

## Sexual assault on minor, accused absconding

**Staff Reporter**  
GANGTOK, June 8: Soreng police has registered a case against a man for allegedly sexually assaulting a 13-year-old girl at Thongling village, west district.

The accused, Sachin Rai has been absconding since the complaint was lodged at Soreng police station by the victim's family members. He is in his 20s and was the neighbour of the victim.

"The accused used to frequent the girl's house. The complainant sensing foul play confronted the victim who revealed that she was being sexually assaulted by the accused since last October," said the police.

A case under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 has been registered against Sachin. Police said all efforts are being made to trace out the absconding accused person.

## West Bengal preparing start-up action plan

**KOLKATA, June 8 (IANS):** The West Bengal government is preparing an action plan to strengthen the start-up ecosystem in the state, an official said on Wednesday.

"We are in a process of preparing an action plan for start-ups. It will be business to business (B2B) kind of thing. There will be a website where entrepreneurs, mentors, angel investors and academicians can interact with each other," Information Technology (IT) department's Principal Secretary Talleen Kumar said.

West Bengal Information Technology (IT) Minister Bratya Basu said the government was pursuing an ambitious plan to be among top three states in the IT space by 2020.

"We want to change state's image. We have set up nine IT parks in the state and seven are in the pipeline," he said at an interactive and felicitation ceremony organised by the National Association of Software and Service Companies (Naasscom).

## SPCC wants Delhi-bound delegation to resolve LT issue permanently

**SE Report**  
GANGTOK, June 8: The Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee (SPCC) has expressed its hope that the proposed Delhi tour of the Chief Minister-led delegation would lay focus on permanent solution of the Limboo-Tamang seat reservation issue.

Expressing such hope in a press statement today, the SPCC reiterated that the reservation of Limboo and Tamang communities in the State Assembly should be done from the existing 32 seats. So far, the State government has failed to send a proper seat reservation formula to the Centre, said the SPCC.

The release informs that SPCC president Bharat Basnet and vice president S.B. Gurung met senior Congress leaders including the party president on the Limboo-Tamang seat reservation issues during their recent weeklong Delhi stay.

## Union HRD minister Smriti Irani to lay foundation for NIT campus at Thekabong

**Staff Reporter**  
GANGTOK, June 8: Union HRD minister Smriti Irani is scheduled to visit Sikkim on June 24 and lay the foundation for National Institute of Technology (NIT) campus at Thekabong village, Parakha near Pakyong town.

State HRD principal secretary G.P. Upadhyaya told SIKKIM EXPRESS that the Union HRD ministry has accepted the State's proposal to set up the NIT campus at Thekabong for which 172 acres of land has been acquired. The government had earlier scouted a land at Khamdong village which apparently did not work out.

The NIT presently operates from a temporary campus at Rabongla in South Sikkim. Upadhyaya further informed that the department is also planning to organise a function at Chintan Bhawan where Irani would address the State functionaries.

The State government would also place certain demands like setting up of institutes like IIT, IIM, State University, model degree

colleges and upgradation of the Law College to National Law University, before the Union HRD minister.

The Union HRD minister would also visit few government schools during her course of visit. She is likely to visit some school in east district, it was informed. Also in the itinerary of Irani's visit is the meeting of Consultative Committee of Parliament on HRD ministry to be held in Gangtok on June 25.

Earlier last week, the Union minister during her online interaction with State HRD minister R.B. Subba had also expressed her desire to visit Sikkim and given June 24 and 25 as the tentative dates. She had urged the State government to finalise the land for the NIT campus.



## December 2017 deadline for Chenrezig Shingkhom project

**SE Report**  
GANGTOK, June 8: The Chenrezig Shingkhom, a mega-project of the State government coming up near the tourism town of Pelling in West Sikkim, is scheduled for commissioning next December.

This was reiterated during a visit of the high-level committee on Tuesday to the project site adjacent to the Sangha Choeling monastery complex. The committee had been recently constituted to ensure swift completion of the project, informs an official release.

Chief administrator R. Ongmu, during the meeting, recorded the importance of Chenrezig Shingkhom project. She reminded all those involved in the project that the State government is committed to inaugurate the project in December 2017 as envisaged by the Chief Minister.

The meeting had the area MLA Chandra Maya Subba as the chief guest with the Ecclesiastical Affairs advisor and Culture & Heritage Board chairman as guests of honour. Officers of line departments like Power, PHE and Forest along with district administration and monks from Sangha Choeling and Pemyangtse monasteries were present in the meeting.

Buildings & Housing secretary C.P. Tongden

## A COLOSSUS PROJECT



A recent picture of the under-construction Chenrezig Shingkhom project. (Next Buildings & Housing senior architect Gary Chapel giving a presentation on Chenrezig Shingkhom project at the project site.

thanked the State government for all the support given to the mega project. He asserted that the department is working sincerely to meet the December 2017 deadline. He directed the project contractors to stock all materials and be well prepared for monsoon.

senior architect Gary Chapel made a detailed presentation explaining different facets of the project, its meanings and technical issues related to the design. Assistant engineer Ashok Chettri presented the work plan and the progress of different components.

committee inspected the various components of the project and expressed their happiness with the work done by the Buildings & Housing department, the release mentions. The high-level committee's visit was to see the progress of the project and to iron out the bottlenecks that have emerged.

## US innovation, Indian human resource a win-win combo: Modi

**WASHINGTON, June 8 (IANS):** Assuring continuity in reforms and predictable tax policies, but with a firm hand against evasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited USA Inc to invest in his country to forge a win-win partnership between American innovation and Indian human resource.

Speaking at a gala hosted by the US-India Business Council here, he also called upon rich nations to open up their economies to goods and services from emerging countries like India as they seek to make world-class merchandise not just for themselves but also for the entire globe.

"India is the future human resource powerhouse of the world with a young hard-working population. In my vision, a partnership between American capital and innovation, and Indian human resource and entrepreneurship can be very powerful," Modi said.

"I am convinced we can strengthen both our economies through such a partnership," said the prime minister to a packed audience that included the top brass of companies like PepsiCo, Master Card, Warburg Pincus, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Westinghouse, Intelsat, Emerson and 8Minute Energy.

making world-class products and services for the whole globe.

"That is why, for us, improvements towards free trade are important. It is very important for us that developed countries open their markets not only to goods from countries like India but also to services. I see this as a win-win proposition for the US and for India."

He also held out an assurance: "We will continue to make our tax policies more predictable."

Earlier, the office bearers of US-India Business Council said their members have already invested \$28 billion in India since September 2014 and that another \$45 billion was in the pipeline, even by a conservative estimate.

Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon.com, specifically said the US-based global e-commerce major had pledged another \$3 billion investment in India in addition to the \$2 billion that was announced in 2014 and had created over 45,000 jobs in India.

In his address, Prime Minister Modi specifically spoke about India's defence sector and said this industry will be opened up further to domestic and overseas investment along with steps to ensure that projects do not get unduly delayed.

licensing approach for defence," he said.

"In the field of nuclear energy, we are purchasing six nuclear reactors from Westinghouse, which will mark a new era in our nuclear and scientific cooperation. I was delighted when GE became one of the first companies to make a major investment in the newly liberalized railway sector."

The prime minister said there were four key elements to his government's policies — a sound macro-economic foundation, ensuring growth with enhanced employment, efficiency and productivity, social inclusion to benefit the poor and a frontal attack on corruption.

On corruption, he said, even the worst critics of his government cannot deny the achievement that has been made since his government took office two years ago, adding graft is an issue that acts as the main deterrent to growth for any developing economy.

"We have taken decisive steps to curb corruption," he said, adding discretion in allocation of key resources has been replaced by auctions, people get direct cash for subsidies intended for them and senior positions are being entrusted to professionals of integrity.

"I am aware that licensing policies can sometimes slow down the process of investing in India's defence sector. We are exploring a simpler and more efficient project

## Bihar school board chief quits, five held for exam scam

**PATNA, June 8 (IANS):** With investigation into the Bihar 12th Board merit list scam gathering steam, former Bihar School Examination Board Chairman Lalkeshwar Prasad Singh is likely to be arrested, an SIT official said.

Singh has reportedly gone underground fearing his arrest after evidence hinted at his complicity in the scam in which the answer books of certain students were allegedly altered to push them up in the merit list.

Following a notice served on him by the education department, Singh resigned from his post and then went underground.

According to a SIT official: "Singh would be arrested soon for interrogation."

appointed Patna Commissioner Anand Kishore as the new chairman of the board on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the students who secured top spots in the merit list have also gone underground. The SIT team could not track students Saurabh Sreshtha, Shalini Rai, Rahul Kumar and Rubi Rai when it visited their homes in Vaishali and Muzaffarpur districts.

According to reports, the SIT of Bihar Police has pasted notices at the homes of these students, asking them to appear before the police to explain their stand.

Patna Senior Superintendent of Police Manu Maharaj, who is heading the SIT, on Wednesday said that five persons, including four staff members of two high schools, have been detained in connection with the case.

On Monday, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had held a high-level meeting with top officials and directed the officials to lodge an FIR and probe the matter as a criminal case.

In the FIR it has been alleged that fraud was committed by VR college to influence the results, the

police said. "The answer books of the toppers appeared to have been changed which makes it a case of fraud," it stated.

Those named in the FIR include Science stream toppers Saurabh Sreshtha, Shalini Rai and Rahul Kumar, Arts topper Rubi Rai and principal-cum-director of VR College. All the toppers were students of the same college.

According to police, the SIT has detained examination centre superintendent Sail Kumari, the head clerk and a peon of GA High School at Hajipur in Vaishali.

GA High School was the exam centre for the students of VR College. All the answer books from Vaishali went to Ara and Bhabhua districts except for VR College which were examined at Rajendra Nagar High School in Patna.

The team has also detained the principal of Rajendra Nagar High School in Patna for interrogation.

The SIT team has raided some places in Vaishali and Muzaffarpur to arrest Amit Kumar alias Bachcha Rai, principal of VR College, who

## Bermiok Tokal senior secondary school to go Smart

**SE Report**

**GANGTOK, June 8:** Bermiok Tokal senior secondary school in South Sikkim is set to become the first government school in the Northeastern region to have smart classrooms. In the initial phase, six classrooms of the school would be converted to e-classrooms using Smart Classes which would also allow two-way video conferencing. Smart TVs would be used to improve classroom teaching thereby making learning interactive and exciting.

The North East Centre for Technology Application and Research (NECTAR) would implement the project at Bermiok Tokal School on a pilot basis. The model would be replicated in other schools of the Northeastern States at a later stage, informs a media statement.

Sanjeev Nair, the director general of NECTAR, accompanied by director Ajay Kumar visited the school today to finalize the modalities to implement the project. The team was received by the patron of



The NECTAR officials being welcomed at the school.

the school T.N. Densapa. Rajesh Verma, the chairman of Committee for Go Smart, school principal, staff and students were also present. The host school was handed over a cheque to undertake the project by the NECTAR officials as well.

Along with six classrooms, the 200-seater school auditorium would be equipped with a LCD project to screen educational video contents for the students and high

resolution camera for video conferencing. Wi-fi routers would be installed at vantage points in the school premises to provide wi-fi internet connectivity to Smart Classes.

After the review of project by NECTAR after three months, the school would seek expansion of the project to all 22 classrooms, an official informed.

"The good practices learnt during the running of

this project would be given wide publicity so that other schools can adopt them instead of reinventing the wheel. It is expected that the board results of the school will improve considerably after the implementation of the project. The students would also be better informed about current affairs, technologies in vogue and therefore would be better prepared to face competitive exams," said a statement from the official.

Sericulture training for women farmers in south



The sericulture training in progress.

SE Report
GANGTOK, June 8: Sixty women sericulture farmers of Upper Wok, Lower Wok and Upper Chumlong in south district were given training by the Directorate of Sericulture under intensive bivoltine sericulture development project.

Resource persons from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Geyzing and Research Extension Centre, Rangpo were roped in to provide technical support to the trainers. Local panchayat members were also involved in the inaugural session.

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Inspection of public assets under DAAV adopted Rong GPU

SE Report

GANGTOK, June 8: A green plantation drive was conducted Wednesday at the Jug Dara under Rong GPU which is the first adopted village near Namchi under the District Administration's Adopted Village programme.

Officials, panchayats, NGOs, school students and teachers participated in the drive. Around 500 various species of fruit trees, herbal plants and trees were planted on the occasion.

Later during the day, the DAAV team headed by the district collector proceeded to carry out a thorough interactive inspection of all the State-run infrastructures operating and situated in Rong GPU.



DC Raj Yadav, DAAV team members and others at the plantation drive. Pic: IPR

in dilapidated condition with minimum amenities to function well. A collective decision was taken up by the committee to modify this PHSC into a model PHSC, the IPR release mentions.

The Rong primary health sub centre (PHSC) was found equipped with all necessary medical infrastructure and medical staff so that quality healthcare service is provided to the villagers.

A decision was also taken to repair and renovate the stage located in the school ground. The district heads of HRD and Rural Development departments and Namchi BAC would be taking up the work on priority basis.

The committee urged the Rong GPU panchayat members and government secondary school to appeal to the concerned public for their voluntary participation in the construction of the stage

New committee takes charge of ASGEA



The new adhoc committee members of ASGEA. SE Pic

NAWINTACHETTRI
GANGTOK, June 8: The caretaker executive committee of All Sikkim Government Employees Association (ASGEA) group C & D on Wednesday handed over the charge of the committee to the new adhoc executive committee of the association.

