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SummitTIMES

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O N T O P O F T H E N E W S

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West Sikkim protest called off after Health Minister gives written assurance

NITESH R PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

State Health Minister, AK Ghatani, along with top health officials today conducted an emergency press conference regarding the recent protests against the department in West Sikkim.

Protesters under the banner of Sikkim Progressive Youth Forum had demanded proper health infrastructure and facilities at District Hospital in Gyalshing, West Sikkim.

The protest has been called off after a written assurance was given by the Health Minister.

"We are confident that 90% of their demands will be met within one month's time and the other 10% will be completed within 3 months," said Mr Ghatani.

Highlighting the State Gov-



ernment's plans for improving health infrastructure and facilities in Sikkim, he said that the Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling has been working "24x7".

"Government has not backed out of any political com-

mitments," he further stated.

At present, he said that there are 147 PHSCs, 24 PHCs and 02 CHCs in the State and that the Health Department is committed to making the health care system better and technologically sound.

Secretary, Health Depart-

ment, Vishal Chauhan, also addressed the press conference and informed about the written assurance given to the protesters as per the Indian Public Health Standard [IPHS] norms. He stated that Gyalshing District Hospital already has 13 specialists and 10 labs.

"In many areas, it is more that IPHS norms," he stated.

Accepting the non availability of surgeon and radiologist, he said that the department is advertising to fulfill such vacancies.

He also highlighted that the newly recruited 47 General Doctor Medical Officers [GDMOs] have been sent to rural areas and now onwards every PHC will have two Medical Officers.

He further added that the final result of 261 Staff Nurses will be published shortly by SPSC and accordingly hospitals short on manpower will be staffed.

Further he added that the department is confident of fulfilling the written assurance within one month and is also ready for a third party assessment.

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SKM students' wing unloads criticism on State Govt

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's students' front has alleged that students in primary section of government schools have been deprived of basic facilities. The students' front has demanded that the government provide all required basic facilities in the primary section for the overall development of students.

Addressing a press conference here today, SKM students' front vice-president, Bhim Kumari Sharma, alleged that kindergarten sections in the government schools do not have proper facilities of toilets, playgrounds and other basics.

On the same, she added that due to lack of such basic facilities, most of the people do not want to send their children in government schools resulting in a decrease in enrolment of students.

She also alleged that the State Government

was never serious about libraries in school so the government students have been deprived of new and good books in the school library. She demanded the government to immediately provide all required basic facilities in the government schools.

Students' front chief convener, Karma Tashi Bhutia, in turn, stressed upon the need of State Education Board in the State. He alleged that the SDF government has failed to setup the board and pointed out that schools were affiliated to CBSE and new academic session of schools start in

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Veteran's exhibition match to be held under floodlights at Paljor Stadium

SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

Gangtok-based Sikkim Boys Football Club today announced a veteran's football exhibition match under floodlights at Paljor Stadium on Saturday evening. The exhibition match will be on the theme, 'In celebration of cervical cancer vaccination launched in Sikkim,' as a support from Sikkim Boys FC to the HPV vaccination campaign of the Sikkim Government.

The match will be played between Sikkim Boys FC [veterans] and Namchi Veterans thus providing an opportunity to witness footballers from yesteryears playing once again at Paljor Stadium.

The match is scheduled to kick off at 6:30 pm.

The exhibition match is also part of the regular activities of Sikkim Boys FC.

The club had organised its annual Mahendra Karki Memorial Football Tournament and played in C Division football league of this season. The club aims to continue with its footballing events to promote talent and also to recognise ex-players of Sikkim.

Centre withdrawing notification on social media hub, AG informs SC

NEW DELHI, AUG 3 (PTI):

In a U-turn, the Centre today told the Supreme Court that it was withdrawing its notification proposing to create a social media hub, which some have alleged could become a tool to monitor online activities of citizens.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra considered the submission of Attorney General K K Venugopal, appearing for the Centre, that the impugned notification was being withdrawn, and disposed off petitions challenging it.

Venugopal told the bench, comprising justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y

Chandrachud, the social media policy would be reviewed completely by the government.

The bench was hearing a petition filed by TMC MLA Mahua Moitra alleging that the Centre's social media hub policy was to be used as a tool to monitor social media activities of the citizens and has sought quashing of the same.

The apex court, while agreeing to hear the plea on July 13, had asked the government whether its move to create such a hub was to tap people's WhatsApp messages, and observed that it will be like creating a "surveillance state".

Govt clears elevation of Justice K M Joseph to SC

NEW DELHI, AUG 3 (PTI): The government has cleared the recommendation of the Supreme Court collegium to elevate Justice K M Joseph, who heads the Uttarakhand High Court, to the top court, ending a long standoff with the judiciary.

The government has also given its nod to appoint Madras High Court Chief Justice Indira Banerjee and Orissa High Court Chief Justice Vineet Saran to the SC.

Justice Joseph's name was recommended for appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court by the collegium headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra on January 10.

On April 30, the government had returned the recommendation for reconsideration on the ground that he lacked seniority.

The executive had also pointed out that several high courts remain unrepresented and Justice Joseph's elevation would be against the principle of regional representation.

His parent high court is the Kerala HC. Justice Joseph had struck down the imposition of President's rule in Uttarakhand in 2016 after the dismissal of a Congress government led by Harish Rawat.

The collegium on May 16 in-principle reiterated the decision to recommend Justice Joseph's name.

Sources said their warrants of appointment are likely to be issued by Monday.

The number of judges in the top court after the appointments would go up to 25. There would still be six vacancies.

LS passes bill to create national sports varsity in Manipur

NEW DELHI, AUG 3 (PTI): A bill to establish a National Sports University in Manipur to promote sports education was passed by the Lok Sabha today, as several members sought the inclusion of sports as part of a comprehensive education curriculum.

The National Sports University Bill 2018, which seeks to replace an ordinance promulgated on May 31, was passed by a voice vote.

Replying to the debate on the bill which had started on August 1, Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said the university would be set up in Manipur at a cost of Rs 524 crore to promote sports coaching and research.

The legislation was earlier introduced in the Lok Sabha in August 2017, but could not be passed. Hence, the government had to come out with an ordinance, the Minister said.

A sportsperson will be the university vice chancellor, while its academic council will also comprise sports personalities, Rathore said.

Replying to concerns raised by members during the debate on the bill, he said all medal winners in the country were funded from the National Sports Development

Fund in which all citizens can contribute money.

He said the government provided stipends to sportspersons, besides a variety of monthly allowances to them for food and other things. He said the government has also increased the salary of coaches.

The bill seeks to set up a specialised university in Manipur, which would be the first of its kind, to promote sports education in the areas of sports sciences, sports technology, sports management and sports coaching.

Besides, the proposed university would also function as the national training centre for select sports disciplines by adopting best international practices.

Among other things, the legislation proposes to empower the university to establish 'Outlying Campuses' throughout the country and also outside India.

"Apart from academic programmes and research, the university and its Outlying Campuses' will also impart training to elite athletes, sports officials, referees, and umpires and evolve as centres of excellence in the various discipline of sports," said the statement of objects and reasons of the bill.

In order to make the university a world-class institution, the government has signed an agreement with two Australian universities -- University of Canberra and Victoria University -- for development of curriculum, research facilities and laboratories, among others.

Earlier, N K Premchandran (RSP) asked what was the need for bringing an ordinance for this. He said a university has to be autonomous in character but the provisions of the bill defy this.

As per the provisions of the bill, he said, the central government had the full authority and control over the institution which, therefore, will not be autonomous.

Anurag Singh Thakur (BJP) said this was an extraordinary effort of the government to promote sports in the country.

He said sports tournaments provided a platform to explore young talents and there should be a special fund for MPs to organise such events. He also suggested a comprehensive school education policy with thrust on sports.

Thakur, who has been associated with cricket as an administrator, also suggested using former defence personnel, who had ex-

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Government of Sikkim

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SLTTJAC remind govt of 2-month commitment to get LT seats

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

A meeting of the central executive committee of the Sikkim Limboo Tamang Tribal Joint Action Committee, chaired by its president, SP Limboo, here on 01 August, discussed the Limboo-Tamang seat reservation issue and other future programmes of the organisation, a press release of the organization informs.

The meeting discussed that the LT seat reservation which has been pending till date due to what the SLTTJAC sees as the "failure of the State government" in taking appropriate and sincere steps in time.

The release adds that due to vote politics, members of Limboo and Tamang community have been deprived of their political rights for 15 years and that injustice continues to be meted out to these two communities in the seat reservation issue.

The release mentions that Limboos and Tamangs started receiving different benefits of their Scheduled Tribes status only after five years of their recognition as ST, job reservation for LTs should be 15% as per their population but it was given at 14% and now further decreased to 13%, delay in the land protection act for LT etc.

The release adds that committee has done all the work to get their constitutional rights and that now the two communities were all set for the last fight to get their seats.

The release states that since the State government announced to reserve seats within two months, the government should fulfill its words.

The release adds the Limboos and Tamangs of Sikkim were ready to go to any extent to get their seats if the government would fail to do so in two months.

West Sikkim protest called off...

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He added that in a democracy, there is no solution without discussion and added that that the department is "willing to discuss with everyone and anywhere" for the larger good of the citizens.

Mr Ghatani, while expressing confidence in fulfilling the demands of the protesters, informed that a 50-bedded hospital on alternative forms of medicine like Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, etc is also slated to come up in the West district headquarters.

One of the protesters expressed happiness on the written assurance made by the Health Minister and stated that they have now called off the protests.

However they have stated that if the department fails to meet the deadline, they will again take forward the "movement in a democratic way".

DISHA North holds meet in Mangan

WANGCHUK BHUTIA MANGAN, 03 AUG:

District Development Coordination Monitoring Committee [DISHA], North district held a meeting today at Zilla Bhawan in Mangan, North Sikkim. The meeting was presided over by MP Rajya Sabha, Hishay Lachungpa, in the presence of Deputy Speaker SLA, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, Forest Minister, TW Lepcha, Chairperson, SNT Division, Pinto Namgyal Lepcha, Senior Superintendent of Police, North, KD Sangdarpa, district officials and Panchayats.

A brief note on the objective of the meeting was presented by the DC North. He highlighted on the action being taken on issues brought up in previous DISHA meetings. He also informed that the demand for a mortuary house at the district hospital will be forwarded to the Health Department.



He further sought update and status of all the ongoing schemes and its progress in the district.

Additional DC, Development, KR Limboo, presented report on MGNREGA, CMRHM and REDRH houses.

Likewise, Divisional Engineer, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana [PMGSY], presented detailed report on PMGSY while Superintendent Engineer, Power Depart-

ment, presented a report on Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gram Jyoti Yojana [DDUGJY].

