/NSCL/WORKS/2019

Date: 12.07.2019

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Chief Executive Officer, Namchi Smart City Limited (NSCL), Namchi, South Sikkim invites percentage rate tender among the eligible bidders for the following works:

SL. NO	PARTICULARS OF WORKS	Length (in M)	Estimated Cost (in ₹)	Earnest Money Deposit @2.5% of - D (in ₹)	Cost of the Bidding Documents (in ₹)
A	B	C	D	E	F
1	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM CENTRAL PARK TO BHUTIA BUSTY VIA CBI ATM NAMCHI	70	533986	13350	500
2	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM KAVI AGAM SINGH ROAD TO NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL NAMCHI	50	600259	15006	500
3	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM BAZAAR TO GOVT. HOSPITAL NAMCHI	100	785669	19642	500
4	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM ADJACENT TO INDOOR GYM. TO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL NAMCHI	70	795453	19886	500
5	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY ALONG BHUTIA BUSTY ADJACENT TO WANGDI'S HOUSE NAMCHI	80	996790	24920	500
6	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM AALEY TO JORETHANG ROAD ALONG SPEAKER'S HOUSE	185	1577953	39449	1000
7	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM PURANO NAMCHI TO JORETHANG ROAD (JOB-C)	165	1944760	48619	1000
8	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM PURANO NAMCHI TO JORETHANG ROAD (JOB-B)	215	2144341	53609	2500
9	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM PURANO NAMCHI TO JORETHANG ROAD (JOB-A)	190	2176933	54423	2500
10	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM MANDIRDARA TO BHANJYANG ROAD NEAR SMART CITY OFFICE	185	2253978	56349	2500
11	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM SMART CITY OFFICE TO KAZITAR TANK	155	2433101	60828	2500
12	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM GHURPESAY SCHOOL TO BYE PASS ROAD (JOB-B)	125	2535200	63380	2500
13	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM GHURPESAY SCHOOL TO BYE PASS ROAD (JOB-A)	125	2570401	64260	2500
14	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM PURANO NAMCHI SCHOOL TO DABUA MELLI ROAD	300	3102426	77561	2500
15	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM PURANO NAMCHI SCHOOL TO ROLEP (JOB-A)	310	3105175	77629	2500
16	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY FROM PURANO NAMCHI SCHOOL TO ROLEP (JOB-B)	365	3407854	85196	2500
17	CONSTRUCTION OF PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY AT AALEY GUMPA NAMCHI	400	3577936	89448	2500
18	CONSTRUCTION OF CANTILEVER RCC PEDESTRAIN WALKWAY WITH RAILINGS (BOTH SIDE) AT OPPOSITE BHAICHUNG STADIUM NAMCHI	250	7713818	192845	15000
19	TOTAL	3340	42256033		

Tender Schedule:

(i)	Sale of Bidding documents	12.08.2019 up to 16.30 Hrs.
(ii)	Last date & Time for seeking clarification regarding bids.	13.08.2019 up to 16.30 Hrs.
(iii)	Venue of the submission of the bids	Office of the Divisional Engineer Namchi Smart City Limited, UDHD Office Bldg Kavi Agam Singh Road, Namchi-737126 South-Sikkim. T 03595-264088
(iv)	Last date and Time for submission of completed bids	14.08.2019 up to 12.30 Hrs
(v)	Date and Time of opening of bids:	14.08.2019 after 13.00 Hrs.

Eligibility Criteria:
This Invitation for bids is eligible to the contractors enlisted with the Sikkim Public Works Department and eligibility criteria as per the Amendment of Sikkim Public Works Manual 2009. Memo No: 515/R&B/PWD/Secy, Dated 12.06.2018 and relevant legislations | rules except for the mode of Tender.

Note:
The tender forms | Bidding Documents to the intending bidders will be issued on the date specified above, after the production of the **Demand Draft** drawn in favour of **Chief Executive Officer, Namchi Smart City Limited**, from any nationalized | Commercialized Scheduled bank | State Bank of Sikkim or acknowledgement receipt of the payment made through **National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT)** | Receipt of the **Over the counter payment (OTC)** payment made to the account of the beneficiary as cost of tender forms duly deposited.

The **Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)** / **Bid Security** value shall also be deposited in favour of Chief Executive Officer, NSCL could be in the form of **Demand Draft (DD)** / **Cashier's Cheque (CC)** / **Banker's Cheque (BC)** / **Bank Guarantee (BG)** from any Nationalized Banks | Commercialized Scheduled Banks | State Bank of Sikkim within the state of Sikkim.

For the Bank Guarantee (BG) format, the intending bidders shall be provided with the format from the office of NSCL.