The handing and taking over programme was held at the association's office in Gangtok. The new committee with 10 members would be handling the affairs of the association. The committee has Phursang Lepcha as its chairman.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Jaganath Gautam, S/o, Shri Dina Nath Gautam R/o Luing Thamida, East Sikkim do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that the correct name of my legal wife is Smt. Nir Kumari Gautam in place of Neeru Gautam, vide affidavit done on 8th day of June, 2016 in the court of SDM East Sikkim at Gangtok

Training on Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

SE Report

GANGTOK, June 8: Agriculture department, East organized a training programme on 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana' at Assam Linzey on Monday.

The programme was attended by more than 50 farmers from Assam Linzey GPU, informs a press release. Agriculture deputy director Bina Rai briefed on the various ongoing programmes of the department, gap between supply and demand of organic produce and measures to overcome the gap.

ADO Sushma Pradhan summarized the details of the scheme 'Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana' and helped the farmers in identification of the lead resource person and potential crop like buckwheat to be grown 50 acres of land with 50 farmers, as per the guidelines of the scheme.



ADO D.K. Pradhan highlighted on importance and advantages of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana'. He also informed about premium percentage to be paid by the farmers, as notified under PMFBY by 2, 1.5 and 5 percent for kharif crops, rabi crops and annual commercial/ horticulture crops respectively.

Panchayat vice-president Y.N. Sharma stressed on mass scale organic production of identified crop, marketing and socio-economic upliftment of the farmers of the area. The training programme was supported by ATMA (East) and chaired by panchayat president Meena Subba, the release mentions.

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KUTSE SHEGU
The Kutse Shegu of late Sanu Bhutia who left for his heavenly abode on April 22, 2016 falls on June 9, 2016. All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence below New Secondary School, Bhanjyang road, Namchi South Sikkim. We would also like to take the opportunity to thank all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.
Zangmo Bhutia (wife)
Thupden Wangchuk Bhutia (son)
Pema, Tsheden and Yangden (daughters)
Blupendra Sharma (son-in-law)
Contact: 784404450/9734126308.

KUTSE SHEGU
The 49th day Kutse Shegu of late Loday Namgyal Lama (Bhutia) who left for his heavenly abode on 2nd May, 2016 falls on 19th June, 2016. All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at near Children Park Private Taxi Stand, Gangtok.
We also express our sincere gratitude to all those who support the family at the time of bereavement.
Denzay Bhutia (wife),
Mrs. Changzey Bhutia, Mrs. Cheden Bhutia,
Mrs. Sonam Doma Bhutia (daughters),
Mrs. Sonam Rinchen Bhutia (sons-in-law)
Dr. Rinzing Dorjee, Dr. N.T.Bhutia, Mr. Sonam Rinchen Bhutia (sons-in-law)

GHEWA
The Ghewa of late Pema Tamang (Lomba Assang) who left for heavenly abode on 23/5/2016 falls on 12/6/2016. All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Buddhish Gumpa, Santi Nagar, Singtam. We also express our sincere gratitude to all those who support the family at the time of bereavement.
Kishan Tamang, Nish Tamang, Dawa Tamang (sons),
Sabita Tamang, Anita Tamang, Binita Tamang & Nikita Tamang (daughters), Contact: 8372835523.

ANTHYESTHI KRIYA
The Anthyesthi Kriya of Late Pamphawati Pradhan (Aji), W/o Kalu Pradhan who left for her heavenly abode on 31/05/2016 falls on 12/06/2016. All relatives, friends, and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Selep Tanki, Upper Chumhari, Gangtok, East Sikkim. We also express our sincere gratitude to all those who supported the family at the time of bereavement.
Pradip Pradhan, Badri Kr. Pradhan (sons)
Man Maya Pradhan, Rupa Pradhan & Lalita Pradhan (daughters)
Manjana Pradhan (daughter-in-law)
Narayan Pradhan, Madan Kr. Pradhan & Ganesh Chettri (sons-in-laws)
Contact: 9733316331, 8016284524

KUTSE SHEGU
OM AMI DEVA
The Kutse Shegu of Late father Shri Chewang Dorjee Lama (retired D.F.O.) who left for his heavenly abode on 23rd, April 2016 falls on 10th June 2016. All relatives, friends, and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Upper Syari, Gangtok. We also express our sincere gratitude to all those who supported the family at the time of bereavement.
Ana Kanchi, Dr. Tshering Peom Lama (daughter), Tshering Dorjee Lama, Sandup Dorjee Lama and Karma Dorjee Lama (sons), Tshering Namgyal (son-in-law), Aniket Lama (daughter-in-law), Yangdol, Yangchen, Peden, Dueshen (grand children)
Contact: 9593784853, 9874785465.

Awareness on Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana

GEYZING, June 8 (IPR): An awareness programme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) was organized by State Cooperation department at Tashiding, West Sikkim today.
The programme was aimed at making the farmers aware of the assistance under RKVY and other Central schemes, and the benefits of becoming members of cooperative society.
Additional registrar D.K. Tamang spoke on the benefits of becoming a member of cooperative, role of cooperatives in bringing about socio-economic development in the economy and scope of cooperatives with regard to Sikkim organic mission.
SISCO Geyzing branch manager Parikshit Lamichaney was also held at Darap on Monday.

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## Monsoon arrives in Kerala, good rains expected in coming days: IMD

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, June 8 (IANS):** The southwest monsoon has finally set in over Kerala and Lakshadweep, a senior India Meteorological Department (IMD) official said on Wednesday.

K. Santhosh, director at the IMD office here, said "good rains" were expected in the coming days across Kerala.

As per the norm, Met officials assess the data recorded at 14 weather stations in Lakshadweep, Kerala and Mangalore from May 10 onwards.

The southwest monsoon normally hits Kerala around June 1. It advances northwards,

usually in surges, and covers the entire country by around July 15.

In its evening weather bulletin, the IMD pointed out that the southwest monsoon had further advanced over many parts of south Arabian sea, most parts of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, some parts of south interior Karnataka, remaining parts of south Bay of Bengal and some more parts of Central Bay of Bengal.

In Kerala, Alappuzha district on Wednesday received a heavy rainfall of 15cm, Kollam 13cm while in some places in the capital district it was 10cm.

Following the heavy rains at Kollam, the district authorities declared a holiday in educational institutions on Thursday.

At Alappuzha, many homes in the coastal areas were flooded and so was Vizhinjam near here.

Authorities have warned people not to visit hilly areas due to fears of landslides.

Local resident Sumathy Krishnan, a 52-year-old homemaker, said it was after a very long time that she was experiencing the monsoon.

Last year, while the IMD forecast the onset of southwest monsoon on May 30, it actually set on June 5.



**JUMBO DELEGATION**  
A herd of wild elephants spotted at Kolabari forest near Indo-Nepal border. Pic: Prashant Acharya

## Two gangsters held in Delhi

**NEW DELHI, June 8 (IANS):** Two gangsters wanted in Haryana and Delhi in several criminal cases, including murder and extortion, have been arrested here, police said on Wednesday.

Gyanender Mandhathia, 29, and Rajiv Dahiya, 39, were taken into custody on June 4 in Bawana in west Delhi.

"Two sophisticated foreign pistols, a country-made carbine and 66 live cartridges were recovered from them," Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch) Ravindra Yadav said.

The gangsters were arrested during a special drive conducted by a Crime Branch team set up to nab parole and bail jumpers, extortionists as well as criminals wanted in sensational and heinous cases.

Police said Gyanender, a resident of Jhajjar in Haryana, was one of the criminals most wanted by Haryana Police and one time second-in-command of Kartar Mandhathia gang.

## People vocal about 'change' have vanished: N.K. Subba

Our Correspondent

**RINCHENPONG, June 8:** The West district unit of ruling SDF party held a constituency-level meeting in Rinchenpong constituency today.

The meeting was chaired by SDF vice-president-cum-minister N.K. Subba.

Addressing the meeting, Subba said Sikkim has flourished well under SDF party and democratic values and fundamental rights of the people have been secured. He maintained that the development of State has been possible due to the dedicated support of people towards the party.

The minister stressed that the SDF workers should lead from the front so that the party can leap forward on the way of prosperity. He mentioned that every party member should be bound by the idealism and constitution of the party and the youth should be active in making the party more



functional and people centric.

He said the SDF party is not worried about opposition parties in the State. "The opposition seems to be in verge of extinction due to lack of people centric agendas and programmes. People who were vocal about the word 'change' have either changed themselves or have vanished into thin air due to lack of support of common mass," he said.

Speaking on Limboo-Tamang seat reservation issue, SDF youth convenor (west) Sushil Tamang informed the gathering about different provisions of Indian Constitution through which the seat reservation issue can be resolved. He said, seat reservation will be possible within 2019 and the SDF party is committed to fulfil the aspirations of Limboo-Tamang community.

SDF general secretary for south and west districts, Sher Hang Subba, in his address, slammed the opposition

## 'Internet Saathi' to digitally empower one lakh women in Bengal

**KOLKATA, June 8 (IANS):** A court here on Wednesday framed charges against underworld don Rajendra Sadashiv Nikhaljalias Chhota Rajan and others in a fake passport case.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Special Judge Vinod Kumar said the trial will be held on a day-to-day basis and fixed July 11 to start recording the statements of prosecution witnesses.

The court framed charges against Chhota Rajan and

then passport officers Jayashree Dattatray Rahate, Deepak Natvarlal Shah and Lalitha Lakshmanan under sections of the Indian Penal Code dealing with criminal conspiracy, cheating, cheating by impersonation and forgery of documents.

All the accused pleaded not guilty and claimed trial.

The CBI, in its charge sheet, alleged that Chhota Rajan got issued a fake passport from Bengaluru in 1998-99 in connivance with Rahate, Shah

and Lakshmanan in the name of one Mohan Kumar.

The three are out on bail while Rajan is in judicial custody.

Rajan was allegedly involved in over 85 cases, ranging from murder to extortion, smuggling and drug trafficking. He has cases pending against him in Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and with the CBI.

The don, held by the Indonesian police on October 25, 2015, was deported to India on November 6, 2015.

## Congress, Trinamool clash in MPs' panel over West Bengal polls

**NEW DELHI, June 8 (IANS):** Members of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Congress reportedly clashed in a parliamentary committee meeting here on Tuesday, officials said on Wednesday.

Deliberating at the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, Trinamool Congress member Sukhendu Shekhar Roy raised issues concerning the functioning of the Election Commission (EC), especially

in the context of recently held assembly polls in West Bengal, the officials said.

While Roy, a Trinamool member of the Rajya Sabha, complained against the EC's certain discretionary orders like transferring civil and police officials during electioneering, he also asked why were the elections in West Bengal held in a multi-phase manner unlike in other states.

Congress member from the Lok Sabha Abu Haseem Khan Chowdhury protested against certain remarks of Roy

and hailed the role played by the EC in conducting the state polls.

The heated debate occurred in the presence of EC officials who were called to attend the Standing Committee meeting.

The 31-member panel of members from both houses of parliament and headed by Congress member E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan is at present examining the subject, "Feasibility of Holding Simultaneous Election to House".

This meeting is being held after reference from the department of Personnel and Training, sources said.

At the meeting, the TMC member pointed out that while independence of the EC is appreciable even a constitutional body should be made to adhere to the rule of law and good precedence and should be accountable.

The Trinamool member strongly questioned as to why and how as many as 68 top police and civil officials were transferred during the period

## Charges framed against Chhota Rajan, daily trial from July 11

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The don, held by the Indonesian police on October 25, 2015, was deported to India on November 6, 2015.

## Sikkim, Nepal trade boards meet in Gangtok

SE Report

**GANGTOK, June 8:** A meeting between Sikkim Chamber of Commerce and Butwal Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BuCCI), Nepal was convened in Gangtok today.

A 25-member BuCCI body headed by president M.M. Singh is on a three-day visit to Sikkim for exchange of ideas and promotion of business in the respective areas, informs a press release.

During the meeting,



BuCCI expressed their views looking forward to establishing a win-win relationship between the two bodies and the areas they represent, adds the release.

## 'Goa government has not done much to fight drug menace'

**PANAJI, June 8 (IANS):** The BJP-led government in Goa has not done much to rein in the drug menace, especially amongst students, in the coastal state, Amogh Arlekar, Joint Secretary of the ABVP for Konkan and Goa said on Wednesday.

"To say bluntly, the government has done very little," Arlekar said.

Arlekar also said the very fact that a few students from the Goa Engineering College (GEC) in the village of Farmagudi, 30 km east of Panaji, were arrested for possession of drugs last month, meant that the drug menace was a grave issue.