Similarly, District Medical Officer, North highlighted the performance of various health programmes in the district while representative of Human Resource Development Department presented the academic and human resources report under HRDD.

The meeting also had

an interaction session wherein issues of health sector, power supply, quality education and roads were addressed by Panchayat members.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Speaker SLA stated that the implementation of departmental schemes will not succeed unless the engineers and officials are dedicated and responsible.

He also directed completion of CMRHM hous-

es at the earliest.

"If there are any genuine cases left for the construction of houses, the Panchayat can submit the list to the administration," he added.

The MP Rajya Sabha, in his address, urged officers to give a deadline for every work under proper monitoring. He also urged all the Panchayat members to avoid signing any completion paper without proper verification of the quality of the works. He further informed that officers who are transferred will not be given relieving order without NOC from concerned officer, Panchayat and area MLA.

Highlighting on the issue of BRO, the MP urged that the road from Seven Sisters to Thingchim Zero and RangRang to Mangan should be given priority and need to be repaired as early as possible.

World Breastfeeding Week observed in Chungthang



SUMMIT REPORT

MANGAN, 03 AUG:

World Breastfeeding Week was observed at Chungthang with a special programme organized by ICDS Chungthang Tribal Project at Chungthang BAC hall in North Sikkim.

Panchayat president, Chungchung Lepcha, attended the event as chief guest in the presence of Theng Ward Panchayat, Tshering Lepcha.

Medical Officer Dr Labin Basnet spoke on the benefits of breastfeeding, maternal health

and immunization while Station House Officer, Pema Rana, shed light on the Acts and laws related to domestic violence and child abuse.

Child Development Project Officer spoke on the importance of observing Breastfeeding Week and shared details of the schemes and functions of ICDS, breastfeeding practices and Infant & Young Child Feeding [IYCF] services.

The programme also had quiz and cooking competitions among the participants.

ATMA Nagaland team visits ICAR NRC for Orchids, Pakyong

GANGTOK, 03 AUG [PIB]: A delegation of the Agriculture Technology Management Agency [ATMA] from Nagaland visited ICAR NRC for Orchids, Pakyong in East Sikkim on 01 Aug. The team comprised of 11 staff members of ATMA and one progressive farmer of Nagaland's Zunheboto district.

Director, ICAR NRC, Dr DR Singh, welcomed the participants and interacted with them. During the interaction, he emphasized on the

government's policies and schemes for doubling farmer's income.

Dr Singh also explained the prospects and importance of orchid cultivation in India and all over the world.

During the field visit, Scientist, RK Pamarthi, highlighted the importance of the management aspects of orchid germplasm and breeding value while Technical Assistant, Ajay Bhushal, explained the potential and importance of orchid cultivation.

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7 CMRHM and PMAY-G houses inaugurated in Zoom

GYALSHING, 03 AUG

[IPR]: Health Minister, Arjun Kumar Ghatani, who is also the area MLA of Salghari Zoom constituency, inaugurated seven houses constructed under the Chief Minister's Rural Housing Mission [CMRHM] and Prime Minister Awas Yojana-Gramin [PMAY-G] at Zoom Gram Panchayat Unit in West Sikkim today.

In a series of programmes, Mr Ghatani inaugurated three CMRHM houses at Sampang Gaon and handed them over to the beneficiaries Younash Rai, Surendra Rai and Harka B Rai.

Thereafter, he inaugurated four houses constructed under PMAY-G at Central Zoom and Dhargaon and two houses at Khaling Gaon

and handed over to the beneficiaries, Gayatri Rai, Sumitra Rai, Chatur Singh Rai and Janga B Rai at their respective wards.

During the series of inaugurations, he interacted with the beneficiaries and detailed the vision and pro-people policies of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling for their social and economic upliftment.

SKM students' wing unloads criticism on State Govt

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Feb while the CBSE new academic session starts in June or July.

He added that the changing of the school curriculum or books has been affecting schools since these happen mid-term.

Mr Bhutia mentioned that if the State had its own education board, then it could teach students about history, geography and other details of Sikkim. He stated that students do not have the opportunity to learn about Sikkim much since schools here are affiliated to CBSE.

He mentioned that the SKM manifesto of 2014 has already announced constituting a State Education Board.

On the issue of the admission in Sikkim University, Mr Bhutia asserted that SU was a central subject so instead to pressurizing the university administration for admission of locals, SDF MPs should raise this issue in the Parliament.

He also expressed surprise over raising of the issue by SDF Ministers after 10 years of

the establishment of the university in the State. He alleged that the State Government was not serious or sincere in implementing educational scholarships to students of Sikkim.

On the recent announcement of one family-one job of the State Government, SKM students' front general secretary, Sonam Chopel Sherpa, stressed on first regularizing all MR and adhoc employees and work for the welfare of existing government employees instead of making such announcements.

He demanded inclusion of 402 SSA employees in government pay roll and sought regularization of all adhoc and MR employees in the school and release of all arrears for the pay revision in one installment (wef from 2016).

He also demanded regularization of the services of 3,486 adhoc teachers under SSA and HRDD, assistant professors and implementation of equal work-equal pay properly in the State. He further demanded that the government stop po-

litical victimization of teachers.

Students' front secretary, Zigma Dorjee Bhutia, strongly condemned and criticised the holding of a party meeting at Sombaria Senior Secondary School in West Sikkim today during school hours.

He also demanded that the government provide good quality school uniforms before the school session begins.

Likewise, SKM general secretary [press & publicity], Bikash Basnet, mentioned that the SKM 2014 election manifesto had programmes to regularise all adhoc teachers, laptops for students from class 8 onwards with internet facilities, scholarship release before 31 March every year, end to political victimization and framing of an innovative transfer policy, provision of all basic required facilities and infrastructure in schools and others.

He added that SKM would also set up the State Education board, and school service commission and other steps to make Sikkim an educational hub.

SKM trying to instigate driver community: SDF

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

Sikkim Democratic Front has criticized Sikkim Krantikari Morcha driver front's allegations that despite collecting revenue from the drivers, the state government is not working genuinely for the welfare of drivers in the state.

In a press release issued today, SDF has alleged that SKM is making false statements and trying to instigate the driver community.

The party has said that only 11,000 different types of vehicles were registered in 1995 which has now increased to around 80,000 in the State. It is added that due to overall development of Sikkim under the SDF government especially due to development in tourism sector 20 lakh tourists have been coming to Sikkim every year.

On the same, the release adds that the increase of tourist inflow in Sikkim has created more than 50,000 jobs and other

job opportunities in the State and drivers have benefitted a lot by using these opportunities.

Sikkim has been developed as a model place for drivers and others involved in the transport profession, SDF has said.

SDF party drivers front, Transport Department and the party president have always been concerned about addressing problems and issues faced by drivers, the release states further adding that the government has been addressing demands placed by drivers and will continue to do so in the future as well.

The SDF government has been providing ex-gratia amount of Rs 5 lakh to family members of drivers who lose their life in an accident, the party has said further detailing other benefits provided to drivers.

SKM is trying to misinform and instigate people with baseless allegations but people know the truth, the party has further said.



Sikkimese footballers to play in upcoming Goa Pro League



REBYNARANA GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

Five Sikkimese footballers along with one from Kalimpong are all set to play in the Goa Pro League 2018 being organised by Goa Football Association. The league will commence from Sept next month.

Mobin Rai, Sonam Zangpo Bhutia, Ugen Pinto Sherpa, Ong Tshering Lepcha [junior] and Bhaichung Bhutia are from Sikkim while Cho Tshering Lepcha is from Kalimpong. These players will be representing FC Bardaz Goa for seven months as per their contract. They are expected to leave for Goa on 17 Aug and will be attending pre-season training with their club first.

Speaking to Summit Times, 24-year-old Mobin Rai, who hails from Kewzing, South Sikkim, has recently played for Hyderabad FC for almost six months. He is a product of Sikkim Himalayan Gangtok Club. Mobin has extended gratitude to the organisers for selecting him for the league.

"If we play well in this league then we might get chance to play in Malaysia as FC Bardaz Goa

management also has a club there. I will give my best performance for the club," he added.

He informed that reputed teams like Churchill Brothers, Dempo, Salgachor, FC Goa, etc are likely to participate in the said league.

Likewise, Sonam Zangpo [24] of ShotakBasti, East Sikkim has also expressed happiness over his selection for the league.

"This is our first big league. I hope to perform well to be spotted by big clubs through the league," said Sonam.

Zangpo is a product of United Sikkim Football Club and has played for LangsingShillong Football Club and numerous other clubs of the nation.

Ugen Pinto Sherpa [26] hails from Soreng in West Sikkim and at present is playing for United Sikkim FC as its goal keeper for this season.

Ong Tshering Lepcha [23] is from GnonSangdong in Lower Dzongu and is a product of Sikkim Himalayan Gangtok Club while Bhaichung Bhutia [26] hails from Tathangchen and is also a product of Sikkim Himalayan Gangtok Club.

Gangtok on
Saturday,
04 Aug

Temp: 26°C/18°C
Forecast: Most-
ly cloudy, widely
separated thun-
dershowers.
Sunrise: 05:00 AM
Sunset: 6:22 PM

Aakraman
FC scores
another
victory at
SFA Premier
Div League

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 AUG:
A hattrick by Bigendra Rai helped Sikkim Aakraman Football Club secure three more points from another victory in the ongoing Sikkim Foot-

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Gangtok Round Table 301 to honour
media personalities

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 02 AUG:
Gangtok chapter of NGO Round Table India, Gangtok Round Table 301, will be organizing an event under the banner of "Titans of Media" to honour State press and media personalities at Hotel Yangthang Heritage in the capital on 07 Aug.

Addressing the press on 02 Aug, Chairperson of Gangtok Round Table 301, Pravin Agarwal, said that the press and media being the fourth pillar of democracy holds special significance in any society with Sikkim being no exception.

"Media has undoubtedly played an important role in bringing out true information while maintaining peace and tranquility in the State," he added.



It is informed that the programme is designed to honour hardworking and deserving press and media personalities in the field of print, digital, radio, electronic and women media personalities. The organizers in association with Press Club of Sikkim will be unanimously selecting five media persons of the State for the honour.

"The names will be revealed on the day of the event," said the organisers.

It may be mentioned here, Round Table is an international friendship organisation founded in England in 1927 and has now spread to 52 nations. It was established in India in 1962 and has 4850 members across the country.

The Gangtok Round Table 301 was formed in 2017 and since then has conducted many social activities.

It is informed that the NGO has since then asso-

ciated itself with V Guard Limited and has also constructed an auditorium at Mamring Junior High School in East Sikkim.