At the event of public holiday falls on the above scheduled timelines for the Tender documents collection and submission date, the following office day shall be considered.

Beneficiary branch detail:-
Account Name:- **NAMCHI SMART CITY LIMITED**
Account Number:- **917020028503704**
Name of the Branch:- Axis Bank Ltd.
Branch Name:- Namchi - 737126, Sikkim.
IFSC Code:- UTIB0001012
MICR Code: 737211502

Sd/-
Chief Executive Officer,
Namchi Smart City Limited (NSCL),
Namchi, South Sikkim

WC final: England, New Zealand a win away from immortality

KUSHAN SARKAR
LONDON, JUL 13 (PTI): The world order in cricket will witness a new dawn when a title-starved England, led by an Irish, meet their match in New Zealand's feisty Black Caps in a World Cup final that will produce a new champion come Sunday.

England's global ambitions have never been fully realised since Sir Alf Ramsey's team won the 1966 FIFA World Cup. Whether it is Gary Linekar or Hary Kane, the 'Cup' that they desperately want never came home during the last five and half decades.

Even the "Three Lionesses" England's women football team under their mercurial manager Phil Neville -- had insane following during their World Cup campaign that ended in a heartbreaking semi-final defeat.

This was at a time when Eoin Morgan's men were going through a roller coaster ride but were hardly followed.

Parched for success, in this backdrop arrives a cricket team, which on

other days can't be followed because the sport in UK is no longer free to air.

But on Sunday, as all roads would lead towards Saint John's Woods, for a day, football will take a back seat.

Never ever had an England limited overs team fired the imagination of cricket loving public in general with their aggressive brand of cricket like the current one, the turnaround that started after their exit at the group league stage of the 2015 World Cup.

New Zealand, on the other hand, have banked on a committed bunch of individuals with a quiet yet assertive leader in stylish Kane Williamson, who would like to go one better than his predecessor Brendon McCullum during the last edition.

At the hallowed Lord's, England will certainly start as favourites with perhaps the most destructive 50-over batting line-up comprising Jonny Bairstow, Jason Roy, Joe Root, Jos Buttler and Ben Stokes.

The 'Famous Five' of



England's '50-50' line-up would like to ensure that they are fourth time lucky after missing out in 1979, 1987 and 1992.

They are way superior in quality from the batch of 1979 that played final against the mighty West Indies.

The legend has it that Mike Brearley (64 off 130 balls) and Geoffrey Boycott (57 off 105 balls) during their 129-run stand in pursuit of 287 off 60 overs (quite an ask in those days) were

so defensive in their approach that West Indies didn't want to get them out.

In 1987, England captain Mike Gatting played the most infamous reverse sweep off his opposite number Allan Border in the history of the game which cost them the final at the Eden Gardens.

The 1992 though was more about a genius called Wasim Akram, who bowled a couple of deliveries to Ian Botham and Allan Lamb that



one could dream of but would find extremely difficult to execute.

However those were the teams of different eras where Test players also played 50-over cricket. This team has Test players who are also game changers in ODI cricket with their explosive power-hitting skills.

Roy (426 runs) and Bairstow (496 runs) have been intimidating in this tournament and Trent Boult and Matt Henry would love to

repeat their semi-final show in the final too.

Joe Root (549) has exactly been what England needed in the tournament, a stable man holding the middle-order yet playing his strokes. Ben Stokes has teed off whenever he got a chance and perhaps Buttler is the only who is due for a big knock.

Whatever the condition of the pitch is, England wouldn't mind bowling first as Joffra Archer (19 wickets), Chris

Woakes (13 wickets) and Liam Plunkett (8 wickets) have been phenomenal.

Even Mark Wood (17 wickets), despite some inconsistencies, has been good and Adil Rashid (11 wickets) has fired in the semi-final when it mattered.

New Zealand, despite their final loss to Australia at an imposing MCG, wouldn't carry much of a baggage even though they have six players with the experience of playing a big final unlike England which has none.

Williamson (548 runs), possibly the most loved and respected cricketer (even if his twitter following is remarkably less than any average India player), will like to play one good knock and expect a bit more support from Martin Guptill (167 runs) and Ross taylor (335 runs).

Then a bit more support from a disciplined Mitchell Santner or the real 'three-dimensional' players like Jimmy Neesham and Colin de Grandhomme, the Black Caps could suddenly look more menacing than

what they seem on paper.

In the end however, even if England win, cricket will never ever topple football. Ditto for New Zealand where 'All Blacks' the world beaters in rugby has captured the imagination for years now, and a cricket World Cup is unlikely to change that.