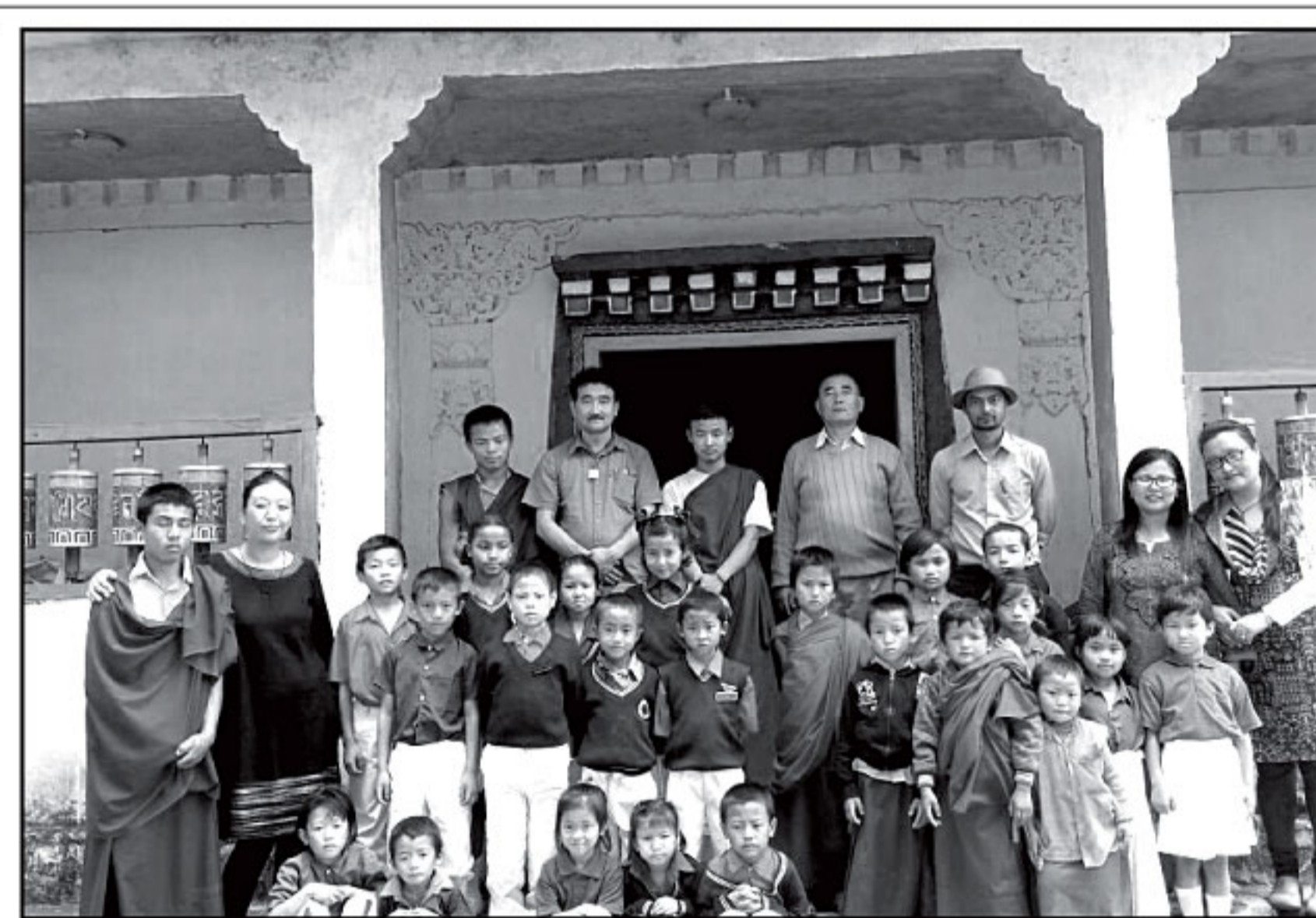
"There were some students in GEC who were caught having drugs. So from that you can come to know it is quite severe. (When) there

are campuses which have drugs being traded, I think it becomes a severe thing," Arlekar said.

Arlekar was addressing a press conference in Panaji to announce the launch of a statewide survey by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad to find out how many students drop out of schools and colleges in Goa's tourism belt as well as those whose parents work in the ailing mining sector.

The ABVP is the student wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

The student leader's comment comes two weeks after State Minister for Art and Culture Dayanand Mandrekar alleged that drugs were being openly sold in colleges and other educational institutions.



**Bermoik Passi primary school headmaster Bhaila Bhutia, students and staff at Bermoik Norbugang monastery during a visit under the 'Each Saturday Field Study Day' initiative. The students were explained about the Buddhist tradition and culture and also about the instruments used during prayers and rituals. The students were also briefed about the different types of prayers and the prayer hall. Importance of discipline and values in life were also shared with the students.**

## Mathura violence: Killed SP's kin seeks murder trial of SSP, DM

**LUCKNOW, June 8 (IANS):** Family members of Superintendent Police (city) Mukul Dwivedi, who was killed in the Mathura violence last week, on Wednesday demanded trial of the district magistrate and the district police chief for his "murder" and for allegedly "mishandling" the whole situation.

Prafulla Dwivedi, younger brother of Mukul Dwivedi, said that the Uttar Pradesh government should order a CBI probe into the whole incident and the circumstances leading to the violence.

If no action is taken against

the then District Magistrate Rajesh Kumar and Senior Superintendent of Police Prakesh Singh, Profulla said, parents of Mukul, his widow and two children will stage a sit-in at Jawaharbagh in Mathura, where the SP was killed.

The Dwivedis have started a campaign for more stringent action against Rakesh Singh and the district magistrate, who they allege, left the police force to go unprepared to Jawaharbagh on June 2.


The Uttar Pradesh government has already transferred both of the officials

and has ordered a judicial probe into the incident.

However, anger continues to simmer against the then SSP Rakesh Singh, whom many in the force in Mathura blame for the tragedy.

The violence during an anti-encroachment drive at Jawaharbagh left 29 persons, including two police officials, dead on June 2.

In the past, Singh was suspended after violence in Firozabad but soon found plum postings due to his "political connections", an official alleged.

  
**VINAYAKA MISSIONS SIKKIM UNIVERSITY**  
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www.vmsuniversity.in, e-mail:contactus@vmsuniversity.in  
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**Job Vacancy/Advt. No 01/2016**

Application on plain paper with full details as per INC norms is invited for the post of **Principal, Nursing College** from eligible candidates on or before 06.07.2016 at VMSU address.

**Md. Mojibuddin**  
Registrar

**North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health & Medical Sciences Mawdiangdiang, Shillong - 793 018**  
Advertisement No. E.II/8/2015/Pt Dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Special Recruitment Drive for filling up of Vacancies of various Categories of Posts Reserved for the Persons with Disabilities (PWD)**

Applications are invited from eligible PWD's candidates on a special recruitment drive to fill up the following reserved categories of Group 'A', 'B' & 'C' posts on direct recruitment. Eligible / suitable candidates are requested to submit their applications in the prescribed format alongwith attested copies of certificates & testimonials, two copies of recent passport size photograph. Candidates working in Govt. / Semi Govt. / Public Sector Undertaking / Autonomous Institutions are instructed to submit their applications through proper channel. Only shortlisted candidates will be called for the skill test / written test / interview as the Institute deems fit. Only Indian citizens need to apply. Candidates who have applied earlier for the following posts against advertisement dated 18-02-2016 & dated 25-04-2016 need not apply again as their applications will be considered accordingly.

Sl No	Name of Posts	No. of Posts	Pay Band and Grade Pay
1	Dental Officer	1-UR (Reserved for Hearing Handicapped)	PB-3 ₹ 15,600-39,100/- GP ₹ 6,600/-
2	Statistical Officer	1-UR (Reserved for Visually Handicapped) (B.L.V)	PB-3 ₹ 15,600-39,100/- GP ₹ 5,400/-
3	Medical Physicist	1-ORC (Reserved for Physically Handicapped) (OL)	PB-2 ₹ 9,300-34,800/- GP ₹ 4,600/-
4	Staff Nurse	3-1-Reserved for Physically Handicapped (OL) & 2-Reserved for Hearing Handicapped	PB-2 ₹ 9,300-34,800/- GP ₹ 4,600/-
5	Medical Social Worker	1-(Reserved for Visually Handicapped) (B.L.V)	PB-2 ₹ 9,300-34,800/- GP ₹ 4,200/-
6	Senior Stenographer	1-(Reserved for Visually Handicapped) (B.L.V)	PB-2 ₹ 9,300-34,800/- GP ₹ 4,200/-
7	Health Educator	1-(Reserved for Visually Handicapped) (B.L.V)	PB-2 ₹ 9,300-34,800/- GP ₹ 4,200/-
8	Warden / Lady Warden	1-(Reserved for Physically Handicapped) (O.A.O.L.B.L)	PB-1 ₹ 5,200-20,200/- GP ₹ 2,800/-
9	Technical Assistant	2-1-UR & 1-ST (Reserved for Physically Handicapped (OL) & Hearing Handicapped)	PB-1 ₹ 5,200-20,200/- GP ₹ 2,800/-
10	House Keeper	1-UR (Reserved for Physically Handicapped) (OL)	PB-1 ₹ 5,200 - 20,200/- GP ₹ 1,800/-
11	MTS	1-UR (Reserved for Physically Handicapped) (OL,OA)	PB-1 ₹ 5,200 - 20,200/- GP ₹ 1,800/-

NB : Abbreviations used : OL = One Leg, BLOA = Both Legs & One Arm, B = Blind, LV = Low Vision, HH = Hearing Handicapped, OA = One Arm, OAL = One Arm & One Leg, BL = Both Legs.

Further details regarding educational qualifications, age, experience, etc. and to download the prescribed proforma of application, kindly visit the Institute's website <http://www.neigrhms.gov.in>.

Complete applications may be sent in the prescribed proforma to the "Recruitment Cell, Establishment Section - III", North Eastern Indira Gandhi Institute of Health & Medical Sciences, Mawdiangdiang, Shillong - 793 108 SUPERSCRIBING "Application for the post of

The last date of submission of applications is 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.  
Sd/-  
Deputy Director (Admn)

SIKKIM EXPRESS

When will this end?

India's tryst with censorship has reached a point where artistic and creative freedoms have to pass muster with both official and unofficial moral policing.

The ground has shifted from the fundamental right to free speech to the enforcement of the reasonable restrictions on free speech, both sanctioned by the Constitution.

Running to the courts and to the CBFC's appellate forums saps even the most tenacious of filmmakers. The Shyam Benegal committee has suggested that the CBFC be restricted to only certifying films and not be authorised to censor films.

How about some animal spirits, India Inc?

It is time for India's corporate sector to take a few punts on India's future

SUNDEEPKHANNA

With the Seventh Pay Commission's goodies on their way and the forecast of an above-normal monsoon likely to trigger a recovery in consumer sentiment in the coming months, a consumption boom could be on the cards for India.

Domestic consumption is the fuel that powers the growth of the Indian economy. In 2014-15, it contributed a growth of 57% to the gross domestic product (GDP). But, given the decline in the growth of investment, as per the data released last month, it is debatable whether India's companies are prepared for the coming boom.

For over five years, government inaction, the aftermath of the financial crisis and stagnant domestic consumption gave private Indian companies the perfect alibi to keep their investment purse strings firmly fastened.

Bankers, citing a low risk-reward ratio, stress that in an environment where most companies are looking merely to refinance or restructure existing loans, there are few proposals seeking funds to finance new projects.

The past year-and-a-half presented a surprising window for the Indian economy as Chinese growth sputtered, leading to a collapse in prices of essential commodities. But as China goes back into investment mode, these prices will recover, leading to inflationary pressures and less disposable incomes in commodity importers such as India.

That's a pity. As Angel Gurria, secretary-general of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), put it eloquently, "Today's investment is tomorrow's growth." China's growth through its golden run was driven primarily by investments made ahead of demand. In India, the time to anticipate that demand is now.

consumer story in the coming 5-10 years will be shaped by its 440 million millennials (those who were young adults around 2000) and 390 million Gen Z (those born after 2000). What new products and services are the largest companies thinking of providing this emerging new class of Indian consumers?

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India certainly has its problems—a notoriously slow bureaucracy, creaking and woefully inadequate infrastructure, and too much regulation, for starters—that need to be addressed for economic growth to take off. But these are not intractable issues. Most businesses now accept that bureaucrats, under instructions from their political

masters, are willing to get things done.

As for infrastructure, sitting back and waiting for the government to put everything in place is to not recognize that it is a massive opportunity waiting to be tapped.

Till the 1990s, telecom was one of India's biggest infrastructure gaps. So were airports. Think back to the time when getting a phone call through to another city needed hours of trying by an operator, and getting a ticket on the choked Indian Airlines flights was a huge task.

Today, both of these are available on demand and in the bargain a whole host of exciting new private companies such as Bharti Airtel and IndiGo have been born. It is the same sort of challenge that roads, railways, power, clean water and efficient public transport present today.

The government has set a target of \$1 trillion in infrastructure spending for the Twelfth Five-Year Plan period running from 2012 to 2017, calling for the private sector to fund half of these

infrastructure investments through public-private partnerships (PPP).

A recent report by KPMG titled India soars high says that the various steps taken by the government are expected to unlock major investment opportunities. The report goes on to say, "In a scenario where the nominal GDP is expected to reach \$3.4 trillion by FY2019-20 and further, to \$7 trillion by FY2024-25, the stakes for the return on investments is expected to be significantly high."

Risk aversion in the corporate context isn't such a bad thing. The excesses of the past decade did produce the vast swathes of debt that have crippled the banking system, and at a time when companies are desperately trying to ward off defaults, taking costly bets on the future may sound counter-intuitive. Yet, this is the time for large Indian groups to unleash what former prime minister Manmohan Singh once called "animal spirits". Even if the expression didn't quite fit his gentle personality, it described best what is needed

today. The frenzied build-up of debt in the past decade is unlikely to happen again partly because companies don't have the appetite for it and partly because the easy-money regime of that era isn't likely to appear again. But smart investment plays, particularly those that leverage innovation and new technologies, are a recipe for growth. The electric and hybrid vehicle industry in India is virtually non-existent. A new generation of Indians may be ready to embrace environmentally friendly vehicles. But look around us—most car makers are content to play catch up with each other and release fuel-guzzling SUVs.

India's IT giants are flush with cash reserves, yet content to chug along doing pretty much what they have been doing over the past 15-20 years even as a Google carves out Alphabet from itself with the avowed aim of pursuing "moon shots".