President, Press Club of Sikkim, Joseph Lepcha, thanked the NGO for coming up with the initiative of felicitating and honouring representatives of the fourth pillar of democracy.

Governor Shrinivas Patil will be attending the event as chief guest, it is informed.



National Conference on Indian
Science at Sikkim University

GANGTOK, 03 AUG [PIB]:

Sikkim University's Department of History organized a three-day national conference on 'Indian Science: History and Historiography' from 01-03 Aug at Cauveri Hall of SU.

Vice Chancellor, Professor Jyoti Prakash Tamang, presided over the inaugural session in the presence of Member, ICHR, Prof Narayan Rao, as chief guest accompanied by Dr Bal Mukund

Pandey of Akhil Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Yojana, New Delhi as guest of honour.

The conference sought to initiate a dialogue among historians of Indian Science and Technology on various aspects of traditional knowledge system. It proposed to look into the realm of traditional science and to engage with the emerging discourses of rediscovering the traditional knowledge

and its dissemination throughout the world. It also sought to understand the contribution of Indian knowledge in all spheres of human life.

In his address, Vice Chancellor, Prof Tamang, stressed on the importance of inter-disciplinary approach to research work and encouraged the faculty members and students to be involved in diverse fields of study.

Workshop held on First Level Checking of EVMs and VVPATs

GANGTOK, 03 AUG (IPR):

In keeping with the direction of Election of India, a workshop on First Level Checking (FLC) of EVMs and VVPATs for DEOs and Nodal Officers of the State was held at the conference hall of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Baluwakhani today.

The one-day workshop was organized by the Office of the CEO which was attended by CEO, Sikkim, R Telang, District Collector (South), Prabhakar Verma, SDMs, Under Secretary and other officials from election department.

Under Secretary of Election Commission of Indian (ECI), OP Sahani and National Level Mas-



ter Trainer, Joint Secretary, Government of Himachal Pradesh, Virendra Sharma were the resource persons of the workshop.

Addressing the gath-

ing, CEO, Sikkim, R Telang said that Election Commission of India has presented people with an opportunity to understand the technicalities associated with EVMs and VVPATs.

"Lot of speculation goes on if we do not know the truth and it is very important to understand what the real facts are," he said.

Mr Telang stressed that every aspect is crucial and understanding the technical areas help us in broadening our knowledge so as to be able to clarify to the general public and polit-

ical parties during their questions and doubts.

During the session, Under Secretary, ECI, Mr. Sahani gave detailed presentation on Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and VVPAT machines. Technical advice to build specification and design of newer version were also touched upon.

He explained that the new version ensures safety and also talked about the various security features of the machines. Various technical rules and regulations which were framed by ECI; e.g. how machines were transported from

LS passes bill to create
national sports...

contd from pg01

focused on two or three sports and "neglected" others, while demanding that advertisement space should be given to all of them.

MB Rajesh (CPI-M) pointed out that China had established sports university in 1993 and currently it has 20 top class sports universities. "So we are 25 years behind China."

In a lighter vein, Rajesh said Croatia's population was 40 lakh, "which is equal to the number of people whose name is not in Assam's NRC."

"But Croatia has produced legendary football players and we failed to do that," the CPI(M) member said.

Dhananjay Mahadik (NCP) said that our country should also have infrastructure for car racing. "Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) money and Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MP-LAD) funds should also be allowed to be used to creating sports infrastructure," Mahadik said.

Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu (TDP) expressed hope that more sports universities will come up in the country in the near future. He also demanded that the government should formulate New Sports Policy as previous one was formulated in 2001.

Demanding a major hike in the sports budget, he said while India's sports budget was Rs 2,000 crore, UK's sports budget was Rs 9,000 crore and USA's stood at Rs 12,000 crore.

He claimed that even the Doordarshan only



Veterans lose to Drakula-VII at
Penlong I-Day football tourney

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 AUG:

Drakula Seven defeated Veteran-Seven [Khatro ke Khiladi] 05-03 today at the ongoing 72nd Independence Day Cup being played here at Penlong Sec-

ondary School in East Sikkim. Retired Indian footballer, Bhaichung Bhutia, who led the Veteran Seven team, also sponsored 10 jerseys for Drakula Seven at today's event.



**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
ENERGY AND POWER DEPARTMENT
VEHICLE AUCTION NOTICE**

Sealed tender are invited from the interested person(s)/ parties for the purchase of 08 (Eight) Nos. of condemned Government Vehicles pertaining to Energy & Power Department of the Government of Sikkim on metallic value and on 'as it is where it is basis'. These vehicles can be located at DPH Complex/Gangtok. The details of the vehicles are as below:-


SL.NO.	VEHICLE REGISTRATION NO/TYPE	METALLIC VALUE
1.	SK-01-G-0908/Gypsy	Rs.11210.00
2.	SK-01-G-0915/Gypsy	Rs.10797.00
3.	SK-01-G-0961/Gypsy	Rs.11623.00
4.	SK-01-G-0935/Gypsy	Rs.10797.00
5.	SK-01-G-0950/Gypsy	Rs.10797.00
6.	SK-01-G-0905/Gypsy	Rs.10797.00
7.	SK-01-G-6281/Gypsy	Rs.10797.00
8.	SK-01-G-0976/Gypsy	Rs.11387.00

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- Cost of tender form is Rs.500/- (Rupees Five Hundred) only for each vehicle, payable in any branch of the State Bank of Sikkim, obtaining Bank Receipt (B/R) under the Revenue Head '0801-Power-80-general 800-other receipts'.
- Tender Forms can be obtained from the office of the Assistant Engineer (Mech.) AWS, DPH, Gangtok during the working hours from 10 to 4 PM.
- The tender form should be submitted within 10 working days from the date of publication.

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**ENERGY & POWER DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
GANGTOK**

No. 19/Const-I/Power/W/06-07/ Dated: 01.08.2018

PUBLIC-NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public of Nimthang, Nandok, Naitam, Rizay, Lower Tathangchen, Chongay, Merung, Gaygay Lakha, J.N. Road, Karponang, Kyognosla, Chupsu, Changu, Thegu and Yakla, East Sikkim that "The 132-KV Single Circuit Transmission Line from Lower Lagyap Hydel Power House (LLHP) Ranipul to Sherathang Near Nathula" could not be charged on scheduled date due to some technical problem. Now the department has finalised that date of charging the same on 17th – 18th of August 2018. As a precautionary measure, the public of these areas are requested not to climb on tower, avoid plantation of sapling of trees and construction of domestic animals sheds along the line or within the tower base.

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SummitTIMES

Looking Out for the Young

Get them justice and also healing

There has been a noticeable spurt in news reports about sexual assault of minors in Sikkim. Every time a minor becomes a victim, the society should hang its head in shame because the young should always be considered as being under the collective care of the society. Every such incident tears into a growing cluster of holes through which too much innocence is bleeding out. It is obviously not enough to hyper-ventilate on social media or scream in the public domain demanding that the perpetrators be lynched. While it is necessary to be worried and important to be concerned, no durable solution can be fashioned by hysterical over-reactions. Decisions need to be better informed and it is imperative that the society first understand the situation and its own failings and then collaborate to keep the young out of harm's way.

Let's begin with the noticeable spurt in such crimes. It is unlikely that pedophilia has only just arrived in Sikkim. But isn't that what the rise in crimes against children seems to suggest? Since no experts seem to be stepping up and doing any explaining for the society, we begin the discussion by throwing in our hypothesis. Child sexual abuse is neither the exclusive shame of any particular society, nor is it absent from any society either. Sikkim is no different. Ask around your circle of close friends, and in all probability there will definitely be some who suffered such abuse at some stage of his/ her childhood. Yes, it is really that common. What has changed in the recent decades in Sikkim is that the joint family system has splintered into nuclear units. Children are invariably preyed upon by people they, and more importantly their families, know and trust. Earlier, the predators were mostly relatives, which made speaking up difficult for the victims and criminal charges even after the abuse was reported difficult to be filed because of family issues and all such illogical excuses. The extended family has now been replaced by neighbours and acquaintances in the colony. They gain access to the children through the same chains of familiarity as was the case of extended families, but when the abuse is reported, there is no family council to hush up the matter and more and more parents now make it a point to report such cases. It is possible that the spike in the number of such cases is more because these cases are reaching the police in higher frequency nowadays and not necessarily because the average of such abuses has grown.

Again, this is not to suggest that nothing can be done about abuse of children because the problem has been around forever. What is being attempted is an effort to first accept that this is not a recent problem and hence not a challenge that can be resolved by the law & order machinery alone. What is required is a longer collaboration to understand situations which put children at risk and then build stronger defences around them – defences which do not choke out their childhood but are still robust enough to keep them safe. What we also need to establish at the earliest is the collective response to such incidents. As mentioned earlier, it is not enough to register our disgust online because what the victims need more desperately is our support to recover from the trauma. There has to be a checklist of things to do for the victims the moment an abuse comes to light. The victims are too young to understand the concept of revenge which most people demand in such situations; what they and their families need more urgently is counseling to make sense of and overcome their situation. Sikkim can keep deliberating over how it will keep its young safe, but before it comes to a consensus on that, it should first institute processes which extend the psychological salve that such hurts need.

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: letters@summittimes.com

The BRICS summit: important small steps, but little to show on big issues

DANNY BRADLOW
theconversation.com

Trying to evaluate a meeting like the BRICS summit that recently took place in Johannesburg is challenging. On the one hand, a summit is an exercise in political theatre. In this sense, success means that the leaders put on a good show of international camaraderie and issue a communique expressing their firm commitment to solving the common challenges facing their countries and the world.

On the other hand, an annual summit is the culmination of a year-long process of meetings of officials, politicians and non-state actors from the participating countries. They spend the year trying to reach agreement on specific deliverables that they hope their leaders will endorse in their communique, which is the summit's primary output.

This means that understanding the real meaning of the communique is essential to assessing the success of the summit. This requires paying close attention to what the communique does – and doesn't – say as well as to the things that it promises.