But it will still be a refreshing change as 50-over format will enjoy a breath of fresh air.

Teams (from):
England: Eoin Morgan (captain), Moeen Ali, Jofra Archer, Jonny Bairstow, Jos Buttler (wk), Tom Curran, Liam Dawson, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Jason Roy, Ben Stokes, James Vince, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (captain), Martin Guptill, Colin Munro, Ross Taylor, Tom Latham (wk), Tom Blundell, Colin de Grandhomme, Jimmy Neesham, Trent Boult, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Neesham and Colin de Grandhomme, the Black Caps could suddenly look more menacing than

Match starts 3 PM IST.

Federer feels 'strange' being in Wimbledon final, 16 years after first



LONDON, JUL 13 (AFP): Roger Federer admitted that it felt "strange" he and Serena Williams will compete for Wimbledon titles this weekend, 16 years after he made his Grand Slam breakthrough. The 37-year-old Swiss reached his 12th final at the All England Club with a 7-6 (7/3), 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 defeat of old rival Rafael Nadal. On Sunday, he will face world number one Novak Djokovic where he hopes to capture a ninth Wimbledon and record-extending 21st Grand Slam crown.

Federer won his first Wimbledon in 2003, beating Mark Philippoussis in the final.

That same weekend, Serena was beating sister Venus for the second successive year in the wom-

en's final.

On Saturday, Serena faces Simona Halep for an eighth Wimbledon title and record-equalling 24th major: "Yeah, it's definitely a bit unusual, a bit strange," said Federer who will be the third oldest man to play in a Slam final on Sunday. "I hope it's going to happen again for somebody, to have such a big span between the first final. 'It's definitely special I think for both of us. Serena was even earlier on tour than me because she made the breakthrough earlier. It's amazing what she's been able to do.

"For me, it's not something I ever expected. Winning that '03 title was something so surreal that it's nice to be back in another final. Means really a

lot to me."

Federer's win over Nadal on Friday came in the pair's 40th career meeting and 11 years after the Spaniard triumphed in a mesmeric, epic final.

The Swiss needed five match points to secure the victory, his 16th of their 15-year rivalry.

"It lived up to the hype, especially from coming out of the gates, we were both playing very well.

"Then the climax at the end with the crazy last game, some tough rallies there. It had everything at the end, which was great. I'm just relieved it's all over at this point.

"But it's definitely going to go down as one of my favourite matches to look back at because it's Rafa, it's at Wimbledon."

Gatlin upstages Lyles in Monaco, Hassan and Amos shine

MONACO, JUL 13 (AFP): Controversial American Justin Gatlin outprinted up-and-coming compatriot Noah Lyles in the 100 metres at Diamond League meet in Monaco where Sifan Hassan set a new world best in the women's mile.

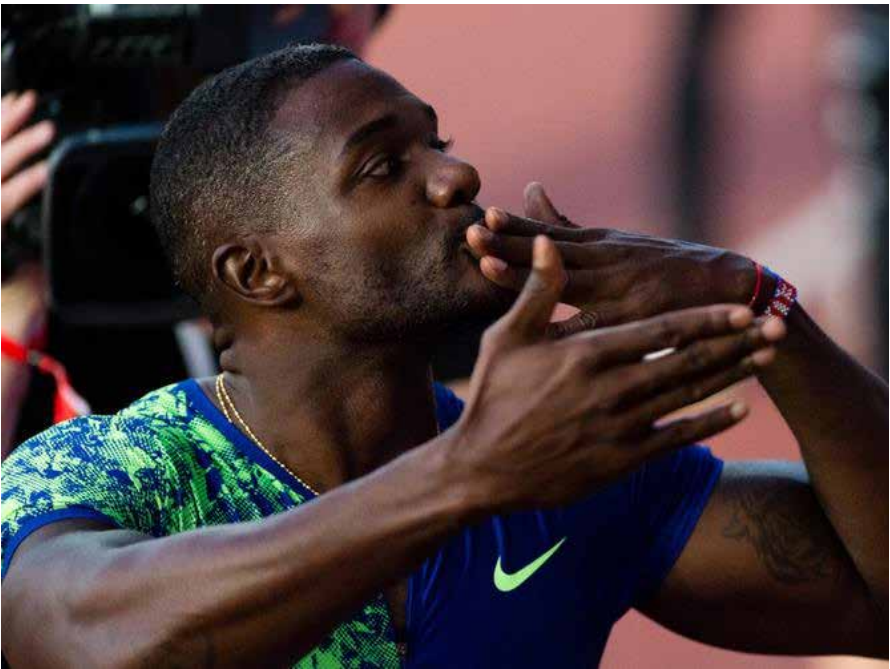
In balmy conditions at a packed Stade Louis II, the 37-year-old Gatlin kept both his nerve and form after an average start to streak through the finish line in 9.91 seconds, just one-hundredth of a second ahead of much-vaunted Lyles, 21.