It is time for India's corporate sector to take a few punts on the country's future. (The Mint)

Gorkhas and Library: A Centurial Conspectus

ANIMESH RAI

Heartiest Congratulations to all on the 103rd Foundation Day of the Gorkha Library, Kurseong. The first Gorkha library in India was started at Kurseong on 8th June 1913. If we look into the history of this library, hundred years ago, a Lepcha named Jombey Paval had founded it with the help of his friends. Paval was originally from Kalimpong and worked at Kurseong hospital. The library was started in his rented house.

Initially the colonial administration suspected the formation of the Gorkha library, as the Bengalis had started an underground group like Anisulan Samity to challenge the colonial administration. Pandit Tulsi Bhattarai, the former member of the Gorkha Library

Executive Committee said "the then founders of the library convinced the administration by stressing on the need of a reading place for the Gorkhas, who were mostly poor and illiterate". Pandit Bhattarai claims that during the mid 1980's, he was also an activist for Gorkhaland and had stopped Jyoti Basu, the then Chief minister of Bengal from entering the hills.

The idea of having a Gorkha library was earlier raised by Pratiman Singh Lama. He was highly influenced by the reading and discussing habits of Europeans at Darjeeling Planter's Association. Lama was further inspired by the feeling which can be theoretically equated as 'Public Sphere'. According to the German sociologists, Jurgen Habermas 'Public Sphere' is a platform where

people can discuss anything freely without any pressure or threat of any kind.

According to Chalmers (2009:127), P.S. Lama often argued that on having a public sphere like the British system of library and rational discussions, "we can reap all and what honours we could achieve". The aspirations and demands of the people for the formation of the Gorkha library led Parasmani Pradhan to form Nepali Sahitya Samaj. Through this group he tried to unite the writers for the creation of an organised civil society.

In 1915, philanthropist Sardar Bahadur Lama donated Rs. 500 for the construction of the library building and the construction was further funded by the Kurseong Municipality. The local papers like Chandrika which was edited

collectively by Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalis. The present Vice-Chancellor of Sikkim University, Prof T.B. Subba argues that when the Hill Men's Social Union was formed in 1930's then the Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalis had collectively consented to call themselves as Gorkhas and accepted Nepali their language.

The Union had also started a monthly magazine called the "Nebula" derived from the abbreviation of Nepali, Bhutia and Lepcha. Almost after one hundred years, the social fabric of the local Gorkha community is breaking up across the political lines and lust for reservation, representation, tribal development boards among others. Our society is in a need of re-organisation and rejuvenation, politics of opportunism and favouritism based on kin and kith relations has damaged the traditional social homogeneity. Amidst such moments of despair and disrepair, Mr. Bipal Barailey, 21 year old school dropout, resident of Munsong tea estate, 21 kms away from Kalimpong has opened a library in his village. The library is being run in one of his rooms with few books and chairs. The era has come to retest the Gorkhas in the scales of communal unity and harmony. There seems to be a need for more Paval's, friends and like-minded people who can come forward and help in the establishment of this library through any ways or means. The rejuvenation of the century old love for libraries for social empowerment must

be accepted and assisted as a new hope for the creation of a better society. Nabu, a GJM student wing Central Committee member from Kalimpong wants to appeal all the members of the civil society to kindly help the library by donating old books. He claims that this is an apolitical affair and everybody should unify irrespective of political backgrounds. Amid such moments of century old historical coincidences, in another case all the political parties of the region has been called by the district administration in a dialogue for the creation of Kalimpong district. Let us hope that the present political parties too can come over their differences and work together not just for Kalimpong alone but for the creation of Gorkhaland as well.

In a way of concluding, let us recollect the words of Prof. Mahendra P. Lama, the former Vice-Chancellor of Sikkim University. He used to say "Grandpa and Grandma passed away. We did not record their knowledge. As a result, they took away the precious libraries with them. Let us learn to archive things by recording and let us not repeat our mistakes". Libraries are after all depositories of many things like knowledge and wisdom, history and identity and many more. Let us all come together and not regret later in willingly watering the library planted by Mr. Barailey.

(Animesh Rai is a research student in the Department of Sociology, Sikkim University)

The ambiguities of gurudom

The prime attraction of today's guru is that he or she is accessible to all. In circumstances that breed despair, the guru becomes the healer, the confidant, and the protective patriarch or matriarch

NEERA CHANDHOKE

Newspaper reports on the Jawahar Bagh killings in Mathura followed in quick succession accounts of the extravaganzas hosted by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar on the floodplain of the Yamuna in Delhi. Both reports reinforce convictions that our world is best described as topsy-turvy. There was a time when statesmen like Jawaharlal Nehru believed that religion was dangerous because it convinced followers that hunger, filth and misery were their natural lot. Today god-men, accomplished practitioners of the art of politics, wield considerable power and political clout. But they willfully overlook, and thereby sanction misery, hunger and filth.

Consider the paradoxes of this rapidly growing phenomenon. Men of god are expected to be renouncers. New-age gurus dress in flashy apparel, travel in luxurious private planes, host celebrations attended by pomp and splendour, and endeavour to arouse shock and awe among devotees. Ministers, Supreme Court judges, high-ranking bureaucrats, police officers, corporate honchos, and media personalities genuflect at the feet of self-styled gurus. Never have religious leaders fetched such unthinking obeisance, and untrammelled power as they do today. It is not surprising that they have neither time nor inclination to do something about the ills of our society.

Down the ages This was not always so. In all religions, visionary

spiritual leaders have challenged hierarchies and disparities, exploitation and discrimination of the community. From the sixth to the sixteenth century the Bhakti movement launched a powerful attack on caste-based discrimination in Hinduism. Till today the subversive poetry authored by Kabir is remembered, recited and sung. "Pandit," he addressed the Brahmin, "look in your heart to know. Tell me how untouchability is born — untouchability is what you made so."

Right up till the turn of the twentieth century, a number of religious leaders driven by the quest for a moral order, and fired by the belief that untouchability was a later appendage to Hinduism, tried to retrieve the spiritual essence of the religion. Over the millennia, others threw up their metaphorical hands in despair, broke away and established new religions — Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Hinduism, smudged deeply by social exclusion, became the object of struggle, the target of social reform movements, and often the butt of ridicule.

Do we see any of this questioning by cults today? Perhaps not. Self-styled gurus can hardly launch a critique of a system of which they are the beneficiaries. When the 'spiritual' leader of the infamous Swadheen Bharat Subhas Sena, Jai Gurudev, died in 2012, he reportedly left property and land worth Rs. 12,000 crore, a school, a petrol pump, a temple that secured him immortality, ashrams, assets, and luxury cars. Hinduism is a religion that teaches detachment,

ironically, leaders of cults are passionately attached to worldly possessions, power and pelf. Their power is on public display. Certainly, Indians have bowed their foreheads before gurus, renouncers, holy men, savants and peripatetic sadhus since time immemorial. But these transactions between believers and faith leaders were private, confidential and sacrosanct. These days transactions are public affairs; conspicuously orchestrated mega-events are televised and breathlessly consumed by a global constituency.

Soulless world and leaders

Why do then thousands of people flock to new-age gurus on show? Perhaps there is an answer. Within the tradition, the guru spent many years mastering philosophical knowledge because his role was that of a medium between individuals and the divine. He himself was never the divine. Yet access to the spiritual leader was restricted through elaborate rituals of exclusion of castes and often women.

The prime attraction of today's guru is that he/she is accessible to all. The gates of spiritual wisdom have been thrown open, gatekeepers have been dispensed with, and religious philosophy has been democratised. Whether the leader himself is a democrat is questionable. But that does not matter for people who have been left rudderless in a world of vulgar consumerism and stark disparities. They have lost confidence in their ability to negotiate the demands of a market-driven society. In

capitalist society the value of a person is judged by the value of her possessions. Individuals themselves become commodities at considerable cost to their self-esteem and assurance.

Social norms breed despair, and the guru becomes the healer, the confidant, and the protective patriarch or matriarch. In a commodity-driven world, where ordinary people lurch — like a fragile raft on stormy waves — from one crisis to another, religion becomes as Marx had said, "the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of the soulless condition." The problem is not with religion, it is with this soulless world that many seek to negotiate with the help of a religious leader.

The quest for reassurance and validation of the self through face-to-face interaction with a local deity, or saint or a god-man is not new. In Punjab, for years Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs worshipped together at roadside shrines, or at the tomb of a Sufi saint. In the town of Malerkotla, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs offer money, jewels, and cooked sweet rice at the mazaar of Sheikh Sadr-ud-Din, the founder of Malerkotla and a Sufi saint. Thousands of people visit a fair held on the first Thursday of every month. In 1904 the author of the Malerkotla Gazetteer wrote in a puzzled mien, "It is strange that these fairs are mostly attended by Hindus though Sadr-ud-Din was a Muslim saint." This is a town of Sufi tombs, temple bells hang in front of mosques, and Om is tattooed on the hands of the keeper of the shrine. Notably

Malerkotla has never witnessed a communal riot, simply because joint worship created a political community. It is debatable whether modern gurus teach followers to live in harmony with other fellow beings. At best, they teach instant moksha, at worst they exploit followers.

Hindutva versus god-men

Ironically personalised worship to a new-age guru has recreated multiple centres of belief that are characteristic of Hinduism. Historians tell us that the unified religion we call Hinduism is a colonial construct, because it were colonial administrators and missionaries who lumped various groups, philosophies, faiths, and ideologies under the umbrella term 'Hinduism'. Neo-Hindu leaders, buffeted by criticism of practices sanctioned by Hinduism, responded to the colonial encounter by projecting a pan-Indian religion.

Over time this religion provided identity and inspiration to sections of the nationalist movement. V.D. Savarkar refused to accept that Hinduism is of relatively recent provenance, and suggested that the religion goes back into ancient time. He called it Hindutva, an ideology that forms the crux of the homogenising project of the religious Right. The irony is that Hindutva can only go so far, it contributes to identity formation through differentiation, but it cannot fill empty or half-filled pockets, give jobs, assure dignity, promise security, or allay insecurities and complexes. That only an

urban-based guru or a cult, which has replaced the traditional roadside shrine, can give.

The contradiction is that even if gurudom feeds into the project of Hindutva, spiritual leaders exercise, for the state, dangerous autonomy. For example, Jawahar Bagh developed into an independent township within the precincts of a sovereign India. Its inhabitants established an economy, an educational system, a currency, and imparted training in violence to the children. They also created a rather wacky political and economic agenda, but one that posed a challenge to the government. That gurus influence considerably the electoral fortunes of the local candidate is the worst-kept secret in India. That is why politicians court them.

We know that Hindutva is fractured along the lines of caste and class. But it is also a brittle construct because it has to compete with personalised religious cults for the loyalties of citizens. Over time, the project is bound to come a cropper, because what we call Hinduism is nothing but a time-bound coalition of cults, religious groups, personalised modes of worship and localised gods. These relentlessly subvert the homogenising ideology of Hindutva. For the rational, god-men are irrational, for the votaries of Hindutva they provide a rather major headache.

(Neera Chandhoke is a former Professor of Political Science, Delhi University. Courtesy: The Hindu)

We need birds in books, not in cages

NOSANG LIMBOO

In 1960s Salim Ali was invited by the King of Sikkim to write a book on the Birds of Sikkim. This is how we got 'The Birds of Sikkim' by Salim Ali. Not everyone was educated in those days but a positive interest of a leader and his broad outlook, respect and love towards nature; we got around 560 species of Sikkim birds in the book.

And today after more than five decades instead of upgrading and revising the book we are jumping directly in putting them in a cage in a land where we worship nature. Birds are Birds, may it be of any corner of the world.

What a great example it can be, but of a negative, narrow outlook, disrespect towards nature and a greedy approach. In fact this is a direct slap in the face of ecotourism when such important components of ecotourism like birds to be caged.

We are not Switzerland or Singapore, the caging of birds is a huge sign of futility. We are Sikkim and we have our own speciality of owning 60% species of birds in the country even being one of the smallest States of India. We just need proper documentation first.

What could be the cause of such evil thought? Who are those very happy about? Have we stopped worshipping nature now and started worshipping something else? Do our education and creativity and a wanting to do good nature vanishes in front of few illiterates?

I wonder how we can overcome this negativity of bureaucracy and self-centred policies of the State Government. It is said, "whenever the project leader tries to make himself out to be bigger than the project, the enterprise suffers". Similar is the case in putting the exotic birds in the cage here in Sikkim.

Rs. 16 lakhs has been sanctioned by the State government just to buy exotic birds for the project which runs in crores of rupees.

## Nihalani censored 'Udta Punjab' on BJP's order: Kejriwal



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday accused censor board chief Pahlaj Nihalani of censoring Bollywood film 'Udta Punjab' on the BJP's direction.

"Pahlaj Nihalani's statement (linking co-producer Anurag Kashyap with the AAP) makes it amply clear he has stopped the film

on BJP's instructions," the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader tweeted.

Nihalani earlier alleged that he had heard that Kashyap had "taken money from AAP" to show Punjab in bad light through "Udta Punjab" and said this was the talk in the film industry.

The makers of "Udta

Punjab" — Kashyap's Phantom Films and Balaji Motion Pictures — have been asked by the censor board to make 89 cuts if they wanted a release certificate.

A furious Kashyap then called Nihalani, who heads the Central Board of Film Certification, an "oligarch" — prompting Nihalani's counter.

## Harris 'struggled' with Swift's 'regimented' life

Scottish DJ Calvin Harris reportedly "struggled" with his former girlfriend Taylor Swift's "regimented" life and the pressure of dating one of the world's biggest pop stars.