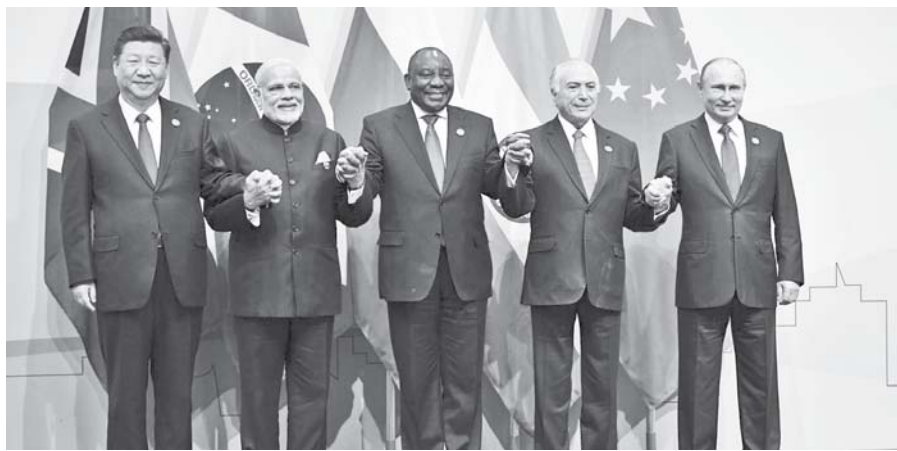
The Johannesburg BRICS summit delivered a mixed bag when judged on these two criteria. The communique makes clear that some solid work was done and that the participants have agreed to undertake some useful initiatives. But it's also clear that on some issues the leaders resorted to vague statements that hide their real differences. This suggests that, despite their accomplishments, there are differences in their overall commitment to the BRICS. In addition, key countries view it as merely one option for advancing their grand international relations strategy.

THE POSITIVE NOTES

The leaders issued a communique that suggested that they had a productive meeting and agreed on a range of issues.

They announced the formation of a new vaccines research centre in South Africa and their intentions to collaborate more in tourism and customs, technology, energy, the environment and agriculture.

On trade, the leaders followed the Chinese lead. They expressed their support for a rules based multilateral international trading system and called on all countries to comply with their World Trade Organisation (WTO) commitments. They also stated their support for the newly signed African Continental Free Trade Agreement and for the African



Union's Agenda 2063.

They agreed on the importance of promoting a more inclusive and sustainable international society, stressing the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals. And the leaders commended the BRICS' New Development Bank's for discussing innovative approaches to development finance.

They also praised officials for the progress that's been made in establishing a BRICS local currency bond fund. This will help the countries raise funds for development projects from each other and further develop their local capital markets. Progress also has been made in operationalising the Contingent Reserve Arrangement which is designed to provide central bank support to a member state facing balance of payments problems.

They also announced more people-to-people exchanges in sports, culture and research collaborations.

The leaders called for South Africa, Brazil and India to play a larger role in the United Nations and for a larger voice for Africa in the governance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

THE GAPS

The summit communique had some noteworthy gaps.

First, while the leaders expressed support for IMF governance reform, they failed to explicitly support South Africa's lobbying for a third chair for Africa on the IMF board of directors. They also didn't propose any other specific measures to improve African participation in IMF governance.

Second, the communique failed to specifically support Brazil, India and South Africa's efforts to win permanent seats on the UN Security Council.

The leaders highlighted their concerns about the challenges in the international trading system and called for it to become more inclusive and development oriented. But they didn't set out how the system should be reformed to achieve these objectives. This is particularly striking because their meeting came soon after the US and the European Union announced that they could begin working together to reform the WTO.

Similarly, their expression of support for the AU's free trade agreement and Agenda 2063 was devoid of any specific commitments. This is particularly noteworthy because both the Chinese and the Indian leaders combined their participation in the summit with visits to various African countries to whom they they made specific offers of support.

This suggests that India and China see the BRICS as only one channel for developing economic relations in Africa. It also means that South Africa's position as the BRICS' gateway to Africa is not assured.

FINANCIAL INTERVENTION

While the communique highlighted the progress made in operationalising the Contingent Reserve Arrangement, it gave no indication that the BRICS are planning to de-link the Contingent Reserve Arrangement from the IMF. This means that about 70% of the financing available through this initiative will be linked to reaching agreement with the IMF. This should be seen in the context of the BRICS lukewarm support for increased African representation in IMF governance.

In addition, while the communique commends the BRICS Bank for considering innovative approaches to development finance, it makes no

mention of its poor record when it comes to transparency, participation and accountability. In fact, the bank is less transparent, less open to consultation and less accountable than any of the other multilateral development banks.

Without improvement in these areas it is hard to see how the New Development Bank can become an environmentally and socially responsible funder of sustainable and inclusive infrastructure. The bank's lack of progress in the transparency scale exposes it to significant reputational risk.

HEDGING BETS

The BRICS have agreed some impressive initiatives and have taken some steps to strengthen their ties. But they have also failed to demonstrate that they will live up to their promise to be an effective advocate for global governance reform.

Key leaders have also shown that they are hedging their bets on the BRICS. They are using other vehicles to develop their international relations in Africa and at the global level.

The key takeaway therefore is that South Africa should be proud of its participation in the BRICS but should retain a healthy scepticism in its approach to the group. It should continue to diversify its international economic and political relations, should attach appropriate value to the BRICS and all the other regional and international forums and groupings in which it participates and South Africa should avoid over-investing in the BRICS.

[the writer is SARCHI Professor of International Development Law and African Economic Relations, University of Pretoria]

Mixing science and art to make the truth more interesting than lies

TIMOTHY CAULFIELD
theconversation.com

Science communication can be a tough game. There is so much noise — and misinformation — circulating in popular culture that it can be difficult to create a message that resonates.

This danger of misinformation is particularly true in the sphere of health, where celebrities and pseudoscience-embracing health gurus seem to dominate public discourse. Indeed, we live in world where Katy Perry has 110 million followers on Twitter, and the World Health Organization has 4.5 million.

And while belief in science-free health myths is nothing new, we do seem to be living in the golden age of misinformation. For example, research on the dissemination of information on social media has found that falsehoods "diffused significantly farther, faster, deeper and more broadly than the truth" — likely because lies are more interesting than the truth.

Also, belief in conspiracy theories and harmful health myths seem to be on the rise, which has played a role in declining vaccination rates and a rise of infectious disease outbreaks. We continue to see a massive, seemingly unbridgeable, disconnect between the science community and the general public on topics like GMOs, supplements and vaccination safety.

Of course, the reasons why individuals hold (and tenaciously hold onto) particular

health beliefs are fantastically complex and include issues of trust and personal identity. The operation of various cognitive biases — increasingly facilitated by social media — complicate the situation further.

But not all is lost. Surveys of the general public have found that most have at least some interest in science news. And there is evidence that we can improve our critical thinking skills at various stages of life and that these skills help protect against the acceptance of pseudoscience and misinformation.

So, there is a need for good science communication, there is a public appetite, and it has the potential to make an impact.

SCI + POP: USING ART TO TALK SCIENCE

But what mode of communication is the most effective? On their own, facts usually don't change an opinion or stimulate dialogue.

Indeed, simply dumping more evidence on people can lead to a further polarization and cause some to become even more hardline in their views. This is the well-known "backfire" effect.



But there are strategies that have been found to be more effective, including, to give a few examples, those that invite critical thinking and that offer alternate explanations; those that use narratives that resonate with their audience; and those that use artistic images.

I'd like to emphasize the value of that last one, art. There are many reasons why collaborating with artists makes a ton of sense, now more than ever.

ART WORKS: HUMANS ARE NATURALLY VISUAL
We process visual information very quickly as compared to text. If done well, graphic images can be a useful tool to communicate complex issues efficiently.

Also, evidence has consistently shown that a good narrative will overwhelm the straightforward presentation of data. So, a visual image that tells a good story has the potential to communicate a lot of information quickly and memorably.

In a world increasingly dominated by social media and short attention spans, the value of an image-focused communication strategy has become even more indispensable. Content that contains images generates more engagement and results in more shares on social media.

ART INVITES REFLECTION

Unlike many mediums, graphic and fine arts may engage people in a way that invites reflection and the consideration of unique perspectives. Art can generate an immediate, intuitive or emotional response that may be effective at deepening engagement.

The use of art may also encourage participation by people that may not otherwise be involved in science issues.

NDFB militant killed in Meghalaya gunbattle

TURA, AUG 3 (PTI): A member of National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) was killed in an encounter with police this morning in Meghalaya's East Garo Hills (EGH) district, a senior officer said.

Around 6 am, a team of police officers raided Tarasin village in Song-sak police station area of the district, having received information about the movement of militants in the region, Superintendent of Police Ringrang TG Momin said. "Based on the tip-off that some NDFB members and local miscreants have gathered at Tarasin village, an operation was launched early today to arrest them. On seeing a police team approaching, the militants opened fired, leading to an exchange of fire between the two sides," Momin said.

While most of them managed to flee, one militant, identified as Koma Boro, was killed in the exchange, the SP said, adding that a rifle and a magazine were seized from the possession of the deceased.

"The blood trails at the site of encounter also suggests that more militants might have suffered injuries in the firing," Momin added.

Landslides destroy Army transit camp, cut off road links

ITANAGAR, AUG 3 (PTI): Landslides, owing to incessant rain in the last couple of days, have left a trail of destruction in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh, while an Army transit camp located at Sessa was totally damaged, official sources today said.

However, there were no reports of any casualty.

The stretch of Bhalukpong-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) Road has been the worst-affected with reports of landslides in several portions of the road, the sources said.

The Kimi-Khupi road has also been badly hit.

Bhalukpong Extra Assistant Commissioner (EAC) Tomo Riba said that a massive landslide on August 1 hit the Army transit camp at Sessa and its ration store, barrack, generation room and ammunition



store were buried under the debris.

As many as 22 jawans and a Junior Commanding Officer (JCO) had a narrow escape while one of them sustained minor injuries.

Though the BCT road was closed, landslides blocked seven

locations between Pinjoli Bridge Point and Sessa and the area has been totally cut off, Riba said.

A team of officers led by Bhalukpong police station OC Dutto Bagra, rushed to the spot to take stock of the situation.

Mobile and radio connectivity have also been disrupted.

However, the Army personnel were shifted to another barrack located below the transit camp area.

The NEEPCO project road connecting Kimi with Pinjoli, Khuffi and Tenga has also been blocked at multiple locations due to landslide and erosion.

Fall in no. of people diagnosed with HIV in last 3 yrs: Health minister

NEW DELHI, AUG 3 (PTI):

There was an overall decrease in the number of persons diagnosed with AIDS in the country in the last three years, even as a few states had witnessed the emergence of "new hotspots" of HIV, Parliament was informed today.

In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, Union Health



Minister J P Nadda said Meghalaya, Mizoram

and Tripura had seen the emergence of such "hotspots" due to "high risk" behaviour among injecting drug users (IDUs) and unsafe sexual practices.

"There is a decrease in the number of HIV patients diagnosed during the last three years," he said.

According to the data shared by the minister, 2,00,465 people were diagnosed with HIV in 2015-16, 1,93,195 in 2016-17 and 1,90,763 in 2017-18.

In all the three years,

Maharashtra reported the maximum number of cases with 28,030 people diagnosed with HIV in the state in 2017-18.

For Mizoram, Meghalaya and Tripura, the government has identified the high HIV prevalence pockets affecting pregnant women and high-risk groups (female sex workers and IDUs), according to the data.