"It was a technical race tonight," said Gatlin, the 2004 Olympic gold medalist and current world champion who served a doping ban between 2006-10.

"I just kept focused as I knew Noah would be coming after me like a bat out of hell!" Gatlin told AFP.

There was an outstanding performance in the women's mile, which is not an Olympic or world distance, as Ethiopian-born Dutch runner Hassan came home in 4min 12.33sec, smashing by 0.23 seconds the previous best set in 1996 by Russian Svetlana Masterkova.

Hassan, twice European champion over 1500m and once 5000m



gold medallist, cracked the field with two laps to go and streaked through the line with teeth gritted, collapsing as the timer flashed up her feat.

"The first 800m were a bit slow so I wasn't thinking it would be a world record," said Hassan.

"When I crossed the line I was so surprised."

"After you run the last 400m like that and set a world record it gives you so much confidence over 5000m," said Hassan, who will aim for a 1500-5000m double in the September 28-October 6 world championships in Doha.

Another experienced campaigner, Botswana's

Olympic silver medallist Nijel Amos, produced a stunning meet record in winning the men's 800m in 1:41.89 ahead of Kenya's Ferguson Rotich, France's world champion Pierre-Ambroise Bosse only managing ninth in a high-quality race.

Only four runners have gone faster than Amos' time, which was the 15th fastest ever run over the distance.

"Everything has been good in the last few weeks and I knew I could run 1:41 today," said Amos.

"The world record is not on my mind but if I'm patient, it will come."

- LISEK VAULTS 6.02M -

Another star showing came in the men's pole vault where Poland's inform Piotr Lisek again went over the mythical 6m barrier, winning with a best of 6.02m, going close three times at 6.06.

Kenyan Timothy Cheruiyot cruised to victory in the men's 1500m in 3:29.97, European 1500 and 5000m champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen -- still just 18 -- coming in second.

American teenager Sydney McLaughlin kicked off the evening in impressive style, setting a world-leading 53.32sec in the 400m hurdles.

The 19-year-old led from the first hurdle and scorched around the

track in muggy conditions, with temperatures of 28 degrees Celsius (82F) and high humidity.

There was further US success as world indoor champion Kendra Harrison streaked to a 100m hurdles win in a season's best 12.43sec.

There was no Caster Semenya in the women's 800m won by American Ajee Wilson.

The South African double Olympic is not appearing in the Principality despite having been cleared to run during her appeal at attempts by the Monaco-based world governing body for athletics, the IAAF, to introduce rules requiring female athletes in events between 400 and the mile to take medication to reduce high testosterone levels.

In her absence, Wilson won easily in 1:57.73, almost three seconds off Semenya's best for the season.

A loaded field in the women's 200m saw Shaunae Miller-Uibo of the Bahamas, the reigning Olympic 400m champion, win in 22.09sec ahead of Jamaica's Elaine Thompson, who won the sprint double in Rio, and two-time defending world 200m champ Dafne Schippers of the Netherlands.

Kohli lends support to "honest and committed" de Villiers

NEW DELHI, JUL 13 (PTI): India skipper Virat Kohli has lent his support to Royal Challengers Bangalore teammate AB de Villiers after the retired South African great broke his silence on his recent controversy.

The Indian captain described de Villiers, who was criticised for picking and choosing international assignments after announcing his retirement last year, as the "most honest and committed" person.

"My brother you are the most honest and

committed man I know. It's been unfortunate to see this happen to you. But know that we stand with you and believe in you.

"Seeing people enter your personal space has been sad to see and uncalled for. More love and power to you and your beautiful family. Me and Anushka are Always here for you guys" Kohli wrote on de Villiers Instagram.

In the middle of South Africa's disastrous World Cup campaign, a media report had claimed that the former Proteas cap-

tain had offered to come out of retirement a day before the squad was to be picked for the mega-event but the team management rejected it.

However, de Villiers, in a detailed statement on Friday, finally broke his silence on the controversy surrounding his international comeback, which never happened, saying he did not demand to come out of retirement at the 11th hour before the World Cup but was privately asked whether he was open to play the 50-over showpiece.

Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh also chimed in his support for the 35-year-old on Instagram.

"My dear friend and legend, your one of the nicest guys i've ever played cricket with an absolute gem of a person! There was never a chance for SA in this World Cup to win without you! It is your country's loss not to have you in the squad not yours. The bigger the player more the criticism! We all know what a gentleman you are," Yuvraj wrote.