Harris recently called time on his 15-month romance with Swift and insiders admit the "Summer" hitmaker struggled with the relationship, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

"Taylor is an empire in her own right and, as such, her life is very controlled," a source told Britain's Grazia magazine.

"At the end of the day, Calvin is still a smalltown boy from Dumfries (Scotland) and I think he struggled with living in such regimented conditions where his every move was

speculated on," the insider added.

Harris, who cancelled a number of shows last month after being involved in a car accident, was said to feel increasingly "suffocated" by Swift's attention, while she often felt "pushed away" by him.

"There were a few times when Taylor wanted Calvin's support and he bailed but she would dismiss her doubts and tell herself it was because he was always so career-focussed," the source said.

"Then, after his crash, she dropped everything to be with him and was ready to prove her commitment," added the insider.

## Shraddha, Siddhanth to play Dawood-sister duo in 'Haseena' biopic



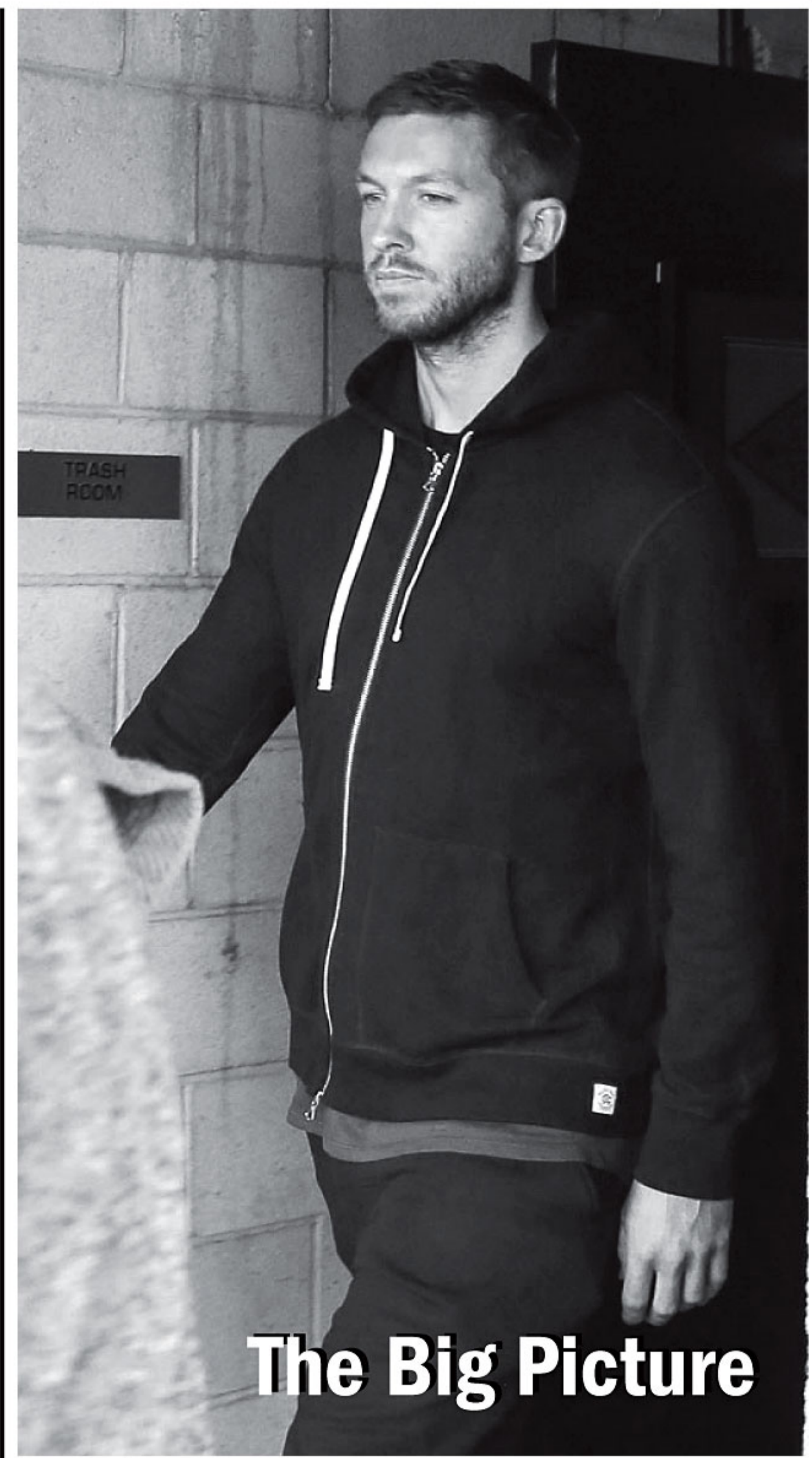
Veteran Bollywood actor Shakti Kapoor has confirmed that his children, daughter Shraddha and son Siddhanth will play Haseena Parkar and her brother, notorious gangster Dawood Ibrahim in the biopic 'Haseena'.

Present at the trailer launch of his film "Dil Sala Sanki", Shakti Kapoor said: "Both of them will star in 'Haseena', where the (real life) brother and sister will actually play brother and sister on-screen. Shraddha will play Haseena Parkar while Dawood's role will be done by Siddhanth."

It is said that Sonakshi Sinha was earlier finalised to play Haseena but the actress apparently walked out due to date issues. The film will be helmed by "Shootout at Lokhandwala" fame Apoorva Lakshya.

Shraddha is currently shooting "Ok Jaanu" and will also shoot for "Half Girlfriend" soon along with "Rock On 2". She might take up "Haseena" after she finishes these three projects.

The actress was last seen in "Baaghi" and Siddhanth was last seen in "Jazbaa".



THE SCOTCH DJ KEEPS UP WITH HIS GYM ROUTINE DESPITE HIS RECENT BREAKUP WITH TAYLOR SWIFT.

## 'Jamai Raja' completes 500 episodes

Zee TV's popular primetime drama "Jamai Raja", a story about a mother-in-law and son-in-law relationship, has completed 500 episodes.

The story revolves around Sid Khurana (played by Ravi Dubey) who took on the responsibility of mending a troubled relationship between his strong, fiercely independent mother-in-law Durga Devi aka DD (played by Achint Kaur) and wife Roshni (Nia Sharma).

Ravi feels ecstatic with the milestone of 500 episodes and said: "It is a big milestone for all of us and it would not have been possible without the relentless love and support from our

audiences who have been an integral part of Jamai Raja's journey."

"I hope that there are at least 500 more episodes to go. The success of this show has reinforced my belief that when you have well-defined characters and a strong script that breaks stereotypes, it is bound to create magic with viewers. The upcoming track has plenty of unexpected developments for the viewers, taking the entertainment quotient several notches higher," he added.

Nia also added that the pairing of Sid and Roshni has been a huge hit with audiences and that the show has given many

special moments to her.

"It feels awesome that Jamai Raja has completed 500 episodes. The pairing of Sid & Roshni has been a huge hit with audiences. This beautiful journey has given me a lot of special moments and has challenged me making me a more well-rounded, versatile actor."

"Right from the range in my character and my look, I have got umpteen opportunities to experiment in the show. For my current glamorous look, I have received such overwhelming response from my fans. My heartfelt thanks to all our fans as well, as it is their support that keeps us going," she said.

## BUSINESS

## Jaitley discusses sovereign wealth fund roadmap

**NEW DELHI, June 8 (IANS):** Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Wednesday discussed the operationalisation of India's first Rs40,000 crore sovereign wealth fund, the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF).

"Second meeting of the governing council of the NIIF was held under the chairmanship of Arun Jaitley to review the status of actions taken for the operationalisation of the NIIF and to provide the road map for further activities," the Finance Ministry said in a

statement. Jaitley also launched NIIF website here on Wednesday during the second governing council meet of the sovereign wealth fund.

The council discussed the long term investors, sovereign wealth funds and pension funds, which are seeking to invest in the NIIF, the statement said.

"The progress on the MoUs (memorandum of understanding) for investment in NIIF with several investors such as Abu Dhabi Investment Authority from UAE, open

joint-stock company Rusnano from Russia and Qatar Investment Authority, Qatar were also discussed, it said.

Financial Times, London has adjudged NIIF as the most innovative structure in Asia Pacific under financial category.

The guidelines for investment of the corpus of NIIF were also discussed at the meeting.

"The NIIF would have various sector-specific or investor-specific close ended funds and each fund may issue various classes of units. The government along with other

investors would subscribe to the units of various funds," it said.

The units, investment strategy and accounts of each fund shall be distinct from and independent of the other funds, it added.

The shortlisting of projects for initial investment by the NIIF and the selection of its chief executive officer was also discussed at the meeting.

"A core team has been put in place to carry-out the activities of the NIIF," the statement said.

## Fitness bands drive wearable market in India: IDC

**NEW DELHI, June 8 (IANS):** Wearable market in India clocked just over 400,000 units sold in Q1 2016, driven largely by fitness bands with 87.7 per cent market share whereas smart wearables such as smartwatches contributed to around 12.3 per cent, says an International Data Corporation (IDC) report.

"The expected launch of affordable smartwatches in the second half of 2016 could see a rapid growth in the

share of smart devices," said Swapnil Bhatnagar, Research Director, IDC India, in a statement.

Though the smart wearables remained low at 12.3 per cent, a higher growth rate compared to basic devices is expected in near future.

The first two positions were grabbed by Samsung and Motorola while Apple stood third due to channel-related issues.

The online channel was

the most preferred means for majority of the vendors. However, a shift towards retail is also being observed as customers are looking to physically feel and test out the product.

Fitbit and Apple are the only two brands that are widely present in physical stores; the other brands have either limited or no offline presence, the report by the US market research and analysis firm, noted.

The penetration of

wearables is still low, and vendors are investing in the continuous development of products to provide better value to users.

"The increase in volume is giving more scope to the vendors to come up with better features such as display and NFC."

Both Intex's recently launched Fitbit and Xiaomi's soon-to-be-launched Mi Band 2 come with a display at affordable prices," added Bhatnagar.

## BEL posts Rs 1,809 cr profit after tax for 2015-16

**BENGALURU, June 8 (IANS):** Public sector defence major Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) on Wednesday said it logged a profit after tax of Rs 1,809 crore in fiscal 2015-16, rising from Rs 1,467 crore in 2014-15.

"We had a good financial year in 2015-16, with an impressive jump in the order book," said BEL Chairman S.K. Sharma.

While the company registered a turnover of Rs 7,522 crore in 2015-16 compared to Rs 6,695 crore in 2014-15, the order book value as on April 1,

2016, stood at Rs 32,022 crore, increasing from Rs 21,617 crore in 2014-15.

With an export growth of 47 per cent, the BEL's exports rose to \$85 million in the analysed year from \$58 million in the last fiscal.

"Highlights of 2015-16 include 12 per cent growth in turnover, induction of Akash missile system into the Indian Air Force and Indian Army, and an excellent MoU rating for 2014-15," said Sharma.

Major order received in 2014-15 included Integrated Air Command Control System,

Weapon Locating Radar from the artillery division of the army and Hand Held Thermal Imager with LRF from the Army Infantry, which is being produced in Machilipatnam unit.

Other orders include Ground-based Mobile ELINT under the electronic warfare, Integrated Communication System and improved USHUS sonar for submarines, said Sharma.

Electronic Fuze being developed with a foreign original equipment manufacturer, Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance

Vehicle and electronic warfare Shakti System for P71 tank complete the order book.

Talking about executed orders in fiscal 2015-16, Sharma said, "Akash weapons system, 3-D tactical control radar, Schilka upgrade and passive night vision device for the Indian Army and low-level lightweight radar to Air Force among others."

Fire control system, new generation sonars and integrated sonar suite, ship data network to navy and L Band surveillance radar for export to Myanmar are the other executed orders.

## Amazon will invest another \$3 bn in India: Jeff Bezos

**WASHINGTON, June 8 (IANS):** The US-based global e-commerce major Amazon.com had pledged another \$3 billion investment in India as it bets big on the \$14 billion e-retail space in the country that's projected to grow to \$55 billion by 2018.

"We have already created some 45,000 jobs in India and continue to see huge potential in the Indian economy," said Jeff Bezos, Founder and CEO of Amazon.com at a gala hosted by the US-India Business Council for visiting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi here.

"Our Amazon.in team is

surpassing even our most ambitious planned milestones, and I'm pleased to announce today that we'll invest an additional \$3 billion on top of the \$2 billion that we announced in 2014, bringing our total investment in India to over \$5 billion."

Bezos was also presented with the Global Leadership Awards by Prime Minister Modi, along with Dilip Shangvi, Founder and Managing Director of Sun Pharmaceuticals. Both were honoured for their contributions and commitment to integrating India into the global economy.

## Global smartphone sales to slow but not in India

**NEW DELHI, June 8 (IANS):** Global smartphone sales will continue to slow down and will no longer grow in double digits, a new report has said. But India still has the highest growth potential.

Sales internationally are expected to grow seven per cent in 2016, to reach 1.5 billion units, according to the report from market research firm Gartner.

The expected growth in 2016 is down from 14.4 per cent growth in 2015.

"The smartphone market will no longer grow at the levels it has reached over the last seven years. Smartphone sales recorded their highest growth in 2010, reaching 73 per cent," said Anshul Gupta, research director at Gartner.

The report said the smartphone market had reached 90 per cent penetration in the mature markets of North America, Western Europe, Japan and the Asia Pacific region, slowing future growth.

Also, the users in these

regions were not replacing or upgrading their smartphone as often as in previous years.