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Aakraman FC scores another...

contd from pg03

ball Association Premier Division Sikkim-League 2018 here at Paljor Stadium. Playing its fourth match in the league today, Sikkim Aakraman FC outplayed Boys Club, Gangtok 3-1.

The contesting first half of the match ended in a goalless draw. However, both the teams got some good opportunities to take the lead in the match but missed the net.

Both played head-to-head again in the second half to take the lead in the match. In the 68th minute, Bigendra Rai scored

the lead for Sikkim Aakraman FC and completed his brace within two minutes. Soon, in the 76th minute, Bigendra Rai scored his hat-trick in a spot kick to extend the lead of Sikkim Aakraman FC to 3-0.

Setu Rai gave some hope to Boys Club with his goal in the 81st minutes to come back into the match but it was not enough to stop Sikkim Aakraman FC from winning three more points with this 3-1 win.

State Sports Academy will take on SAI Namchi in another match in the league on 04 Aug.

Workshop held on First Level...

contd from pg03

prepare a timely FLC Schedule & Coordinate timely Start/completion of FLC. He also instructed for deputation of Officials from CEO's office to ensure proper FLC training, visits during actual FLC conduct and regular monitoring of FLC in all the districts.

He also highlighted various responsibilities of DEOs in districts, and further said DEOs are

overall In-charge and responsible for the conduct of FLC in the districts, they are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for FLC and ensuring smooth conduct of FLC in their respective places.

Mr. Virendra said, "It's a duty of DEOs to arrange sensitisation programme for political parties to

maximise their participation in the FLC process, DEOs must ensure proper preparation for conducting of FLC during the ECI observers visit, prior to start of FLC. DEOs must monitor the rejections, quality and progress of FLC through frequent visits to FLC hall, after completion of FLC of CU/BU/VVPAT and marking in ETS, DEOs should submit Certificate to CEO."

During the programme, hands on training session was also held where participants put forth their doubts and other queries related to newer version of machines to the resource persons and engineers of BEL and ECIL which were satisfactorily clarified by them pertaining to issues raised by the participants.



Flood waters recede from three Assam districts

GUWAHATI, AUG 3 (PTI): The flood situation improved in Assam today as deluge waters receded from Udalguri, Barpeta and Biswanath districts, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said.

According to ASDMA flood waters receded from the three districts but entered Darrang district today taking the total number of deluge affected districts to six and the number of people affected to 87,742.

The death toll in the deluge stood at 41 as no new death was reported today, it said.

Yesterday eight districts and over one lakh people were affected by the flood.

Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said the flood waters have overrun 153 villages in six districts - Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Golaghat, Sivasagar, Charaideo and Darrang.

At least 2,000 marooned people in Golaghat district have been rescued by the SDRF which pressed into service 14 boats.

The ASDMA also said that the deluge has submerged 6972.38 hectare of crop area in the six districts with 4852.18 hectare of it in Golaghat.

At least 400 houses in Lakhimpur, Golaghat, Sivasagar and Charaideo districts were completely damaged, while another 277 partially destroyed by the

swirling waters, the ASDMA said.

The Brahmaputra river at Nimatighat in Jorhat, Dikhow at Sivasagar town, Dhansiri at Numaligarh in Golaghat, Jia Bharali at NT Road Crossing in Sonitpur and Beki at Road Bridge in Barpeta are flowing above the danger mark, it said.

Submersion of roads due to rising water level of rivers, washing away of embankments, besides breaching of bridges and culverts have been reported, it said, adding erosion have been reported from Barpeta and Baksa districts.

The district authorities are running 108 relief camps and distribution centres sheltering 24,152 inmates, the ASDMA said.

Mixing science and art to make the truth...

contd from pg04

ART IS A POWERFUL FORM OF COMMENTARY

While there is a lot of great art that focuses solely on communication, art can also be used as of form of conceptual discourse. Art can be a powerful form of commentary.

As my brother Sean Caulfield, an award-winning artist and art professor at the University of Alberta and frequent collaborator, recently told me:

"Visual art has always played a vital role in fostering critical thinking in society. It has great power to communicate complex and nuanced ideas. This is why one of the first things totalitarian regimes do is to suppress open artistic expression and to heavily censor artistic

production."

For all these reasons, my research team at the Health Law Institute has collaborated with renowned artists on numerous art plus science projects. Some of our initiatives explore genomics, stem cell research, international immunization policy and vaccination myths.

We are continuing this work with a new social media-focused project called SCI+POP (use #SciPop to search Twitter and Instagram). Working with artists, including my brother and up-and-coming graphic designer Tess Heinrichs, we will regularly circulate images that communicate research findings, provide commentary on science and health policy issues, and, we hope, engage a

range of new audiences.

In a pop culture environment that has become increasingly noisy and fragmented, good science communication will require the use of as many different tools as possible. Art can play an important role.

While we may never rival the reach of Katy Perry and her 110 million Twitter followers, communications that include intriguing images can be a powerful and entertaining way to be part of the conversation.

[the writer is Canada Research Chair in Health Law and Policy; Professor, Faculty of Law and School of Public Health; and Research Director, Health Law Institute, University of Alberta]

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It was eye-opening to watch Kohli bat, says Curran

BIRMINGHAM, AUG 3 (PTI): Rookie England pacer Sam Curran says it was unreal to perform the way he did only in his second Test though bowling to Indian captain Virat Kohli made him think more about his bowling.

Kohli struck a majestic 22nd Test hundred, as India didn't let advantage slip on day two at Edgbaton. England lead by overall 22 runs in the series opener, with nine wickets to play with.

Curran said that Kohli's 57-run partnership with Ishant Sharma frustrated the hosts but they will try to fight back on day three.

"We had them at 100 for five, and felt in the game but then Virat played really well with their tail and frustrated us a little bit. Numbers 9, 10 or 11 aren't walkovers anymore, and they can all hold a bat now. It was a frustrating partnership, but we've just got to be positive going into tomorrow," said Curran after close of play on day two.

"Credit to a great innings there. I'm only in my second game, but I think it was a little eye-opener for watching the way he bats and how precise you've got to be with your lengths to him, he said.

After a fine start, Curran had struck thrice in eight balls to reduce India to 59-3. Then Ben Stokes also took two wickets before Curran returned to dismiss Hardik Pandya and finish with 4-74.

It was Kohli's brilliance, despite three dropped catches, that rescued India from a precarious situation of 148-6 and 169-7 later.

"Personally, it was obviously a pret-



ty special day for me with the ball. Coming on and taking a few early wickets, I can't really remember it was so unreal. You can't really predict (if it will swing) until you start bowling a few. But the breeze was pretty good out there, the clouds came in and it started swinging especially when the lacquer came off the ball," Curran said.

"Virat did nick a lot of balls outside off-stump that didn't carry as well. We stuck to our plans very well against him, and on another day they would carry. No one means to drop catches, and on another day they would be tak-

en. But you can't dwell on those things too much especially in a game like this, because there's going to be another chance coming at you straightaway," he added.

Thanks to his knock, India finished with only a 13-run deficit in the first innings. England were handed another blow later as R Ashwin bowled Alastair Cook and reduced them to 9-1 at close of play.

Curran said that the pitch had something in it for both batsmen and bowlers, yet it was difficult to predict a sufficient target for the fourth innings.

"The pitch has been pretty good runs, wickets, catches, everything. The bowlers feel in the game, the batters feel in the game. It is maybe starting to turn a little bit more as you saw Ashwin's ball to Cook there at the end did spin.

"We've just got to bat big tomorrow, and put India under pressure going into the fourth innings. It wasn't ideal losing Cook at the end there, but it was a big positive that we managed to bowl them out under our total. Everyone (here) got what they paid for it's going to be a great Test match, Curran added.

Lahiri tied 7th after flying start, Woods 14th

AKRON (US), AUGUST 3 (PTI): Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri shot a fine 5-under 65 to position himself in tied-7th place after the opening day of the WGC-Bridgestone Invitational at Firestone Country Club here.

Landing six birdies against one solitary bogey, Lahiri was three shots behind the leader and two-time WGC winner, Ian Poulter, whose 8-under 62 tied the record for lowest first-round score in the WGC-Bridgestone Invitational.

India's other player in the field, Shubhankar Sharma shot 2-over 72 and was T-63rd in the 71-man field. Sharma had two birdies against four bogeys in his third WGC appearance.

Tiger Woods, T-6 at the Open last month, and an eight-time winner at Firestone, opened with a 66 to sit at T-14.

Woods beginning on No. 10, sank a 50-foot birdie putt from off the green at No. 18 to make the turn in 3-under 32. His only bogey of the day came at his last hole, No. 9.



Englishman Poulter produced his lowest round in eight years with eight birdies and no bogeys as favourable scoring conditions resulted in a lot of low scores. Poulter's 62 was his best since 2010 UBS Hong Kong Open, where he had a second-round 60 enroute to lifting the trophy. Americans Kyle Stanley and Rickie Fowler were in a tie for second on seven under par after shooting opening 63s, while Spain's Jon Rahm, American Patrick Cantlay and South Korea's Si Woo Kim were then another stroke back on six under.

Lahiri and six others Rory McIlroy, Jason Day, Justin Thomas, Marc Leishman, Luke List and

Kevin Na shot 65 each to be T-7.

The 65 was Lahiri's lowest round at Firestone and his lowest opening round this season. This is his third appearance in the WGC-Bridgestone Invitational where he finished T-53 and T-33 in 2016 and 2015 respectively. He was T-5 after the opening round in 2016 following a 68.

Playing his ninth WGC, he has been T-28 three times for his best result.

Chasing his first win on the PGA Tour, Lahiri has had three top-10s this season -- at the CIMB Classic in Malaysia, CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES in South Korea and Travelers Championship.

Bhullar moves to 5th; Sandhu also makes cut at Fiji International

NATADOLA BAY (FIJI), AUG 3 (PTI): Indian golfer Gaganjeet Bhullar recovered from a shaky start to card three-under 69 for a share of the fifth spot at the midway stage of the Fiji International tournament here. Bhullar stands five-under overall. He is six shots behind the runaway leader Kiwi Ben Campbell, who shot 67 after his first round 66 to get to 11-under.

Of the four Indians in the field, Ajeetesh Sandhu (73-73) was the only other one to make the cut, while Shiv Kapur (80-72) and Chiragh Kumar (77-80) missed out.

Bhullar, on his maiden visit to Fiji, is enjoying some unexpected fan following. 'Bula' in Fiji means 'Hello' and it rhymes well with his surname.