ROME, JUL 13 (AFP): Juventus have signed Genoa's Cristian Romero for 26 million euros (29.3m), but the centre-back will stay with his current club for another season, the Serie A champions announced.

"Juventus and the player have signed a 5-year contract of employment until 30 June 2024," a statement said.

"Juventus has reached an agreement with Genoa for the free loan until 30 June 2020 of the registration rights of the same player and bonuses of maximum EUR 5.3 million will be paid to Genoa on achieving given sports

performances."

Romero, 21, played 27 games, scoring twice, in his first campaign in Italian football after joining Genoa from Belgrano in his native Argentina in July 2018.

The Stade Luigi Ferraris side only main-

tained their status in the Italian top flight thanks to a superior head-to-head record with 18th-placed Empoli.

The youngster is Juve's sixth close-season signing after midfielders Aaron Ramsey and Adrien Rabiot, defenders

Merih Demiral and Luca Pellegrini as well as the return of legendary goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon.

Juve have won eight straight Scudetto titles but Maurizio Sarri's side have failed to lift the Champions League since 1996.

51 injured as quake rocks southern Philippines

MANILA, JUL 13 (AFP): Fifty-one people were injured and several homes, churches and other buildings damaged on Saturday when an earthquake sent terrified residents of the southern Philippines fleeing their homes before dawn, police said.

The 5.8-magnitude shallow quake struck the northeast coast of Mindanao island at 4:42 am (2042 GMT Friday), with the Philippine seismology office recording seven less intense aftershocks.

Officers at the police station in Madrid town, near the epicentre, ducked beneath tables as the glass door of a filing cabinet splintered and a television set fell to the floor and shattered, police chief Lieutenant Wilson Uanite said.

"We saw people running out of their homes. A number of residences sustained minor damage like cracked walls," Uanite told AFP by telephone.

Patients were also evacuated briefly at the Madrid District Hospital,



which sustained cracks on its concrete walls, he added.

The roof of an old car park in Madrid collapsed, causing slight damage to the town's two fire trucks and three cars, Uanite said.

The impact was also felt in four neighbouring towns, damaging homes, two Catholic churches, a hotel, a gym, a bridge and a public market, while toppled power pylons blocked a key road, the civil defence office in the region said.

A restaurant tipped over into a nearby river in Cantilan town, while residents reported broken plates and glass and ceramic decorative figurines in their homes, police officer Johannes Tipon told AFP by telephone.

In Cantilan, masonry from a construction site fell through the roof of a neighbouring house, injuring a girl and her father as they slept, Tipon added.

The US Geological Service said Saturday's quake occurred at a

depth of 11.8 kilometres (7.3 miles).

The Philippines is part of the Pacific "Ring of Fire", an arc of intense seismic activity that stretches from quake-prone Japan through Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin.

The country's most recent deadly quake occurred in April when at least 11 people were killed and a supermarket collapsed in a 6.3-magnitude tremor that hit a region north of the capital Manila.

Mueller testimony on Russia meddling investigation postponed

WASHINGTON, JUL 13 (AFP): Special Counsel Robert Mueller's appearance in Congress next week to testify on the Russia election meddling investigation and allegations of obstruction by President Donald Trump has been postponed, the House Judiciary Committee announced Friday.

Mueller was originally scheduled to appear before the committee on July 17.

Committee chairmen Jerry Nadler and Adam Schiff released a statement saying the planned sessions would take place on July 24 for an "extended period of time."

American media had reported earlier Wednesday that some

committee members viewed the originally planned sessions as too short.

Completed in March after a more than two-year investigation into Russian election meddling in the 2016 presidential election, the Mueller report documents numerous instances of attempted collusion between Trump's campaign and Russia, but found no grounds for criminal conspiracy charges.

The report also listed ten occasions when Trump allegedly attempted to obstruct the investigation.

But Mueller refrained from recommending criminal charges against the president, saying he had



no power to do so.

That led to Trump declaring that he had been fully cleared by the probe, while Democrats in Congress began calling for more investigations and impeachment, saying the report was evidence of criminal wrongdoing.

On May 29, in his only public comment since completing the report, Mueller said he had not exonerated

Trump of obstruction of justice, but said Justice Department policy prevented him from charging the president.

On Friday, Democratic Congressman Jerry Nadler, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, said the committee is considering issuing articles of impeachment against Trump, but that "no final determination has been made.

26 dead, 56 injured in attack on Somali hotel: Official



MOGADISHU, JUL 13 (AFP): At least 26 people, including many foreigners, were killed and 56 injured in a suicide bomb and gun attack claimed by Al-Shabaab militants on a popular hotel in southern Somalia, a top regional official said Saturday.