"In the mature markets, premium phone users are extending life cycles to 2.5 years, which is not going to change drastically over the next five years," Gupta added.

Communications Service Providers (CSPs) have moved away from subsidies providing a free smartphone every two years, which had led to more varied upgrade cycles.

Since mature markets are saturated, the focus for many vendors is on India and China.

"India has the highest growth potential. Sales of feature phones totalled 167 million units in 2015, 61 per cent of total mobile phone sales (are) in India," Gupta noted.

Smartphones are expensive for users in India. But with the average selling prices of low-end models falling, Gartner said 139 million smartphones would be sold in India in 2016, growing 29.5 per cent year over year.

## What the planets have for you today

**ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)**

Business and money matters may seem too good to be true, Aries. Success and good fortune in these departments are definitely indicated for you today. If you've been trying to get a break in a creative or artistic field, it may finally manifest. The present looks profitable and the future bright. In the evening, celebrate by scheduling a romantic encounter with your lover. You should find it especially gratifying now.

**TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)**

You should be feeling especially passionate today, Taurus, so don't be surprised if you can't get sex and romance out of your mind. If you're currently involved, schedule an intimate evening with your lover. If you aren't involved, don't be surprised if you pull someone new and exciting under your spell. Your passions could also spill into other parts of your life, including creative and intellectual interests. Make the most of it.

**GEMINI (May 22-June 21)**

Long-buried emotions from the past, some of them pleasant and some in need of release, could well up from your subconscious today, Gemini. This is likely to have an uplifting effect on your mental and emotional state, so don't fight it. It's also likely to release whatever hang-ups you might have about relationships. Therefore, you can expect all your involvements to thrive - particularly the romantic ones. Enjoy.

**CANCER (June 22-July 23)**

Some exciting social events or group activities could take place in your neighborhood today, Cancer. You'll definitely want to attend. You may go with some close friends or a romantic partner. Contact with others is likely to be intense and gratifying now, so expect your head to be spinning by day's end. It's definitely a great idea to spend some time alone with a romantic partner this evening. You're feeling passionate.

**LEO (July 24-Aug 23)**

Your business and financial interests definitely get a big boost today, Leo, perhaps through contacts with friends. Career matters are skyrocketing and your financial future looks promising. Keep up the good work. Your health is especially strong and vigorous, but your primary interest is likely to be romance, as you should be feeling especially passionate. Schedule an intimate evening with a significant other and make the most of it.

**VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23)**

Love and romance are apt to be your primary focus today, Virgo. If you're currently romantically involved, expect a wonderfully intense evening with your special someone. If you aren't involved, don't be surprised if someone new and exciting comes into your life, perhaps from another state or foreign country. Your creative abilities are also intensified. Take whatever time you need to memorize the ideas coming your way. You won't want to forget them.

**LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23)**

Today dreams, visions, and intuitive insights enrich your innovative side and interactions with others. Don't hesitate to put your ideas into motion, Libra, even if they seem a bit too ambitious. You're well attuned to the collective unconscious and likely to be picking up on future trends, so be on the alert. You're feeling especially sexy in the evening, so plan an intimate get-together with your lover.

**SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 23)**

A neighbor or relative you haven't spoken to for a while might suggest attending a social event together, Scorpio. Make the time, as it could open up doors for you that you wouldn't normally expect. Relationships of all kinds should be going especially well, and these include romantic ones. If you're involved, expect to grow closer. If you aren't currently involved, don't be surprised if someone new and exciting enters your life.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 22)**

Sagittarius, your working life and income are likely to be enhanced today through the influence of people who live in distant states or foreign countries. The desire for knowledge is probably strong, and you might seek to develop some new skills. Your romantic life is also likely to be thriving since you feel passionate and project that feeling to others. Expect some surprises from a current or potential romantic partner.

**CAPRICORN (Dec 23-Jan 20)**

Romance is front and center today, Capricorn, as you're probably feeling especially passionate. This is a great day to plan an intimate evening with a lover. Make use of candles, muted lights, and soft music. You're apt to be feeling especially passionate about your other interests, whether they're intellectual, creative, or business oriented. You can expect to spend a lot of time pursuing your passions, no matter what they are.

**AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)**

You're likely to be feeling especially romantic today, Aquarius. If you're currently involved, plan an intimate evening at home with your lover. If you aren't involved, anything goes. Don't be surprised if someone new and exciting comes into your life. Your imagination is high, so you might decide to put your energy into creative projects. Take whatever time you need. Don't let the day pass you by.

**PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)**

Today you might find that your social life takes a definite turn for the better. You could receive more than one invitation to parties or group activities, Pisces, and spend a lot of time on the phone discussing arrangements for future get-togethers. If you aren't romantically involved now, you may meet someone promising. If you're involved, make sure you reserve time for an intimate encounter with your special someone. Have fun.

## Declaring a historic victory, Clinton turns fire on Trump in her White House bid

**SANTA MONICA, June 8:** Hillary Clinton celebrated her triumph as the first woman to lead a major party in a race for the White House, scoring big wins in California and New Jersey to cement her grip on the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination.

The former first lady, U.S. senator and secretary of state spoke to supporters at a raucous event in Brooklyn, New York, and placed her achievement in the context of the women's rights movement.

"Thanks to you, we have reached a milestone," Clinton said in a speech. "We all owe so much to who came before." Clinton appealed to supporters of party rival Bernie Sanders. She said Democrats had been bolstered by his campaign for eradicating income inequality, which has commanded huge crowds and galvanized younger voters. Not yet ready to concede, Sanders vowed to fight on.

Clinton also harshly attacked Donald Trump, her presumptive Republican rival in the Nov. 8 presidential election, for using divisive rhetoric that belittled women, Muslims and immigrants. She took specific aim at his condemnation of an Indiana-born judge of Mexican heritage.

"The stakes in this election are high and the choice is clear. Donald Trump is temperamentally unfit to be president and commander in chief," Clinton said.

"When Donald Trump says a distinguished judge born in Indiana can't do his job because of his Mexican heritage, or he mocks a reporter with disabilities, or calls women pigs, it goes against everything we stand for," she said.

A Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Tuesday showed Clinton leading Trump by 10 percentage points nationally as they launch their general election battle, little changed from a week earlier.

### OBAMA, SANDERS TO MEET

Clinton edged Sanders out in a rough-and-tumble battle that stretched over four months and 50 states. She won support, especially among older voters, with a more pragmatic campaign focused on building on the policies of her fellow Democrat, President Barack Obama.

Obama called both Clinton and Sanders on Tuesday. The White House said he congratulated her on securing the delegates necessary to clinch the nomination and

would meet Sanders on Thursday at Sanders' request.

The Associated Press called the race in California for Clinton early on Wednesday. Clinton won 56 percent to Sanders' 43 percent, avoiding what would have been an embarrassing loss in America's most populous state. The California win came on the heels of a decisive win in New Jersey and narrower victories in New Mexico and South Dakota on Tuesday's nominating contests. Sanders won Montana and North Dakota.

A defeat in California would have reinforced doubts about Clinton's candidacy. Now, she can turn her attention to healing her fractured party and drawing in Sanders' passionate supporters.

Clinton's credentials for office have not been a serious issue, but a scandal stemming from her use of a private email account while at the State Department hangs over her head as she enters the general election campaign.

Clinton, 68, will also be running against the current of this election season, one that has favored outsiders like Trump and Sanders. In Trump, 69, she has an unpredictable opponent who shreds the standard

campaign rule book on an almost daily basis.

### FEW OPTIONS

For his part, Sanders, 74, seems to have few options left.

Democratic Party elites are lined up squarely behind Clinton, including most likely Obama, who may endorse his former secretary of state as early as this week. Pressure will mount on Sanders to exit gracefully and throw his support to Clinton.

Eight years ago in June 2008, Clinton did exactly that when she ended her bitter primary fight with Obama. At the time, it appeared unclear whether Obama would be able to garner the support of Clinton's most ardent backers, but that election drew the highest voter turnout in generations.

At a rally in Santa Monica on Tuesday, Sanders showed no interest in ending his upstart candidacy, telling cheering supporters he would go on campaigning through next Tuesday's primary in the District of Columbia and carry his political mission — although not necessarily his campaign — to the party convention in Philadelphia next month.

"We are going to fight hard to win the primary in

Washington, D.C.," he said. "And then we take our fight for social, economic, racial and environmental justice to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania."

Prominent Democrats say that unifying the party now is the highest priority, and that if Sanders maintains his challenge to Clinton through the July 25-28 convention, Trump will benefit.

"We have our work cut out for us," said U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal, a Democrat from Long Beach, California. "My overriding fear is that we get divided, and Donald Trump could win the election."

Even if Sanders does concede, his supporters may not go quietly. Several told Reuters in recent days that they would have trouble supporting Clinton in a matchup against Trump, saying they either would not vote or would support a third-party candidate.

"People right now are talking if Bernie doesn't get the nomination, they are deregistering as Democrats," said Susan Hartley, 71, a lawyer from Northern California, who was part of the noisy throng of thousands at a Sanders rally in an aircraft hangar in Santa Monica. "People are really upset."

## North Korea restarts plutonium production for nuclear bombs - U.S. official

**WASHINGTON, June 8:** North Korea has restarted production of plutonium fuel, a senior U.S. State Department official said on Tuesday, showing that it plans to pursue its nuclear weapons program in defiance of international sanctions.

The U.S. assessment came a day after the U.N. nuclear watchdog said it had "indications" that Pyongyang has reactivated a plant to recover plutonium from spent reactor fuel at Yongbyon, its main nuclear complex.

The latest developments suggest North Korea's reclusive regime is working to ensure a steady supply of materials for its drive to build warheads, despite tightened international sanctions after its fourth nuclear test in January.

The U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that Washington is worried by the new plutonium reprocessing effort, but he offered no explicit word on any U.S. response.

"Everything in North Korea is a cause for concern," the official told Reuters.

"They take the spent fuel from the 5 megawatt reactor at Yongbyon and let it cool and then take it to the reprocessing facility, and that's where they've obtained the plutonium for their previous nuclear tests. So they are repeating that process," the official said. "That's what they're doing."

North Korea, which conducted its fourth nuclear test in January, vowed in 2013 to restart all nuclear facilities, including the main reactor and the smaller plant at Yongbyon, which was shut down in 2007 as part of an international disarmament-for-aid deal that later collapsed.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has no access to North Korea and mainly monitors its activities by satellite, said last year it had seen signs of a resumption of activity at Yongbyon.

IAEA chief Yukiya Amano told a news conference in Vienna on Monday that there have been indications of renewed plutonium reprocessing activities at Yongbyon.

Reprocessing involves extracting plutonium from spent reactor fuel, one route to obtaining bomb fuel other than uranium enrichment.

"I would agree that there are indications," the U.S. official said.

The official declined to



confirm whether this determination was made from satellite imagery or intelligence sources, or to say how much plutonium North Korea could produce by this method.

South Korean Defense Minister Han Min-koo said last month the North probably had about 40 kg (88 lb) of plutonium. That would be enough to make eight to 10 bombs, according to experts.

Operating the 5 megawatt reactor could yield about 5-6 kg of plutonium a year, they said.

Experts at the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies in Washington predicted last year that North Korea's nuclear weapons stockpile could grow to 20, 50 or 100 bombs within five years, from an estimated 10 to 16 weapons at that time.

North Korea has come under

tightening international pressure over its nuclear weapons program, including tougher U.N. sanctions adopted in March backed by China, following its most recent nuclear blast and ballistic missile tests.

The website 38 North reported last week, based on commercial satellite imagery, that exhaust plumes had been detected twice in May from the thermal plant at Yongbyon's Radiochemical Laboratory, the site's main reprocessing installation.

The Institute for Science and International Security also reported exhaust emissions from a chimney at the plant, which it said was often associated with reprocessing activities there.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un looks from the balcony as he presides over a mass rally and parade in the capital's main ceremonial square in Pyongyang, North Korea May 10, 2016.

There is little proven knowledge about the quantities of weapons-grade uranium or plutonium that North Korea possesses, or

## Afghanistan to restore bombed-out 'safe haven' palace

**KABUL, June 8:** With collapsed roofs and bullet-strewn crumbling walls, the derelict Darul Aman palace has become a symbol of failed attempts to bring peace to war-torn Afghanistan.

Decades of fighting have eroded the grandeur of the European-style palace, built by King Amanullah Khan atop a small hill on the outskirts of Kabul in the early 1920s following full Afghan independence from Britain in 1919.

Darul Aman, which means "safe haven" in Arabic, was burned several times, including during the 1979 Soviet occupation, before being wrecked by fighting. It was abandoned during the civil war in the 1990s.

While most of Kabul has been repaired since the city was ravaged by wars and Taliban occupation, the palace remains in ruins. A haunting memorial to the country's bloody past.

Until recently, tourists could make friends with the guards who patrol the site and sneak in to take photographs



The Darul Aman palace stands in Kabul, Afghanistan, June 2, 2016.

of the bombed-out building but that privilege has since been taken away.

What was once a home to royalty is now daubed with graffiti and home to stray dogs, snakes and scorpions.

While the dust settles on the rubble, just next door sits the pristine National Assembly which was inaugurated in December following a near \$100 million build.

Some Afghans have suggested the palace be left as is, as a reminder of the awful destruction that war unleashes.

But the plan is to rebuild, even though the latest phase of Afghanistan's decades of conflict seems far over and could still derail the good intentions.

national ceremonies.

Fundraising for the project, which will also cover restoration of the nearby Tajbeg Palace, began in 2012 with a government campaign.