The eight-time Asian Tour winner, smiled and said, "Every time I'm here (at the golf course), every third person is calling out my surname, 'Bula, Bula.' It's very good. I'm enjoying myself. My wife is here and we are enjoying ourselves, having a great time. It's a great place."

Campbell, whose sole professional win came earlier this year at the NZ PGA on Australasian Tour, shot 33-33 on either side of the turn and he may well have been a shot better but for his sole bogey on the 18th.

Right behind him is Australian Andrew Dodt (67-70) in sole second at seven-under 137, while two other Aus-



tralians Terry Pilkadaris (70-68) and Jarryd Felton (67-71) are Tied-3rd at six-under 138. Bhullar and six others are Tied-5th at five-under 139.

"I had a shaky start to the round, I started with a bogey and then I had another bogey on No. 3. Three-under 69 is not a great round, but I think with 36 holes to go I'm in a good position," he said.

On the fine season he is having, Bhullar smiled and added, "I'm doing exactly the same stuff I've been doing all these years. For some reason the ball is going in the hole more often.

"Yeah, the last one and a half to two months have been really good. I have two runner-up finishes and let's see what's next."

Three-time Major winner and the Natadola Golf Course designer, Vijay Singh (76-72), made the cut despite bogeying his last hole, the ninth.

Ernie Els (72-70) was T-20, while defending champion Jason Norris (72-76) made it on the line.



Marin outplays Saina in quarters of World Championships

NANJING (CHINA), AUG 3 (PTI): Saina Nehwal's impressive run came to a disappointing end at the World Championships as she suffered a straight-game loss to two-time champion Carolina Marin here today.

It turned out to be a lop-sided contest between the 2015 edition finalists as reigning Olympic champion Marin once again produced her 'A' game on the big occasion to complete an emphatic 21-6 21-11 victory.

Mixed doubles pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy also couldn't cross the quarterfinal hurdle, losing 17-21 10-21 to top seeds Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong of China.

A 5-4 head-to-head count meant little as Marin dismantled Saina with consummate ease. The Spaniard stamped her authority on the match, parading her heart out after winning every point.

"Her movement was very quick today. She was moving so fast and covering the court very quickly. The kind of shots that she played, it seemed like she was suddenly very fast. Also I had a late match yesterday so

to face someone so quick was difficult. I didn't understand what to do, she never gave me a chance to play my game," Saina told reporters.

Marin said: "I'm doing well since first day. I was in control today. I'm the fastest in the world, it is my strength and I have to keep doing it. I am happy to reach the semi-final. The favourite player (Tai Tzu Ying) to win the tournament lost today, so I'll try to give best tomorrow against China's He Bingjiao."

Marin played a perfect game to bamboozle Saina in the opening game. The left handed shuttler took just 12 minutes to race away with the game after earning 14 game points when Saina failed to retrieve a shot. The Spaniard closed it with a smash from close to the net.

Saina showed better fight in the early stages of the second game but Marin managed an 11-8 advantage at the break. The Spaniard stifled Saina with her stroke play and placement to surge ahead.

Marin gained 10 match points when Saina found the net and the Spaniard closed the match when the Indian went long again.

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Kashmiri boatman to the lazy lad: How sustainable fashion is styling the everyday man

RADHIKA SHARMA

NEW DELHI, AUG 3 (PTI): He can be a boatman who rows a shikara through the waters of Dal Lake and he can be this lazy lad who does not want to wear ironed clothes.

'A Man for All Seasons' offers the promise of sustainable fashion to the layman who wants to be anything he wants to be.

Presented by Good Earth, which is venturing in men's fashion for the first time, and Royal Enfield, the umbrella collection saw lables such as Raffughar, Shift, Suket Dhir, Pero, 11:11, Itoh and Antar-Agni, with accessories by Kesya and Raw Mango present their body of work.

Wajahat Rather of Ruffughar says he has woven a tribute to his childhood in Srinagar through his collection, 'Dastavez'. "When I was a kid, my grandfather would teach me the script with a 'kalam' (pen)," he told PTI.

The clothing line, which is about translating traditional Kashmiri silhouettes, used pixelated Urdu script so that it does "not hurt sentiments".

The designer has used handwoven and handspun fabric from Bhagalpur weavers.



Rather says sustainable fashion is important to get the craftsmen in villages the right wages.

"You have to pay the right amount. You need to see if we are paying a person or a machine. It's a slow process but that's the

real debate."

Using monochromatic palette to bring out the characters from the vibrant landscape of the Kashmir Valley, one can find a boatman, a blacksmith, a shepherd and an officer in Rather's designs.

Pero's Aneeth Arora said she wanted to create a comfort day wear line for men, but stayed true to her brand.

"You will find the subtle details which are synonymous with Pero - like the seams, the buttons, etc.

"The idea was to keep it very basic so that men don't get bored of it. They tend to be choosy, so bold colours may not always work. That's why there are basic designs of shirts and waistcoats," Arora told PTI over phone.

Handwoven clothes with natural dyes and intricate work, a signature of Pero, the line T-shirts, coats and overcoats in mostly monochromatic shades.

Suket Dhir says the theme 'Work hard, play harder' in his collection puts a spin to the whimsical man.

He emphasises the clothes are about reimagining fabrics, especially Bengali mulmul.

"We have never imagined blazers in mulmul; this is what we're doing with this collection," Dhir told PTI.

In pinks, chromes, mustard, whites and also parrot prints, the collection offers chic, sharp and comfortable experience to

the wearer.

"Like a lazy man's kurta with sporty collar and sleeves to simply roll them up. And you're good to go," he says.

Nimish Shah says the latest line-up under his label Shift is for someone who doesn't iron clothes and borrows "a blouse from his mother" or "a shirt from his father".

"It's modern menswear. It actually represents the generation of today who are ready to bounce off their feet. A modern freelancer in their 20s who may also work from home," Shah told PTI.

Lots of crushed material, khadi and washable fabrics made into shirts, jackets and coats with floral prints on the inside in khakis, blues, blacks and whites highlight the collection championing sustainable fashion.

"It's about leading a sustainable life. This also reflects in your choice to not to leave the refrigerator door open for a long time. It's about taking care of things," he adds.

The three-day curated showcase runs till August 4 at Khan Market's Good Earth store, items of which are also available for sale.

12 girls' schools burnt down in Pakistan

KARACHI, AUG 3 (PTI): Twelve girls' schools have been burnt down by unidentified persons in coordinated attacks in Pakistan's restive Gilgit-Baltistan, triggering protest by local residents who sought safety for educational institutions which are often attacked by the militants, a media report said today.

The schools in Chilas town, about 130-kilometre from Gilgit, were targeted late last night by unidentified men who also damaged school property across Diamer district, police said. "Explosions were also set off in two schools," Geo News reported, quoting police officials.

Following the attacks, local residents staged a protest at Siddique Akbar Chowk demanding the arrest of culprits and seeking safety for educational institutes which are often targeted by the militants, it said.

Police have started a search operation in the area to arrest the perpetrators. According to the district administration, the schools were under-construction.

In December 2011, at least two girls' schools were partially damaged in low-intensity explosions in Chilas. Earlier that year, unidentified assailants had also blown up two girls' schools.

In 2004, girls' schools in Chilas came under a string of attacks. Nine schools of which eight were girls' schools were attacked and destroyed in five days in the area in February.

Trump downplays Ivanka's remarks on media

WASHINGTON, AUG 3 (PTI): Donald Trump today tried to tamp down speculation of differences with daughter Ivanka over his remarks about the press by saying that it is the "Fake News" and not the entire media that is the enemy of the people, hours after she distanced herself from the US president's comments.

Trump has repeatedly criticised the media before and during his presidency.

He has declared journalists to be "enemies of the people", drawing condemnation from across the political spectrum.

During an event yesterday, when Ivanka was asked about her father's repeated accusation that the media is the "enemy of the people", she said, "No. I do not feel that the media is the enemy of the



people."

"I've received my fair share of reporting on me personally that I know not to be fully accurate, so I've had some sensitivity around why people

have concerns and gripe, especially when they sort of feel targeted," Ivanka, who is also Trump's senior adviser, said.

Her remarks were construed as her differences with

the president on this issue.

However hours later, President Trump took to Twitter to clarify the issue.

"They asked my daughter Ivanka whether or not the me-

dia is the enemy of the people. She correctly said no. It is the FAKE NEWS, which is a large percentage of the media, that is the enemy of the people! (sic)," he tweeted.

Asked at the White House briefing about Ivanka's remarks, press secretary Sarah Sanders refused to reject the president's statements that the media is the enemy of the people.

"The president's rightfully frustrated; 90 per cent of the coverage on him is negative despite the fact that the economy is booming, ISIS is on the run, and American leadership is being reasserted around the world," she said.

When Acosta insisted her to express her views, Sanders said, "I'm here to speak on behalf of the president. He's

made his comments."

A few days back, Trump had called American journalists "unpatriotic" as he accused them of putting lives at risk by their reporting.

"When the media-driven insane by their Trump Derangement Syndrome - reveals internal deliberations of our government, it truly puts the lives of many, not just journalists, at risk! Very unpatriotic!" he had said.

He ramped up his attack on the media last night during a campaign rally by criticising the press as "fake, fake, disgusting news" and describing journalists in attendance as "horrible, horrendous people", despite UN experts' warning earlier in the day that his actions were putting journalists at risk.

Mnangagwa wins Zimbabwe's first post-Mugabe election

HARARE, AUG 3 (AFP): Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa, a former ally of Robert Mugabe, narrowly won the country's landmark election, results showed today, in an outcome set to fuel fraud allegations as security forces patrolled the streets to prevent protests.

Mnangagwa won 50.8 per cent of the vote, ahead of Nelson Chamisa of the opposition MDC party on 44.3 per cent, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) said.

"Mnangagwa, Emmerson Dambudzo, of ZANU-PF party is therefore duly declared elected president of the Republic of Zimbabwe," announced ZEC chair Priscilla Chigumba.

Mnangagwa won by the smallest of margins, after needing more than

50 per cent of the vote to secure victory without a second-round run-off.

He quickly took to Twitter to say he was "humbled" to have won the election, hailing it as a "new beginning" for the country.

Zimbabwe was braced for public reaction to the election results -- the first since last year's ousting of Mugabe -- after a deadly crackdown on protesters.

Six people were killed on Wednesday when troops fired live rounds against MDC demonstrators alleging the vote had been rigged.

Soldiers and police cleared central Harare ahead of the results, shouting at pedestrians and traders to leave the area, as the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) repeatedly



alleged that ZANU-PF was stealing the election.

Moments before the official announcement, MDC spokesperson Morgan Komichi denounced the vote count as "fake" as he took to the stage at the ZEC results centre before being removed by police.

After Mnangagwa was declared the winner, he told AFP that his party rejected the outcome.