"Twenty-six people were killed in the at-

tack and fifty-six others wounded, among those killed are... foreign nationals three Kenyans, one Canadian, one British, two Americans, and three Tanzanians. There are also two wounded Chinese citizens," regional president Ahmed Mohamed Islam told a news conference.

New Zealanders give up weapons after mosque killings

CHRISTCHURCH, JUL 13 (AFP): Dozens of New Zealanders handed in their firearms Saturday as a gun buyback scheme went into operation aimed at ridding the country of semi-automatic weapons in the wake of the Christchurch mosque attacks.

The first of more than 250 collections to be held nationwide was in Christchurch, where 51 Muslim worshippers were gunned down while at prayer less than four months ago.

The government, with support from opposition parties, immediately rushed through legislation to tighten New Zealand's gun laws.

Police Minister Stuart Nash said the objective was to "remove the most dangerous weapons from circulation".

With armed police monitoring the handover, 169 firearms owners handed in 224 weapons and 217 parts and accessories. They were then crushed in hydraulic presses.

More than USD 290,300 was paid out in compensation.

Regional police com-



mander Mike Johnson said 903 gun owners in the Canterbury region, which includes Christchurch, had registered 1,415 firearms to be handed in.

"Police recognise that this is a big change for the law-abiding firearms community and we are hearing really positive feedback from people as they come through today that they are finding the process works well for them," Johnson said.

"Canterbury firearms owners' attitude towards this process has been outstanding," Ray Berard, who moved to New Zealand from Canada 25 years ago, handed in an assault rifle. He told re-

porters he had been in the Canadian army and on the Canada shooting team but believed there was no place for military-style firearms in modern society.

"My wife is working as one of the project directors on the hospital rebuild and we were there on the day of the shooting and watched the 35-odd hearses leave the next day," he said.

A person can "do a lot of damage to a lot of people... if you're mentally unwell and you have a weapon that can shoot 100 rounds a minute." Licensed firearms owners have six months to surrender weapons

that have now been deemed illegal under the scheme, with an amnesty ensuring they will not face prosecution during that period.

After the amnesty expires, possession of a prohibited firearms will be punishable by up to five years in jail.

Australian-born Brenton Tarrant has been charged with the killings and is alleged to have used an arsenal of five weapons, including two military-style semi-automatic rifles, in the attacks on two mosques.

He has pleaded not guilty to terrorism charges, as well as 51 counts of murder and 40 of attempted murder.

Theresa May speaks of Brexit frustration in final interview as British PM

LONDON, JUL 13 (PTI): Theresa May has spoken of her frustration over not being able to see Brexit through and underestimating how "entrenched" the country's MPs had become on the issue of Britain's exit from the European Union (EU) in her final television interview as British Prime Minister.

May, who is currently serving as caretaker Prime Minister during the course of a leadership contest between UK foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt and former foreign secretary Boris Johnson, was forced to announce her resignation amid mounting rebellion within her own Cabinet over Brexit at the end of May.

"It had been incredibly frustrating that MPs on either side of the Leave-Remain divide had got so sort of entrenched that they just were not willing to make that compromise that would enable us to get the majority to get this through," May said in a BBC interview in 10 Downing Street on Friday.

"I sacrificed my job in order to try to get a deal. I sat down and tried to get a compromise with [Opposition Leader] Jeremy Corbyn to try to get a deal that would get through Parliament," she said.

Asked if she took responsibility for the failure to get a Brexit deal through, May said: "No. What people say to me

is on the one hand that I stuck too firmly to my red lines, and on the other hand people say I gave up too much, I compromised too much. Both of these cannot be true.

"But everybody in Parliament had a responsibility in how they voted on this issue."

The outgoing PM, who will be exiting Downing Street to make way for Hunt or Johnson by July 23, said she felt a "mixture of pride and disappointment" and that despite having to go earlier than she wanted, she had been the "right person" for the job and was "immensely proud" of what she had accomplished.

"One could always look back and say, 'If I'd sat down and talked to people more often,'" she said, in reference to any regrets.

The 62-year-old senior Conservative Party MP, who took charge as Prime Minister in the wake of David Cameron's resignation after the vote in favour of Brexit in June 2016, admitted she had wrongly assumed MPs would be "eager to get Brexit over the line".

"I actually think there's quite a difference between Parliament and the public. I think the public have got a very simple view. A decision was taken just get on with it and they are not in that same polarised way that Parliament has been about this issue," she said.



TO GO! The Pretty Little Liars, Ashley Benson grabs takeout for lunch in Los Angeles.