The project will take at least three years and could cost up to \$20 million. Abdul Aziz Ibrahim, a media adviser for the ministry of Urban Development and Housing, said last month.

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## Four Malaysians held hostage in the Philippines freed, army says

**MANILA, June 8:** Four Malaysian sailors kidnapped by Filipino gunmen in April were freed on the southern Philippine island of Jolo on Wednesday, a Philippine army spokesman said.

The sailors, part of the crew of a tugboat travelling between Malaysia and the Philippines, were abducted by members of the Abu Sayyaf militant group off the eastern Malaysian state of Sabah on April 1.

It was not immediately clear if a ransom had been paid. The Philippines rarely publicises such payments, but it is widely believed no captives are released without them.

Canadian John Ridsdel, 68, a former mining executive, was executed in April by Abu Sayyaf who captured him and three others in 2015 while they were on vacation on a Philippine island.

Philippine Major Filemon Tan told reporters the Malaysians were released on Jolo, Abu Sayyaf's stronghold in the southern

Philippines.

The sailors were then sent by speedboat to Sabah.

"We have yet to confirm whether ransom money was paid in exchange for the safe release of the victims," Tan said, adding that the kidnapping was led by Abu Sayyaf leader Madjan Sahidjyan, also known as Apuh Mike.

Malaysian authorities have yet to confirm the sailors' release.

Abu Sayyaf, a group linked to the Islamic State, have become notorious for kidnapping, earning millions of dollars in ransom.

Last month, 14 Indonesians kidnapped by the group were released but several people, including Norwegian, Canadian and Japanese citizens are still being held.

Security is precarious in the southern Philippines, despite a 2014 peace pact between the government and the largest Muslim rebel group that ended 45 years of conflict.

## REGIONAL

## To take on BJP in Assam assembly, Congress banks on ex-Chief Minister Saikia's son

**GUWAHATI, June 8:** The Congress, which under three-time Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi suffered its worst ever drubbing in the recent Assam Assembly elections, has chosen former CM Hiteswar Saikia's son and two-time MLA, Debabrata Saikia, to lead its legislature party. On Monday, Debabrata was formally recognised as the Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, where the Congress has 26 seats.

Just two weeks ago, the Congress's attempt to pick a CLP leader had thrown up three names — Ajanta Neog, Rakibul Hussain, both three-time MLAs

and former ministers, and that of Debabrata Saikia — in the presence of AICC observers Ambika Soni and CP Joshi. The central team had then left the decision on the high command.

On May 30, the party finally chose a relatively junior Saikia over Neog and Hussain, with Gogoi describing the decision as one that would help rejuvenate the state unit. "I had personally not lobbied for the CLP post, but what I later heard was that majority of the legislators had ticked my name," said Debabrata.

He added, "I am happy that I have been entrusted with the task of leading the Congress

party in the Assembly. I know it is a difficult task, especially after we lost following three consecutive victories since 2001. But I am sure I will be able to discharge my duties in such a way that the opposition will play a watchdog's role in the true sense of the term."

Party insiders said Debabrata was chosen as he was young and represented the influential Ahom community. Sources added that the party probably wanted to groom him as a future leader.

Born in December 1964, Debabrata's website describes him as a leader of "quality and value" who "belongs to a blue-

blooded family possessing rich culture and tradition." The soft-spoken leader has done his BA from the Calcutta University. His mother, Hemoprova Saikia, is a CWC member.

"Though I came into active politics only in 1991 through the Youth Congress, I have seen politics and governance from close quarters. I have worked in the party upwards from block-level," he said. Debabrata is an MLA from Nazira — a seat he has been representing since 2011.

"I have learnt the art of keeping in touch with my voters from my late father," he said.

## Arunachal, Meghalaya and now Tripura: Big trouble for Congress in NE states

**SHILLONG/AGARTALA, June 8:** The Congress is in big trouble in the north-eastern states after it lost Arunachal Pradesh to dissidence and Assam assembly polls to a BJP-led alliance this year.

On Tuesday, Tripura added to the grand old party's misery in the region after six of its MLAs joined Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC). Another Congress MLA resigned and applied for CPI(M) membership, bringing the party's seats in the 60-member Tripura assembly down from 10 to three.

The Tripura development followed the call of a banned Meghalaya outfit —

Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC) — to overthrow the 'dictatorial and inefficient' Mukul Sangma, the state's chief minister. The outfit also threatened to blow up the state Congress headquarters in Shillong.

Sangma's Congress government in instability-prone Meghalaya has been battling dissidence since his wife Dikkanchi D Shira lost the May by-poll for the Tura Lok Sabha seat. Former chief ministers and veteran Congress leaders DD Lapang and Salseng C Marak are allegedly leading the rebellion against the chief minister.

Sangma was expected to

shuffle his cabinet in a bid to placate the rebels when HNLC issued the threat. "We have a mechanism to verify if HNCL has any nexus with any political leader or group of politicians demanding change of leadership," Sangma said.

Insisting his government was safe, Sangma told HT: "It is not a question of dissidence but of grievances blown out of proportions. But we have checked the forces of destabilisation, including the BJP."

The BJP, for a change, did not have a hand in weakening the Congress in Tripura. TMC cashed in on the anger of the Congress MLAs who were opposed to the poll pact

between the Congress and Left Front in West Bengal.

The Left Front — which has 50 MLAs — is the Congress' main rival in Tripura. The CPI(M) in particular has been edging it out since the 1993 assembly polls.

"We promised poriborton (change), and it has begun," TMC vice-president Mukul Roy said in Agartala after the six Congress MLAs sent a formal letter to assembly speaker Ramendra Debnath and joined his party.

Barman said, "TMC will do what the Congress couldn't. This is the beginning of the end of the Left Front in Tripura."

## Laos Ambassador seek closer ties with Assam

**GUWAHATI, June 8:** Following the second 2019 AFC Asian Cup qualifying match between India and Laos held yesterday in Guwahati, Laos Ambassador to India, Ravi Shankar Aisola said his country is looking for improved cultural and sports exchange programme with Assam as a way to build better relations

between both countries.

Aisola, who is currently in the city to watch the 2019 AFC Asian Cup India versus Laos qualifier, said that more cultural and sporting activities were required to bring Laos and the northeast closer.

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal also had a talk with the Laotian

Ambassador and discussed a range of issues of mutual importance to India and Laos, and more particularly Assam.

"Assam was keen to work with Laos in the fields of trade and commerce, cultural exchange, sports and strengthening road connectivity through Myanmar," said a government release here.

Habib Mohammed

Chowdhury, a business man from Assam, who had been doing business in Laos for 18 years was also at the press conference highlighting the scopes and opportunities that Laos offers for investors.

Aisola also said that Laos is still very less known to India and that efforts are on for bridging the gaps.

## Congress wins 12 seats in 27-member Manipur local body

**IMPHAL, June 8 (IANS):** The ruling Congress party in Manipur on Tuesday won 12 seats, while the BJP bagged 10 in the Imphal Municipal Corporation, for which elections were held on June 2.

Independent candidates managed to grab five seats in the 27-member council.

"Three independents have joined the Congress and it has been approved. Now the Congress shall form the IMC body. There is no anti-incumbency and the election results in Assam have not impacted Manipur's IMC polls," state minister of Indian National

Congress T.N. Haokip told IANS.

Stating that love and support of the people stood the party in good stead, Haokip claimed that people will support the party which has been in power for three consecutive terms in the February 2017 Assembly elections.

"Nobody can play the communal card in Manipur as the voters are matured," he added.

Meanwhile, Thounaojam Chaocha, election cell in charge of the BJP, said, "No party is in a position to form the IMC body. We are forming a democratic alliance with the non-Congress parties."

## France launches attack alert app ahead of Euro 2016

PARIS, June 8: France launched an app to alert users to attacks on Wednesday, two days before the Euro 2016 soccer championship gets underway under a state of emergency imposed after militant Islamists struck Paris in November.

The Interior Ministry app, called SAIP, flashes a warning on a user's mobile phone screen if there is an attack close to their location or suspicion of an imminent strike. Users can also request alerts for up to eight geographic areas, including individual districts in the capital.

First impressions on social media were mixed.

"Things are getting better?" The creation of SAIP leaves you thinking that, at least in terms of security, it's not really the case," said one Twitter user, referring to President Francois Hollande's mantra that life for the French is improving.

"Not very reassuring, but it is useful," said another Twitter user.

Britain this week cautioned fans travelling to France for the tournament that stadiums, fan zones and transport hubs were "potential targets for terrorist attacks", echoing warnings from French intelligence agencies and the United States.

## Goalkeeper Mandanda says France want to reach, win Euro final



PARIS, June 8 (IANS): France's second goalkeeper Steve Mandanda said on Wednesday that they want to reach the final of Euro football championship which his country hosts, starting on Friday.

The Olympique Marseille keeper added at a news conference that he does not know if France are favourites, but the team's target is to get to the final and win, reports Efe.

On the last-minute absence of some of the crucial players before the Euro, Mandanda said that the strength of team is in collective work and even though they have lost some important footballers, especially in defence, they have trained hard and can overcome the issue.

As for the opening match France will play on Friday against Romania, Mandanda warned that it will not be easy.

PARADENA (California), June 8 (IANS): Colombia were inspired by captain James Rodriguez and two critical saves from goalkeeper David Ospina to hold off Paraguay 2-1 and become the first team to book passage into the Copa America Centenario football quarter-finals.

Rodriguez was Colombia's catalyst, his corner to Carlos Bacca in the 12th minute resulting in Colombia's first goal at the Rose Bowl stadium here on Tuesday.

Rodriguez then scored his team's second goal in the 30th minute.

Rodriguez was an injury doubt for the match with a shoulder injury, but he was in coach Jose Pekerman's starting line-up.

Paraguay had plenty of chances throughout the night, including Dario Lezcano's free

kick that was tipped over the bar by Ospina just before the half-time whistle.

Paraguay finally broke through with Victor Ayala's long-distance strike in the 71st minute, but could not equalise.

Ospina, who plays for Arsenal in England, leaped off his line to bat away a header in the 61st minute.

Paraguay played the last 10 minutes of the match with 10 men when midfielder Oscar Romero was sent off after seeing his second yellow card.

Colombia, with six points to lead Group A, is guaranteed a place in the quarter-finals regardless of the outcome of their next match, against Costa Rica on Friday in Houston.

Paraguay face a must-win situation against the United States to have a chance to advance.

## Muguruza eyeing Serena's top ranking

LONDON, June 8: So long the dominant force in women's tennis, Serena Williams will head to Wimbledon this month in danger of losing her number one ranking to Spain's Garbine Muguruza.

Muguruza, beaten by Williams in last year's Wimbledon final, turned the tables to win the French Open on Saturday and climbed to a career-high second on the WTA list.

Should she win the Wimbledon title and the 34-year-old Williams loses before the final, she would rise to number one, a position Williams has held for 178 weeks.

"Everybody's dreaming about being number one," 22-year-old Muguruza said after her straight sets defeat of Williams.

"My focus is just on winning matches and tournaments. But of course I

## BCCI keen to develop cricket in Sikkim

SANJAYAGARWAL

RANGPO, June 8: The BCCI officials who are on a three-day visit to Sikkim today said the board is interested to develop the game of cricket in Sikkim.

"If the Sikkim Cricket Association fulfils the norms of BCCI we are ready to release the fund immediately for the development of cricket in Sikkim," said Prakash Dixit, BCCI's infrastructure development committee chairman and Vidarbha Cricket Association president.

Dixit along with other BCCI delegates, who reached Sikkim today, visited



The BCCI team at Rangpo Mining cricket ground. SE Pic

Rangpo Mining cricket ground where they met officials of Sikkim Cricket Association (SCA).

Dixit, after inspecting the location and atmosphere and said the ground lease must be for minimum of 30 years.

SCA general secretary Ashwin Oberoi informed the BCCI officials on the SCA's recent meeting with the State Sports minister R.B. Subba and the latter's assurance of increasing the lease deed. The current lease will run out in 2021.

The BCCI delegates will be meeting the Sports minister on Thursday.

## Sharapova banned for two years

LONDON, June 8: Russian former world number one Maria Sharapova was handed a two-year ban by the International Tennis Federation on Wednesday following her positive test for banned drug meldonium at this year's Australian Open.

In a statement the ITF said the 29-year-old five-times grand slam champion's ban would be back-dated to Jan. 26 this year, meaning her results from the Australian Open where she reached the quarter-finals, would be disqualified.

"An Independent Tribunal appointed under Article 8.1 of the 2016 Tennis Anti-Doping Programme has found that Maria Sharapova committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Article 2.1 of the Programme and as a consequence has disqualified the affected results and imposed a period of ineligibility of two years, commencing on 26 January 2016," the ITF said in a statement.

Sharapova, the world's highest-paid female athlete, stunned the sporting world in March when she announced that she had tested positive for



medlonium, a drug she said she had been taking for a decade to treat diabetes and low magnesium.

Meldonium was added to the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) list of banned substances at the start of the year after evidence that it boosted blood flow and enhanced athletic performance.

After her admission, Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer cut its ties with Sharapova while other brands such as Nike and Porsche distanced themselves from her.

The ban means she will miss this year's Wimbledon championship, the title she won as a teenager to launch her career into orbit in 2004, and the Rio Olympics.

At the time Sharapova, the highest-profile tennis player to fail an anti-doping test, insisted she had made "a huge mistake" blaming her failure to read an email sent by the ITF that meldonium had been added to the WADA list.

Sharapova has 35 WTA singles titles and has won all four of the sport's grand slam titles.