"We will take this to the courts," he said.

Police and Army were on the streets of Harare overnight, but there were no reported protests and few public celebrations when the results were announced after midnight. Turnout was high at over 80 per cent in most of the country's 10 provinces.

"What they have been

trying to do of late is to play around," Chamisa told reporters hours before the final results.

"That is rigging, that is manipulation, trying to bastardise the result, and that we will not allow."

Yesterday, the Army had guarded ZANU-PF headquarters, while armoured personnel carriers, water cannon trucks and police anti-riot vans

took position outside MDC headquarters.

Monday's vote was meant to turn the page on years of brutal repression under Mugabe, end Zimbabwe's international isolation and attract foreign investment to revive the shattered economy.

Mnangagwa had promised a free and fair vote after the military ushered him to power when Mugabe was forced to resign in November. In the parliamentary election, also held on Monday, ZANU-PF won easily.

Before the violence, European Union observers declared they found an "un-level playing field and lack of trust" in the election process.

Election observers from the Commonwealth issued a statement after Wednesday's clashes to "denounce the excessive

use of force against unarmed civilians".

"It means our suffering will continue," Emion Chitsate, a security guard at shopping centre in the Waterfalls district of Harare, said of the result. "It's the same ZANU-PF which brought us to where we are."

Under Mugabe, elections were often marred by fraud and deadly violence.

ZEC chairwoman Chigumba, a high court judge, has flatly rejected allegations of bias and rigging.

The ZEC website was unable to publish results after it was hacked during the week.

Mugabe, 94, voted in Harare on Monday alongside his wife Grace after he stunned observers by calling for voters to reject ZANU-PF, his former party.

Antigua says Indian agencies had given 'no adverse info' on Choksi during citizenship check: Report

NEW DELHI, AUG 3 (PTI): Antigua has claimed it was told by Indian agencies that there was no adverse information against Mehul Choksi when it did a background check on the fugitive billionaire before granting him citizenship in 2017, a local media report in the Caribbean nation has said.

While the Antiguan authority responsible for grant of investment-linked citizenship named the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) as one of the Indian agency to have given such a clearance in case of Modi, the Indian capital markets regulator rejected the claim saying it neither received any such request, nor provided any such information to the concerned department in Antigua.

Choksi's application for citizenship in Antigua in May 2017 was accompanied with clearance from the local police as required by norms, Antiguan newspaper the Daily Observer reported, citing a statement from the Citizenship by Investment Unit of Antigua and Barbuda (CIU).

Choksi is one of the alleged masterminds of the USD 2 billion scam in state-run Punjab National Bank and uncle of fugitive diamond-taire Nirav Modi.

"The said police clearance certificate from the Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs Regional Passport Office, Mumbai, certified that there was no adverse information against Mr Mehul Chubbhai Choksi which would render him ineligible for grant of travel facilities including visa for Antigua and Barbuda," the report said.



The authorities in the island country did a thorough check on Choksi from open source global agencies, including the Interpol, that there was "no instance" of any derogatory information against him, it added.

The Antiguan authorities, as part of their own checks, found two instances of Sebi action against Choksi's firms in 2014 and 2017 and sought more information on them, the report further said.

It further quoted CIU as claiming that Sebi had told authorities in Antigua that one case was "satisfactorily closed" and there was "insufficient evidence" to pursue the second matter. However, the Indian regulator issued a statement today denying these claims.

"Sebi has neither received any request from the Citizenship by Investment Unit (CIU) of Antigua for updates on any investigation nor provided any such information to CIU," the regulator said.

As per the Antiguan media report, the CIU has said if there was a warrant against Choksi when his application of citizenship was being processed, Interpol should have been informed about it and it should have been part of national criminal database.

Choksi had fled India on January 4 this year and took oath of allegiance in Antigua on January 15. His citizenship was cleared in November 2017.

On January 16, this year, the USD 2 billion scam was detected by Brady House branch of Punjab National Bank, making it the biggest banking scam in the country.

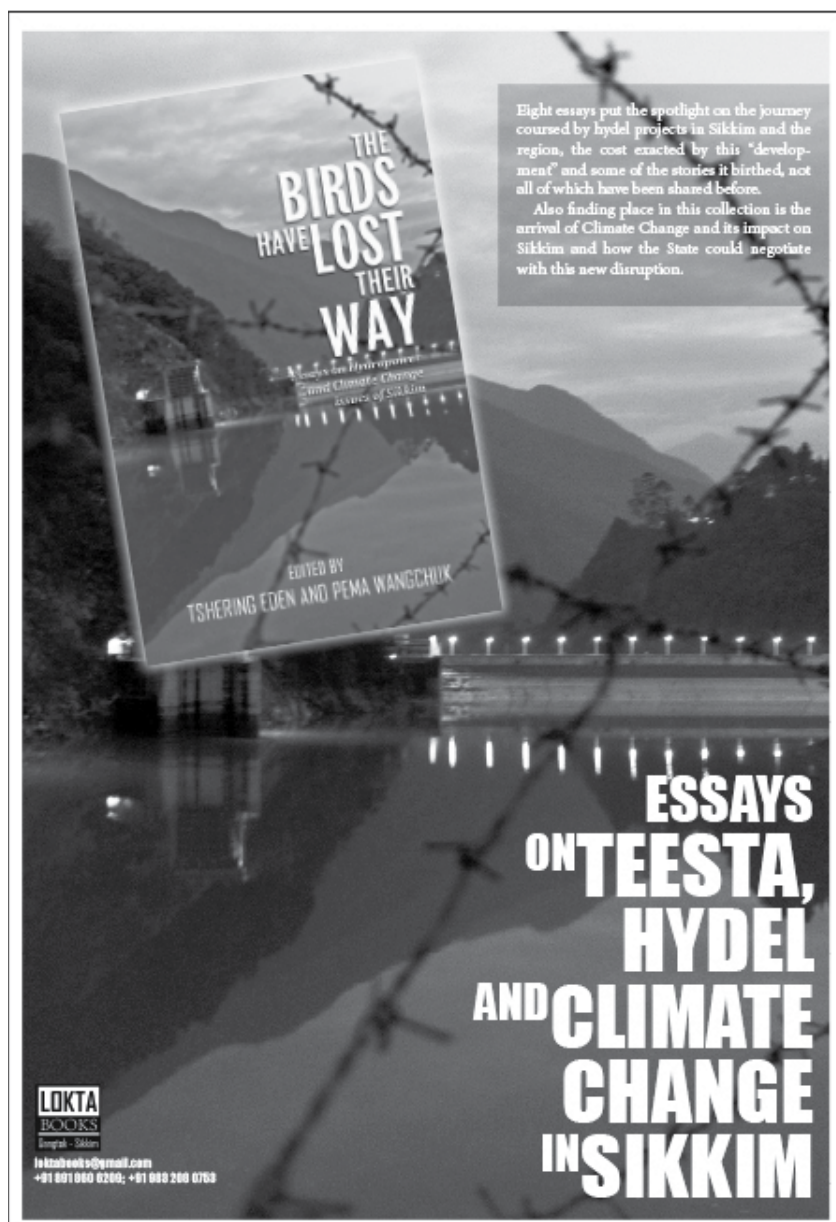
On July 29, 2016, Bengaluru resident Hari Prasad had informed the Prime Minister's Office about alleged nefarious activities of Choksi and his companies.

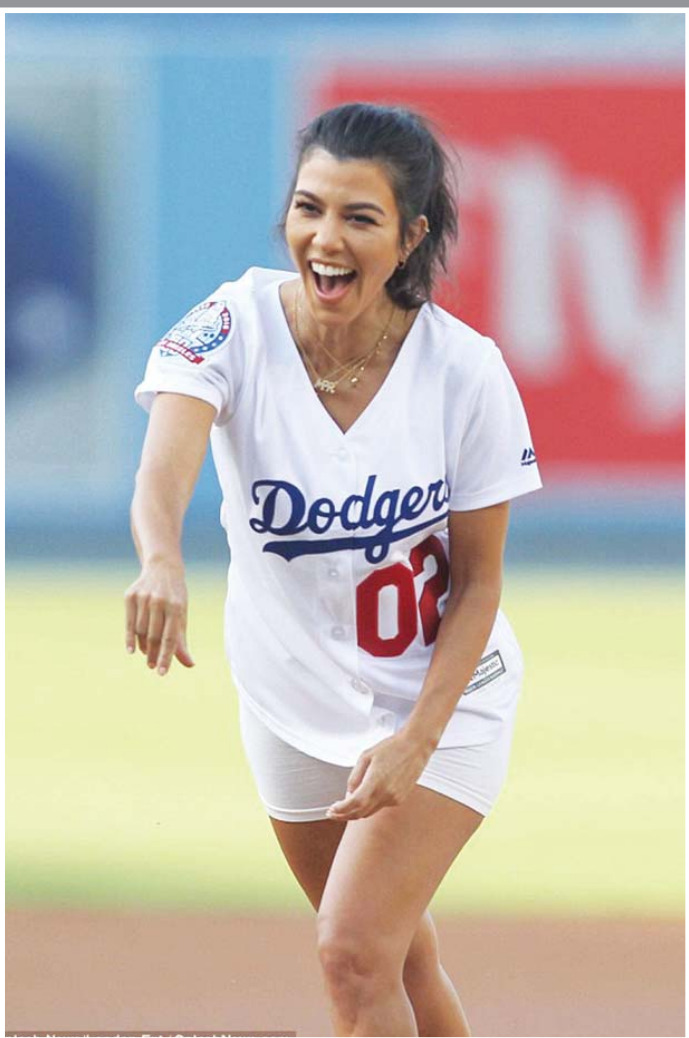
In a recent response to a question by Congress leader Kapil Sibal, the Finance Ministry said in the Rajya Sabha that the PMO was "intimated" about the complaints regarding the PNB fraud in 2016 and the matter was referred to it.

"Ministry of Finance, vide Office Memorandum dated 1.3.2018, apprised PMO of action taken regarding the fraudulent issuance of Letters of Undertaking in PNB," it said.

The reply, however, did not make it clear whether it referred to Prasad's specific complaint against Choksi. Under the Citizenship by Investment Program of Antigua and Barbuda, a person can take their passport on a minimum investment of USD 100,000 in the NDF investment fund.

Choksi and his companies allegedly availed credit from overseas branches of Indian banks using the fraudulent guarantees of PNB given through letters of undertaking (LoUs) and letters of credit issued by the Brady House branch which were not repaid, bringing liability on the state-run bank, the officials have said.





ALL EYES ON HER! Kourtney Kardashian can't hide her delight as she works baseball chic to throw ceremonial first pitch for Dodgers game in LA.