Millie Bobby Brown says she is not starring in 'The Eternal'



LOS ANGELES, JUL 13 (PTI): "Stranger Things" star Millie Bobby Brown has denied that she has been offered a role in Marvel Studios' upcoming feature "The Eternals".

The 15-year-old actor took to Instagram to shoot down the rumours that she will be starring in the film, which will be directed by Chloe Zhao of "The Rider" fame.

"OK, guys, this is the problem. Everybody thinks that I'm going to be in a Marvel movie. Not that I know of. My family and I have no idea. So, I just want to let everybody know that I'm not... as of right now," Brown said in a video she posted on her Instagram story.

Marvel is reportedly lining up a star-studded cast for the film.

Salma Hayek, Angelina Jolie, Richard Madden, as well as Keanu Reeves, are all in negotiations with the studio to join the film.

Created by Jack Kirby in 1976, the story of "The Eternals" is set millions of years ago when the cosmic beings known as the Celestials genetically experimented on humans to create super-powered individuals known as the Eternals along with the villainous Deviants.

Zhao is directing from a script by Matthew and Ryan Firpo. Marvel head Kevin Feige is producing.

Don Cheadle joins cast of 'Space Jam 2'

LOS ANGELES, JUL 13 (PTI): "Avengers: Endgame" star Don Cheadle has boarded the cast of "Space Jam 2".

The 54-year-old actor joins professional basketball player LeBron James and Sonequa Martin-Green in the sequel to the 1996 classic.

The details of his character are yet to be revealed, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Martin-Green, best known for starring in "The Walking Dead", will play the wife of James' character.

The long-anticipated follow-up to the Michael Jordan-Bugs Bunny hit will be directed by Terence Nance. "Black Panther" helmer Ryan Coogler is attached to produce.

"Space Jam" was a live-action/animated film that mashed up Looney Tunes characters with basketball stars and aliens. Bugs Bunny is expected to return for the sequel.



John Abraham to star in, produce hostage thriller 'Attack'

MUMBAI, JUL 13 (PTI): John Abraham's next will be action thriller "Attack", to be directed by debutante filmmaker Lakshya Raj Anand.

The film, based on a true story about a hostage crisis, will feature the actor as a lone ranger who leads an attack team during a counter operation.

Lakshya will also write the screenplay of the film, which will go on floors in December.

The project is a joint collaboration between John's JA Entertainment, Dheeraj Wadhawan and Ajay Kapoor's Kyta Productions.

"At JA Entertainment, we believe



in 'content first'. It is our endeavour to push the envelope and produce films that entertain and have something sig-

nificant to show to the increasingly discerning audience.

"Attack" is a taut, interesting thriller with a strong storyline and a genre that I love. I am happy that Dheeraj and Ajay are on board this very interesting project," John said in a statement.

Ajay described the film as an "intelligent, engaging story, which needs to be told for audiences of the younger generation."

"Working with John Abraham and his production banner has been a pleasure as we think alike on films. We look forward to this exciting collaboration," he added.

'Stuber' deals with toxic masculinity, says Kumail Nanjiani and Dave Bautista



LOS ANGELES, JUL 13 (PTI): Actors Kumail Nanjiani and Dave Bautista have said that they tried to tackle the phenomenon of toxic masculinity through their new film, "Stuber".

Talking to The Hollywood Reporter on the sidelines of the film's world premiere here, Nanjiani said they felt it was important for them to talk about "dude issues" through the movie because the way masculinity has been "traditionally defined" is causing "problems for everyone".

"I feel like we're in a time where we can talk about masculinity and how it's always been very traditionally defined in a narrow way and how that's led to problems for everyone for women and for men," Nanjiani said.

"I felt like it would be interesting to try to talk about that stuff in a traditionally very masculine genre. A buddy cop action-comedy is such a dude movie, so we thought it would be interesting to talk about dude issues that also affect the whole world, in a traditionally male genre," he added.

Bautista said there is an underlying message about toxic masculinity in the film.

"Throughout the film, we're constantly talking about it. Sometimes you don't realise it because we're making you laugh or disguising it with action, but we really do have the discussion throughout the film," he said.

"Stuber", directed by Michael Dowse, is about an Uber driver, who picks up a grizzled cop, played by Bautista, who is hot on the trail of a brutal killer. The driver finds himself thrust into a harrowing ordeal where he has to keep his wits, his life and his five-star rating.

The film released in the US on Friday.

Janhvi a sincere and hardworking actor: Rajkumar Rao



MUMBAI, JUL 13 (PTI): Rajkumar Rao is impressed by the professionalism and hardwork of newcomer Janhvi Kapoor, who is sharing screen space with him in "Rooh-Afza".