Her career earnings amount to \$36 million while her off-court earnings, according to Forbes, are around \$200 million.

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## Copa America:

### Colombia advance to quarter-finals with 2-1 win vs Paraguay

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# Jolts give sleepless nights to residents of Deorali government quarters

**SE Report**  
**GANGTOK, June 8:** Residents of government quarters at Deorali here just below the national highway are having sleepless nights these days.  
 The reason given in a complaint to SIKKIM EXPRESS was jolts taken by their already vulnerable class II building from movement of heavy traffic along the highway above.  
 The building had suffered damage during the 2011 earthquake and we feel

vibrations in our quarters whenever heavy vehicles passes on the above road but these jolts are giving us sleepless nights, said a resident.  
 The residents said the jolts were due to an excavation work on the road at the Gangtok-Nam Nam junction to lay a 100 mm water supply pipe. The excavated part has not been covered up and this caused portion is creating a jolt when vehicles run in high speed, they said.  
 During this excavation

work, the duct left for the water supply pipe has been damaged by various activities and water is pouring out into the already damaged stairs leading to the quarters whenever it rains, said the residents.  
 The duct was meant only for cables and pipes and not water.  
 Continuous seeping of rainwater from the cracked road, tilted footpath and stairs into the cavity caused during 2011 earthquake has left our quarters in a vulnerable state, said the

residents. They requested the departments concerned to look into the matter and initiate action at the earliest.  
 It would be best that a retrofitting of the building, covering of the excavated road and repairing of the footpath be done at the earliest to avoid any disaster in the very near future, said the residents.  
 When contacted, Building & Housing secretary C.P. Tongden said the department will write to the Mines & Geology

department requesting for an immediate study of the geo-tech aspects of the government quarters at Deorali.  
 We will immediately form a team of engineers of the department and carry out a study of the structure there, said Tongden.  
 It was suggested that the disaster management authorities should also visit the area and study the concerns made by the residents of the government quarters in Deorali.

## Lanco workers protest abrupt layoff

**SE Report**  
**RANGPO, June 8:** Workers engaged by hydro project developer Lanco Energy today protested at the Samardung project office after the company laid off around 127 workers. The agitated workers gathered outside the company vice-president's office protesting the sudden ouster. They also demanded that their monthly dues pending since March be paid at the earliest.  
 Later, labour contractors Phurba Lepcha and Bikash Pradhan held a meeting with vice president H.B.S. Rao over the grievances of the workers.  
 Rao maintained that the company had to lay off the workers due to financial crunch. He added that the workers would be re-engaged once the situation improves.  
 On the pending dues, the company official stated that the payment would be done along with a three month compensation amount and applicable provident fund.  
 Lanco Energy is executing the 500 Mw Teesta-VI hydro power project which has already been delayed reportedly due to fund crunch and other issues.

## President's visit to Ghana, Ivory Coast first by Indian head of state

**NEW DELHI, June 8 (IANS):** President Pranab Mukherjee's upcoming visit to Ghana and Ivory Coast will be the first by an Indian head of state while the presidential visit to Namibia comes after 21 years, External Affairs Ministry said on Wednesday.  
 "It will be the first visit to Ghana and Ivory Coast at the level of the head of state. The Namibia visit too is happening after 21 years," Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (ER) Amar Singh told reporters here.  
 Mukherjee's three-nation itinerary begins with the Ghana visit on June 12. He will reach Ivory Coast on June 14 afternoon. He will visit Namibia on June 15 and will be there till June 17.  
 "The visit is part of the outreach to Africa which kicked off with the visit of the Vice President (M. Hamid Ansari) to Morocco last week. The President has taken on the responsibility of visit to these three countries," he said.  
 Giving details, Sinha said the President will unveil a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Ghana.  
 He said a number of agreements are slated to be signed during the visit, which may include some on visa waivers.

# Indian women will shape destiny of country, possibly planet: Minister

**NEW DELHI, June 8 (IANS):** Indian women have the ability to become agents of comprehensive transformation of the country, and the potential to determine its destiny as well as that of the planet earth, Power Minister Piyush Goyal has said.  
 "Women have the potential to determine the destiny of India or possibly the world," Goyal said, speaking at the launch here of the book "The World in 2050: Striving for a more just, Prosperous and Harmonious Global Community", on Tuesday evening.  
 "Personally, I have no doubt in my mind that the women of this country have the ability to become an agent of change," he said.  
 The minister noted that the emerging concern of demographics in India can



either be a boon or a disaster for the country.  
 "The demographics can be a boon or a disaster depending on whether we can channelise it in the right direction and strengthen the youth for tomorrow," Goyal said, adding that India needed to focus on developing skills of youth so that the country's growth is not hampered when the population aged 60 or above grows manifold by 2050.

The minister said the country may have to face a "burden of aging people by 2050, and to save India from such problems, we need to focus on skill development and entrepreneurship skills of today's youth".  
 According to a UN report, the number of Indians who have attained the age of 60 years or above would increase by 360 per cent by 2050.  
 Currently the country has more than 100 million elderly persons. By 2050, the number is expected to increase to 323 million — which would be 20 per cent of its total 1.65 billion projected population.  
 Goyal said the true empowerment of the country's youth to drive India's growth "can only come through proper infrastructure whose major portion consists of electricity.  
 "And in some sense, a lot

of efforts are going in this subject in India today," he said, releasing the book edited by Harinder S. Kohli, a renowned economist.  
 The book, published by the Oxford University Press, stresses upon women empowerment, infrastructure and skill development in the country.  
 At an event here earlier on Tuesday, Goyal said the next round of bidding by states for solar parks will begin soon.  
 "I have signed the file for round two of solar parks. We will soon have another round of bidding by the states for solar parks. It is a journey that will go on relentlessly," he said while delivering the inaugural address of the national workshop on rooftop solar.  
 Till date, 33 solar parks have been approved across the country.

## Online traffic complaint system launched

**PANKAJDHUNGEL**  
**GANGTOK, June 8:** Sikkim Police has launched a new online system where citizens and road users can send their traffic complaints and suggestion to the Traffic Police.  
 Launched on June 1 by the road safety and traffic management wing, the Traffic Complaint and Suggestion Box (Traesbox) provides a dedicated

mobile number where citizens can make traffic complaints and suggestions through SMS or WhatsApp messages and pictures. The State-wide mobile number 7063592059 would take only messages from across the State, it is informed.  
 A senior police official said the digital initiative was launched as traffic personnel cannot be deployed on every part of

the State. The personnel deployed at the other end of the digital message or SMS takes note of the complaint or suggestion and forwards it to the Sikkim Police Headquarters in Gangtok. From the headquarters, the complaint will be forwarded to the police officer deployed in that particular jurisdiction to verify and act on the complaint, the official

informed.  
 The SMS and Whatsapp feature also eases the headquarters to verify whether the complaint is genuine or not and persons making misleading and false complaints would be penalised, it was informed.  
 The initiative has been undertaken with an aim to educate, strengthen, sensitize and enable the responsible citizens of the State and also to keep a check on traffic violations.

## Governor attends NIT executive board meeting



Governor Shrinivas Patil with minister GM. Gurung and NIT officials during the meeting.

**SE Report**  
**GANGTOK, June 8:** Governor Shrinivas Patil attended the executive board meeting of Namgyal Institute of Tibetology (NIT) at the institute in Deorali here today. State Cultural Affairs minister G.M. Gurung, secretaries of Culture and Finance departments, and other executive members of the board were also present at the meeting, informs an official press release.  
 While deliberating on the agenda, the Governor, also the president of the executive board of NIT, stressed on the measures to be taken to

enhance the beauty of the institute complex. He suggested that the North Eastern Council could be approached for financial assistance. Stating that the centre is one of the most sought after tourist destination in Gangtok, he also proposed for the production of a documentary film on the institute for the benefit of tourists and locals.  
 Patil suggested the management to publish booklets, brochure and leaflets with the required information of the institute including access and nearest rail and air link which will help attract more tourists and visitors.

On the issue of encroachment in the complex, the Governor suggested the board to approach the district administration for ensuring zero encroachment in the premises and also asked the management to install CCTV cameras for better surveillance and safety of the complex, the release mentions.

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 For details please visit www.nhpcindia.com or www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app or contact Manager (IC)-Contract Division, Teesta-V Power Station, NHPC Ltd., Balitar, P.O. Singtam, East Sikkim-737134. Telephone No. 03592-247349; e-mail ID: tvcontract@gmail.com. Subsequent amendments and/or extension of date, if any, for submission of bids shall be posted only on websites mentioned above.  
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**BIRDS OF SIKKIM**  
**Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher**  
 Scientific name - *Culicicapa ceylonensis*  
 Quite unlike other flycatchers, the Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher has a distinctive head shape and an upright stance. It breeds in forests and open wooded country from 3940 ft to 10170 ft and spends its winters down in the foothills and even plains. While foraging, the Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher prefers an open perch from where it will take off, catch tiny flies and bugs with its beak and more often than not land at the exact spot on the branch. Best places to see near Gangtok - Nam Nang, wooded areas near Pangthang.  
 Pic & Text: Suraj Gurung

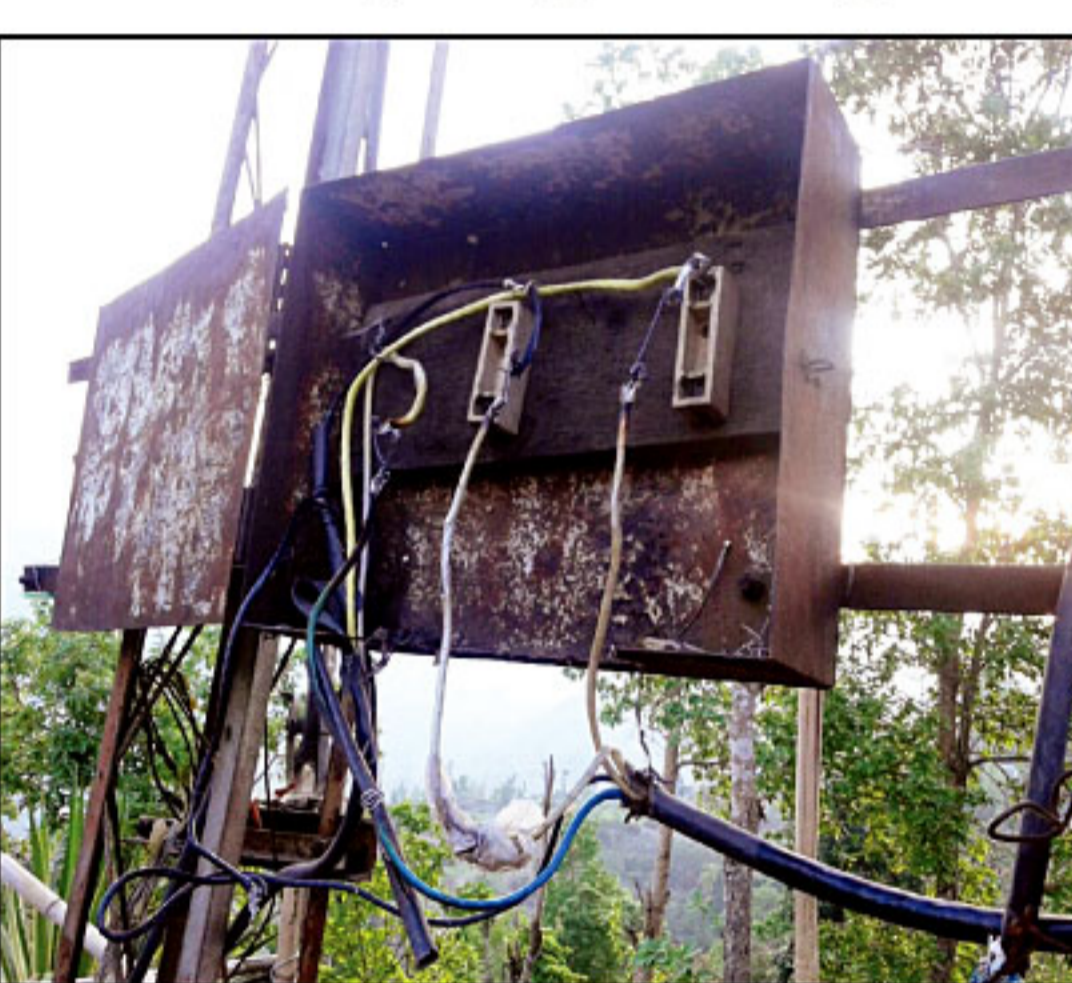
**Security forces bust militant hideout in Rajouri**  
**JAMMU, June 8 (IANS)** Security forces on Wednesday busted a militant hideout in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district and recovered some arms and ammunition.  
 Defence sources told

IANS in Jammu city that the "timely recovery" of the cache has helped prevent a likely militant attack in the area.  
 A defence source said: "Based on specific information, the army alongwith troops of state police in Kalakote recovered a cache of arms and ammunition in the area of Lal forest, a natural hide out."  
 "In the ensuing search

operation, they recovered two pistols, three radio sets, two anti-personnel mines, 20 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, three rounds of pistol ammunition, two hand-grenades, one magazine of AK-47 and other war like stores," the source said.  
 "The army has been conducting relentless operations to ensure peace and stability in the region."

## Live wire risks Katyang villagers

**SE Report**  
**RANGPO, June 8:** Live wires dangling close to human contact from an uncovered circuit board at Lower Katyang village, South Sikkim have become a major cause of concern for the villagers. The power switch board which is close to the school could prove risky for humans especially school students.



The uncovered circuit board and exposed wires at Katyang village. SE Pic

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