We trust Jim Brooks and team to handle it: Fox CEO on Apu controversy

Fox Studio has decided not to get involved in the controversy over "The Simpsons" Indian-origin character Apu Nahasapeemapetilon.

The show has faced an increasing criticism from Indian fans who feel that the Kwik-E-Mart manager promotes offensive stereotypes, particularly because he is voiced by caucasian actor Hank Azaria.

Comedian Hari Kondabolu made a film about the negative influence of the character, prompting the show to finally address the debate in an April episode.

In the episode "No Good Read Goes Unpunished", a photo of Apu is in frame as Lisa Simpson laments: "Something that started decades ago and was applauded and inoffensive is now politically incorrect. What can you do?"

Many felt that was an unacceptable response.

"We have had the conversation with [executive producer] Jim Brooks and his team and we've basically left it up to them. They've treated the characters with so much respect. We trust them to handle it in a way that will be best for the show. Ultimately we decided that would be their decision," Fox chairman and CEO Dana Walden said during the network's Q&A session at the Television Critics Association press tour.

According to USA Today, Walden said she was not surprised by the reaction, but it will



factor in the producing team's response.

"In a day of social media where fans are able to have a public forum, I can't say ultimately we were surprised. I think it's good information for the creators to receive they focused on the reaction and I think that's partially informing how they will move forward."

She also revealed that "The Simpsons" is not ending anytime soon, despite being an expensive series.

"There's no consideration of not ordering more Simpsons," she said.

"The Simpsons" creator Matt Groening recently complained about the tone of the debate around Apu, arguing that those complaining were no longer having a constructive dialogue.

"It's tainted now the conversation, there's no nuance to the conversation now," he argued. "It seems very, very clunky. I love the character. I love the show," he had said.

GEMINI: Catch the wave of activity that's spinning in your direction today, Gemini. You'll find prosperity and good fortune within your reach. Expand your horizons and connect with others intellectually. Hurdles will shrink to nothing as long as you maintain a positive attitude. It will be tremendously easy for you to make great strides in any project you're working on.

CANCER: You may find it hard to trust others today, Cancer. Trust your instincts - they're probably right. Don't take anything at face value. There's a fanciful frenzy that's threatening to lure you into its madness. Approach things cautiously. You may discover that people are full of hot air. If it doesn't have real meaning for you, don't waste your time.

LEO: There may be a bit of opposition coming at you, Leo. There's a light, airy feeling that's prevalent everywhere. This is definitely the kind of energy you can connect with today. There's a great deal of strength in numbers. Don't let anyone try to stand in your way. It could very well be that they are operating on incorrect information.

VIRGO: What seems like the perfect plan today may not necessarily seem like the perfect plan tomorrow, Virgo. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. There's an expansive feeling in the air that's working to catch you up in its net and pull you into its plan. Beware of get-rich-quick schemes. The wool could get pulled over your eyes on a day like this.

LIBRA: There's a flurry of activity around you today that you should

latch onto, Libra. You'll be on a magic carpet ride that takes you into the clouds. The most difficult thing to remember is to not get so carried away that you lose sight of the ground. Keep in mind that things aren't always exactly the way they seem. What appears to work perfectly today may not work at all tomorrow.

SCORPIO: You'll find yourself working well with any group today, Scorpio. There will be a great connection between you and the people around you. Make sure you ground your relationships in something meaningful or else you could find that you've built a whole reality out of something that doesn't exist. Be true to yourself and try not to get fooled by anything that seems too good to be true.

SAGITTARIUS: There's an incredibly expansive feeling in the air that you should latch onto, Sagittarius. Things are moving rapidly. You'll find long-term trends come together quite well. The thing to be aware of today is making sure you're operating based on facts you know to be true. Check your sources. Be cautious, but if you see an opportunity that looks good, run with it.

CAPRICORN: Sticking close to home may leave you feeling like you're missing the boat on certain things, but you're probably better off, Capricorn. People may make outlandish promises that sound good today but will basically flop tomorrow. Stay safe and don't invest a great deal of time or money in risky ventures. Keep moving at a steady pace. You'll find success your own way.

AQUARIUS: You're riding a wave of prosperity and things are looking up for you, Aquarius. The situation today may appear too good to be true. The bad news is that's probably the case. It may be that the truth is being masked, and that there's a great deal of speculation and hype causing a frenzy of activity. Feel free to join the frivolity, but realize that the bubble may burst tomorrow.

PISCES: The wind is blowing quite strongly today, and you'll find that things are flying around in a frenzy, Pisces. This whirlwind of activity is threatening to pick you up, spin you around, and take you away. Be cautious of anything that suggests this. People may take on unrealistic attitudes that lure you into grand schemes. Beware of fanciful promises.

VICTORIA BECKHAM "FURIOUS WITH MEL B FOR MAKING HER LOOK LIKE THE KILLJOY OF THE SPICE GIRLS REUNION"

Victoria Beckham is 'furious' with Mel B for her constant discussion of the Spice Girls reunion - and for making her look like the bad guy.

According to The Sun, the fashion designer, 44, 'never agreed' to reunite with Mel, Geri Horner, Emma Bunton and Melanie Chisholm for a comeback, and is frustrated with her band mate for making out she is the 'killjoy' of the group.

Rumours of a rift between Victoria and the girls have been swirling for weeks, but America's Got Talent judge Mel has continued to insist the concerts will happen.

The group sent fans wild back in February when they reunited at Geri Horner's house, and Mel's constant assurance of a comeback tour has only excited them further.

However, the paper claims Victoria is growing sick and tired of Mel's reunion talk, as she feels it unfairly raises the hopes of fans when she has not agreed to take part.

A source said: "Victoria was always up for a catch-up and the prospect of a celebration of the band's work. But going out on the road for con-



certs was never something she agreed to. Every time Mel makes promises to the fans it leaves Victoria looking like a killjoy who is stopping it from happening and that just isn't fair."

It was only last week that Mel revealed one of the girls was being 'difficult' about the reunion, in a seemingly subtle dig at Victoria.

Speaking on Loose Women, she said: "We are getting back together for sure. We're sisters at the end of the day, and what we went through was quite an amazing, brilliant journey."

However, she added:

"There's one that's been a bit difficult.... but I'm hoping she's going to get roped in. We're going to start this year, then go on until next year - and then hopefully the year after that if it's got anything to do with me."

The women were set to make £30million each following the tour - which was due to begin in late September - but Victoria reportedly put the brakes on earlier this year.

While the designer has always insisted that she would never tour with the band again, the girls thought their original manager Simon Full-

er would convince her.

It is claimed that the other girls gave Victoria an ultimatum between them and Simon - but she chose their former manager, who managed to turn her brand into an empire.

Victoria later told Vogue at New York Fashion Week: "I'm not going on tour. The girls are not going on tour."

Yet, Mel has never taken this for an answer, and even said of her pal on The Today Show in June: "She's always bloody saying that! Stop it! We are touring! We are going to be doing performances together, for sure."

Fanney Khan, Karwaan and Mulk start slow at the ticket windows



This Friday three Bollywood films - Mulk, Fanney Khan and Karwaan have hit the screens. Unfortunately, none of these ventures has taken an impressive opening in the shows. While Anil Kapoor's Fanney Khan has taken around 12 per cent occupancy while Karwaan and Mulk registered below 10 per cent occupancy. Though this kind of footfalls was expected as none of the films are commercial entertainers.

Talking about Fanney Khan, the film has an interesting plot where we will see a father's drive to make his daughter realise her dream. It is directed by debutante Atul Manjrekar and also stars Divya Dutta in a pivotal role. The musical comedy is bankrolled under the banners of Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra

Pictures and T-Series. On the other hand, Akarsh Khurana's Karwaan marks the Bollywood debut of Malayalam superstar Dulquer Salmaan along with Irrfan Khan. Coming to Mulk, this hard-hitting courtroom drama features Taapsee Pannu and Rishi Kapoor in pivotal roles and directed by Ra.One helmer Anubhav Sinha.

Lady Gaga mourns death of Rick 'Zombie Boy' Genest...

Lady Gaga has urged anyone suffering from mental health issues to seek help after the death of tattooed model Zombie Boy. Canadian Rick Genest, 32, was found dead on Wednesday after apparently killing himself at his apartment in Montreal.

Genest earned the moniker Zombie Boy for having bone and organ tattoos inked all over his body, including skull features on his face. He starred in Lady Gaga's music video for Born This Way that was released in February 2011.

"The suicide of friend Rick Genest, Zombie Boy is beyond devastating. We have to work harder to change the culture, bring Mental Health to the forefront and erase the stigma that we can't talk about it. If you are suffering, call a friend or family today. We must save each other," the singer tweeted to her roughly 77 million followers on Twitter.



She included a photo of Genest and herself from the Born This Way music video.

The singer added: "Science tells us that it takes 21 days to form a habit, if you are suffering from Mental Health issue I beckon for today to be your first day or a continuation of the work you've been doing. Reach out if you're in pain, and if you know someone who is, reach out to them too."

The Bad Romance singer also posted another tweet announcing a new partnership with her Born This Way

Foundation to promote 'kindness and mental health'.

"Kindness and mental health aren't one time practices. They aren't just to do list items. This fall, in partnership with @btwfoundation, I'll explore the power of habits to build cultures of kindness and wellness. Sign up to learn more," she posted.

The singer's stylist Nicola Formichetti discovered Genest in 2010 while also serving as creative director for French fashion designer Thierry Mugler. The model

became known as Zombie Boy for his numerous tattoos depicting the inside of his body on his skin. The skin art included a tattoo of a brain outside his cranium.

Genest was featured in Mugler fashion shows in Paris and New York City in 2011 and later appeared in magazines such as GQ, Vanity Fair and Vogue Hommes. He also was in the 2013 fantasy action film 47 Ronin starring Keanu Reeves, 53.

British artist Marc Quinn, 54, has been working on a 11.5-foot sculpture of Genest titled Self-Conscious Gene set to appear at the 2019 opening of the Medicine Galleries at the Science Museum in London.

Genest started getting tattoos after recovering from brain surgery at age 16 after being on a waiting list for six months.

Friends said he struggled with mental health issues throughout his life.

ARIES: Things are sporadic today, Aries. You may find a thousand things on your plate, and all of them look delicious. There's a great deal of wind to fuel your fire, so let it burn red hot. You might get caught up in a frenzy of activity. Have a good time but realize that it might not last forever. The royal carriage is likely to turn back into a pumpkin at some point.

TAURUS: Don't get pulled off track by empty promises today, Taurus. Someone may try to sell you ocean-front property in the middle of Iowa. Beware of things that sound too good to be true. People may be talking quite a bit, but in reality they probably have nothing to say. Don't waste your time trying to make sense of useless drivel. You've got more important things to do.