Shooting on the horror comedy is currently underway in Agra after the crew completed their Manali schedule.

The Hardik Mehta-directed film marks maiden collaboration between Rajkumar and Janhvi.

Talking about his experience of working with the young actor, Rajkumar said in a statement, "Janhvi is phenomenal. She is such a sincere and hardworking actor. I think what we have seen her in 'Dhadak' is just a hint of her talent, she is way more talented than that."

Co-produced by Dinesh Vijan and Mrighdeep Singh Lamba, the film revolves around a singing ghost who puts grooms to sleep so it can possess their brides.

Also starring Varun Sharma of "Fukrey" fame, "Rooh-Afza" is scheduled to be released in March 2020.

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Aries:

It's not you versus them. It's the two of you against the problem. Think and work like an A-team, Aries. If the foundation you have laid is strong, you'll find a way to survive this storm. But don't forget to resolve the conflict in your own head first. What you need to keep in mind as you move forward: love is not a battleground.

Taurus:

On the cards for this weekend: love, harmony and togetherness. Spend more time with the soul family. Spend more time in the company of those who make you feel like 'home'. For some of you, this could be a time of positive changes on the domestic front. PS: Let your home transform into a haven of good vibes.

Tip: Expect positive changes on the domestic front.

Gemini:

Ah, the classic communication gap! Why are you shying away from sharing your side of the story, Gemini? Daily reminder: you matter and so do your feelings. If you don't have clarity on how to put things forth, step back.

Retreating into your space of silence will help you find the answers you need right now. Tip: You have the permission to express your side of the story.

Cancer:

You know what's sexy? Hustling hard and staying focused. Blinders on, Cancer. Refuse to budge until your mission is accomplished. The success you deserve will come to you in due course of time. It's amazing how much you will have shifted by the end of the year. But for now, you're being asked to cultivate patience.

Tip: Hustle hard and stay focused. You are in the process of manifesting your best life.

Leo:

A wish is being granted, Leo. The Universe wants to experience cosmic union with your divine counterpart—somebody who nourishes your soul and holds a mirror for you to see light within. Single lions, get ready to meet somebody with serious potential. Has a loved one been trying to play Cupid for a while? There's no harm in considering your options.

Virgo:

The full moon is a time of 'fullness'. If you wake up feeling overwhelmed, know that you aren't going crazy. You're just synching with Mother moon. Word for the wise: allow yourself to feel your emotions in their entirety. This is the secret to releasing that which no longer serves you. In the realm of love and relationships, temporary separation may be on the cards. Be patient, Virgo. If the love you share is real, they will find their way back into your Universe.

Libra:

Have you been dancing with your demons yet again? What the Universe wants you to remember: you are in the midst of a massive ascension. Learn to use the power of manifestation to create a beautiful reality for yourself. Your mind is the most powerful tool at your disposal. The words you use when in conversation both with yourself and others are just as important. Be kind. Be gentle. You are a work-in-progress.

Scorpio:

Turn your wounds into wisdom, Scorpio. Who says you have to make your way to a better

tomorrow alone? Given the magnitude of your trauma, it's best to work with a healer or therapist—somebody who can guide you in the right direction and hold space for you to release the wounds. Is there a person in your life who often plays Mother Hen? Get them on the phone.

Sagittarius:

When you find strangers telling you their stories, know that you're not going crazy. You're simply opening the channels of healing for yourself and the world. Meet people as they are, Sag. Your judgement-free zone will inspire them to take off their masks and become the most authentic version of themselves. For some of you, this transition could lead to permanent changes in your career and life path. Have you been thinking about serving the world in your own small way? This is your chance to consider being certified as a therapist, a life coach or a spiritual counsellor.

Capricorn:

What does the next phase of your relationship look like? Ask and it will be given. The Universe wants you to experience as a blissful ex-

istence as much as you do. Has distance been the bad guy between you and your beloved? The chapter you're about to begin scripting promises commitment, togetherness and a deeper level of intimacy. If you're feeling inspired to move closer to them, this is the time. Tip: Move closer to your beloved.

Aquarius:

Sensual pleasures are on the cards. For some, this could be a time of vacationing or spending time in their holiday homes. Your mantra: live life queen size or not at all. Coupled waterbearers, be sure to take thy amour on this getaway. Meeting each other as strangers in a different setting will not only rekindle the passion, but also help you see each other in a brand new light.

Tip: Sensual pleasures are on the cards.

Pisces:

On the cards for you this weekend: relationship harmony. But you need to be willing to put in the work it takes to get there. Remember, everything can be figured out if and when you are with the right person. Don't shy away from having 'the conversation'.